

Youth Participation:
Does it have a place in the Samoan traditional church?
Exploring youth perceptions of the EFKS in South Auckland

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Abstract

The concept of youth participation is explored in the EFKS¹ church context where the perspectives of young Samoan people of South Auckland are explored. In the Samoan culture, children and young people are usually the unheard and quiet voices at formal settings (Simanu, 2002; Tamasese, 2009). This thesis analyses the place of young people in the EFKS as well as their views and experiences on church issues. The EFKS which was first established in New Zealand in 1962 celebrated its 50 years anniversary in December 2012 (Tauafiafi, 2012; Oka, 2005). For the EFKS to be in existence for another 50 years, it will need the support and leadership of the youth of today.

The *Talanoa* methodology is used to interview 12 youth participants from 5 different churches of the EFKS Manukau *matāgaluega* with the understanding that the data obtained will be used to find possible solutions to achieving effective youth participation in the EFKS church. Some critical questions that were generated from the *Talanoa* are – What is a safe avenue or method for youth to voice their opinions? What is a culturally appropriate way for youth to speak in church settings before their elders and church leaders? How can the youth be critical of church matters and not be seen as disrespectful? What does specific positive youth participation for Samoan and Pasefika² youth look like? What is positive youth participation in a traditional Samoan church? How is it different to the national definition of youth participation? To assist with obtaining a clear understanding of this thesis, a brief history and background of the EFKS is presented as well.

As a result of the *Talanoa*, different themes emerged from the interviews with the 12 youth participants. In-depth notions include identity, *gagana*³ Samoa, *fa'aSamoa*⁴, financial issues, as well as challenges that are experienced in the church. The research findings state that the sharing of knowledge, awareness of youth issues, having adult role models and acknowledgement of young people is vital for positive youth participation in the church. This can be achieved through youth services, youth workshops and conferences as well as youth representatives who would be able to sit in on church meetings and boards.

¹ EFKS – Ekalesia Faapotopotoga Kerisiano Samoa – Congregational Christian Church Samoa

² Pasefika – Pacific. The many Pacific ethnicities in New Zealand are represented primarily by Samoan, Cook Islands, Tongan, Niuean, Fijian and Tokelauan groups, with smaller numbers from Tuvalu, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands and the small island states of Micronesia (Retrieved 19 July, 2014 from <http://www.mpia.govt.nz/pacific-peoples-in-new-zealand/>).

³ *gagana* - language

⁴ *fa'aSamoa* – the Samoan way.

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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

Signed:

Date:.....

In accordance with the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee, the final ethics approval was finally granted on 28/11/11 AUTC with reference number 11/194

Fa'afetai, fa'afetai, fa'afetai tele lava

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“E lē mafai e so’o se malosi fa’alelalolagi ona liua le fa’amanuia a le Atua”

– Reverend Elder Faigame Tagoilelagi

***“E vivii lo’u loto i le Alii, o le punavai ma le malosi o le tino, mafaufau ma le agaga.
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May it be acknowledged again, that in accordance with the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee, the final ethics approval was granted on 28/11/11 AUTEK - Ethics reference number 11/194. *See Appendix IX*

Chapter 1

Introduction

“Pacific Islanders should write their own histories, their own versions of their history. Histories written by outsiders, no matter how fair they’ve been, are still views of foreigners, still views of other people about us. In many ways, those historians have imposed on us views of ourselves that added to our colonisation. We should write our own histories in order to be free of those histories written about us, those images created by other people about us, not only in history books but in fictions they’ve written about us” – Albert Wendt
(as cited in Helu-Thaman, 1993, p. 117).

Introduction

We often hear the terms of rebellious youth culture, teenage rebellion or of the naughty young days. Young people are almost always viewed as a problem and delinquent by most where they are not respected as individuals with rights and views. With South Auckland being a youthful population, Crothers (2012) found that the most frequently cited problems in sampled New Zealand (NZ) Herald articles on South Auckland was that of crime at 62.2%. Very rarely are young people depicted in a positive light in the media. Much of the statistics also depict a negative image of South Auckland with teenage pregnancy, high unemployment and low educational achievement (Statistics New Zealand, 2006).

In addition, youth gangs and ethnic gangs are not alien to South Auckland in which many of our young people are members of (Nakhid, 2012; Solomona, 2010). Other issues that affect young people in New Zealand are the notions of cultural identity or identity crisis which are very highly spoken of by and for young people in the *diaspora*⁵

⁵ *Diaspora* – derived from the word “Disperse”. People who live in the ‘*diaspora*’ are those who maintain many of their rituals, traditions and cultural systems even whilst living in a foreign land. Most NZ Samoan continue to live in the diaspora in NZ by maintaining their links to Samoa through their language, culture, traditions and rituals.

