

**How effective are school-based interventions in terms of  
complementing academic achievement for male Pasifika high  
school students?**

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# Table of Contents

<b>LIST OF FIGURES .....</b>	<b>V</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES .....</b>	<b>V</b>
<b>ATTESTATION OF AUTHORSHIP .....</b>	<b>VI</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....</b>	<b>VII</b>
<b>ABSTRACT .....</b>	<b>VIII</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
THE PROGRAMME.....	3
RATIONALE .....	4
MOTIVATION FOR THE PROGRAMME .....	9
<b>CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>11</b>
PASIFIKA LEARNER .....	11
<i>Parents and family .....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Identity .....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>New identity is formed – acculturation .....</i>	<i>13</i>
DEFINING SUCCESS FOR THE YOUNG PASIFIKA LEARNER .....	15
<i>Pasifika academic achievement at high school.....</i>	<i>15</i>
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS .....	16
<i>Ecological Systems Theory.....</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Positive Youth Development.....</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>New Zealand context: Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa .....</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Strength-Based approach .....</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Social Capital Model .....</i>	<i>25</i>
INTERVENTIONS.....	26
<i>What role do intervention programmes play in youth development?.....</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>Sport focused school-based interventions .....</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>Other relevant interventions.....</i>	<i>30</i>
CARING ADULTS .....	31
<i>Role of the parent .....</i>	<i>33</i>
<i>Key trends and the role of key players.....</i>	<i>35</i>
<b>CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>37</b>
DECOLONIZING METHODOLOGIES.....	37
INDIGENOUS RESEARCH .....	38
PASIFIKA RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES .....	39
<i>Mea’alofa .....</i>	<i>40</i>
<i>Lalaga .....</i>	<i>40</i>

<i>Tivaevae</i> .....	41
<i>Talanoa</i> .....	41
KAKALA METHODOLOGY .....	42
<i>Teu – Conceptualisation</i> .....	44
<i>Toli – Data Collection</i> .....	44
<i>Tui – Data Analysis</i> .....	48
<i>Luva - Presentation</i> .....	49
<i>Malie – Relevancy and worthwhileness</i> .....	49
<i>Mafana - Application, transformation and sustainability</i> .....	50
<b>CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS</b> .....	<b>52</b>
TUI – DATA ANALYSIS .....	53
<i>Benefits of the Intervention</i> .....	53
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT .....	55
<i>Attendance</i> .....	56
<i>Academic attainment</i> .....	59
<i>Food</i> .....	61
<i>Homework</i> .....	61
DISCUSSION ON PASTORAL CARE .....	62
<i>Life Skills</i> .....	63
<i>Goal setting</i> .....	65
ELITE SPORT MENTORING .....	66
ADULT SUPPORT ROLES .....	66
<i>Programme Facilitator</i> .....	66
<i>Parents</i> .....	68
<i>School staff</i> .....	69
SOCIAL CAPITAL .....	70
<i>Unity</i> .....	70
<i>Identity</i> .....	71
PARTICIPANTS RECOMMENDATIONS .....	73
FINDINGS SUMMARY .....	75
<b>CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION</b> .....	<b>79</b>
<i>Participants</i> .....	80
EXTERNAL INFLUENCES .....	81
<i>Impact of critical incident</i> .....	81
LINKING LITERATURE TO FINDINGS .....	81
<i>Relationship to the YDSA</i> .....	81
<i>Appropriateness of Kakala</i> .....	82
<i>Programme achieving its goals?</i> .....	82

LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH .....	83
<i>Programme research participation</i> .....	83
<i>Parent / caregiver involvement</i> .....	83
<i>Pasifika programme or not?</i> .....	84
WHAT VALUE IS THIS RESEARCH? .....	84
GAPS IN RESEARCH .....	86
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	<b>90</b>
<b>APPENDICES</b> .....	<b>98</b>
APPENDIX 1 COMMUNITY INTERVENTION PROPOSAL .....	98
APPENDIX 2 SAINT CATHERINE’S COLLEGE .....	101
APPENDIX 3 PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM .....	103
APPENDIX 4 PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET .....	104
APPENDIX 5 FOCUS GROUP 1 QUESTIONS .....	106
APPENDIX 6 FOCUS GROUP 2 QUESTIONS .....	108
APPENDIX 7 ETHICS APPROVAL .....	110

## **List of Figures**

Figure 1.1: School leavers by ethnic group (2000 to 2006) .....	5
Figure 1.2: Pacific Population Growth in New Zealand .....	6

## **List of Tables**

Table 1.2: School leavers who fulfilled requirements to enter university .....	8
Table 1.3: Participant details .....	9
Table 4.1: Attendance - Detail .....	57
Table 4.2: Attendance - Summary .....	58
Table 4.3: Academic Attainment .....	59

## **Attestation of Authorship**

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

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## **Abstract**

Pasifika students continue to fail academically at high school at a disproportionate rate compared to their European/Pākehā and Asian counterparts. The purpose of this research is to evaluate an after school programme that claims to adopt a holistic approach to teaching and learning which may help to arrest that rate of underachievement. The research will help to determine what benefit, if any, the after school programme will have on the Pasifika participants.

The programme is designed to assist the development of members of one of the elite sporting teams of a high school. One of the programme's primary objectives includes enhancing improvements to academic performance thereby contributing to retention. Finally the programme hopes the participants successfully complete the NCEA level they enrolled in at the beginning of the year.

The programme also delivers practical life-skills workshops aimed at preparing the participants for when they leave school. Areas of improvement for the participants include enhancing positive self-esteem, confidence building, identity awareness and goal setting. The programme is one of a few run by a community non-profit Trust. The Trust asserts this programme allows their learners to become exposed to areas of youth development in a relaxed, comfortable setting whilst gaining confidence and acquiring tools for success in a Pasifika-friendly environment.



# Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

## **How effective are school-based interventions in terms of complementing academic achievement for male Pasifika high school students?**

Pasifika people in New Zealand derive from a range of unique cultural and language identities. In New Zealand, the Ministries of Education and Pacific Island Affairs use the term “Pasifika peoples” to describe people living in New Zealand who have migrated from the Pacific Islands or who identify with the Pacific Islands because of ancestry or heritage. According to the Ministry of Education, the term does not refer to a single ethnicity, nationality or culture but is a *term of convenience* to encompass the diverse range of peoples from the South Pacific in New Zealand who derive from a range of unique cultural and language identities (e.g., Samoan, Tongan, Tokelauan, Cook Island, Nuiean), (Fletcher, Parkhill, Fa’afoi, Taleni & O’Regan, 2009, p24, 25)

The research will examine the effectiveness of a community run, after school, school-based programme. The programme claims to adopt a holistic approach to enhancing academic success of Pasifika male high school students by complementing the teaching at the host high school. The programme structure combines classroom tutorials and sports mentoring and also offers external support and pastoral care.

The host high school provides compulsory education at levels recognised nationally throughout New Zealand’s compulsory school system, with students requiring to be enrolled in the National Certificate in Educational Achievement (NCEA) at levels one, two or three. The rationale for the research is based on the high rate of academic underachievement of Pasifika young people and the economic implications that may arise as a consequence. However it must be noted at the outset that males have been used for this research due to the anecdotal claim that male Pasifika high school students leave school after sports has finished for the academic year. There may or may not be a similar trend amongst female high school students however for the sake of this research, male students have been targeted.

There were eight male students making up the final research cohort. They were all of Pasifika descent, between 16 and 18 years of age. All of the participants at the time were in their senior years at school and were enrolled in the NCEA at varying levels. The high school is located in Auckland, New Zealand's largest metropolitan city. It also has the largest Pasifika population of any city in New Zealand. The data gathering exercise included a literature review combined with input from the participants through focus groups. The focus groups were conducted between August and October, 2009.

A literature review will look at youth interventions aimed at improving educational outcomes. The review examined any references to community-based interventions particularly where they can be linked to the thesis. The research methodology used for the project adopted a Pasifika research approach. The Kakala research model is based on a Tongan concept which uses the analogy of making a finely adorned garland (Kakala). The Kakala encompasses the whole production process of the garland making from the selection of the items required to produce it, to the presentation to its intended recipients. The Kakala will be explained in more detail in Chapter Three.

For this research, the prevailing theory and strategy used to bind the literature review, research methodology and findings is the Positive Youth Development model and the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa (YDSA). The YDSA articulates notions of support for the young person, and targeted support in the case of Pasifika youth by involving them in key decision making opportunities where applicable. The Kakala invites a distinct Pasifika perspective on the impact the YDSA can have on the young Pasifika participant. The Kakala process values the participants, their families, their communities and the YDSA by weaving them all into the research process and acknowledging the shared ownership and nature of the research. The YDSA is strength-based but does not ignore corrective or deficit approaches and as such should be a core element of programmes and initiatives where youth development is of primary interest in New Zealand.

## The Programme

The programme was established by a community Trust and is one of a number of youth intervention programmes offered by it. The Trust hoped the programme would maximise academic achievement by offering pastoral care, extra academic support and mentoring to Pasifika male high school students who anecdotally focus excessively on sports performance rather than scholastic success. Scholastic success elements are incorporated in the programme, the idea being they would give the participants a better chance at success particularly if the school and the Team Management have buy in. Some of the participants of the programme aspire to become professional athletes.

The programme ran a one and a half hour session, after school, once a week for twenty four weeks. The participants could expect to receive extra tutorial assistance in key areas of academic weakness, like English (literacy) and Mathematics (numeracy). The Trust also expected the programme to provide pastoral care for the participants through the Programme Facilitator. The programme began at the end of April and ended toward the end of October 2009. During the one and half hour sessions the Trust provided the participants a small meal at the beginning of each session. The programme then had an hour, normally, within which guest speakers and invited teachers could be brought in to speak to or work with the participants. The programme calendar included examination preparation and revision sessions. Life skills workshops also became a regular feature of the programme too with themes like self esteem, motivation, relationships and decision-making. The programme venue was in a breakout room in the school's main gymnasium. The room was large and well lit and was in a prime location with respect to access to the gymnasium and other sports amenities close by, proving useful for any activity based events.

The programme was originally piloted in another high school in the Auckland region prior to being introduced to the host high school participating in the research. In 2008 it was run for the first time at the school where the research was undertaken and running the programme again in 2009 was fully endorsed by the school's Board

of Trustees and the school's Senior Management and was well received by the Team Management and players of that year.

The Trust is a non-profit organisation that has dedicated itself to working with schools, communities and local government agencies to fulfil its mission towards Pasifika development. The Trust comprises voluntary members from the Auckland community committed to the development of Pasifika communities in the region. It was first established in 2002. The members of the Trust bring with them experience mostly from the education sector and between them have many years of experience in the high school and tertiary sub-sectors. The Trust claims that the programme is flexible which helps promote innovative learning opportunities that motivate, inspire, mentor and help to build capability in Pasifika youth in schools and communities within the Auckland region. The Trust also believes that socio-economic factors are a significant determinant in terms of Pasifika students' potential. It asserts there is a problem of access to after-school programmes because of lack of funding which plays out for youth from disadvantaged backgrounds.

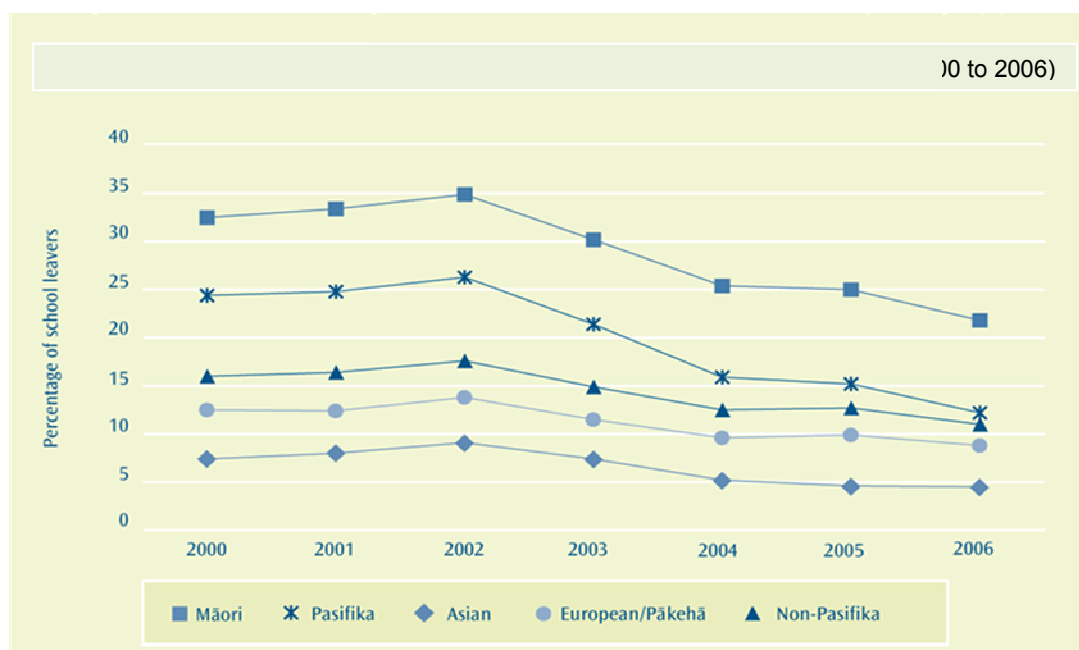
The Trust proposed an alignment of its key outcomes of the programme with those of the host high school's charter. Some of those key indicators included increased performance in literacy and numeracy for Pasifika (and Māori) students, an improvement in retention in their final year at school and with a view to hopefully provide more tertiary bound students. Students' physical and emotional wellbeing were paramount and their learning environment conducive to learning. In establishing its charter, the school recognised the importance of engagement with their students, their parents and communities. The school also stated how it valued effective communication between the parent, school and students.

### *Rationale*

The Trust will develop a secondary school based programme that will support all players to develop to their full potential academically. The rationale for this target group is the students tend to focus on their sport at the expense of their academic outcomes. This process would enhance their team behaviours and strengthen the team concept as well as enhance their educational outcomes and improve their study skills. (Board of Trustees, 2007, p2)

In New Zealand the rate of Pasifika high school students leaving school with little or no academic attainment is disproportionately high when compared to that of their non-Pasifika counterparts (see Figure 1.1 below). The Government of New Zealand has attempted to address this problem by commissioning various agencies and ministries to create their own iterations of youth development education strategies. The Ministry of Education, for example, has the Pasifika Education Plan (Ministry of Education, 2003) aimed specifically at improving academic success for New Zealanders who are of Pasifika ethnicity. The fact that there is a Pasifika plan suggests the concerns the New Zealand Government places on targeting this particular ethnic group.

The rationale behind the research project highlights the rates of Pasifika underachievement at high school level. Figure 1.1 below also identifies the gap between Pasifika and Māori and 'other' groups. In 2006, whilst that gap is closing the figures are still high at 13% and 22% respectively. Pasifika youth are leaving school early by dropping out or through stand-downs, or expulsions. For those students the chances of securing meaningful employment significantly decreases whilst there is a higher risk of non-achievement both academically and economically into early adulthood.

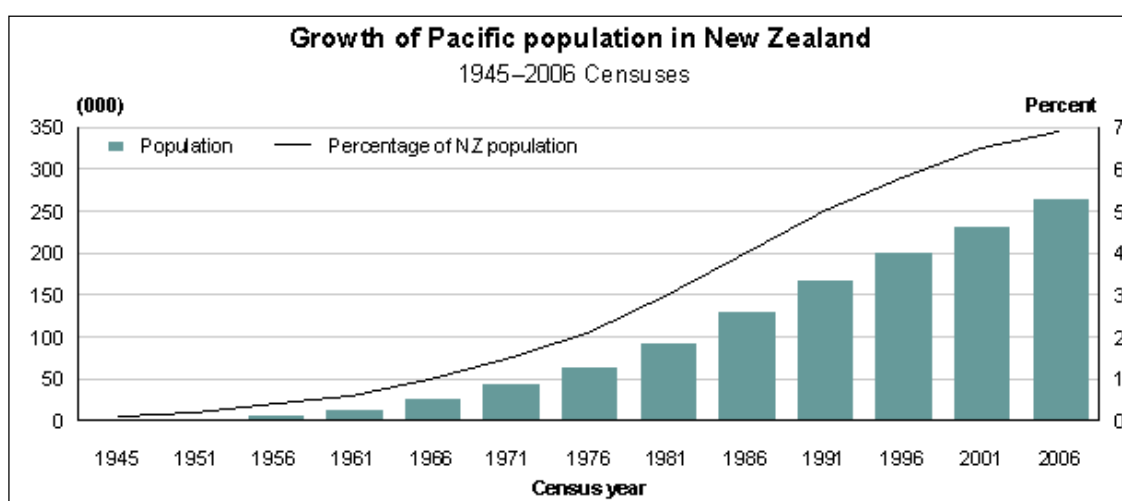


**Figure 1.1: School leavers by ethnic group (2000 to 2006)**

Source: Ministry of Education: Pasifika Education Plan Monitoring Report 2007, p27.

Low rates of academic achievement have a detrimental effect on the rate of unemployment, level of wages and the impact on families, communities and the economy. With this in mind the programme aims to help the participants set realistic and achievable goals and to assist participants by giving them positive support to avoid ending up in unemployment queues.

Coupled with this low level of academic achievement is the rising Pasifika population growth, further exacerbating employment challenges for Pasifika youth. Since the last Government Census in 2006, the population growth rate of Pasifika Peoples in New Zealand has been dramatic. Statistics New Zealand reveals in Figure 1.2 below, that growth (Statistics New Zealand, 2010). According to the 2006 Census, 266,000 people (6.9 percent of the total population) were of Pasifika descent and who lived in New Zealand.



**Figure 1.2: Pacific Population Growth in New Zealand**

Source: Census 2006, Statistics New Zealand

The Pasifika profile in terms of age shows it is significantly younger than that of the total New Zealand population. The Census of 2006 reports that in the under-15 year old group, 22 percent of the total population compared to a much higher 38 percent of Pasifika (Statistics New Zealand, 2010). New Zealand’s Ministry of Pacific Islands Affairs adds that in less than 2 decades “one in five New Zealand children will be Pacific” (Ministry of Pacific Islands Affairs, 2010, p2) and in terms of the Pasifika population in New Zealand, one out of eight will be within the 15 to 39 year old age

group. High birth rates together with low mortality rates of Pasifika youth will contribute to an escalating youth unemployment issue in New Zealand. If youth development at the educational level is not addressed the flow on negative impact of having an increasingly younger unskilled labour force will be realised in the employment and social services sectors.

With reference again to Figure 1.1, the declining trend of non-achievement can be misleading for Pasifika school leavers. A more telling statistic is outlined in Table 1.1 below which looks closer at learners leaving school with the minimum NCEA Level 1 qualification. The data indicates how Pasifika students were falling well below their Non-Pasifika fellow students in both the private and state school learning environments over those four years.

Students are normally fifteen or sixteen years of age by the time they enrol in NCEA Level 1. They can however, continue to sit that qualification up until their final year at high school and it is not uncommon for young and more mature students sitting the same subjects during their final years at high school. So whilst the number of students passing NCEA Level appears to be quite high integrating the senior students' numbers gives the reader a false sense of accomplishment by schools.

**Table 1.1: School leavers with NCEA level 1**

	2005	2006	2007	2008
Percent				
Private/Integrated Schools				
Pasifika Students	79.4	82.0	86.9	88.1
Non-Pacific Students	91.0	91.0	94.7	92.4
State Schools				
Pasifika Students	59.7	64.5	70.9	76.3
Non-Pacific Students	70.3	73.2	79.7	82.3

SOURCE: Ministry of Pacific Islands Affairs, 2010

The following Table 1.2 gives an even grimmer scenario for the Pasifika student when taking into account access to university. The difference is substantial whether educated in the state or private school system. Far fewer Pasifika learners are progressing to university. The disparity between Pasifika and non-Pasifika learner achievement is alarming given the Pasifika youth population is significantly larger and showing no signs of decreasing. With fewer numbers of Pasifika learners gaining tertiary qualifications the correlation is a decrease in the level of access to higher paying, and more senior roles in the employment sector.

**Table 1.2: School leavers who fulfilled requirements to enter university**

	2005	2006	2007	2008
Percent				
Private/Integrated Schools				
Pasifika Students	24.9	26.1	33.4	32.2
Non- Pasifika Students	57.6	60.9	65.1	65.9
State Schools				
Pasifika Students	12.1	14.7	17.1	20.3
Non- Pasifika Students	30.2	33.7	35.9	40.1

SOURCE: Ministry of Pacific Islands Affairs, 2010

In terms of the high school elite sports team from which participants for this research were recruited, twenty-six of the total twenty eight athletes were either Pasifika or Māori. Only eight chose to participate in the research. There was an initial expectation throughout the majority of the competitive season that the number of participants would be higher. I suspect however that a critical incident that occurred at a significant time in the season may have impacted the final number of research participants. In the days and weeks that followed the incident, a noticeable unity was experienced amongst players and staff at the school and there was an outpouring of support from its local community. This is explored further in the Findings Chapter 4.

The elite sports team comprised participants aged between 16 and 18 years of age. Table 1.3 below indicates relevant information about the participants.



**Table 1.3: Participant details**

Total Half Days absent for all participants	Term 1: 137 of 816 (17%) Term 2: 124 of 784 (16%) Term 3: 165 of 800 (21%) Term 4: 118 of 288 (41%)
NCEA Level	3 x Level 2 2 x Level 2 and 3 3 x Level 3
Year level	2 x Year 12 6 x Year 13

SOURCE: Host High School

### *Motivation for the programme*

The Trust's programme was inspired by a girls' basketball high school programme run by Saint Catherine's College, an all-girls high school in Wellington, New Zealand (refer to Appendix 2 on page 101 for report from Sports Coordinator). The part time Sports Coordinator at the school at the time hired a Samoan female coach to coach the team. The academic history of the players needed improvement and one of the ways the sports coordinator thought that could happen was by using sport as a catalyst. At the end of the basketball season all of the athletes performed beyond expectations in the classroom despite having started the academic year poorly. The coach used sport as a motivator for the players to succeed in the classroom. Coincidentally, like the host high school participating in the research, most of the students also came from Pasifika backgrounds and it was also a single sex school. Saint Catherine's College's basketball programme in turn was inspired by the popular movie *Coach Carter* (Gale, Robbins and Tolling, 2005).

Coach Carter the movie, based on a true story, tells the story of Ken Carter, the Head Coach of a boy's high school basketball team. Coach Carter and his team made national headlines in the United States when he took the decision to stand his team down from playing on the grounds of academic underperformance. Coach Carter locked the gymnasium much to the chagrin of his players, colleagues, parents and members of the local community. Most of his players were not achieving academically, however due to Coach Carter's insistence and unique, albeit controversial methods, he managed to initiate academic success for them in the classroom significantly. The results of this unconventional, controversial move saw

the majority of the athletes not only graduate from high school but six of them also progressed to further study at university level. Coach Carter took a stance against the establishment simply because he wanted his charges to succeed both on and off the court. By adopting a similar philosophy to Coach Carter, Saint Catherine's College, although without the lockout, took first placing in the Wellington Secondary Schools Basketball Championship, 2005.

The Trust attempted to shape its programme around the basketball model and used it to apply for funding from an external local government funding provider. That funding would provide payment for the Programme Facilitator, food, and resource materials required at each session. The Trust also requested assistance from a tertiary education provider for the provision of academic revision support leading up to final examinations.

In summary, the performance to date of Pasifika youth at high school level, according to the statistics available, indicates that work needs to be done to lift their academic achievement. Modelling from similarly motivated programmes, such as Saint Catherine's and those identified by the literature review indicate the need for interventions. Intervention programmes such as the one chosen for this research project are well intentioned and it will be interesting to evaluate its effectiveness at some point in the future on those who choose to participate. Hopefully the programme is able to influence positive academic achievement in some way. The steadily increasing Pasifika youth population needs to be achieving in the classroom at higher rates than is currently the case. The implications of not addressing the issue of academic non-achievement will impact the New Zealand economy due to lower levels of employable (Pasifika) youth. That would lead to more pressure on social services required to facilitate more young people leaving schools without formal qualifications.

## Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Pasifika students' presence in education appears as little more than intrusions into a system which holds very little benefit for them rather than as participants in an educational process. It is as important to Pasifika students, as it is to any of us, to be able to look and to find ourselves in the places where we are located. If the capacity to do this is missing, or the opportunity to create that feeling of belonging is absent, then it is a signal that our presence is not wanted or valued. (Nakhid, 2003, p314).

The literature review examines both national and international literature on the effectiveness of youth interventions. The review focuses primarily on how interventions can improve educational learning outcomes for Pasifika youth. The study will look at any references to community-based interventions especially those that are school-based.

Resolving the issue of academic underachievement of Pasifika youth continues to be a priority of New Zealand's Ministry of Education. As a result of this, in 2002 the Ministry set out to define goals for Pasifika peoples through the establishment of a Pasifika Education Plan (Ministry of Education, 2003). The Plan focuses on closing the gap of academic achievement success rates of its Pasifika constituents with those of their non-Pasifika counterparts. The Plan does this by comparing Pasifika academic achievement statistics to those of their New Zealand *palagi*, or European, and other high achieving non-European students.

Building on previously developed theoretical models, New Zealand's Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa (YDSA) will be introduced (Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2002). The YDSA will then be examined briefly in the context of how it can be used to inform interventions for Pasifika youth.

### ***Pasifika Learner***

#### **Parents and family**

To understand more about the young Pasifika learner it is necessary to first briefly look at Pasifika people's introduction into New Zealand society. During the early 1950s New Zealand invited low skilled workers from the various island nations in the Pacific to help fill a significant labour shortage at the time. Migration from the Pacific

started resettlement in earnest and the arrival, in large numbers, just after the Second World War. The exodus resulted in transitional generations of migrants travelling to New Zealand to settle in their new promised land. The period between then and the 1970s saw New Zealand as a land of opportunity for new migrants from the Pacific (Macpherson, 2002). The migration was directed mainly to the main centres, of Auckland and Wellington, and as more and more migrants immigrated to New Zealand the tendency was to gravitate to these centres (ibid p77). As the new migrants began to settle, churches and kinships were created and communities within communities formed. These settlements became places of safety and comfort because the collective environments removed some of the alienation and isolation often experienced when moving to a new land (Taule'ale'ausumai, 1990).

Eventually the Pasifika migrants themselves adopted the lifestyles and worldviews of the dominant ethnic society. As a consequence, over the years as new generations came so too did newly created cultures and traditions. Many of these new generations themselves opting to be influenced less so by the traditions of their parent's homeland (Macpherson, 2002). Some however did continue to stay committed to village, or rural/agricultural values and in an urban setting (ibid, p74). The mix of two or more societies also gave birth to a new breed of youth. Youth began to ask questions about where and how they fit in the new society. Influences from traditional institutions like the church became areas of tension between migrant parents and their New Zealand born children. Identity issues began to emerge both within their own communities (Tiatia, 1998).

## Identity

In general Pasifika youth continue to be exposed to extended family structures, like the Samoan concept of *aiga potopoto* (Samoan translation for extended family). Traditional Pasifika influences what is normal in their dominant-culture context. In the Pasifika family setting influences tend to be more subdued rather than something made explicitly known and publicised to the community (Macpherson, 2002). In fact together with family, tradition and structure for most Pasifika peoples tend to be replicated through traditional church structures (Macpherson, 2002). There are varying degrees of acceptance, and rejection of the church, by second-generation immigrants.

For many Pasifika youth, church has become a meaningless institution (Tiatia, 1998). Tiatia also purports, however, that parents play a different, albeit just as significant, role in Samoan youth development in comparison to their non-Pasifika counterparts. Some parents are caregivers whose first language is not English but whose natural instincts for their developing families are to ensure they are given every opportunity to succeed in New Zealand (ibid, p49). Parents effectively become their first teachers and so naturally Samoan language, for example, and traditions are the norm for young Samoan children. Identity markers are formed at that early phase in their development.

A study of Pasifika students in the classroom (Gorinski, Ferguson, Wendt-Samu and Mara, 2007) found that ethnic identity was strong within the family and church environments. The influence of school with the mix of other cultures and ethnicities in their lives brought a different social context compared to what the students were used to. Village life, as new Pasifika migrants were accustomed to from their Pacific homelands, had been replaced in their new adopted country firstly by the church and then to a lesser extent by other groupings like sports clubs.

### **New identity is formed – acculturation**

Some Pasifika urban youth, both New Zealand-born and Pacific island-born, make a connection between generational breakdown, spiritual, and popular youth culture (Beaudoin, 1998). Significantly for Pasifika communities in New Zealand, entertainment media contends with traditional activities and influences for youth attention. Take the hip-hop sub-culture for example. What originated from African American roots has now categorised itself through different styles and has attracted Pasifika youth to create their own style as well which is quite distinctive from their American counterparts. Influential music genres like Gangsta (rap), Message, Pop and even Christian, with pop-culture helping Pasifika urban youth define who they are (Njubi, 2001). Youth are now being exposed to influences outside of both their parents' traditional and adopted lands.

In terms of identity and how it relates to academic achievement in a high school context, Nakhid (2003) proposes that Pasifika students in particular need to carry out an identifying process. Sadly, schools often neglect to take into account their students' own interpretations of their ethnicity. Nakhid's (2003) claim is that schools that choose to do this deny students recognition of themselves in the education system, "The claim ...therefore is that being able to construct one's identity, under the dominant influence of globalization, is a condition of educational success" (Nakhid, 2003, p7). Pasifika identities need to be valued by their teachers and other members of the school. Nakhid's article brings a challenging perspective to how the compulsory education system of their dominant host values Pasifika students. Nakhid also presents the argument of social justice in so much that Pasifika students are not receiving the same benefits from schools accorded to other students. Gewirtz (2001) suggests that social justice needs to contain both distributional and relational elements. The relational dynamic is defined in part by the issue of power and how we treat each other. Valuing the identifying process allows relational power to be distributed proportionately thereby giving balance between the education system and the Pasifika student (Nakhid, 2003).

Further to the identifying process young Pasifika learners interact with their world, whether at school, play, friends and family, and their identity alters accordingly. Gorinski et al, (2007) uses an example of how a teacher valued their students of Pasifika ethnicity. The teacher used posters that displayed commonly used Pasifika words and videotaped the students using the language(s) of their migrant parents. The positive impact of the action by the teacher was significant for the students' pride, academic attitude and ultimately academic achievement. The practice illustrated how the teacher's role is a critical factor for Pasifika students by integrating explicit Pasifika aspects to enhance learning opportunities for marginalised learners where the identity process is vital (ibid. p59).

## ***Defining success for the young Pasifika learner***

### **Pasifika academic achievement at high school**

Educational opportunities for Pasifika migrant children and better access to other resources made the move to New Zealand more attractive for the new migrants. Compulsory education and in few cases early childhood centres and kindergartens, became opportunities for Pasifika youth where teachers and student diversity interacted for the first time (Ferguson, Gorinski, Wendt-Samu, Mara, 2007). However, literature suggests that more is required to improve the capabilities of new migrants and their dependant youth (ibid). As a consequence many Pasifika students have not had the equivalent amount of educational success as their higher achieving counterparts in their New Zealand school surroundings (Macpherson, Bedford, and Spoonley, 2000).

In terms of tertiary education, Bensemen, Coxon, Anderson and Anae (2006) assert that Pasifika generally, and New Zealand Māori too for that matter, are under-represented at entry level into universities. Whilst recruitment rates into universities have been steadily improving since the early 1990s, for Pasifika, they still lag behind their contemporaries. In addition, retaining students at tertiary institutions to completion continues to be a problem (Bensemen et al., 2006). Retention requires addressing the specific needs of the Pasifika learner to enhance their chances of success. Behavioural, attitudinal and family issues tend to be of major concern for Pasifika high school and university students. The lack of adequate support services, finance expertise, and existence of pedagogical deficiencies in academic offerings amongst other things, has all contributed to underachievement (ibid).

For Pasifika learners a vital element to student success at tertiary level is also dependant on institutional responsibility. Improved connections between the institution and the Pasifika learner significantly improving the student's chances of academic success are required (ibid). In addressing the retention issue, there is a necessity to look at factors leading to students withdrawing from programmes prior to completion and consequent graduation. Student retention, however, is a subject for further research.

As much as there is academic support for minority groups, ironically there is also opposition from some academic factions regarding the provision of that support. Academics can present an ethnical dilemma, for example showing favouritism to one group without considering others (non-academic staff). Or the ethical debate on why academic assistance is given to the same ethnic groups each year who continue to underperform. Lecturers argue that high achieving non-Pasifika, minority groups, like Asians, do not have these problems and do not have academic support so why then should other marginalised groups (Nakhid, 2006). Nakhid then mentions or poses the question on institutional responsibility of the organisation which continues to allow failure and consequential funding of special interventions that allow this to happen.

### *Theoretical frameworks*

This section will introduce models that I feel are relevant to Pasifika youth development in an education context. Where the research on Pasifika in both of these areas is limited, international literature will be referred to with the intention of supporting, refuting or exposing gaps. I will begin with some of the discussion on youth development. In the Methodology Chapter the Kakala approach presents a shift in mindset for other areas of Pasifika development. Areas like pedagogies and co-construction of learning contexts posited by Gorinski and Fraser (2006) allow a more inclusive and valued contribution from Pasifika parents and communities. Given the nature of the intervention and the participants studied in the research, developing a set of theoretical guidelines to underpin the case study is also necessary.

### **Ecological Systems Theory**

Bronfenbrenner theorises that the human child's development takes place within a set of 'nested contexts' of families and peer groups (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 1998). Ecological Systems Theory explains the concept of the development of a child within a set of relationships which Bronfenbrenner defines as layers of environment, each of them impacting on the child's development. There are three contexts beginning with the closest one to the child; the *microsystem* has structures which have direct contact with the child, for example their relationship with their



parents, family members, school friends and neighbourhood associations. The next is the *mesosystem* which connects relationship formations within the child's microsystem, for example between the child's teacher and parents, or between social organisation and neighbourhood. The mesosystem also describes the connections within the child's social system. The third layer is the *macrosystem* and is the farthest from the child and is best described as comprising elements like cultural customs and norms, values and beliefs.

The significance of Bronfenbrenner's socialisation theory, when applied to education and in particular teaching, is that challenges that occur in the child's home may also have adverse implications to their learning. Bronfenbrenner theorises that educators and schools need to build and foster stable relationships with their students to enhance their chances of academic success. Compared to parents and caregivers teachers are in secondary roles and cannot provide the complex support that can be given by primary adults. On the other hand tensions between workplace pressures on parents and their families are eroding the school/family relationship which would promote better opportunities for primary roles of influence for child development. Youth development, according to Hamilton, Hamilton and Pittman (2003 as cited in Hamilton and Hamilton 2004) uses *Ecological Systems Theory* to recognise where an organisation or intervention figures amid the frameworks within which youth grow and develop, and the array of pressures brought to bear on that process.

Males (1996) offers a different yet refreshing perspective of youth and on youth development by suggesting a two-pronged approach to the way research is looked at and presented. First the focus on 'teenage' problems needs to be removed or at the very least, de-emphasised. Teenage sex, violence, drinking and use of illicit drugs do not exist, they are instead manifestations of adult behaviours, and adult actions, which themselves have not been addressed or scrutinised. Second, research needs to be re-directed away from 'teenage' behaviours in isolation, and in its place observe what frameworks youth use to immitate the adults that influence them. "It is crucial that American institutions turn away from the destructive attack on youth and adopt a more integrated approach which recognises that adult and teen behaviours are interconnected and that our fate is a shared one" (Males, 1996, p3).

## Positive Youth Development

Models of positive youth development and problem prevention are directing other researchers and practitioners beyond the deficit thinking paradigm (Kerpelman, 2004; Catalano, Hawkins, Berglund, Pollard, & Arthur, 2002). Most recently the three fundamental viewpoints to youth development are prevention, resilience, and positive youth development that have been amalgamated to form an overarching, strength-based focused strategy (Kerpelman, 2004; Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2002). The intention of positive youth development is to build capability within youth to enhance their chances of reaching their full potential. Whilst there is an acknowledgement that youth need to work on problem prevention and in some cases intervention there is an increasing awareness of utilising youth strengths as a part of this new positive youth development view.

The prevention or deficit approach has a risk and protective focus and can be found wanting in normal development because of its negative direction. This approach has unfortunately typically been associated with Pasifika youth development and consistent with other research conducted on minority youth (Ferguson et al. 2008; Gorinski & Fraser, 2006; Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2002). The resiliency model stresses protection by highlighting how adverse situations can be overcome through the positive results, like focusing on strengths and building assets, of people, communities and environments. The downside to resiliency though is that unwarranted pressure can be brought to bear on individuals who encounter difficulty (Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2002). Finally, *positive* youth development, a strengths-based approach, helps youth identify and develop their talents or strengths in an effort to fulfil their maximum potential. However this approach, if applied in isolation, can at times fail to hit the mark because of its inability to address the risks encountered by youth and robbing them of the ability to cope and develop in these situations (Kerpelman, 2004; Catalano et al 2002; Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2002). From a youth development perspective however, Pasifika youth work well in this dimension.

This new approach envisions young people as resources rather than as problems for society. The positive youth development perspective emphasizes the manifest potentialities rather than the supposed incapacities of young people—including young people from the most

disadvantaged backgrounds and those with the most troubled histories (Damon, 2004, p15).

### **New Zealand context: Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa**

New Zealand's Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa (YDSA) has a similar emphasis to the three perspectives mentioned above. The YDSA has a strong policy focus with the added benefit of offering guidelines on programme design. It too has an overarching influence across the Government's various public sector activities. The YDSA is based on the allocation and distribution of a wide range of resources to assist in the development of young people in New Zealand (Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2002). The development of Pasifika young people has not been forgotten in the YDSA and is acknowledged explicitly along with other "key specific groups", for example like Māori, students with disabilities, gay youth and (other) minority groups. The YDSA states that there are "too many young people arriving at adulthood unprepared" (p10). It further infers "this group to be disproportionately made up of Māori and Pacific young people" (p10).

New Zealand's YDSA comprises four fundamental elements - its vision, six principles, three aims and four goals.

The strategy uses four elements to apply the positive youth development approach. A vision, a statement of what we would like to see happen; six principles, the foundations of the youth development approach; three aims, the strategy's key and overarching directions; four goals that can be used as tools across key social environments and government areas (Ministry of Youth Development, 2002, p12).

The goals referred to above include a strengths-based approach for positive youth development. The approach also attempts to establish quality relationships through the use of skilled adults. The YDSA would like to ensure participation by youth, as more opportunities are made available to them. Finally, the YDSA builds on the knowledge base for youth development through the dissemination of relevant research based knowledge.

## Strength-Based approach

This approach is foundational to the YDSA in the New Zealand context and is evident in international literature as well.

...our major premise is that the skills needed to enhance performance and to succeed in life are basically the same. More-over, when skills are taught so that the learner understands that the skills are transferable and knows how to transfer the skills from one domain to another, the effect can be very powerful (Danish, Forneris, Wallace, 2005, p42).

In an American study of young people, over four hundred and fifty students took part in a series of focus groups where character strengths were examined. “They were especially drawn to the positive traits of leadership, wisdom, a willingness to learn, the capacity to love and be loved, practical intelligence and social intelligence” (Steen, Karchorek and Petersen, 2003, p5). The students also articulated their preferences for contemporary role models that were not necessarily those that their teachers thought would be appropriate and relevant. The study highlighted effective character education programmes that have a positive focus rather than the deficit model approach as mentioned previously (Steen et al, 2003). Whilst adoption of the positive development approach is most often called upon today, the merging of positive youth development and problem prevention approaches helps broaden the scope of youth development. This fusion of approaches in turn increases the possibility of having more effective youth programmes (Kerpelman, 2004). How then do programmes adopt these concepts, or even a combination of them?

The positive youth development approach accentuates in youth the “manifest potentialities rather than the supposed incapacities of young people”, (Damon, 2004, p15). This approach also includes youth whose childhood has been problematic and have had a disadvantaged upbringing. The fundamental vision of positive youth development takes the view that all youth are fully capable, potential-laden individuals who are able to gain competencies and confidence to build into their own lives and eventually contribute to society. Damon (2004) maintains that by engaging youth in interventions where there is education and productive activities, as opposed to corrective and preventative ones, such as interventions, will enable and equip them to realise their potential, or least set them on a positive and productive pathway. Building capability through enabling and empowerment are key factors

here, as youth can eventually become independent individuals who can make the positive and empowering decisions without adult intervention (ibid).

In this approach participants make their own choice to take part in activities that can enhance their own personal strengths and abilities. They naturally gravitate to activities where their talents can be exercised and enhanced. Environments where they are able to express themselves in the context of a smaller out-of-school programme compared to the larger school environment (Gilman, Meyers, Perez, 2004). Therefore rather than focusing on fixing parent practice, identifying youth strengths and building on those assets in a structured extracurricular activity instead is an ideal way of shifting that focus.