(Anae, 2001). Youth suicide also continues to be an alarming statistic for New Zealand where in 2003-2005, young people aged 15 to 24 had the highest rate of suicide (18.1 deaths per 100,000 population). The following year in 2006, the highest rate of suicide (21.1 deaths per 100,000 population) occurred in the 25-29 age group (Ministry of Health, 2006).

Samoan language maintenance (Hunkin, 2007; Wilson, 2010) and pride in culture continues to be explored and valued by young people in New Zealand by many with Poly Festivals⁶ and Pacific language weeks being held annually. However, the number of Samoan language speakers continues to decline especially amongst New Zealand born Samoan people (Statistics New Zealand, 2006). These youth issues and statistics made me question many things in society. What is the community doing to help young people? Where are parents in this picture? Why do young people turn to gangs and suicide? Why is our Samoan language use declining? I found research and writings that addressed many of these questions (Fa'alaau, 2011; Solomona, 2010; Wilson, 2010; Wyn & Harris, 2004). I thought about my own life and how fortunate my upbringing was that I did not fall into any of the traps that captures so many of our young people today. I accredit this to my family and the EFKS⁷ church that I grew up in. As I thought deeper into the role of the church in young people's lives today, I felt there was much more it could do for them. The church in New Zealand is often referred to as the village setting for Samoan people (Hunkin, 2007; Macpherson, 2012); how then can the church engage, motivate and inspire young people to be good citizens and members of society?

I feel that as a young Samoan woman living in the *diaspora*, the EFKS church has helped me to maintain my culture and language as well as my relationship with my people away from the homeland. The church has also nourished me from an infant to an adult. However, as I have met more people within the church, all did *not* share the same experience. Stories and understandings varied with the different EFKS churches throughout New Zealand. There are many reasons for this, and it will not be something

⁶ *Poly Festivals* – example: ASB Polyfest formerly known as the Auckland Secondary Schools Māori and Pacific Islands Cultural Festival is an annual event where high schools come together to perform and compete on five stages, performing traditional items from the following cultures – Cook Islands, Māori, Niue, Samoan and Tongan. There is also a diversity stage featuring performances from a range of cultural groups including Fijian, Tokelau, Chinese, Korean and Indian.
(<http://www.asbpolyfest.co.nz/event-information>)

⁷ *EFKS* – Ekalesia Fa'apotopotoga Kerisiano Samoa –Congregational Christian Church of Samoa.

I will delve into in any real depth as there has been research by Tunufa'i (2005) who explores the reasons youth leave a South Auckland Samoan Seventh day Adventist⁸ (SDA) church. Tiatia (1998) also researched PIPC⁹ youth on the subject of 'Caught between Cultures' where she explored the dilemma of being a Pacific Island youth in a European society who are ignored within their Pacific Island cultures. There may be Samoan youth of the EFKS church that can relate to this and it is research that can be used to address the issues and problems some youth may face in their respective churches.

However, I wanted to concentrate on the relationship of the EFKS church today and its youth; what was and is it doing right for our young people as well as explore the place of youth participation in the church. Does 'effective' youth participation in the EFKS exist? Can it be improved? What does it look like? If positive youth participation is addressed and valued in churches, there may possibly be less of a trend of young people moving from traditional churches to charismatic and modern churches. Of course, not all young people are following in this movement and this was one area of research I wanted to explore. What made young people stay at EFKS churches? What did they value and what were some of the challenges they experienced? Effective youth participation in churches can also assist young people in making the right or better choices in life.

The EFKS church celebrated 50 years since it was first established in New Zealand in December of 2012 in which I attended many of its programmes. This prompted other questions – Why is the EFKS important for Samoans living in New Zealand? How is it or how can it be relevant for Samoan people in *diaspora*? It is the young people of the church who decide this. It is the young people of the church who will be the leaders of congregations in the future and they will have the choice in the near future as young adults whether to stay or exit the church. If young people do not feel they are valued members of the church today, how does it affect them? I felt that discussions on youth participation in the church could generate possible remedies and solutions that would help achieve 'positive' youth participation and a youth participation that is relevant and culturally appropriate in the EFKS context and Samoan context.

⁸ Seventh-day Adventists is a Protestant religion that accepts the Bible as the only source of their beliefs. Their day of rest or their Sabbath day falls on a Saturday (Retrieved 26 July, 2014 from <http://www.adventist.org/spirituality/>)

⁹ PIPC - Pacific Islands Presbyterian Church

Research Focus

In 2006, Samoan people were recorded as the largest Pacific ethnic group in New Zealand, making up 131,100 or 49 percent of New Zealand's Pacific population (Statistics New Zealand, 2007). Here, the Samoan population had increased by 14 percent (16,083) between 2001 and 2006 depicting that New Zealand continues to be a homeland option for Samoan people. A number of 25,377 people are currently registered as attending members of the EFKS church in New Zealand (The EFKS 50 Aotearoa Komiti, 2012). This statistic makes up almost 20% of Samoan people in New Zealand according to the 2006 census. These numbers illustrate that the traditional church remains a relevant and active part of communities in New Zealand as the number of Samoan churches also continue to rise in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2006; Wilson, 2010). With these facts, how then can the church be a place for young people to thrive and grow?