### **Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa from an educational perspective**

Educationally, how does the YDSA influence the Pasifika learner? In theory, the YDSA proposes an overview of how to support the young learner in an educational context by promoting a feeling of enthusiasm about school whilst simultaneously “building sound learning skills [which] greatly improves their chances of doing well in other parts of their lives, especially at work” (Ministry of Youth Affairs, p18, 2002). The YDSA also endorses the fact that youth who are not getting any support from home can often find that their teachers become a surrogate supporter for them.

During school hours student interaction is predominantly with fellow students, teachers and other school staff. Outside of school hours parents, families and communities make up the balance of that potential time that can be spent with youth and whilst it is important for learners to be connected to their families and caregivers not all youth are exposed to supportive home environments. For young people, external influences like teachers, sports coaches and community workers can help shape the youth environment towards a positive youth development context. Influences can include the provision of good housing and accommodation within a stable neighbourhood, gaining access to recreational and educational opportunities and thereby avoiding environments where illegal activities may take place (ibid). The YDSA stresses the provision of safe, positive environments wherever possible for

the young person and especially where there are opportunities to develop educational capability.

### **Barriers and solutions to learning**

Research undertaken by Pasikale and Yaw (1998) identified that group-based learning is a very effective teaching and learning approach for Pasifika students. The social and oral nature of groups compares to the natural environments of the Pasifika *fonofale* (Samoan term for meeting house) or *falesā* (Samoan term for church building), meeting places that many Pasifika youth are used to and feel safe. Confidence building and self-esteem can be enhanced in these two communal environments. According to Pasikale and Yaw, their perception was that “Samoans want to work in groups because they would rather talk than write...sharing in groups helps students who are shy” (p42). This observation now seems to be a gross over exaggeration with examples now of many Samoan youth dispelling a myth given the proliferation of Samoan scholars and academics like Anae, Fairbairn-Dunlop, Salesa, Tiatia and Taule’ale’ausumai and other emerging scholars that some Pasifika youth aspire to become.

The literature review by Gorinski and Fraser (2006) of Pasifika parents and community engagement exposes schools’ lack of ownership of issues relating to why parents do not support their children at school. Some parents just feel incapable of assisting their child’s academic learning, and as a result are perceived by dominant practices and systems as having no interest in their child’s development. Gorinski and Fraser’s review presented shared perspectives from other researchers around parental confidence and self esteem. Views held by Hughes, Schumm & Vaughn, 1999; Hyslop, 2000; Kelty, 1997; Mole, 1993; Paratore, Melzi & Krol-Sinclair, 1999, as cited in Gorinski & Fraser, 2006, suggest that “cultural differences can create misconceptions that impact negatively upon the effective engagement of parents in their children's educational experience”. Comer (1991) and Kelty (1997), also cited in Gorinski and Fraser (2006), posit that low self esteem from parents stem from the parents non-achievement themselves in school with the ensuing anxiety creating “further barriers to parental involvement and participation” (p4).

Other barriers to the Pasifika student educational achievement include language, literacy, low confidence levels, and lack of willingness of teacher engagement with the parents. I have, from my own personal experience been exposed to these barriers as a young person growing up in Aotearoa New Zealand born of parents who were new migrants in the mid 1950s. Generally the reasons are wide and varied as to why parents sometimes fail to make the connection with the school and/or teachers (Gorinski & Fraser, 2006; Nakhid, 2003). In the main schools and teachers are being misled into thinking that parents just do not care about their child's education and academic achievement and there is more empirical research undertaken to help allay those views. My conversations with educationalists and researchers have exposed misconceptions and fuelled my desire to inform these debates with awareness of the issues and reasons around youth development particularly in an indigenous context.

A more recent study was conducted on successful Pasifika and Māori Private Training Establishments (PTEs) and according to Marshall, Baldwin, & Peach (2008) there were three key elements to holistic learning for the Pasifika and Māori learner. They were "Adopting the surrogate *aiga* (Samoan term for family) concept; creating a sense of belonging; and creating a sense of greater humanity" (p7). Creating an environment of *aiga* helps to promote an environment of "cultural safety and wellbeing for learners and staff" (p21) which instils a heightened sense of confidence in the learner. Creating a sense of belonging, the second strand, for Pasifika and Māori learners is vital for them to develop in an educational setting. It builds on the socialisation process previously instilled in them from their home and family. The third strand is creating a sense of greater humanity, a belief which acknowledges and values all cultures and ethnicities by valuing their indigenous identities (Marshall, et al, 2008, p21). These best practice concepts illustrate that developing the Pasifika young person goes beyond conventional youth development models because of the underpinning of their indigenous roots as strengths rather than something that has been kept in the margins. The models also help to validate the importance of their ethnicity within a main stream, dominant-culture context.

## Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa – Interventions

The YDSA endorses extracurricular activities or interventions for youth. The default approach of youth interventions should be to dispel some myths about today's youth as being the cause of their own problems. The YDSA takes the view there will be a reduction of factors that result in risk taking and in its place, promotion of protective measures. Strong interventions for young Pasifika people should stay closely linked to their social environments like healthy families, strong communities, healthy schools and supportive peers.

### Key Issues for Pasifika youth

Pacific culture, values and practices are very strong in New Zealand. However, most young Pacific people (58 percent of the total Pacific population in 1996) were born here. This means they need to develop their own identity among conflicting systems and two or more cultures. Many young Pacific people's social, spiritual, cultural and youth development activities centre around the church.

(Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2003, p40)

As mentioned earlier in the section ***New identity is formed – acculturation*** on page 13, establishing their unique Pasifika youth identity has become a meeting of two conflicting learning systems – the education system and their ethnic-specific system through their parents. Church is another traditional institution that holds a central focus for young Pasifika because of the social, spiritual, and cultural youth development activities associated with them (Tiatia, 1998; Taule'ale'ausumai, 1990). On the basis of the abovementioned therefore, issues for young Pasifika are also wide and varied and can be complex as a result of these influences. The YDSA provides some possible answers to some of the issues in the context of a Pasifika high school intervention. An example of this includes the use of appropriate teaching and learning methods for effective engagement of Pasifika students (Marshall, et al., 2008). The YDSA subscribes to the provision of culturally appropriate in-school intervention services and endorses Pasifika community-based youth interventions. Schools also have a part to play by overcoming the lack of cultural understanding of Pasifika cultures, values and upbringing by key non-Pasifika people (like educators) and additionally by providing prospects for Pasifika youth to express their creative flair (Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2002). The YDSA can and should have a pervasive impact across all Government agencies like education, health, and needs to be a key



guiding document in any discussion that relates to issues around Pasifika youth development.

### **Social Capital Model**

The YDSA also proposes that the acquisition of sound social skills is an important element to healthy development for youth. Skills like communicating effectively with others and appreciating the views, values and beliefs of others are valuable traits for young people. These attributes also equip youth with the ability to build social capital that will help identify and resolve potential conflict appropriately and peaceably, "...social and economic contexts and their related institutions and structures provide an historical and current context to life in New Zealand and shape the outcomes for young people" (ibid, p16).

Pasifika youth are not immune to issues encountered by not possessing any or all of the aforementioned skills. The Social Capital Model therefore is another approach that has relevance in this context (Broh, 2002). Broh links three theoretical approaches to help explain why school intervention activities can lead to enhanced academic achievement. The first is the Developmental model within the school. This approach posits that characteristics prevalent in activity based interventions that are external to the curriculum, like commitment, work ethic, respect of authority and persistence can all help to build skills consistent with educational values. These values in turn help students in their quest for positive achievement and accomplishment. The Pasifika programme being researched in this thesis is an example of where these elements can be acquired.

The second theoretical approach is Leading-Crowd Hypothesis which is an approach that accords athletes popularity and higher peer status. Membership to this select group has certain privileges that go along with it. Having an enhanced social status then gives them opportunities to connect with academic peers who in turn assist improved academic performance. Members of this group then have access to aspire to progress to tertiary education (Broh, 2002).

The third theoretical approach, the Social Capital Model can be exercised in activity based and extracurricular activities. Participation in such interventions provides opportunities for social interaction between participants, teachers and others, like parents and members of the community. Membership of certain social networks has distinct benefits with the most important of these being their relationship with their parents and family. “As strong as the familial ties may be, extra familial networks are thought to be an additional and important source of social capital” in adolescents (Portes, 1998, p72). Non-familial social ties create opportunities for educational achievement simply through enhanced information flow. Ties created in school based activities (interventions) are made possible through a network-analytical approach, which essentially allows a network approach to parents, teachers and other students that goes beyond the adult culture (Broh, 2002). In essence, youth have the capability to build social capital. After-school interventions extend that capability further by giving [Pasifika] youth enhanced opportunities to build in extended supportive networks (Feldman & Matjasko, 2005; Becket, 2005).

## ***Interventions***

### **What role do intervention programmes play in youth development?**

In order to provide a balanced educational experience for students, school based interventions are regarded as an important part of the school’s responsibility towards positive youth development (Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2002; Ferguson & Fraser, 2006). However that has not always been the case. In the early 1900s, there was widespread criticism from educators of school-based interventions. The consensus was that education at school needed to stay focussed on distinct academic outcomes and achievements. Interventions that did not have this focus were misconstrued as being activities based on leisure rather than education, they were thought of as being contradictory to academic attainment (Marsh and Kleitman, 2003). In the last twenty years, a growing body of research has looked at the effectiveness of school-based interventions, in particular theoretical and methodological frameworks used to impact research and policy (Darling, 2007; Fletcher, Nickerson & Wright, 2003; Davis & Farbman, 2002; Greenberg, Weissberg, O’Brien, Zins, Frederick, Resnik & Elias, 2003; Anderson-Butcher, Stetler & Midle, 2006; Vandell, Shernoff, Pierce, Bolt, Dadisman & Brown, 2005). Expressions like

academic achievement, identity awareness, social capital and challenges outside of the normal academic settings, like high school, have become common traits amongst interventions (Feldman & Matiasco, 2005).

From a practical perspective “framing after-school programs narrowly as crime prevention is unlikely to result in greater support for quality developmental programs” (Lockner & Bales, 2006, p17) and further supports the notion of deficit modelling for Pasifika young people alone is not enough. However, the findings of recent studies on the impact of positive youth development programmes, whether school based or not, are especially noteworthy and encouraging in today’s youth development climate (Mahoney, 2000; Valentine, Cooper, Bettencourt & DuBois, 2002; Wilson, Lipsey & Derzon, 2003). Programme environments provide experimentation, practice and experience that young people can later use as adults. Leadership, teambuilding and teamwork and the ability to make the right decisions are all assets that are developed in these positive youth development-learning contexts. Lockner and Bales’ (2006) study also identified that “parents and other adults serve as community guides for the developmental journey of young people” (p26) and so help to initiate youth on their development journeys in a positive context.

Societal changes, for example those brought about by global trends and the Internet, are affecting Pasifika youth and what is happening to young people is now becoming the central focus of policy discussions. The future of any nation being founded on the basis of how youth are standing up to changes brought about by the society in which they are being raised (Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2005). In 2005 the Pacific Youth Development Strategy was released with education considered one of the key drivers leading to an increase in economic development for Pasifika.

### **Sport focused school-based interventions**

School-sponsored activities also appear to provide relatively higher positive effects on academic achievement than community-school sponsored activities. Nevertheless, significant, albeit lower, correlations were found for activities in this latter group, suggesting that non-school sponsored SEAs [Structured Extracurricular Activities], e.g. hobby clubs, boy scouts, may also facilitate positive school outcomes (Gerber, 1996, p45).

School based extracurricular programmes provide participants with a leisure-focused, structured environment. Whilst youth are at school age level, after-school programmes, whether school-based or community-based, become one of the only situations where students come into contact with non-school related adults (Gerber, 2001). Different types of learning take place with these sorts of interventions as opposed to the normal school environment or the home. School based programmes have an “internalized sense of belongingness” (Gilman, et al, 2004, p33) that helps to cement school identity. They are also beneficial to at-risk students who often fail to embrace their school’s values and codes during normal school hours. Greenberg, Weissberg, Zins, Utne-O’Brien, Fredericks, Resnik & Elias (2003) criticise the short term, fragmented efforts by some schools without addressing or integrating their missions, values and beliefs into their programmes. Andersen-Butcher, Stetler & Midle (2003) endorse that by adding that missions include a commitment to the healthy development and achievement of youth. There are well-intentioned initiatives established and run, but the uncoordinated nature of them can be disruptive (Sarason, 1996 as cited in Greenberg et al., 2003). Therefore without the connection and alignment with school missions, garnishing support from school staff and administrators who may not be so forthcoming, may adversely impact the chances of success or continuation of any such initiative.

Other recent studies have looked at the partnership between schools and communities that had the intention of creating relationships between schools and youth development organisations (Andersen-Butcher et al, 2006). They acknowledged the need to have social workers based in schools to facilitate communication, coordination and collaboration between different agencies as part of the process. The design of these relationships and the potential roles coming out of them, for example promoting leadership development by recognising potential leadership, is a vital element. Today’s attractions and influences on our youth, such as financial and family circumstances, and the appeal to them of things like drinking and use of drugs, run the risk of hindering emotional, behavioural and social development, “multi-faceted school and community partnerships. Therefore, strategic school social work facilitation has never been more needed, and they are absolutely critical for fostering student achievement and overall school success” (p162).

Structured activity-based relationships like those in sport contribute significantly to youth identity development as compared to the emotion-based relationships between student/parents or even their own friends and peers (Darling, 2005); "...participation in school-based extracurricular activities may provide a context in which adolescents interact with peers on a regular basis while focusing on skill development and shared interests and thus provide a respite, or even cathartic release from other concerns" (p494). A part of that identification process includes student connection with their school simply through membership of the school community (Valentine, Cooper, Bettencourt, and DuBois, 2002, p248). There are advocates of the notion that participation in group sport interventions promotes a socialisation context and by mixing with other more academically inclined peers, can have a positive impact on educational achievement and motivation (Davalos, Chaves & Guardiola, 1999). Other positive spin offs, in this context, include respect for others and those in authority, affirmation of the rules and identifying their own values and beliefs around competition (McGee, Williams, Howden-Chapman, Martin & Kawachi, 2006).

For some minority high school students and depending on the location of the school, sport based interventions had a significant correlation to lower rates of drop-outs (Melnick & Sabo, 1992; McNeal, 1995). On the other hand there was no relationship to educational expectations (Melnick & Sabo, 1992).

Students with low academic ability, from lower social classes, and from racial-ethnic minority groups typically have increased chances of dropping out (McNeall, 1995, p62).

So what factors contribute to high school dropout rates? McNeall (1995), and Melnick & Sabo (1992), postulated that interventions that focused on physical activities and fine arts for example, compared to those involved in academic or vocational programmes, had lower dropout rates. McNeall (1995) also clearly posits that the school plays a significant role in influencing a student's chances of staying at school. Research has shown that sport related after-school interventions emphasise positive learning experiences like confidence building, self esteem and leadership development, but there are also negative impacts. Learning how to control anger on the one hand is entirely relevant, but to experience negative peer pressure and at times adult supervision and control is sometimes inevitable, and unfortunately

sometimes not appropriate (Hansen, Larson & Dworkin, 2003). The need for that control or adult coercion is possibly because of the heightened state of mind during competition at times of physical stress that can cause tension from which anger can sometimes result (ibid). Add to that the key relationship between actual participation and developing the trust in others in order for them to learn especially when trying to teach youth how to compete is challenging for some practitioners.

Other studies on sports related interventions have also revealed the element of increased “predicted positive educational and occupational outcomes and lower levels of social isolation but also higher rates of drinking” (Barber, Eccles and Stone, 2001, p429). Improvement in some key areas can be at the expense of adverse reactions in others. Is potential alcoholism from binge drinking justified if academic success is the prize at the end? There continues to be disparate views on whether participation in sports focused interventions impacts on academic outcomes. In a high school setting sports, like other intramural activities like cheerleading or music for example, needs to be tested and further researched in order to make conclusive deductions about any positive effects (Broh, 2002).

### **Other relevant interventions**

Gilman, Meyers & Perez (2004), hypothesise that youth participation in Structured Extracurricular Activities (SEAs) influences self-concept and academic achievement. They examined youth participation in SEAs from the perspective of Ecological Systems Theory explained earlier in the section, *Ecological Systems Theory* on page 16 and maintain that involvement provides opportunities for group collaboration and support from relevant adults. SEAs give youth a chance for group identification, which suits Pasifika learners, and they can get exposure to supportive social networks and at the same time enhance their chances of connecting with their school identity. Positively planned and ordered extracurricular youth activities can initiate young people into useful social networks that may immitate school and society based values (Gilman, et al., 2004). They also allow for the growth of interpersonal skills.

Another very strong message coming through from youth is that they are already heavily bombarded by warnings about illegal use of illicit drugs, teenage pregnancy, and dropping out of high school. Effective character education programmes need to have a positive, affirming and encouraging approach. Even the very act of developing character strengths fosters self-belief in the participants and from that belief, purpose and direction is developed. As youth examine what elements constitute character strengths, a confidence is instilled and they can then choose to develop these strengths willingly resulting in them shaping their own lives. Character education and community services interventions initiate positive youth development promoting within youth a sense of moral identity (Damon, 2004).

### ***Caring Adults***

Apart from the acquisition of the young person's basic physical competencies, social skills and behaviours, and to some extent improvement in academic development, researchers are now discovering the need to focus on another key element - relationships. Bailey (2006) recognises the importance of the development of key relationships between youth and adults who organise sport. Those who organise, coach, mentor and manage youth participants enhance opportunities for positive self-esteem through sport by using positive affirmation, encouragement and support (Bailey, 2006). Yet other studies around adult supervision highlight the important contribution of parental participation from a supportive and pressured upbringing. Hoyle and Leff (1997) observed that parents played a substantial role in their child's enjoyment in participating and consequently enhanced opportunities for positive youth development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998).

By and large, interventions where positive relationships can be fostered and development can and does occur are still not being accessed by more youth (Saito, 2006). Saito cites reasons for non-participation in youth programmes includes lack of knowledge of what is available, lowered motivational levels as youth mature and the inability of youth serving organisations to identify which youth programmes are likely to be successful.

This includes Pasifika learners who also need to feel comfortable separating themselves from traditional connections of church and sometimes parents, in order to be successful in further academic study (Tiatia, 1998). Adults are key stakeholders in this relationship and need to work together, in partnership with young people to cultivate such diverse youth communities (Saito, 2006).

Resources are being made available to guide parents around the holistic approach to sport by illuminating them on the essentials of youth sport participation. Fine, Sachs, Baron and Lois (1999) point out that apart from sport itself, political and psychological factors are other positive benefits arising from sport participation. By making parents more aware and informed can result in their child having every chance of raising their level of confidence, self-esteem, enhanced academic achievement and success. Their overall sport experience can be a positive one. Further studies on parents look at not only support for their children but also at developing their child's ability to make their own choices. Mothers in particular are not only interested in their child's sporting pursuits and accomplishments but also on autonomy support of their child's ability to make decisions (Cassidy and Conroy, 2006).

In a study of the relationship between the teacher and Pasifika and Māori learners, Hawk, Cowley, Hill & Sutherland (2002), found evidence that the type of person (teacher) was significant in establishing a positive relationship. Their values and beliefs, attitude and skills all helped add to the formation of the relationship that would help the students learn. Mutual respect was also found to be a valued aspect to building effective relationships. It was not a matter of the teacher being liked but that they were able to help them to learn and develop. In fact nice people did not always gain the respect of their charges (Hawk et al, 2002). According to current literature (Marshall, Baldwin, Peach, 2008), tutors are perceived as playing a pivotal role in influencing the attitudes and efforts of learners. Tutors can do this by helping learners set goals and support them in achieving them. The commonly mentioned characteristics that made for a successful tutor mentioned by PTEs (Private Training Establishments) in this study were flexibility, commitment, passion for teaching and focus on the learners.



## Role of the parent

Parent influence is a forerunner to youth participation in youth development interventions. Janoski and Wilson (1995), as cited in McGee et al. (2006) add that the chances of higher levels of youth participation is enhanced when both parents choose to involve themselves in out of school activities. McGee et al. (2006) acknowledge this to be the case when participation is being initiated, however sustaining involvement and participation past that point is not so successful. More research, they say, is needed therefore around other areas of parental influences and involvement. Kerpelman (2004) maintains that parents are the socialisation agents for their children. The combined problem prevention and youth development approach gives another vital perspective on parent education programmes in particular ones that assist parents in terms of being realistic about what the programme can offer. They should also consider what motivates them to learn and engage more with other youth and adults who are associated with the programme.

From a Pasifika perspective, the most vital element to parent and community engagement is the relationship connection required between all stakeholders (Gorinski & Fraser, 2006). Added to this network of connections is the church that has traditionally played a vital role in the development of Pasifika youth, their parents and the wider Pasifika community (Ferguson, et al. 2008). Borden, Perkins, Villarruel, Carleton-Hug, Stone & Keith, (2006) offer key reasons in Latino youth for non-participation of youth in after-school programmes. They made special mention of personal obligations at home and schoolwork. The need to undertake their own study at home, or work related commitments, and even home responsibilities like chores or babysitting, church activities (especially for Pasifika learners) all take priority (Ferguson, et al, 2008); Gorinski & Fraser, 2006). This particular issue offers a clearer understanding of the daily lives of these young people and suggests that addressing issues, such as family responsibilities, may be essential for increasing participation. Borden, et al. (2006) also pointed out the barriers for indigenous youth participation due to financial constraints like programme and transportation costs, or perhaps language constraints or even for reasons sometimes as simple as not knowing the organisers of the intervention was a barrier.

Socioeconomic factors have been identified as being a significant determinant in terms of participation. For some students from disadvantaged backgrounds, access to interventions or extracurricular activities because they simply cannot afford the cost of enrolling in such programmes. However, youth who fall in this category can still involve themselves more in unstructured activities. Activities like hanging out with friends and watching television, not necessarily harmful activities in themselves but when compared to purposeful, structured, adult supervised interventions any opportunity to learn is minimised (McHale, Crouter & Tucker, 2005; McGee et al. 2006). Many Pasifika learners and their families are from low socioeconomic backgrounds and have limited access to interventions that require funding. This has led to extracurricular activities better suited for the Pasifika learner being a double edged penalty in that they under achieve in the school classroom and do not have access to interventions that can help them (Brown, Devine, Leslie, Paiti, Sila'ila'i, Umaki, et al., 2008).

For students to be supported, parents need to be informed in order to respond positively and appropriately to the demands of their children (Kerpelmen, 2004). Informing parents can be done by introducing them to practitioners in the community who have the ability to address youth problems and what is available to assist them in terms of non-school interventions (Damon, 2004). According to Kerpelman (2004) youth development is complex because of how youth traits interrelate within their various contexts. Conversely Pasifika parents born in a Pacific island can, for a raft of reasons, choose not to be informed for fear of losing face, or due to not having a sufficient command of English to comprehend or relate to those contexts (Ferguson, et al., 2008). Eliciting parent involvement is vital. Significantly youth have often been found to be involved in activities, like sports or church groups, that their parents participated in when they themselves were young (Marczak, Dworkin, Skuza & Beyer, 2006). Pasifika youth get exposed early to activities by their parents in their specific cultural contexts, like church related or sport activities however that does not guarantee continued involvement in those areas of interest (Macpherson, 2002).

Parents also like to have the final say about what activities their children involve themselves in and about the length of time spent in after school activities (Marczak et al, 2006). In fact in terms of sport participation parental support seems to clarify

the association that exists between performance and enjoyment. If parents are involved it increases the possibility of better performance and enhances the young person's enjoyment of out of school activities (Hoyle and Leff, 1997). The support of parents increases that enjoyment because of the relationship between self-esteem and that of parental support itself. In pursuit of excellence however parental support and pressure can sometimes cause tension and may even lead to disgruntlement if this tension is not identified early and managed adequately by the parent (Hoyle and Leff, 1997, p234). Conversely, the view of some parents is not necessarily focused on the quality of the intervention. Some of them felt as long as their children are doing well at school academically, and are not displaying behavioural attitudes and problems and so long as they have an association with 'good friends', participation in interventions is not justified. These parents found that after school interventions were simply another activity that occupies their children during their non-school hours (Marzak et al., 2006, p49). As a result parents believe there is no urgency to advocate for structured after-school programmes if the abovementioned criteria are met.

In the case where youth desired to participate in after school programmes parents wanted to know that their children were participating in programmes that were being run and supervised by responsible adults. Keeping their children out of trouble due to boredom is often a strong enough reason for parents. Out-of-school-hours programmes also offer more opportunities for youth to develop social skills, a place where youth can actually relax with friends, where there is down-time and where the chance of getting into trouble is lessened so long as there was adult supervision (ibid).

### **Key trends and the role of key players**

There is already a significant body of research claiming the positive benefits of quality programmes for youth and how they impact the lives of those who participate in them (Broh, 2002; Cassidy & Conroy, 2006; Catalano, Hawkins, Berglund, Pollard, J & Arthur, 2002; Darling, 2005; Davalos, Chaves, & Guardiola, 1999). Research reports improvement in attitudes towards school, grades, attendance and higher career ambitions and post-high school education aspirations. There are also reports

that youth, who participate in quality, well structured programmes are more likely to have a trusting relationship with their parents. They have also been found to be more stable in other relationships. Studies have also argued that youth improve their chances of gaining meaningful employment and find themselves being actively involved in community events and activities that they ordinarily would not associate with. In general this may result in youth having a more positive outlook and are enjoying life more (Lochner & Bales, 2006).

Attention needs to be drawn towards the significance that quality positive youth developmental programmes can make in terms of the larger public benefits that result if youth engage in these types of programmes. Just as importantly however the question of how programmes, good quality or bad, can either support or hinder youth development and that policy makers need to undertake the vital work of public and community education about these interventions (Aubrun, Grady & Bales, 2005). Youth development strategies need to be instrumental in guiding policy and community education and especially so with targeted groups like Pasifika youth.

Eccles and Gootman's (2002) research further endorses community, out-of-school programmes because they present a broader range of opportunities to build and develop personal and social assets on a positive developmental platform. They propose that caring adults are an important ingredient along with youth peers who are inspired by their goals and who can influence the aims for other youth engaged in out-of-school programmes. Similarly such programmes can help address identity awareness issues around culture, sexuality and relationships. They can also provide opportunities to experience community involvement, the intention of that being to take those experiences through to adulthood. No programme will suit all youth so flexibility and diversity of after-school programmes is required.

## Chapter 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

...reclaiming a voice in this context has also been about reclaiming, reconnecting and reordering those ways of knowing which were submerged, hidden or driven underground (Smith, 1999, p69).

### ***Decolonizing Methodologies***

This chapter opens with views from Linda Tuhiwai Smith's *Decolonizing Methodologies: Indigenous Research* (1999), and in particular how indigenous methods are now becoming valued and academically accepted in scholarly circles. Smith's seminal book has become an integral text for modelling indigenous research that in turn helps to lay a foundation for other emerging research methodologies. The significant differences between Westernised and indigenous approaches, promotes an awareness of the benefits and indeed ownership of research not only to the researcher but also the participants, their families and their communities. This insight proved a significant attraction to me in my decision to employ an indigenous research methodological approach.

Reading Smith's book helped affirm and rationalise my perception of how valuable and insightful the use of a Pasifika research model can be. Smith's (1999) research also stirred me because Māori language and philosophy is embedded in my own upbringing in the Waikato, a province in the central region of New Zealand's North Island.

In this chapter some Pasifika research methodologies are briefly examined to illustrate the growth in emerging Pasifika researchers and the growing body of Pasifika research as a result. The chapter concludes with a look at the Kakala, the Pasifika research framework chosen for the thesis. That approach weaves together the elements of the research, the participants and communities and the values that bind them.

The decision to use a Pasifika research methodology began in the twenty four months prior to commencing the thesis. During that time I identified and began to refine my worldview. Questions about my own identity and my connectedness with

family and community became clear as I began to build on my own research experience. The Pasifika research approach also allowed my experiences as a Samoan, born and raised in New Zealand, to take on new significance because of the knowledge of who I was in the adopted homeland of my parents. One of the courses I enrolled in was *Community Research Methodologies: An Indigenous Perspective* paper. This course was an important breakthrough for me in terms of the different approaches to researching Pasifika participants and communities.

### ***Indigenous research***

Methodology is important because it frames the questions being asked, determines the set of instruments and methods to be employed and shapes analysis. Within an indigenous framework, methodological debates are ones concerned with the broader policies and strategic goals of indigenous research. It is at this level that researchers have to clarify and justify their intentions (Smith, 1999, p143).

Linda Tuhiwai Smith's seminal writing, *Decolonizing Methodologies* (1999), conceptualises indigenous research approaches for Māori and promotes dialogue around reasons why Pasifika, and other indigenous research approaches are needed to promote a balanced view from what has traditionally been a colonial, Westernised model of research. From her view, decolonisation offers a stance based on indigenous peoples as opposed to positions held by research approaches from the United States or the United Kingdom for example.

Smith's primary focus empowers and returns power of the indigenous researchers and scholars to themselves. The researchers bring knowledge, experience, insight and stories from their own marginalised communities and upbringing. That view helps to decolonise Western theory and identify, create and develop indigenous research, epistemologies and methodologies. This approach helps to liberate indigenous scholars from Western research and epistemological practices and the return of ownership of their own knowledge, experiences and practices. Control over indigenous 'knowing and being' is being reclaimed and power restored to a growing body of knowledge by an emerging group of indigenous scholars. This approach allows indigenous communities to articulate their own valued and valid expressions of who they are and what is significant to them and their worldviews.

Smith calls for a decolonisation of current methodologies as she challenges traditional Western research approaches by critiquing dominant society practices. Linda Tuhiwai Smith is Māori and her views are expressed both from an indigenous and 'colonized' perspective. On the one hand Smith critically examines the idealistic notions of post-colonialism and Western research conditions whilst on the other she values and credits research undertaken by indigenous researchers for the benefit and on behalf of themselves and their communities.

### ***Pasifika Research Methodologies***

Pasifika research and methodologies based on Pasifika values and belief systems are now being acknowledged and interwoven with Western research approaches. These indigenous research approaches identify Pasifika values and worldviews that are relevant to Pasifika societies (Anae, Coxon, Mara, Wendt-Samu & Finau, 2001). Pasifika research must raise the level of understanding and awareness of the problems faced by Pasifika and offer opportunities for them to develop holistic resolutions to those issues. Values, beliefs and aspirations need also to be at the core of Pasifika research so that attitudes of non-Pasifika societies can be transformed from the academic single-minded approaches of westernised research and education paradigms (Smith, 1998). Apart from being academically robust and sound, Pasifika research also requires a strong element of practicality for it to be of merit in a Pasifika community environment. The participants and their communities being researched must be made to feel empowered and enriched through the research process with the research itself responding to evolving and dynamic Pasifika contexts (Taufe'ulungaki, 2000 cited in Anae, et al., 2001, p9).

Consultation is an important aspect for the Pasifika researcher and their Pasifika participants and communities. Dialogue assists the establishment of a strong research engagement between the two entities. Two-way, collaborative dialogue builds trust between the Pasifika researcher and Pasifika communities and participants. Historically this has not been the case because Westernised research approaches have dominated academic thought and as a consequence a sense of mistrust has occurred due to the lack of clarity of research purpose, design and ownership. The Pasifika Education Research Guidelines (Anae, Coxon, Mara,

Wendt-Samu & Finau, 2001) supports the idea that consultation, therefore, is essential in helping to create such research partnerships. “If research is to make meaningful contributions to Pacific societies, then its primary purpose is to reclaim Pacific knowledge and values for Pacific peoples” (p8). What follows is a look at examples of Pasifika research models.

### Mea’alofa

A mea’alofa is a Samoan term for *a gift that is handed over*. Pasifika researchers in the field of counselling have adopted the term and concept. From a research perspective key features of the Mea’alofa focus on the purpose and usefulness of Samoan protocols and how they are incorporated purposefully and visibly in the area of counselling in New Zealand. A vital element of the processes of the *Mea’alofa* research approach is the handing over stage. This handover provides continuity when passed from generation to generation, and it is of benefit to both present and future generations (Webber-Dreadon, 1999). The *Mea’alofa* is not limited to passing between generations but also between cultures. The *Mea’alofa* is not to be kept by any individual but is to be shared and passed on. Anae, et al., (2001) expresses this Samoan worldview to be of intergenerational continuation over time and space. The *Mea’alofa* is not complete until it is handed over to the intended recipient.

### Lalaga

The *Lalaga* model is another Samoan approach used in a social work practice framework (Mulitalo-Lauta, 2000). Quite simply the term *Lalaga* translates to the weaving of a fine artefact or item of value like a fine ornamental mat for example. When used in Pasifika research, *Lalaga* describes the process of collection (of data), analysis and presentation. *Lalaga* connects Westernised social work methods with Samoan understanding and how these synergies can benefit people from Samoa. If taking our example of the weaving of a fine mat the process for its manufacture is very much an ordered one, much the same as it would be for indigenous research. Both processes involve careful selection of material, followed by the next steps of collection, preparation, integration and presentation. A fine mat is a good example of how when the artefact has been produced it is returned to the participants and



community. It is not owned by the maker, or researcher, but is instead the valued property of the person who receives it, the participants and their community associations.

### **Tivaevae**

The third Pasifika research approach is the *Tivaevae* research model (Maua-Hodges, 2003). Like the *Lalaga*, *Tivaevae* is another approach based on the weaving of materials into objects of great value and significance and symbolic importance. The *Tivaevae* is a Cook Islands concept that provides a framework modelled on the processes involved in making a patchwork quilt. Maua-Hodges (ibid) used this framework for a project involving a diverse collection of Pasifika researchers. The researchers themselves monitored the quality of the research or patchwork closely. This accountability element was important to the researchers because both individually and collectively they wanted to produce and present a quality *Tivaevae*. Each of the researchers was given a specific task to perform with some of them working with individuals, whilst others with groups and others still with a combination of both categories.

### **Talanoa**

Vaiotele (2006) uses the *Talanoa* as a lens from the Pasifika nation of Tonga. He challenges the appropriateness of Western research methodologies and argues that *Talanoa* speaks of the interaction, flexibility, tolerance, and acceptance of Pasifika knowledges to facilitate more effective and meaningful research engagement. *Talanoa* theorises the use of other Pasifika (indigenous) research approaches and how they can be used legitimately as metaphors for researching matters concerning Pasifika. The term *Talanoa* means conversation or dialogue where ideas, thinking and knowledge is exchanged and where the talk is informal so that stories can be told and experiences shared. The research process must therefore be an experience where the researcher is entirely and wholly an integral part of the process rather than purely observatory and removed. “*Talanoa*, then, is subjective, mostly oral and collaborative, and is resistant to rigid institutional hegemonic control” (p16).

The uniqueness and commonalities between the examples of Pasifika research approaches, like the weaving and giving back to the communities, has shown how vital it is for Pasifika researchers to embrace their own valued, distinctive experiences and knowledge. This has been a paradigm shift for me as a researcher and from it I have felt liberated by my own experiences and identity of who I am and how I am connected to my family, forebears and communities. To that end another Pasifika approach to research and one that I have chosen to adopt for the thesis is the *Kakala* (Thaman, 1993).

### ***Kakala methodology***

Cultural safety and avoidance of misinterpretation aided the decision on which research approach to use for this project. My own worldview journey needed a new, culturally and ethnically accepted indigenous methodology where cultural respect was observed and made explicit from the outset. Using this type of research approach, as opposed to a Westernised view, that would facilitate understanding of what was meaningful and significant to me, and logical from my own eyes became increasingly important. I learned too that the use of an indigenous research approach gave me power and control over research on Pasifika issues (Bishop & Glynn 1999).

Whilst my heritage is predominantly Samoan, I also have links to Tonga through my mother and for that reason chose to adopt a Tongan research approach. In the early stages of my Masters degree, the *kakala* resonated with me and today it continues to hold great appeal. During that early stage I was reshaping my indigenous identity and philosophy and warmed to the notion of *kakala*. At that time of my worldview journey I felt that the richness, beauty and value of using the garland as a metaphor, was a respectful and measured way of esteeming the participants identities, their families and communities. *Kakala* therefore, seemed the most appropriate research framework than perhaps other approaches like the Tongan *talanoa*, or Samoan *mea'alofa* or *lalaga*. However in my view, it should also be possible to infuse elements of perhaps the *mea'alofa* like the generational passing down, as part of the *kakala's luva* stage or 'handing over of the gift'.

*Kakala* describes both a garland and the process of making it and as far as research is concerned can be defined as a legitimate Pasifika research model. Thaman posits that each of the steps involved in assembling the garland are comparable to those of the research process (Thaman, 1993). The *Kakala* is based on the nation of Tonga's context of the making of a special garland but it also refers to the aromatic flowers used in its production (Koloto, Katoanga & Tatila, 2006). The *Kakala* has been chosen not only because it embodies the key essential elements of other Pasifika research methods, but also because of the connotations of beauty, value, ownership and giving back to the participants and their communities. A garland has to be worn and is visible to all, therefore research that is done using the *Kakala*, is research that is used by and is visible to its recipients and users.

Each of the Pasifika research approaches stated so far all have their own set of protocols. For example the people from the nation of Samoa recognise the distance that is appropriate and required between that of a man and a woman that is referred to as *va*, or the *fa'aaloalo* or respect and politeness needed to be observed between them. Tongan protocols include concepts like *faka'apa'apa* or respect, humility and consideration; or *'ofa fe'unga* a term used to describe love or empathy that is appropriate for any given situation. These and other protocols form the philosophical foundations that should be in place so Pasifika indigenous research can effectively and appropriately take place. What are the components and stages that comprise the *Kakala* process?

*kakala* is Tongan for the fragrant flowers and leaves weaved together in special ways, according to the need of the occasion it is woven for...In most Pacific cultures, there is a special mythology and etiquette associated with *kakala*. The making of *kakala* (*tui kakala*) involves three different processes; *toli*, *tui*, and *luva* (Vaiotei, 2006, p25).

In 2006 the *Kakala* research framework was enhanced by 'Ana Taufe'ulungaki and Seu'ula Johansson Fua after taking guidance from Konai Thaman and making reference to the "seminal work of Linita Manua'atu" (Sanga & Thaman, 2011, p202). As a consequence the *Kakala* research framework transformed from a three to six level approach. Teu, Malie and Mafana to the original Toli, Tui and Luva phases helped enhance the research process. Manu'atu's mafana and malie elements in

particular have added an evaluative and monitoring component to the *Kakala* process (Manu'atu, 2001). Thaman refers to “two additional ‘steps’ (*teu* and *mafana/malie*)” and referenced these steps in a research study in Tonga known as Sustainable Livelihood and Education Project (SLEP) (Thaman, 2009, p5). The *Teu* is at the beginning of the *Kakala* process whilst *Malie* and *Mafana* present themselves after the *Toli*, *Tui* and *Luva*.

### Teu – Conceptualisation

Before the weaving phase begins the purpose and reason for the *Kakala* and how the research is to be shaped in a Pasifika, or in this case Tongan context must be addressed. *Teu* is influenced by philosophies, perceptions, beliefs and assumptions about the project. For this research project the *Teu* conceptualises the problem of non-achievement for Pasifika youth and is an important precursor before progressing to the next phase.

### Toli – Data Collection

*Toli* is the process of selecting the flowers and leaves to be used to make the *Kakala*. Once collected, the flowers are graded according to their level of cultural significance, the purpose of the occasion and the expected recipient of the *Kakala*. In the research environment, this part of the process involves the research question, the participants, the context within which the research is to be undertaken and the community that will benefit from the research. With reference to the research for the thesis it also includes the collection of data through the use of a literature review, focus group interviews (and questions) and statistical information about the participants from the school. These elements were woven together in the making of the *Kakala*. The research was conducted using the AUT University's Library's relevant electronic databases with other forms of literature sourced from various government departments and ministries (Education, Pacific Island Affairs, Social Welfare, and Youth Affairs) and thesis publications from other New Zealand and international universities.

Whilst the programme itself was not new to the school and Team Management, the 2009 participants were not aware of it until the introduction of the project in April 2009. The participants in the first focus group comprised the eight participants, the Programme Coordinator and the researcher who facilitated the focus groups.

In preparing for the research I found face-to-face interaction to be the most effective form of qualitative interview for the Pasifika participants (Anae, et al, 2001). Generally they prefer to build a relationship with the interviewer and become familiar with the process and the topic being researched. Focus group interviews also allow clarification of language used (verbal, non-verbal, ethnic specific) and immediate resolutions to issues surrounding the interview process. Focus groups as opposed to one on one interviews, can therefore provide a platform necessary for Pasifika youth to make comparisons of their own individual experiences within the group format. In fact it is within these group contexts that they are able to express themselves more openly as Tamasese, Peteru, Waldegrave and Bush (2005) discovered in their research on culturally appropriate services in the mental health sector.

Hair, Babin, Money and Samouel (2003) describe the focus group as being a semi-structured interview that employs a qualitative research methodology. They are structured in the sense that the facilitator has a list of questions or topics to present but on the other hand unstructured because participants are prompted by leading questions. The focus groups were very appropriate for the cohort of participants being researched and served as an appropriate vehicle for *Talanoa* and the weaving of experiences shared by everyone involved in the research process.

The Consent Form used to gain approval is attached; refer to Appendix 3 Participant Consent Form on page 103. Participants were also informed that once transcripts were transcribed they were welcome to receive of a copy on request. Interactions with the Programme Coordinator and members of the Advisory Group helped to form focus group questions and served as a reminder of the key priorities of the programme.

Lawrence and Berger (1999) offer a list of some characteristics that helped to identify what to look for in terms of a focus group facilitator. They include someone who has excellent communicative abilities with exemplary listening skills, and is personable, attentive and organised. In general effectively run focus groups are those where the facilitator says as little as possible. Facilitators can delve deeper into responses by asking probing questions (Hair et al, 2003).

With Pasifika youth the focus group facilitator needs to be directive and yet flexible (Koloto et al, 2006). The focus group facilitator should also have the ability to build a rapport with the participants. That was done through strategies like the use of youth terminology and colloquialisms at appropriate times, greeting and fare-welling them in the Samoan or Tongan language, the use of sport specific terminology, for example “doing the hard yards” and using appropriate levels of humour at appropriate times. Building this rapport is important to the research process because it improves the chances of having open, two-way discussions and receiving good feedback from the participants (Anae, Coxon, Mara, Wendt-Samu, and Finau, 2001).

Food was integral to each focus group and like most nations of the Pacific, the provision and communal consumption of food is an important gesture of respect and is seen as a gift of value by the host (Anae, et al, 2001). A spiritual blessing over the meal was deemed appropriate particularly as Christianity is prevalent and widely accepted amongst most Pasifika communities.

None of the participants felt challenged or intimidated by a perceived threat of coercion from the researcher. Protection of identity and confidentiality of the participants was therefore monitored by an Advisory Group to avoid this happening. The Advisory Group comprised external membership by way of the researcher’s academic supervisor, the Programme Coordinator and an external Pasifika educator. Whilst an Advisory Group was not a part of the *Kakala* research model it was deemed necessary as a monitoring mechanism to ensure participants felt comfortable and safe within a controlled research environment.

When I introduced myself as the researcher I also spoke about my ethnicity, family connections and involvement I have had with the local Pasifika community. These experiences were again a part of the *Kakala* and helped to cement myself as more than just an interested observer. I informed them of my community youth service experience working with youth similar to them. That included explaining to them how involving and relating to parents and other youth serving adults in the community also helped build my capacity towards developing youth in their own environments. My experiences helped the participants relate to who I was and to become aware of what my goals were in terms of advancing youth development particularly with Pasifika and Māori youth. I explained the purpose of the research project and the significance that their participation and stories would have on the continuation of the intervention and the benefits to other similar cohorts and indeed the wider Pasifika community.

Participant and Parent Information Sheets and Consent Forms were research tools used prior to commencement of the first focus group. The Information Sheets outlined the research question, the purpose of the focus group, the contact details for both the researcher and the researcher's academic supervisor and an out clause for the participants should they choose to opt out of the project at any time during the research period. All of the participants and their parents agreed on their participation in the research project.

Attendance records and pass / fail results were made available by the school. Consent forms from the participants were also used to capture the required approval for that information to be obtained from the school.

Following two successful focus group interviews, the analysis of the narrative data included identifying and coding key patterns and themes. A member of the Trust that organised the intervention together with a nominated reader conducted a preliminary reading of the interview transcripts. The Trust member was not the Programme Facilitator. Following the coding exercise the qualitative data was reviewed again by the reader and the same member of the Trust. That involved reviewing the transcripts and dialogue looking for points of commonality and difference between participants and the literature.

## Tui – Data Analysis

The *Tui* is the weaving phase of the *Kakala*. Once the materials or key elements of the garland are selected, sorted, grouped and arranged according to cultural importance, weaving can then take place. The character and intricacy of any *Kakala* will determine the time needed to make it. The visual impact of the *Kakala* reflects the dexterity and skill of its maker in terms of the quantities and types of flowers and leaves and depending on the purpose of its use. Only those who are skilled are capable of making the most eye-pleasing *Kakala*. The weaving of Pasifika knowledge, stories, experiences and spirit are all intertwined in the *Kakala*. Authenticity is dependant also on the type of information gathered and its relevance to the research and awareness of how this information is presented as research. In that respect, skill in cultural and technical aspects of research is important at this point

Prior to the focus group discussion each participant was given an information sheet (refer to Appendix 4 Participant Information Sheet on page 104). Permission to use a digital recorder to record the interviews was granted by the participants. Note taking was done to help confirm the integrity of the data collection and noting any non-verbal cues. Analysis of the data obtained from the audio recordings was conducted using Microsoft Word which according to Anae, et al., (2001) is entirely appropriate for this level of discussion and in the context of this research project. Part of that analysis involved coding of the transcripts to identify any common threads emerging with the intention of developing groupings to provide the final results much like the grouping together of the various elements that would go into making the *Kakala* (Koloto, Katoanga and Tatila, 2006). All participants were guaranteed anonymity and advised that codes will be used in the transcripts in place of their names. Refer to Appendix 5 (on page 106) and Appendix 6 (on page 108) for research questions for both focus group sessions.

The Trust's intended outcomes of the programme were student retention, and academic achievement. Both aspects are quantifiable and relatively easy to measure using statistical baseline data obtained from the school. The programme also delivers life-skills workshops aimed at teaching the athletes about expectations once they leave school and how to prepare themselves for that time. Examples of



life skills themes included self esteem, goal setting and academic achievement. There is also a pastoral care element to the programme as well although the benefit of pastoral care is difficult to measure given the limited scope of the research project and the complexities of pastoral care.

### **Luva - Presentation**

The third and final element of the *Kakala* is *Luva*. This stage simply represents the presentation of the *Kakala* to the intended recipients or wearers, in this case the Pasifika community, the participants and the academic community. The Trust and host school are accorded respect and honour by the giving and receiving of a valued and esteemed artefact. With respect to a Pasifika research approach *Luva* relates to how the research is returned to the participants and communities that actually own it.

Vaiotele argues that the *Luva* is similar to the metaphor of *koha* (gift) in Kaupapa Māori Research. Following the symbolic acceptance of *koha* a commitment to accountability and a continuing relationship between the giver and the receiver is established. This idea is also common to other Pasifika research methods like *Mea'alofa*.

The results of this research will ultimately be made public in the form of a bound thesis. The thesis is the final document to be submitted to the AUT University in 2011. A summary report will also be produced for the participants and stakeholders. For the purpose of the *Kakala* a commitment was made to the participants that they would each be given a copy of the summary report. They were also invited to the presentation of the findings as well. Few participants took up both options, whilst most preferred to do neither. To complete this step of the *Kakala* process the summary report will be given to the Advisory group with invitations extended to members of the Trust, the high school and the participants.

### **Malie – Relevancy and worthwhileness**

The research was provocative and relevant to the programme. As a result of the research, questions were raised around the continuation of the programme in its

current form and what, if any, changes were needed to sustain it as a worthwhile intervention. The programme also received funding so from the outset research was very welcomed by the Trust as a means to justify its continuity. Ultimately the effectiveness of the programme is essential to the purpose of the research with youth development, through academic achievement, for Pasifika high students at the core.

### **Mafana - Application, transformation and sustainability**

According to Johansson Fua, as cited in Sanga & Thaman (2009), *malie* and *mafana* represents an internal evaluation and monitoring of the process through the lens of the “insider, with their experience, wisdom and criticism” (p205). This view differs from the conventional Western mindset where outsiders conduct evaluation often at the end of the project and with the view that insiders are unable to give objective, critical, evaluative skills to “form appropriate judgement on the work” (p205). This shift from objectivity to subjectivity allows the knowledge holder the context for them to exercise their ability to be reflective, judgemental and to be creative within their own context. During the initial discussions with the Trust there was agreement that the research would be a useful tool to help inform areas of both strength and areas of improvement of the programme. The Trust welcomed the opportunity for constructive criticism in terms of the effectiveness of the programme. Asking critical questions of the participants and using those conversations to build confidence and capability and sustainability of the programme proved valuable to the members of the Trust. In essence if *Malie*, or relevancy, of the research assists the programme’s viability and worth, then *Mafana*, or sustainability of the programme through review and evaluation as a result of this research was viewed as a favourable outcome.

With respect to the protection of the researcher, the participants and any organisations involved with any research project, it is important that ethics approval is sought and granted prior to any engagement with any research community. The AUT University Ethics Committee granted ethics consideration and subsequent approval of this Pasifika research project. Ethics committees are especially careful to preserve the safety and wellbeing of Pasifika participants’, families and communities. Anae, et al., (2001) claim that confidentiality should not be compromised for the sake of the research process and expediency. Pasifika are

particularly guarded of their reputation and standing in the Pasifika community so it is critical that appropriate time and space is observed and practiced by the researcher. Refer to Appendix 7 Ethics Approval on page 110

This chapter attempts to articulate the impact of research approaches appropriate to the relationship between the Pasifika researcher, the Pasifika participant, and stakeholders that influence those links. From theorising concepts of indigenous perspectives it became evident that emerging approaches are paving the way for the acceptance of Pasifika voices. I have discovered throughout this research journey that this approach is not natural in the sense that I was used to the Westernised research methodological approach due to lack of exposure to indigenous approaches. The Kakala has instead helped to lay a refreshing, liberating platform for the research findings in the next chapter where respect of the Pasifika young person is paramount.

Pasifika peoples live, love and learn 'in community'. We value the support of our immediate and extended families. We value the contributions of all others, friends, acquaintances, work colleagues and so on into our lives. We, in return, willingly offer our support, in any shape or form, to our families, friends and community. We realise that we are not alone – we are never alone (Brown, Devine, Leslie, Paiti, Sila'ila'i, Umaki, Williams, 2008, p17).

## Chapter 4: FINDINGS

The Trust will develop a secondary school based programme that will support all players to develop to their full potential academically. The rationale for this target group is the students tend to focus on their sport at the expense of their academic outcomes. This process would enhance their team behaviours and strengthen the team concept as well as enhance their educational outcomes and improve their study skills (Board of Trustees, 2007, p1)

The participants were also *youth* and *Pasifika*, terms that have been associated with risk and failure. Collecting data therefore needed care and dexterity so they felt protected and comfortable in the research setting. Building confidence at the outset was the primary objective in the first focus group and if successful would greatly enhance collection of narrative data thereafter with the participants.

Themes emerged from the key areas of the intervention design (refer to Appendix 1 Community Intervention proposal on page 98). In terms of academic achievement, for example food and homework had positive effects on attendance whilst with life skills became a possible pastoral care spin off. The role of adults was also a significant factor on how well or otherwise the chances were of the programme being a success. The notion of coming together as a unified group proved an important part of the socialisation process as well.

In this chapter, the *Toli* and especially *Tui*, were the main foci of the *Kakala* research process. When considering *Kakala* the Findings chapter is the analysis of specially chosen information through the literature review, statistical and narrative data collected. The data will be presented to form a representation of the views and perspectives of the participants. The initial areas of focus were based on those identified as priorities by the intervention organisation. Those broad areas were academic achievement, pastoral care and elite sport specific development. From those three headings emerged themes and sub themes and they will be used as the basis of discussion in this chapter.

### ***Tui – Data Analysis***

This section begins with looking at the benefits of the programme and how they have helped the participants during the academic school year. The *Tui* draws out sub themes like the influence, for example, of food and its relevancy to attendance and completing homework during normal school classes. There was a strong emphasis on goal setting and in particular how their high school education plays a significant part in realising many of those goals. Other benefits included the acquisition of key life skills for example how to react and respond to critical events that can impact individuals, those they are associated with and their caregivers and communities. The impact of pastoral care and how social capital has a role in the social dynamic of the participants is also discussed.

### **Benefits of the Intervention**

Seven of the eight participants thought the intervention to be of benefit to their academic development. The programme helped to set direction and provided focus towards identifying the steps required for academic goal achievement. Knowing where they were going and how to get there proved a motivational tool for them. Encouragement from Team Management and the programme itself helped that motivation as well. In fact each of the participants developed a respect for Team Management which aided enforcement of rules and policies and recognition of those in authority.

Protocols were extremely important in such a competitive sport environment where leadership, unity of purpose and control are essential. The Team Management had a significant role in the building of the team culture in 2009 compared to the previous year. Relationships between the players and the Head Coach took on a much more formal nature where professional distance and respect was more evident. The Head Coach in 2009 supported his team's involvement with the programme because he realised how it could benefit the overall development of the players and the team. In that respect he made it a compulsory element in his team's programme. Participants were very positive about the programme and what it was able to do for their development at high school. Examples of some of the comments from the participants include:

Participant 1: "Help made me learning future ideas (goals), plus it helped me study to gain credits from internals during the year."

Participant 2: "Helping me set goals, and the steps that are required to reach those goals. Different ways to study and it made me more focused on completing tasks at the best of my ability and I started to work hard in class."

Participant 3: "Not much"

Participant 4: "Extra help and study, more motivation and encouragement and we kept on doing goal setting – putting a goal to where to go."

Participant 5: "I liked the way they were trying to make me achieve my goals. Doing extra school work was better than just going home. Yeah it gave us time to look back at our work and focus what we could do."

Participant 6: "There's other things than elite sports in life; education is important as well sir. It helped me (to be) up to date with my school work."

Participant 7: "Helped me to set goals for the future and I learnt revision skills."

The programme helped the participants reflect on their academic progress throughout the year and the impact their sport was having on their achievement. It also showed them how to make their own choices about their future, a notion advocated by positive youth development theory. Empowerment of the youth participant to choose their own pathway themselves and how interventions such as the one currently being researched, can assist that process (Cassidy and Conroy, 2006).

Participant 2: "[it] gave us time to look back at our work and focus what we could do".

Participant 4: "Concentrate better in class; motivated me to pass".

Participant 5: "Some of the time it got me motivated to check up on how I really was doing in my academic side of school".

There was extra tutorial support from a high school teacher but those sessions were all too limited in terms of regularity. There were only two instances when this happened and the response of that session was positive. The content of the sessions were focused around academic performance and helped to fill in gaps for students who asked for assistance. Participants were attracted to the prospect of

achieving credit towards their respective qualifications during the after school sessions but there was clearly not enough attention paid to this resource for this element to be effective.

Participant 2: “Bring in a teacher to help us in credits that we haven’t got.”

Participant 3: “Have a timetable, like one day have a solid homework session or teaching, the next day have a outdoor activity, just to not bore the boys.”

Participant 5: “The structure of sessions is ok but would still like to see more activities and variety added to make the programme more interesting, plus there needs to be more teaching”

The intention to bring in tutors who were trained teachers from the high school itself was met very favourably. As well as that, apart from the lack of variety of the sessions if both of these areas could be addressed it is quite possible that the participants will experience a noticeable improvement on academic results. The comments from the participants helped identify strengths and weaknesses of the programme and assisted with recommendations for improvements.

### ***Academic Achievement***

The Trust recognised that statistically Pasifika students have lower rates of academic achievement compared to their higher performing non-Pasifika counterparts. The programme hoped to measure the success of academic achievement by adding key indicators like participant attendance and student retention for the full academic year. The Trust attempted to align aims of the programme with those of the host school’s charter.

- **Improve the number and level of qualifications achieved by all students.** Improvement in numeracy and literacy for students, Maori and Pasifika. Improvement in overall achievement as measured by AsTTle, midYIS and NCEA. Improvement in retention of Year 13 students. Increasing numbers of students staircasing to tertiary (university, polytechnic) studies.
- **To continue to provide a safe, supportive and culturally appropriate environment with particular focus on improving school facilities.** Promote and maintain a safe physical and emotional environment. Focus on continual improvement that fosters an environment that is conducive to learning.
- **Improve communication between school and home and increase involvement of parents and caregivers with their children’s**

**education.** Improved way communication between parents and school. Improve parental/caregiver participation. Improved exposure to the importance of literacy and numeracy.

#### Appendix 1: Community Intervention Programme (on page 98)

*Researcher: So why did you come to school this year?*

Participant 2: "To get my level 3 (qualification)"

*Researcher: And what's beyond level 3?*

Participant 3: "University, AUT University"

Participant 4: "The school's not just about elite sports, there's other stuff as well like education, qualifications".

Some of the participants reported a change in attitude when comparing their attendance patterns against their previous year at school. The main motivation to attend the programme was the fear of being omitted from the weekly roster of the elite sports team. Building that motivation through engaging youth in programmes where education, in this case academic success, and productive activities are the primary foci, enables them to equip themselves to cope with and build positive youth development capacity (Damon, 2004) mentioned earlier in the *Strength-Based approach* section of the Literature Review chapter (on page 20). School based interventions which are also sports-based programmes have certain distinctiveness about them. The "sense of belongingness" (Gilman, et al, 2004, p33), mentioned earlier in *Sport focused school-based interventions* on page 27 connects participants to the school and their elite team which enhances their attitude and consequential positive behaviour towards academic achievement.

#### Attendance

The data in the following two tables was made available by the high school on request. In Table 4.1 the two international students, Participants 7 and 8 have the first and third best attendance results at 90% and 84% respectively. Their motivation to attend the programme was amongst the highest because they did not want to disappoint their families and communities in their Pacific homeland who had made some sacrifices for them to attend the host high school. This connection to family is



supported by Anae (2003) as being a key part of the upbringing of new migrants from the islands in the Pacific.

Participant 7: “That’s the main reason why we are in New Zealand sir. To learn and play [sport]”

*Researcher: Why did you attend the intervention sessions?*

Participant 8: “It was compulsory and for our families”

**Table 4.1: Attendance - Detail**

	Term 1 26 Jan - 6 Apr			Term 2 27 Apr - 29 Jun			Term 3 20 Jul - 21 Sep			Term 4 12 Oct - 7 Dec			Overall	Tot days
Half Days	102			98			100			36			336	336
Participant	Pres	Abs	%	Pres	Abs	%	Pres	Abs	%	Pres	Abs	%		
*1	83	19	81%	80	18	82%	65	35	65%	19	17	53%	74%	247
*2	89	13	87%	81	17	83%	65	35	65%	9	27	25%	73%	244
3	79	23	77%	92	6	94%	82	18	82%	22	14	61%	82%	275
4	86	16	84%	91	7	93%	92	8	92%	25	11	69%	88%	294
5	82	20	80%	74	24	76%	77	23	77%	20	16	56%	75%	253
*6	82	20	80%	68	30	69%	77	23	77%	19	17	53%	73%	246
7	94	8	92%	94	4	96%	86	14	86%	29	7	81%	90%	303
8	84	18	82%	80	18	82%	91	9	91%	27	9	75%	84%	282

\* Denotes players who were stood down as a result of a critical incident

SOURCE: School records of participating high school

As a result of the critical incident, three participants who were directly involved (Participants 1, 2 and 6) were at times called away from normal school activity to conduct community service in some form or other. Their attendance records were the worst of the eight participants. Unfortunately despite being present for the community service activities they were also marked absent from class. They appeared to have been punished twice by the adult decision makers who either had no knowledge of the fact or that the system of recording attendance in such instances was fraught. In either situation there may be a case for the school’s attendance monitoring systems to be reviewed.

*Researcher: How does this year differ from last year in terms of turning up to the intervention?*

Participant 3: “You see I was like...I only turned up to one session last year”. (Because it was voluntary)

Participant 4: “Some of the time it got me motivated to check up on how I really was doing in my academic side of school. I was able to concentrate better in class too sir which motivated me to pass.”

*Researcher: If you don't come here to this session you don't play?*

Participant 5: “He [the coach] doesn't care like how good you are if you miss the programme...if you've made the top team like...whatever...if you don't come here (to the programme), you don't play...and that's fair”

The academic school year comprised four terms. Terms 1, 2 and 3 yielded very high attendance rates generally across the cohort, results that the Team Management was very pleased with. The programme was considered to have assisted these results.

**Table 4.2: Attendance - Summary**

TERMS	1			2			3			4		
	Pres	Abs	TOT	Pres	Abs	TOT	Pres	Abs	TOT	Pres	Abs	TOT
Total Half days Present	679			660			635			170		
Total Half days Absent		137			124			165			118	
Total Half days per Term			816			784			800			288
Total %	83%			84 %			79%			59 %		

SOURCE: School records of participating high school

Attendance at the programme sessions was mandatory and as a result the rates of attendance for 'normal' classes were also very good. In Table 4.2 the aggregated rate of attendance for all eight participants over the first three terms, from January to September, averaged 82% (83% in term 1, 84% term 2 and 79% term 3). However, that pattern was significantly different in term 4 where aggregated attendance plummeted to just 59%. This may be due to a number of reasons and possibly the biggest one being that the sport season had ended in term three and so team selection was no longer a compelling factor for attendance at the programme sessions. Term 4 also saw the inclusion of exam preparation classes outside of their normal class timetables which meant that some of the participants may have been away from school or chose to study in the school library for example.

The Team Management showed its support of the programme by including attendance as part of its stand down policy for players who chose not to attend the sessions without legitimate reasons. The same rule applied for students not attending their regular school classes. Compared to 2008 the positive impact on attending the programme was attributed to attendance being a mandatory condition of team membership. The research by Melnick and Sabo, (1992) and McNeal, (1995) also helped to support the view of how the participatory nature of similar interventions can also improve academic results through attendance. The participants claimed the programme had been a catalyst in improving class attendance. Mandatory attendance of the programme and normal school classes together helped motivate them in academic completion and achievement. The attitudes of some of the participants towards schoolwork were changing. The link, however, between how the participants performing at school and other issues that may hinder their development was needed.

### Academic attainment

**Table 4.3: Academic Attainment**

Participant	Ethnicity	Year	Level enrolled	Credits attainment in 2009				Completed	
				Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	TOTAL	Level enrolled	Literacy
1	Tokelau	13	3	-	16	32	48	Yes	No
2	Samoa/Niue	13	2	6	3	-	9	No	No
3	Samoa	13	3	-	41	2	43	Yes	No
4	Tongan	12	2	10	57	6	73	Yes	Yes
5	Samoa	12	2	-	94	6	100	Yes	Yes
6	Fiji	13	3	-	-	-	-	No	No
7	Fiji	13	2	-	57	-	57	Yes	No
8	Fiji	13	3	3	44	-	47	Yes	Yes
<b>Total</b>				<b>19</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>377</b>		

SOURCE: Website of New Zealand Qualifications Authority

Ultimately the proof of the success of the programme is how the participants fared academically. Table 4.3 is an overview of the ethnicity of each of the participants, the year and NCEA level they were enrolled and the number of credits they achieved during the academic year. There is also a final indicator indicating whether or not they completed requirements for literacy which would allow them to progress to higher tertiary level study. Academic results of the eight participants were obtained from the website of the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA, 2010). The participants granted access to NCEA results on the Consent Form for Focus Groups.

From the attendance data in Table 4.2, on page 57, all eight participants satisfied the school's requirements to finish the academic year after the elite sports season had ended (effectively in August, 2009). This effectively meant they were eligible to sit external NZQA examinations in November that year promoting their chances of academic success. Six of them completed the eligibility requirements to sit and qualify for the level in which they were enrolled (refer to 'Level enrolled' in Table 4.3) which was another one of the aims of the programme leading to complementing academic achievement. Six of the participants were enrolled in their final year at high school (Year 13). Most of the credit attainment was at Level 2 (312 credits compared to 19 at Level 1 and 46 at Level 3) suggesting that unit attainment at Level 3 for those who were enrolled in Level 3, was low.

According to the results, Participant 5 was the only one to actually achieve a qualification level. The remaining seven failed to complete or attain adequate credit totals for their respective NCEA level. Participant 6 failed to attain any credits for the entire year. From an academic standpoint the high failure rate would adversely affect the continuation of the programme at the host school and invoke a review of the programme's effectiveness.

Literacy is another area of importance in the NCEA framework. Students are expected to achieve at satisfactory levels of literacy for academic progression beyond high school to university or polytechnic institutions. Only three participants out of the eight (38%) succeeded in passing the literacy benchmark for the 2009 academic year. This should enforce the need for more structured tutoring assistance in the area of English if the programme is to help improve these rates.

At the end of 2009, none of the participants in this cohort succeeded in matriculating to higher level tertiary education the following year. Qualifying for university or polytechnic admission at any of the state institutions in New Zealand requires strong passes overall at Level 3, with equally strong passes at level 2 literacy. Without accessing results from previous years ascertaining how or even if academic success was achieved by any of the participants was not possible.

However in accordance with the aims set out by the Trust and its goals, completion of the academic year in which they were enrolled was met by most of them. In addition, whilst literacy still remains a concern it has at least been identified as an area of improvement which will undoubtedly impact overall academic success in the long term and ultimately access to higher further academic learning.

## Food

The most popular part of the programme as far as participants were concerned was the provision of food. The use of food during the programme was part of the valuing practice to assist the participants with their identifying process (Nakhid, 2003). The Trust considered food to be important in helping participants maintain concentration and focus after-school. The provision of food is supported by Marshall, Baldwin and Peach (2008) and seen as going the extra mile for Pasifika learners. The participants also admitted to food helping to build the “chemistry” between them and helped them feel more positive about the programme.

Participant 1: “Food, good chemistry with the boys, reflect on our previous games.”

Participant 2: “Mostly the food, but also (*name of Programme Facilitator*) helped us out with our homework.”

Participant 3: “Extra hour to study; different; active; feed.”

Participant 4: “Food, learning to help with the future, help us as a team to grow.”

Participant 5: “The feed they provide; the staff’s good because the boys and myself can relate to them...activities and challenges they set for us.”

## Homework

For most of the participants having the space to complete homework was the second most valued aspect of the programme. The majority of them preferred to do their own homework at home, however having the time to catch up on homework or try to get ahead proved useful for them. When asked whether the programme was beneficial for the participants the following responses were noted.

Participant 2: “No, I’d like to go home early to go online and do other stuff.”

Participant 3: “Yes, because it is like another training and it shows who is committed to the team and who is not.”

Participant 4: “No [be]cause of other commitments outside of school.

Participant 8: “Yes. To do homework and more time to study at home.”

The programme did offer more space for the participants to complete homework and some agreed it helped make a difference to their homework-load whilst the minority found the programme a hindrance to their out of school obligations. There is no evidence whether those in this second group had other activities and events planned, would have found these homework sessions helpful if those obligations were not so important.

### ***Discussion on Pastoral Care***

The Trust’s philosophical view of pastoral care for the participants was a significant strand of the programme. Remembering that anecdotally the Trust considered that male high school elite sports players tended to focus too much on their sporting activities and achievements at the expense of their academic endeavours. The pastoral care element attempted to bring balance for the participants by helping to add a holistic dynamic to their development. The Trust wanted to expose and address reasons and barriers to their academic success through personal counselling. The uptake of pastoral care during the programme was very limited however because the participants seemed unclear about the concept and any potential benefits. The Trust needed to take responsibility to ensure there was clarity around pastoral care and once again there is no evidence that the Trust fulfilled that obligation. When questioning the participants about “pastoral care” they appeared bemused by the term. The Programme Coordinator (not Programme Facilitator) then offered the following explanation of the concept to the participants.

It would be enough for guys like yourself, who don’t want to talk to a teacher, but we are outsiders, we are not teachers, and you guys can come and open up to us in certain things and we’re able to support you in that particular area. So yeah, it’s there for you guys, after school, especially that one day in the week where you can come along and to say “hey look I’ve got this problem, I’m struggling with this, is there any way you can help us out.” (Trustee, personal communication, Focus Group Two, 30 October, 2010).

*Researcher: Did any of you access that (pastoral care) through the programme?*

Participant 2: "To do what?"

Participant 3: "Is that like a record of all your...um...?" (shrugs shoulders)

Participant 5: "I dunno sir."

*Researcher: Was it helpful?*

Participant 2: "But we had one on one's. And when he went away with them, the rest of the class were just inside doing their studies 'cos they didn't know what that was all about really."

Participant 3: "...and what's going on...how elite sport was. Is that what you mean sir?"

Any pastoral care opportunities had to be conducted during the programme times. Three out of the eight participants made use of opportunities to speak to the Programme Facilitator during the programme session. The topics discussed in those sessions included aspects to do with their general progress at school, their studies and their elite sports development. With respect to pastoral care, relationships that require a deeper level of discussion also call for a stronger level of trust between the two or more parties. This process takes time to develop. This should have been anticipated by the Trust but there was no explicit mention in the Trust document or discussion with Trust personnel. Rutten, Stams, Biesta, Schuengel, Dirks and Hoeksma, (2005) advocate that sports based relationships tend to be better equipped to deal with issues such as the one that arose from the critical incident during the season. However, the fact that the programme was only a one and half hour session once a week suggests that it would have been difficult to build trusting relationships between the participants and Programme Facilitator due to lack of time thereby limiting the effectiveness of the opportunity for pastoral care.

### **Life Skills**

During the focus groups, other comparisons to the 2008 season were drawn. A significant difference in 2009 was how players would meet in their own time to discuss aspects of their on-field performances. The participants believed these ad hoc team meetings helped them improve as the season progressed. An example of the benefit of the meetings was how they coped with the stress and anxiety of

sustaining two losses at the beginning of the season and how their newfound team unity helped them manage those losses both as a group and individually.

Participant 2: "We had a honesty session, and like there was people crying..."

Participant 3: "And like everyone was just being honest.

Participant 4: "I reckon it just brought us closer, and a part of the team, and then everyone started playing harder. And then when we played...I think it was *Team C* after that..."

Participant 5: "Yes, it was my first year playing elite sports and I heard that, like last year they lost a game like they won't come back and talk about like why they lost, or things they would've done. But this year, when we lost to *Team A* and *Team B* we all came together as a team, and discussed things like what we need to improve on. And from there we went better as we went through the season."

The participants also paid tribute to other factors like their teammates, the quality of the elite sports mentoring and experience of the coaching staff, and most importantly the positive change in team standards and protocols from the previous year. Each of the participants spoke of the honour they felt as a consequence of being a member of the elite sport team and used words like "commitment, brotherhood, humility, and sacrifice", terms synonymous with the socialisation process described by Broh (2002) in the Social Capital Model section on page 25.

*Researcher: School identity, school pride...is there any other school you'd like to go to?*

Participant 6: "No sir."

*Researcher: Why not?*

Participant 2: "Because of the brotherhood here at this school. Because we've been here so long and everyone's like bonded with each other."

Participant 3: "Stay loyal to the school sir."

Participant 4: "Brothers aye. Say if we went to change schools, you wouldn't really feel like you 'fitted' in, and stuff like that."

Participant 5: "The boys sir...the brothers."

*Researcher: That's a fair call. What about some of our brothers who've just come across from (the islands). Do you like it here?*

Participant 7: "Yes sir."



*Researcher: Why do you like it? So how long have you been here?*

Participant 7: "This is my first year and they (the team members) are like my family here."

The participants were also pleased with how the programme would aid them in other life skill areas, for example lifting confidence levels and building social ties. For the three participants who were involved in the critical incident their ability to bounce back testified to their resiliency as youth. They acknowledged the programme in assisting them in the acquisition and the practice of life skills that helped with that resiliency.

Participant 3: "The programme helped me take care of things in the classroom sir so I can focus more on Saturday, meaning...I don't need to worry about doing homework. It lets us learn about the mistakes we did and what we could do better."

Participant 6: "The group work activities, it helps my socialising skills; with my school work. The programme helped me concentrate on my school work also and not only on sport."

Participant 8: "Study and communication and most of all concentrate about my future."

## **Goal setting**

One of the predominant areas of life skills was the area of goal setting. The process of setting goals was a skill that many of them acquired and appreciated about the programme. Marshall, et al. (2008), claim that Pasifika learners use goal setting as the most common method of maintaining motivation. From their comments below it seemed clear that the programme provided an excellent opportunity for each participant to learn about how to set achievable goals for themselves.

*Researcher: How did the intervention help you with your sports and schooling?*

Participant 1: "Made me work harder to achieve my goals".

Participant 3: "Make me achieve my goals".

Participant 4: "Yes sir it helped because I would get to be with friends and build confidence in myself in understanding my goals."

Participant 5: "Goal setting...putting a goal to where to go".

Participant 6: “Helping me set goals, and the steps that are required to reach those goals”.

### ***Elite sport mentoring***

In terms of elite sport specific knowledge, seven of the eight participants reported gains in the development of their elite sport skills as a result of participating in the programme. The programme helped them focus on what was important to them with both their high school elite sport and scholastic education. Elite sport specific knowledge and experience from the Programme Facilitator added value and enjoyment to the programme sessions and built on their individual elite sport contexts. Inviting an international elite sport player, a former student of the host high school, as a guest speaker gave the participants insight from a professional player’s perspective and he also further endorsed the importance of doing well at school academically. On the one hand the programme helped to maintain high levels of motivation for the elite sport and on the other it helped add balance to the view that there was more to school, and life, than elite sport.

### ***Adult support roles***

#### **Programme Facilitator**

The majority of the participants also believed that it was important for the Programme Facilitator to have the ability to relate to the participants both as students and as athletes. In this case the Programme Facilitator was a reputable sports person having been selected to an elite sport national championship team. He was also a former student at the host high school and the elite sports team and already had a connection and affiliation with the host high school.

The Programme Facilitator struggled to maintain full control of the participants throughout the programme sessions; that is where the participants felt the most improvement was required. Research by Hawk, Cowley, Hill, Sutherland (2002) and Marshall, et al. (2008) on Pasifika learners agrees with the project findings of the need for classroom control to maximise the learning of the Pasifika participant. Although this was not a traditional ‘classroom’ environment as such the inability of

the Programme Facilitator to exert and maintain control was a common criticism from the participants.

*Researcher: How important is it in having the right person to facilitate your class?*

Participant 1: "Very important because the person in charge must be able to control the group."

Participant 2: "Really important because he needs the understanding that he's been through all this. So I could give myself more self belief."

Participant 4: "Yes, it's important [be]cause they know more about what they're talking about."

Participant 6: "Very important because the kind of attitude the teacher or supervisor brings it was a reflection on the way the class is run...like for example he or she brings a relaxed attitude that then the class reacts."

Participant 7: "It is very important to have the right person, someone that gets on with the boys but at the same time can help us with our homework and has good discipline."

It was also important for the participants that their after school time was productive, however when asked how effective the Programme Facilitator was overall, responses were mixed. From an elite sports perspective the participants felt the Programme Facilitator had very good motivational skills and they were able to glean from his experiences. They all agreed that he was technically sound in terms of elite sporting experience and knowledge; his lack of expertise as an educator or possibly even inexperience in dealing with youth may have been detrimental to his effectiveness. The participants liked him but they lacked confidence in his ability to assist in the improvement of their academic learning.

Participant 2: "A person who played sport before and knew what it was like to cope with the things here."

Participant 3: "I reckon really important because so that they can relate to us like a normal person. Just someone who has been in our shoes before."

Participant 5: "A sense of humour, enjoyment and can still teach us or help us in a positive way, like school, sport and family stuff."

Participant 6: "If you didn't have the right person you wouldn't learn...[it's] a waste of time."

The Programme Facilitator's ability to motivate and encourage as an elite sports athlete was one of the key reasons why he was selected by the Trust for the role. Possessing good communication skills and being someone whom they could trust were qualities the participants valued highly. Having a sense of humour was felt to be an integral part of the acceptance of the facilitator to the programme. Research conducted by Marshall, et al. (2008), found that humour used appropriately and in the right context is helpful in engaging with Pasifika learners so in that respect the Programme Facilitator connected well with the participants which facilitated relationship building.

*Researcher: What things do you think is important to have in a Facilitator?*

Participant 2: "Trust, commitment, loyalty, respect, honesty."

Participant 3: "Good sense of humour, have variety to teach so we can have fun."

Participant 5: "A person who played (the) elite sport before and knew what it was like to cope with the things here."

Participant 7: "Trust, communication skills, can relate to us."

## Parents

Another key adult role was that of the parent. The Literature Review Chapter revealed that when parents involve themselves in their children's development it improves the chances of better academic performance (Hoyle & Leff, 1997) and decision-making abilities (Cassidy & Conroy, 2006). Parents also prefer to be involved in the final decision regarding involvement of their child in any school related programme (Marczak, Dworkin, Skuza & Beyer, 2006).

Interviewing parents was not in the scope of the research project therefore it was not possible to gauge reasons for levels of involvement and participation. Some Pasifika parents do have a tendency to leave their child's academic development to the teachers and schools and purposely choose to stay uninvolved. Some of the reasons for this include English language barriers, or childcare responsibilities or sometimes, limited understanding of the school curriculum (Gorinksi & Fraser, 2006). Throughout the programme, only three of the eight participants mentioned that they would receive support from their parents or caregivers for example in the form of

allowing them time and space at home to do homework, or not expecting them to attend normal church obligations throughout the normal school week. In this high school context the programme may have yielded better rates of parent support had there been ongoing communication with them from the outset and maintaining regular contact throughout.

Participant 1: “No. They didn’t really know much about it.”

Participant 2: “Yes because I would always go home and reflect on what I did at the programme.”

Participant 4: “Yes, parents help me in my study.”

Participant 7: “Yes they encouraged me to attend all homework centres as this would benefit my education side of my life.”

Participant 8: “Not really. They didn’t really know too much about it.”

### School staff

When asked why the bonds and feelings of the school were so strong the participants acknowledged the positive influence on them, not only from their fellow students but from their teachers as well. The participants claim that these teachers were mindful of the students’ understanding of their own cultural and ethnic origins as explained earlier in the literature review (Nakhid, 2002). In other words participants felt encouraged that their teachers appreciated their Pasifika origins.

*Researcher: Ok, so we have some of you who have strong bonds with the teachers...*

Participant 6: I think there’s a very strong bond between students and teachers.”

Participant 7: “For example our PE (*Physical Education*) teachers.”

*Researcher: Ok, what nationality are they...*

Participant 2: “Palagi...”

Participant 3: “Pacific Islanders... We seem to relate to our teachers like how we relate to each other...and then they seem fine with it.”

Participant 4: “The Māori ones.”

*Researcher: You’re talking outside of team management...?*

Participant 4: “Yeah.”

### ***Social Capital***

The programme allowed the participants to engage with fellow teammates, over a meal and to meet and discuss the game, academic issues or just ‘shoot the breeze’ in a relaxed social setting. This exchanging and sharing of ideas through conversation was articulated earlier in the *Talanoa* section on page 41. The process of socialisation helped to unify the participants. The Social Capital Model, (Portes, 1998), is expressed in the familial ties the participants developed with their fellow elite sportsman over the year. Academic success through these ties is achieved by the provision of a “source of social control and a source of dissemination of information and resources” (p72). ‘Honesty session’ gatherings became prime opportunities for the participants to create meaningful social relationships with one another and helped with the development of these ties, “...formation and intensification of social ties among students, parents and the school also create social capital outside the family” (Portes, p4, 1998).

Participant 2: “...good chemistry with the boys...”

Participant 3: “Bonding with my team mates.”

Participant 2: “Yeah because we’ve been here so long and everyone’s like bonded with each other”.

Participant 4: “Enjoyed interacting and socialising with the boys”.

Participant 5: “for me, the group work activities, it helps my socialising skills; with my school work. The programme helped me concentrate on my schoolwork also and not only on elite sports”.

### **Unity**

The team’s honesty sessions helped to galvanise the team, which led to a run of victories en route to the semi finals, a result that was arguably a success indicator. Team members felt honoured to be a part of the elite sports team and knew and valued what the team stood for in relation to the school. The programme assisted the participants’ familiarity process with one another as early as the previous off-season preparations in October 2008. Spending time together helped the Pasifika and Māori participants because they were able to share without critique, criticism or

tension, what they did and did not know. This sharing of knowledge is supported by Brown, Devine, Leslie, Paiti, Sila'ila'i, Umaki and Williams (2008) who said "Samoans want to work in groups because they would rather talk than write. Sharing in groups helps students who are shy" (p29).

The programme also created a proxy *aiga* (Samoan term for *family*) environment. There was a sense of belonging confirmed by the research findings of how well the group learning approach and the social aspect of the programme worked with the participants. They enjoyed being together which ultimately helped build confidence. Recognition by the Programme Facilitator of their Pasifika ethnicity and differences developed a "greater sense of humanity" (p21) by valuing their individual ethnic and cultural identities.

Participant 3: "It's about unity."

Participant 4: "Being together all the time."

Participant 5: "But like I do my work but it was more to socialise with the boys."

## Identity

Self-identification grows from patterns of participation in school activities (for example, class discussions, extracurricular activities), that is, student beliefs about abilities and identities as students derive in part from membership and participation in the school community (Valentine, Cooper, Bettencourt and DuBois, 2002, p248).

The participants claimed they were very proud of their Pasifika roots. They also appreciated the connection and respect they shared with the different ethnicities of others within the group. Evidence of this was how they greeted and saluted one another using Pasifika languages at the beginning and end of the focus groups. These simple actions were consistent with recent studies undertaken of Pasifika students who were accustomed to their family and church social settings and who then transitioned into the school system. Family in particular is often the cornerstone in the lives of Pasifika. They kept their connection with their Pasifika heritage intact whilst embracing those of others (Gorinski, Ferguson, Wendt-Samu & Mara, 2007; Eccles & Gootman, 2002).

Acknowledgement and appreciation of other cultures together with that of the school's identity was evident in the participant's relationships when they spoke of their unity and closeness with one another. Each of the participants felt that connection to be extremely strong. The term "brotherhood" was used often. The participants believed the brotherhood culture was a carryover characteristic from teams of previous years. Team Management used this as a positive strength to build team unity by endorsing the term "brothers" in one of their team chants. The participants admitted that as players and teams change, the one constant is school pride, from which brotherhood, family and loyalty stem. The Tongan participant would call his Samoan friend "uso" or "uce" (Samoan words for brother) or similarly a Samoan participant would use the term "toko" or "dox" (Tongan words for brother) in a conversation with the Tongan participant so a mutual exchange and respect was observed between participants and cultures.

*Researcher: How strongly do you identify with this school? You might say, oh I feel really strong about it. Well that's good but you need to explain how strongly you feel about it.*

Participant 4: "What do you mean by how strongly?"

*Researcher: School identity, school pride.*

(Long pause)...

*Researcher: Is there any other school you'd like to go to?*

Participant 1: "No."

*Researcher: Why not?*

Participant 2: "Because of the brotherhood here at (*host high school*)."

Participant 2: "The boys sir. The brothers."

Participants 3: "Brothers aye."

Participant 2: "Because we've been here so long and everyone's like bonded with each other."

Participant 4: "Say if we went to change schools, you wouldn't really feel like you 'fitted' in, and stuff like that."

Participant 5 was new to the school and came from a mixed-gender school environment commented that now belonging to a single gender school had helped



him focus on his schoolwork. Other participants agreed and believed that being in an all male school created strong bonds amongst themselves. Whether being in a single gender school is a key success factor is unsubstantiated however some of them believe that to be the case.

Participant 1: "You don't need girls to have fun"

Participant 4: "Girls were a distraction"

Identity also related to how the participants perceived their own connection to "their school". The participants felt a sense of belonging to the school itself, which is a trait consistent of most school-based interventions; a concept supported by the research of Gilman, Meyers and Perez, (2004) on the effect of structured extracurricular activities on adolescents. For Pasifika students, having that connectedness is seen as "contributing to their holistic well-being", a point advocated by Marshall, et al., (2008, p17), in their study of the Pasifika learner and was something that was experienced by the participants in the programme.

Participant 3: "It doesn't matter who it is, (*host high school*) will always be (*host high school*). A proud sport school...the best!"

Participant 4: "Stay loyal to the school."

### ***Participants Recommendations***

Generally the participants viewed the programme as successful; however they gave clear indications of how they thought the programme could be improved. They believed for example that session planning should include a wider variety of activities and teaching delivery. They also believed a timetable rotation for different types of weekly activities would improve outcomes. Fun but productive activities with variation and more exciting study plans and inviting guest speakers more regularly were other suggestions (Marshall, et al., 2008). There were also comments targeted at how overly relaxed and unruly the sessions can get and even criticism about food wastage.

Participant 2: "It's not strict enough; not serious enough."

Participant 3: "It's kind of 'kick-back'. Some guys just came here to muck around."

Participant 6: "You can waste food and waste the afternoon sometimes."

Following on from previous comments regarding the Programme Facilitator, in terms of improvement, constructive criticism was aimed at the fact that he was not a trained, qualified teacher and so was deficient in terms of interaction with the wider youth group. Some of the feedback criticised the Programme Facilitator's ability to give demonstrations, with varied ideas and activities and straying from his schedule too often.

Participant 3: "He needed to be loud and clear and explain everything to the class".

Participant 5: "Try and come up with more creative group activities".

The role of the teacher is significant for Pasifika students because they are in a position of assimilating a multidimensional aspect to the learning environment. The relationship in turn has a positive effect on student self esteem, pride and attitude towards achieving academically and in that respect the Programme Facilitator has the potential to be that role of significance. This is supported by the research conducted by Gorinski, et al., (2007), on the role of the Programme Facilitator and their influence on the Pasifika learner in the classroom.

Another area of consideration was the planning of the programme. The only participant who did not think that student involvement in planning was required thought so because the programme was designed for the student rather than by the student. Conversely responses from the remaining seven participants agreed that they should take part in the programme planning process. When youth participate in their own future in planning and design of the intervention, they are more likely to accept and implement it even if the eventual outcome is detrimental to the end result (Gorinski, et al, 2007). The participants have seen the positive impact the programme has made but realise there is room for improvement. That is where the

participants felt the programme had something to offer which would ultimately benefit them, the school, the Trust and the continuity of the programme.

Expanding that view further, adults need to work in partnership with the participants because youth communities are so diverse. The participants need to be seen by adults as a resource to assist with programme design which adds value to the project and enhances participation (Saito, 2006). The participants who agreed to plan did so because of the potential benefits not only for them but also for successive cohorts and the continuity of the programme in subsequent years (Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2002). When asked what their thoughts were on participant involvement in planning, comments from the participants included:

Participant 1: “Yes, because it’s their future and their choice on what they want to do”.

Participant 2: “Yes, so they have a[n] input on what happens. People planning might plan things that we don’t like doing”.

Participant 3: “Yes because it’s about us, have a say what we were to do”.

Participant 4: “Yes to help all Pacific students. Our opinions [should] count and matter”.

Participant 5: “Yes so they share it with other Pacific Islander students...more impact to ideas for the programme in 2010”.

### ***Findings summary***

From a positive youth development perspective, the intervention attempts to adopt goals outlined in the YDSA. Firstly the programme has a strengths-based approach (Danish, Forneris & Wallace, 2005). Secondly, the programme attempts to establish quality relationships through the use of skilled adults (Gerber, 2001; Scales, Benson & Mannes, 2006). Thirdly, simply through participation the participants are exposed to more youth development opportunities (Walker, 2006; Davis & Farbman, 2002) and lastly building on the knowledge base for youth development through the dissemination of relevant knowledge through research. The use of technical, sport-specific knowledge, pathways and academic support allows that dissemination to occur (Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2002). On the basis of the YDSA goals outlined the

Trust may have unwittingly aligned itself with the goals and aims of the YDSA (refer to *New Zealand context: Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa* on page 19)

Goal setting helped set direction and provided focus towards identifying the steps required for academic achievement. The Trust needed to take responsibility of this communication to the participants at the outset of the programme. Task completion was a significant part of that achievement process. Knowing where they were going and how to get there proved a significant motivational tool for them. Encouragement from team management and the Programme Facilitator helped that motivation as well. Participants were very positive about the programme and the positive impact it has had on them. Social capital acquisition, enhanced team unity, goal setting and improved attendance were clear benefits of the intervention.

More tutorial sessions were needed with the notion of teachers being more involved in the session delivery proving popular with the participants and an aspect the Trust needs to address and implement if deemed necessary. The prospect of potential credit attainment towards their respective qualifications was very appealing to the participants. Increasing the level of tutorial (academic) support during the programme time was very well received as evidenced by comments from the participants.

During the focus group discussions, the participants became more aware of the key areas of the programme. They also acknowledged the social aspect of the programme (Broh, 2002) and how that, along with the lure of being named in the playing team each week, proved to be a motivating factor for attending the programme. There were few opportunities for the team members to congregate in a group setting other than on the sports field and under the control of the Team Management so the programme proved beneficial in that respect.

The pastoral care dimension of the intervention could have been realised if more time was made available for the participants to build relationships with the Programme Facilitator. The concept of pastoral care was not clear to the participants and it is unknown whether the Programme Facilitator was conscious of it

as well. There needs to be an awareness of the concept and clarity of how it will be used in this role.

With respect to the programme being compulsory, one participant answered both “yes” and “no” because whilst the programme was helpful to them it was also “boring at times” due to lack of structure and activity. Four of the participants affirmed their likelihood of continuing to attend the Programme if they were given this opportunity again. The Programme proved to be helpful and a good learning environment for them and they agreed it should continue to be a compulsory part of the elite sports team’s commitment to its players. The goal setting sessions were again referred to in answering this question. The weekly Programme sessions seemed like another ‘training session’, which indicated to participants their perception of the Team Management’s support and commitment to their overall development.

The participants were in agreement that the programme sessions allowed them the opportunity to complete homework, revision and generally stay ahead in their schoolwork. Doing homework during the programme meant more time in the evening to do activities of their choice.

Three of the participants would prefer not to attend the Programme if it were not compulsory. They felt that that time could be better spent doing other activities. Examples of this would include after school jobs, babysitting commitments, church activities or even practices for other sport (Borden, Perkins, Villarruel, Carleton-Hug, Stone & Keith, 2006). Ironically having to do more ‘schoolwork’ after school, during their own time was met by some with dissention even though they would have had to do the same albeit in a less supervised manner. They preferred studying and completing homework in the comfort and familiarity of their own home. One participant commented on their preference to simply go home and sleep.

There was little need to prompt them too much beyond the initial questions asked. The evidence from the narrative data suggested the participants appreciated the programme, the adults involved and the reasons why the programme became a part of the sports development programme. Ascertaining how much the programme has improved from the previous year was not clear however there was a real sense of

unity amongst the participants. The participants were appreciative of how the programme seemed to highlight the feelings of brotherhood and identity within the team, the school and indeed their own Pasifika origins. The programme had its shortcomings and the participants suggested improvements to the way the programme had been administered and run to help enhance academic outcomes.

## **Chapter 5: CONCLUSION**

Did the programme support all players to develop to their full potential? From the Trust's perspective, the good news is that seven of the eight participants believed the programme to have benefitted their academic results. Whether the actual academic results from 2009 reflected those benefits is debatable given that none of them matriculated to higher tertiary education and not many of them attained tertiary level literacy levels as well. Their comments though about how they were given academic tools for alternative methods of study that resulted in credit attainment were probably indicative of one of the more significant successes of the programme. The chapter will synthesise the findings with the literature review, the background and rationale for the research.

The goal setting life skills element of the programme proved invaluable because it helped the participants maintain their focus throughout the duration of the programme and together with encouragement from the team management and programme staff provided motivation for them. Participants felt supported and encouraged by the Trust, via the programme, its staff, Team Management and the school and were happy with how the programme was able to complement not only their academic learning but also the balance with their sport development as well. Apart from goal setting there were also some positive attitudinal changes too which gave them insight into what can be done outside of the sports environment and beyond school.

Food and social ties helped the very good attendance rates at the programme sessions was another key indicator which was impacted significantly by the sports season itself. Examinations were also a significant reason why attendance at the weekly programme sessions was very good throughout the whole academic year not just during the sports season. The participants claimed the programme had been a catalyst in improving class attendance in 2009. The attitudes of some of the participants towards schoolwork were changing from seeing school as a means of facilitating playing elite sport to school as being a place of learning and opportunity.

The programme became another forum where the participants could engage with one another outside the sports arena. They believed strongly that this social connection off the sports field was a vital ingredient to the bonds and relationships that had formed. Being accepted and valued amongst their peers proved an important part of the socialisation process that the programme also helped to promote. The participants all strongly identified with the school and a close “brotherly love” feeling was pervasive amongst them. This was thought to be a channel for the members to perform well on the sports field.

Pastoral care was an important element considered crucial by the Trust however the implementation of it within the programme seemed disjointed and lacked a clear focus for the participants and the Programme Facilitator. On the other hand the research identified other benefits that were not stated in the Trust’s objectives. The socialisation process for example proved extremely beneficial to each of the participants because of the unity the programme had built and developed over the course of the sports season. The unexpected critical incident initially had an adverse affect on some of the individuals and indeed the team as a whole but then quite quickly the programme sessions began to assist participants deal with public pressure resulting from the incident.

Another very important dimension was the Team Management’s support of the programme by making attendance a compulsory part of the sports programme. This support was a critical part of the successes derived simply through participation. Research supports the view that participation in programmes such as this intervention enhanced the likelihood of academic success just through attendance alone.

## Participants

The participants identified strongly with one another in terms of group dynamics whilst at the same time strongly and proudly linking their identity to the school as previously mentioned. These types of positive benefits from school-based programmes can often repeat these trends within post-school networks, like clubs and work. They were all united through their ties with the school, the elite sports



team and their own Pasifika backgrounds. They felt a strong connection with their school due in part to the tradition of those who had gone before them, and especially because of the unity that the school seemed to invoke.

Despite there being less academic tutoring than was desirable or anticipated by the researcher and Trust the positive influence the programme had on the participants seems evident. The participants felt empowered to make their own choices. The participants were able to self reflect and contribute to the research which are two elements advocated by the positive youth development model.

## ***External influences***

### **Impact of critical incident**

In essence, the critical incident offered the opportunity for the Trust to demonstrate the pastoral care element it claimed to offer. The programme provided a 'safe house' for the participants in the sense that it became a place where they could share and 'be themselves'. That uniqueness of the safe-house environment facilitated the socialisation process referred to in the *Social Capital Model* section of the Findings and Analysis chapter which in turn assisted this bonding process and helped the participants form strong and lasting relationships.

## ***Linking literature to findings***

### **Relationship to the YDSA**

The YDSA subscribes to goals like adopting a strength-based approach, forming quality relationships through skilled adults and exposure to and participation in youth development opportunities. The programme, whether by design or not, appeared to be on track with respect to these goals. An example being the fact that it acknowledged the participants strengths in their sport and their culture and endeavoured to build on them. With respect to opportunities to participate in youth development opportunities, the Trust enabled the participants to choose to take part in the research. Those who did so were willing to be a part of the research based on the fact that findings may enhance the continuity of the programme, pathways for themselves and future students, academic support and acquisition of relevant expert

knowledge not only for the 2009 cohort but also for subsequent programmes and indeed programme continuity.

### **Appropriateness of *Kakala***

With respect to the *Kakala*, the discourse on indigenous research is now providing many opportunities to debate the notion of valuing and owning Pasifika research. The thesis project has become much more than simply a means to an end and is instead beginning an indigenous journey for me as an emerging researcher. The research journey has empowered and liberated my Pasifika worldview as a Samoan researcher and academic writer and has positioned me in Pasifika communities where indigenous voices are becoming heard more and more.

The making of the special garland has helped me value every part of the Pasifika research process and the communities that it represents. An invitation to present my thesis at a Maori and Pasifika Student Symposium in November, 2010, at AUT assisted the “*Luva*” or handing over of the “garland” and accorded me the privilege of giving the *Kakala* to the Pasifika academic community. The presentation at the symposium is to be followed by a presentation to the Trust, School and youth participants.

### **Programme achieving its goals?**

The Trust’s alignment with the schools charter aimed to help the participants succeed academically. This enabled the Trust to successfully gain the support and buy in of the programme by the school management initially and then the Team Management. The Trust believed that the programme needed to be able provide an environment for the participants where they could establish better study and revision skills and where there was some opportunity to get support in areas of academic weakness. The programme also succeeded in providing support in retaining the participants at school until the end of the academic.

The Trust also believes that socio-economic factors are a significant feature in terms of low achieving Pasifika students. It was not within the scope of the research to

examine this aspect of the programme and given that the programme did not cost the participants financially it is a credit that the Trust was able to secure the necessary funding required to run the programme.

## ***Limitations of the research***

### **Programme research participation**

The potential cohort number was twenty-eight. Only eight participants chose to take part in the research and consequently both focus group discussions. The timing of the focus groups due to the critical incident proved to be an influence on how the questions would ultimately be framed. I hoped that the first focus group would be conducted during the playing season rather than post season so that responses would truly reflect the feelings and opinions of the participants prior to the critical incident.

### **Parent / caregiver involvement**

The Trust did not explicitly attempt to engage the participants' parents throughout the duration of the programme. There has been considerable mention of how parental involvement whilst children are at school can help lift academic achievement. Whether that same or similar type of parental influence can have a positive impact on an after-school intervention is debatable. It is fair to say that connecting the participants with their parents or caregivers may assist in issues arising from attendance or pastoral care. It is possible that perhaps a more in depth knowledge of the programme by the parents may alleviate any after school activities imposed on the participants. For example church or baby sitting commitments. Establishing synergistic relationships between the parents/caregivers, the school, the participants and Team Management is important given that they are key decision makers in the development strategies concerning their child. An example of the benefits of these relationships could see parents teaching cultural items to the group to assist them with their team chants and add to team unity; in fact the Pasifika dynamic of the programme is also an area of the programme which remains uncharted.

### **Pasifika programme or not?**

The research did not necessarily determine whether the programme would benefit Pasifika youth specifically. All of the participants were of Pasifika ethnicity and so having that commonality may have enhanced any successes for the programme. Therefore whilst the Trust targets Pasifika youth there is no evidence to say the benefits would not extend to other Non-Pasifika youth. However even non-Pasifika members of the team, who did not choose to be included in the research, enjoyed the Pasifika environment and found the programme had an impact on the cohesiveness of the team overall. Cohesion may simply have come about by virtue of the fact that all members of the wider team experienced the natural bonding of the team. It is also unclear what significance gender, if any, has on the success of the programme.

The programme also appeared to be void of any explicit Pasifika content. There was no indication of Pasifika academic learnings or cultural artefacts that could have easily been encouraged during the programme sessions. If the Trust claims to be enhancing academic success for its Pasifika young constituents, it may be advisable to implement its format to reflect an appropriately Pasifika 'feel'.

The evaluation undertaken at Saint Catherine's (Appendix 2 Saint Catherine's College on page 101) suggests that their programme worked successfully with an all female high school however it was not necessarily a factor for success in an all-male high school. Other than sport and the fact that both schools were single-sex schools, one other commonality between Saint Catherine's and the host high school is that all the participants in both cohorts were of Pasifika origin.

### ***What value is this research?***

Feedback is helpful in determining programme continuity, value and effectiveness. The research has been impartial and independent that the Trust can use to evaluate its position on whether or not to rerun the programme in future years. At the time of writing of the thesis, the Trust had completed its third year running at the host high school. The programme did recognise the need to review the Trust's selection

process of the Programme Facilitator and also to ensure a stronger commitment to delivering more academic tutorial sessions.

The host school was very supportive of the idea to research the programme and was very accommodating in providing statistical data on the participants. Primarily the school's main interest in the programme was whether it would provide a positive influence on the academic results and outcomes of the participants.

Team Management was also very supportive of the programme and recognised the potential benefit of the programme for the participants and team overall. Academic research produces theoretical explanations to various situations and explores unequal power relations and political, cultural and social underpinnings. From a practical perspective these underpinnings would also help to inform Team Management of the feedback from the participants with a view to gleaning the positive aspects of team dynamics and performance on and off the field. Team Management advocated developing young men beyond the sports field and acknowledged not only the programme itself but any improvements of the programme so they can be implemented for the next cohort.

The research would also assist the school and Team Management in terms of knowing how the participants responded to the critical incident previously mentioned. The research would help determine continuity of the programme in future years and like the Trust, the school and Team Management were hoping the research could help to provide that confidence for all interested parties that that would happen.

From an educationalist's perspective, this type of programme is intended to assist and complement rather than replace academic learning. This research project might be used by educationalists who may wish to investigate how beneficial a school based programme would be compared to that of a similar programme run outside of the school environment. Some educationalists who concern themselves with Pasifika academic underachievement may find it useful that the findings of the research, whilst targeted at Pasifika youth, would be equally beneficial to the general youth community.

In terms of the youth development community, the research did identify how the programme developed the participants' socialisation skills, and how it gave them opportunities to engage with other students under conditions of duress. The findings also supported the YDSA's strategies about how youth preferred to be involved with decisions made about their own development and future.

Parents and caregivers of the participants and the communities they belong to may find that the programme itself supported their child to develop further away from the classroom and sports field. The research can inform parents on how the participants familiarise with other participants in a social setting, how their child was able to commit to a programme that was designed to benefit their schooling and how the programme became a forum that provided support and building resilience during a very stressful period for the participants themselves, their families and their communities.

### *Gaps in research*

Are youth programmes making a difference to the participants, their families, communities and ultimately, societies? Eccles and Gootman (2002) explain that what is needed is more longitudinal and experimental research across a wider range of programmes. Evaluations involving youth, for example of social assets, need to be followed through to adulthood. Longitudinal studies will be able to examine certain aspects of the same young person as they develop, but at different times in their lives. Research on Pasifika participants within these contexts would also be useful because they are a targeted group due to the high rates of academic under achievement. Design of programmes can and should continue to be informed by evaluation and programme assessments. Unfortunately when funding programmes, even the evaluation process itself has financial costs associated with it and for that reason is often neglected. Funding bodies, perhaps unwittingly, can then impose demands on organisations running programmes, to deliver results and outcomes without requiring the need to assess the impact of the programmes.

The results of research undertaken so far between SEAs and school-related activities are largely positive. However some writers report little correlation between

SEAs and positive academic achievement. Some of these programmes reporting to have little academic achievement have only researched sport related activities and not the impact on academic achievement. Research on the Pasifika learner and where they are involved in SEA interventions would help in adding to the body of knowledge in the youth development area.

Findings on sports related programmes have had positive impacts on self esteem, social and personal outcomes like relationships with their peers for example, but are not known to have a great deal of impact on academic achievement. The same may be said about faith-based, community-based and character education programmes. With respect to the Pasifika learner research, the faith-based element combined with sports has distinct possibilities of increasing understandings of Pasifika communities because of the strong spiritual background of their Pasifika parents and families although the correlation to academic achievement was not particularly strong.

Other important areas to research are the negative aspects, along with the positives, of the different kinds of structured programmes currently being run. Research undertaken has been predominantly on school-based, after-school programmes because of the obvious relationship with academic achievement. Non-school based initiatives have also been known to support positive academic performance but unless explicit reference is made to that as being the primary purpose for the programme, academic achievement may not be top priority. Non-school based programmes will also indicate their influence in other areas like young peoples' attitudes, self-concept and behaviours at school.

Questions are emerging about how programmes can be most effective for youth and the return on investment for those organisations that are resourcing such activities. Communities and youth focused organisations play an important role in creating development opportunities by promoting positive youth development in community settings. However another big question is how accessible are these activities to the youth who really need it? Interventions targeting marginalised learners like Pasifika youth would benefit from research conducted on who should be targeted to participate in these programmes.

Responses from ‘uninvolved’ youth report that structured out-of-school programmes may in fact be undesirable and so become an obstacle to involvement. That provides yet another tension because youth serving organisations are now being faced with the question of how to meld what youth want with quality positive youth development activities. A possible answer is for organisations to offer wider ranges of activities to respond to different needs. If organisations worked more closely with parents and young people, building more organic youth development opportunities could be promoted. The opportunities can be developed at community level and have the potential to reach a wider scope of youth. Utilising youth as a resource to help with programme design and evaluation adds value to the projects and enhances participation. It should be possible to go a step further by saying that youth development must be framed in terms of the larger societal benefits that come from youth engagement in these projects. In other words there needs to be more engagement of the public to sustain support for policy decisions for youth development.

Common research needs are around the provision of larger samples, longitudinal perspectives and further research over longer periods of time to assess long-term influences and effects of after school programmes. Longitudinal research will allow monitoring of Pasifika individuals and collectives further enhancing the possibilities for Pasifika success.

### ***Conclusion***

How effective is this school-based intervention in terms of complementing academic achievement improvement for male Pasifika high school students? Consensus amongst the participants themselves is that the intervention programme had value with respect to influencing their academic achievement. Rather than viewing the programme as an intervention it is instead an initiative that complements the academic syllabus offered by the participating school. The research of the programme has highlighted areas where it has benefitted the elite sports team as well as areas where improvement, if factored in for the future years, can make a difference for Pasifika youth.



From a purely academic achievement perspective comparing the programme to the Saint Catherine's College and Coach Carter models, both successful in terms of producing academic outcomes, the programme falls short. However there have clearly been aspects about the programme that have yielded other areas of youth development that would benefit not only Pasifika but quite possible youth in general.

The Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa, presents a road map for schools and intervening programmes to promote the development of youth in their own environments within the wider contexts. Programmes that align with school values and missions can create a fundamental link between youth, their school, their career aspirations and pathways. More work is needed by the school and parents to make the most of resourcing of the programme practically and in a more coherent way.

Finally the use of the *Kakala* was a highlight of the thesis and has birthed a desire to continue to use Pasifika research approaches for future research projects. Presentation of this research to recipients is a privilege and honour because of the contribution the participants have made to Pasifika youth development. This research belongs to them, their families and communities, the Trust, the school and the Pasifika and research communities.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1 Community Intervention proposal

## Vasa Pasifika Creative Learning Centre



**To unlock the potential in our people to be the very best that they can be**

#### Key Questions:

- What measurable changes will there be in the participants
- Where is the target BEFORE the pilot programmes (past students)
- What are the elements of sports participation that turn them into potential leaders?

#### Proposal:

#### **Vaka Pasifika: Developing tomorrow's leaders at Kelston Boys High School**

- Develop a model from this research
- Provide a level of support of the programme through investigation
- To produce empirical data and consequential research

<b>Name of the programme</b>	<b>Vasa Pasifika Creative Learning Trust's First Fifteen Coaching Centre.</b>
<b>Staff contact</b>	Tba
<b>Programme Objectives</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To provide a holistic academic support programme for the players in the First Fifteen rugby football team at Kelston Boys High School to support achievement of greater academic outcomes in conjunction with their sporting achievements.</li> <li>2. To improve the educational outcomes for this group of young people by providing education and pastoral care in a supportive manner with a strong focus on sporting activities.</li> <li>3. To monitor academic progress of all First Fifteen students.</li> </ol>
<b>Key Performance Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvement in academic outcomes for First Fifteen Players.</li> <li>• Support for elite sportspeople in the school to ensure they sustain educational outcomes</li> <li>• Monitoring of individual outcomes to ensure progress</li> <li>• Reduced barriers to education by health interventions as required.</li> <li>• To provide academic coaching for all students in First Fifteen.</li> </ul>
<b>Historical Context</b>	Vasa Pasifika wishes to pilot a new initiative focusing on enhancing the educational outcomes for the students of Kelston Boys High School 1 <sup>st</sup> XV rugby team. The purpose of this initiative is to ensure that the rugby players achieve academically and are supported to reach their potential in sport, academia and socially. This will provide

	<p>regular academic support and a chance to provide an early intervention with students who are requiring additional support to achieve. Vasa Pasifika is a non profit organisation with the main focus being to “service the community”. Vasa Pasifika has a diverse membership representative of the community it services this being Maori, Pakeha and Pacific that being three women and four men. These members also bring to the forum expertise and knowledge from the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors in education and members from the business sector. It wishes to reflect its unity yet diversity, in its approach and has an understanding that their knowledge gained is to be shared and given back to the community. Vasa Pasifika translated means the Pacific Ocean. This is reflected in the wide community it services and the journey it wishes to take. In the logo this is symbolised in the three cornered sail servicing Micronesian, Polynesian and Melanesian peoples in Aotearoa. The Vaka resembles the trust and the Ama (arm) symbolises the relationships that are forged between the organisations and groups whom we service and support. This being parents, families, schools, teachers, Churches, community leaders and business organisations created by the strong presence of Tikanga Maori (Maori cultural beliefs and practices) throughout our organisation.</p>
<b>Targeted students</b>	<p>Vasa Pasifika will develop a secondary school based homework centre that will support all First Fifteen rugby players to develop to their full potential academically. The rationale for this target group is the students tend to focus on their sport at the expense of their academic outcomes. This process would enhance their team behaviours and strengthen the team concept as well as enhance their educational outcomes and improve their study skills.</p>
<b>Resources</b>	<p>We will be seeking funding external to Kelston Boys High School for: Tutors and facilitators Co-ordination Step Up Programme A study review of all Level 1, 2 and 3 to support the student prepare for final NCEA exams. Based at Unitec. Boys to Men A supportive youth development programme that assist young men transition between adolescence and adult hood. Food for every coaching session Resources to support students Health and social assessments This service will provide year long academic support for forty students including comprehensive attention to their health, education and social needs. They will enhance their academic skills; team skills and social skills as well as a proactive health education and clinical support service to a group of talented athletes.</p>
<b>Programme Activities</b>	<p>The preferred way of working with these students would be in a group- with sports coaching two afternoons/ nights a week and academic coaching a third afternoon/ night. This would provide the opportunity to these young men to enhance their educational opportunities and balance their sporting achievements with comparable academic achievement.</p>

	<p>The Coaching Centre would operate one afternoon a week with skilled teachers working with the students plus parent support. It would be essential to provide food to support these active young men. The initial focus would be on the First Fifteen Rugby team to lay the foundations for this programme and for these young men to role model the homework coaching concept through out the school.</p>
<b>Family Support</b>	Vasa Pasifika is whanau and students friendly, where the support of parents and caregivers is encouraged.
<b>Other information</b>	
<b>Integration with Charter</b>	<p>Vasa Pasifika integrates well with the school Charter- there is an excellent alignment with key outcomes for:</p> <p><b>Improve the number and level of qualifications achieved by all students</b></p> <p>Improvement in numeracy and literacy for students, Maori and Pacific</p> <p>Improvement in overall achievement as measured by AsTTle, midYIS and NCEA.</p> <p>Improvement in retention in Year 13.</p> <p>Increasing numbers of students continuing to tertiary.</p> <p>Providing Learning and opportunities for Tikanga Maori, Te Reo Maori</p> <p><b>To continue to provide a safe, supportive and culturally appropriate environment with particular focus on improving school facilities.</b></p> <p>Promote and maintain a safe physical and emotional environment.</p> <p>Focus on continual improvement that fosters an environment that is conducive to learning.</p> <p><b>Improve communication between school and home and increase involvement of parents with their children's education.</b></p> <p>Improved two way communication between parents and school</p> <p>Improve parental participation.</p> <p>Improved exposure to importance of literacy and numeracy</p>
<b>Evaluation</b>	<p>Student participation.</p> <p>Student satisfaction surveys</p> <p>Students academic coaching tracks well.</p> <p>Academic outcomes.</p> <p>Identification of a measure of team spirit - don't know how to do this.</p>



### St Catherine's College Basketball

Hi - I'm Di Jordan

I'm the Sports Co-ordinator at St Catherine's College. St Catherine's is located in Kilbirnie, an Eastern suburb of Wellington.

This is my 4th year at St Catherine's. We have recently been successfully sports mark reviewed. This process has provided an excellent opportunity to review the delivery of sport to our school. Today I want to talk about the challenges involved in running sports programmes in a small secondary school

Here is a summary of the main challenges faced. You will recognise most of the issues I am sure. I am not going to talk about all of these but will identify a few that may be of interest.

Some groups with very high expectations and no or little input. Asking a lot of the same pool of people

Parent support and transport issues often go together.

Unable to provide a taxi service but have a clear obligation to ensure safety.  
Responsibility?

Different cultures have different expectations and rules that are often not compatible with a commitment to playing sport regularly.

Catholic Girls School

I am not a Catholic - but I want to note that the schools religious values have a significant impact on the school, on students and on relationships with our community

Focus on spiritual, human and academic development.

- respect for self and others - develops a sense of social justice - concern and help for those in need - fosters commitment to service

Expenditure to date approx	\$33,000
Income to date	\$30,500
Outstanding fees \$	
Grants	\$6000
Student fundraising	\$6200

20 hours week, 40 weeks per year  
Last day of school year also my last working day  
Contract reviewed annually

Improved fitness and skills  
Coach requested academic reports on all players  
Decision made not to attend tournament  
Homework sessions established - before training  
Focused work - improved fitness  
Continue now season has ended  
Involvement of the Senior Dean and other staff who voluntarily supervise continuing  
2-hour homework sessions  
Term 4 - 2 hours homework, 1-hour fitness  
Talked to student today she said she is getting on a role and now works up to 3  
hours. Before these sessions she would walk home after school, get her gear then  
walk back to school - time gone. Now she is prepared and the 2 hours is used for  
study - happy kids, happy parents, happy staff, winning team

Self-belief, confidence

### Appendix 3 Participant Consent Form

# Consent Form



Project title: **Towards academic success: A holistic approach of teaching and learning for Pasifika youth**

Supervisor: **Josie Keelan**

Researcher: **George Gavet**

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- ☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 8 February 2009.
- ☐ I understand the nature of the study and its aims.
- ☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to ask for clarification.
- ☐ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- ☐ I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without having to provide reasons and without being disadvantaged in any way.
- ☐ If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.
- ☐ I understand the information I provide will be treated confidentially and will only be used for the purposes of this research.
- ☐ I understand the information collected from this study will be used to prepare a Final Report and the information may be used for the purpose forming the research component of the researchers' Masters thesis. The research findings may be used for publication and presentation at private or public forums for the purpose of advancing Pasifika and Maori education.
- ☐ I agree to take part in this research.
- ☐ I understand that all information will be destroyed five years after the end of the project.
- ☐ I wish to receive a copy of the report from the research (please tick one): Yes ☐ No ☐

I \_\_\_\_\_ (Participant's Name) declare to have read and/or understood the above points and hereby consent to take part in this study.

Participant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_/\_\_/09

**Researcher:** George Gavet

**Principal Supervisor:** Josie Keelan

*Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form*

# Participant Information Sheet

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**Kia Ora, Kia Orana, Fakaalofa Lahi Atu, Ni Sa Bula Vinaka, Talofa Lava, Taloha Ni,  
Mālō e Lelei and Greetings**

**[date]**

## **An Invitation**

My name is George Gavet. I am a student in Te Ara Poutama, completing a Master of Arts (Youth Development). I am inviting you to take part in this study. Your participation is entirely voluntary. If you agree to take part, you can still choose to withdraw at any time, without having to give a reason.

## **Participants**

This study will research the Vasa Pasifika Creative Learning Trust's Coaching Centre programme conducted at Kelston Boys' High School in 2009. The students from the school's first fifteen rugby team and who are between the ages of 16 and 18 years of age are eligible to take part in this study.

## **What is the purpose of this research?**

1. To identify the factors that might increase access, participation and achievement for Pasifika learners;
2. To identify what are measures of academic success for the participants in this study.
3. To evaluate the Vasa Coaching Centre Programme.

## **How was I chosen for this invitation?**

You were chosen because you are:

- Enrolled on the Vasa Coaching Centre Programme
- Enrolled at Kelston Boys' High School
- A member of the school's First Fifteen rugby team
- Are aged 16 to 18 years old at 1 January, 2009

## **What will happen in this research?**

Information from this research will be used to inform my Master's research. I will gather information about your attendance and NCEA results, with your consent. Then you will be part of a Focus Group discussion with other members of the Vasa programme. The Focus Group will meet twice, once mid-way between the Programme and again at the end. I have



attached a copy of the questions we will discuss. The Focus Groups will last approximately one hour. The Focus Groups will be conducted after school hours, during your Vasa programme session.

### **What are the discomforts and risks?**

There are no personal questions being asked, so it is not anticipated that there will be any discomforts or risks. However, if you experience any discomfort during or after the Focus Group discussion, then up to three counselling sessions can be made available through AUT Counselling. The main commitment from the participant will be the time taken to be a part of the two focus group meetings.

### **How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?**

If you are unhappy with any question or any part of the process, you will not be required to answer and you can choose to leave the Focus Group at any time. If you have any discomforts, counselling support is available from AUT.

### **How will my privacy be protected?**

Your privacy will be protected because you will be a part of a larger Focus Group. Your name will not be used in any part of the written reports and you will be referred to a pseudonym (or alias). You will be known to the other members of the group. However, none of the questions seek personal or private information.

### **Confidentiality**

Please be reassured that the information you will give will be treated confidentially and will only be used by the researcher for the purpose of this study.

### **What are the costs of participating in this research?**

You will be asked to take part in two Focus Groups (July and September). Your Focus Group will comprise members of the rugby team.

### **How do I agree to participate in this research?**

Please sign the Consent Form attached if you agree to participate and return when convenient.

### **Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?**

You will be invited to attend a meeting early in 2010 where a summary of the key findings of the research will be presented. Your attendance will be voluntary.

### **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 my Principal Supervisor, Teorongonui Josie Keelan at the following:

Ph (09) 921-9999 or [josie.keelan@aut.ac.nz](mailto:josie.keelan@aut.ac.nz).

### **Whom do I contact for further information about this research?**

Name: George Gavet

Contact Details: [gavet@hotmail.com](mailto:gavet@hotmail.com), or 827-5810, or 029 828-2372

Fa'afetai tele lava

## Focus Group 1 Questions

Project title: **“Towards academic success for Pasifika youth”**  
Supervisor: Josie Keelan Researcher: George Gavet

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### FOCUS GROUP 1 (30 August, 2009):

#### **1. School identity:**

*1.1. How strongly do you identify with the school? Explain.*

*1.2. Do you intend to finish this year at school as planned regardless of how well the rugby team performs? Why?*

#### **2. Academic status:**

*2.1. Has the programme helped you perform in class? Why?*

*2.1.1. Has it changed your attitude and behaviour towards school? Explain changes and differences?*

*2.1.2. Are you making progress academically? What steps have you been taking for this to happen?*

#### **3. Pastoral care:**

*3.1. How has pastoral care support benefited you during the programme?*

*3.1.1. If yes, how, if not, why not?*

*3.1.2. Is this an important part of the programme? Why [not]?*

#### **4. Post season:**

*4.1. How has pastoral care support benefited you during the programme?*

*4.1.1. What are some of the reasons why it (did/didn't) improve?*

*4.1.2. What would you do differently in 2010 if/when you are returning?*

## **5. VASA Coaching Centre programme:**

*5.1. Were you given the option of joining the Coaching Centre programme?*

5.1.1. What keeps you coming to the programme?

5.1.2. Do you think you would succeed academically if you weren't in this programme?

5.1.3. What are the positive aspects of this programme?

5.1.4. What can be improved?

5.1.5. Is the programme delivering what was intended?

5.1.6. Did you enjoy your time in the programme?

## Appendix 6 Focus Group 2 Questions



### Focus Group 2 Questions

Project title: **“Towards academic success for Pasifika youth”**  
Supervisor: Josie Keelan Researcher: George Gavet

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#### FOCUS GROUP 2 (30 October, 2009):

##### **THE PROGRAMME:**

1. **What do you enjoy the most about VASA’s Homework Programme?**

(Probe responses: What do you enjoy learning about the most? Do you like learning? What do you like to learn? How do you like to learn?)

2. **What part of VASA’s Homework Centre programme has helped you out the most and why?**

**What had helped you least and why?**

3. **If the Homework Centre was not compulsory would you still attend?**

**Why?**

**Why not?**

##### **THE PEOPLE:**

4. **How important is it in having the right person to facilitate your class?**

**How can their methods be improved?**

5. **What things do you think is important to have in a Facilitator?**

**How can their methods be improved?**

(Probe responses: where should they be strong – as a rugby expert, teacher, coordinator)

6. **Did your parents support you with the VASA programme? How did they do that?**

(Probe: what did your parents expect from you going to the programme? Did they understand what the programme was all about? Why not?)

**CHANGES FOR NEXT YEAR?**

7. **If you were the VASA Coordinator what sorts of things would you change for next year?**

8 **Is the structure of the sessions ok. What changes would you like to see if you came back in 2010?**

(Probe subject specific, group, self)

9. **Are there any activities that you take part in outside of the classroom with other Pasifika students that contributes to your school?**

(Probe cultural groups, mentoring, leadership etc)

10. **How did the VASA programme help you with your:**

**Rugby?**

**Schooling?**

11. **Student involvement: Should students be involved in the planning? Why/why not?**

# MEMORANDUM

## Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)

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To: Teorongonui Josie Keelan  
From: **Madeline Banda** Executive Secretary, AUTEC  
Date: 11 August 2009  
Subject: Ethics Application Number 09/148 **Towards academic success for Pasifika youth.**

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Dear Teorongonui Josie

Thank you for providing written evidence as requested. I am pleased to advise that it satisfies the points raised by a subcommittee of the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) at their meeting on 14 September 2009 and that I have approved your ethics application. This delegated approval is made in accordance with section 5.3.2.3 of AUTEC's *Applying for Ethics Approval: Guidelines and Procedures* and is subject to endorsement at AUTEC's meeting on 14 September 2009.

Your ethics application is approved for a period of three years until 11 August 2012.

I advise that as part of the ethics approval process, you are required to submit the following to AUTEC:

- A brief annual progress report using form EA2, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/research-ethics>. When necessary this form may also be used to request an extension of the approval at least one month prior to its expiry on 11 August 2012;
- A brief report on the status of the project using form EA3, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/research-ethics>. This report is to be submitted either when the approval expires on 11 August 2012 or on completion of the project, whichever comes sooner;

It is a condition of approval that AUTEC is notified of any adverse events or if the research does not commence. AUTEC approval needs to be sought for any alteration to the research, including any alteration of or addition to any documents that are provided to participants. You are reminded that, as applicant, you are responsible for ensuring that research undertaken under this approval occurs within the parameters outlined in the approved application.

Please note that AUTEC grants ethical approval only. If you require management approval from an institution or organisation for your research, then you will need to make the arrangements necessary to obtain this. Also, if your research is undertaken within a jurisdiction outside New Zealand, you will need to make the arrangements necessary to meet the legal and ethical requirements that apply within that jurisdiction.

When communicating with us about this application, we ask that you use the application number and study title to enable us to provide you with prompt service. Should you have any further enquiries regarding this matter, you are welcome to contact Charles Grinter, Ethics Coordinator, by email at [ethics@aut.ac.nz](mailto:ethics@aut.ac.nz) or by telephone on 921 9999 at extension 8860.

On behalf of the AUTEC and myself, I wish you success with your research and look forward to reading about it in your reports.

Yours sincerely



Madeline Banda  
Executive Secretary  
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee  
Cc: George Gavet [gavet@hotmail.com](mailto:gavet@hotmail.com)