In the church, there are specific fellowship groups for men, women, youth and children in each of the respective EFKS churches. Although there are more and more opportunities today for youth, they would still have the least opportunity in any church setting to speak. This may be because “with and in the Samoan culture, the parents speak on behalf of their children (young and untitled¹⁰ children) in matters of importance” (Tui Atua, 2008, p. 163). However, these limitations need be looked into as times change where the youth of today also have their own new sets of skills, abilities and talents that could or can be better utilised in the church. With this in mind, what then is a safe avenue or method for youth to voice their opinions? What is a culturally appropriate way for youth to speak in church settings before their elders and church leaders? How can the youth be critical of church matters and not be seen as disrespectful? What does a specific positive youth participation for Samoan and Pasefika youth look like?

These questions and notions have influenced my reasons for choosing the specific group of youth for my research. Life in Aotearoa New Zealand for Samoan youth, or any youth is not ‘straight forward’. There is no simple answer to the problems or issues they face whether in a traditional church, educational system or social system. The young people although common in nationality and church affiliation all have different backgrounds, personalities, histories, cultures and goals that all need to be

¹⁰ Untitled children – children without *matai* titles or leadership roles such as *fai'feau* (church minister).

acknowledged when addressing youth development and youth participation. This research then solely gives a voice to the 'EFKS experiences' of youth in South Auckland.

“To have Samoans write about themselves and their affairs is an opportunity for each writer not only to pay closer attention than before to his/her own family, but to have some of these versions of their family history recorded for the benefit of their children, grandchildren and other members of their respective families” (So'o, 2007, p. 7).

Youth when translated in Samoan means *talavou* or *tupulaga*. Traditionally, 'Autalavou' means a youth group and in the context of the EFKS church, there are no age limits for membership. An *Autalavou* can and usually consist of children as young as 5 to grandparents up to the age of 70 and beyond. However, for this research I have chosen to interview youth aged only between 12-24 years of age which is consistent with the Ministry of Youth Development NZ (2012) when referring to the ages of young people in New Zealand. Young people often feel marginalised by their own communities and have the least amount of opportunities to speak in the Samoan church context (Tunufa'i, 2005; Tiatia, 1998). This, in addition motivated me to direct my study on the voices of young people.

Furthermore, another reason the focus of this study is on EFKS youth is because I am a leader of the church and working with and for young people is one chief aspect of my role. It is indeed a valuable opportunity to hear the stories of the youth and to document their own versions of their experiences in the church. To build young people to be leaders, advocates and members of the church, it is important to first acknowledge their place in the church today. This study also endeavours to explore and critique youth participation in the church in the hope it can encourage awareness of the perceptions, needs and experiences of the EFKS youth in achieving positive youth participation in the church. My wish is for people to read this thesis and be proud of their youth as it is not easy to speak about church issues in any setting.

Research Aims

This research aims to explore the views and perceptions of Samoan youth on youth participation in the EFKS church in New Zealand today as well as its value and

effectiveness. The young people are encouraged to share their thoughts on what works well in their respective churches and what can be done better to achieve positive youth participation.

The main research questions are:

- What does youth development or youth participation mean to Samoan youth at an EFKS church?
- How is youth development and youth participation used at an EFKS church?
- How can youth participation be used effectively at an EFKS church?
- How does *gagana* (Samoan language), *aganu'u* (culture) and *fa'aSamoa* (Samoan way of doing things) affect youth development and youth participation at an EFKS church?

The sub questions prepared for the interviews/*Talanoa* with the youth are:

- What does youth development and youth participation mean to you?
- Tell me about the church you attend. What is your involvement at church?
- What does the EFKS church mean to you?
- Why do you attend an EFKS church?
- What does *fa'aSamoa* or *aganu'u* mean to you?
- What does *gagana* Samoa mean to you?
- What affects youth development and youth participation in the church?
- How is youth development and youth participation encouraged and supported at your church?
- Do you value anything in the church and if so what?
- What do you think are the barriers and challenges youth face in the EFKS church?
- What ways do you think positive youth development and youth participation can be achieved in your church?

A further aim to this study was to create safe opportunities for *talanoa* about the importance of youth participation and how this can be better achieved in churches. At first, it was solely the concept of youth participation that was to be explored by young people; but during the interviews, it was difficult to keep youth development and youth participation separate as the two go hand in hand together. In introducing and including

the model of youth development to young people, they were able to better understand what youth participation means.

Purpose of Research

The purpose of this research is to find possible answers and solutions as to why young people either leave the church or are unhappy in the EFKS church. It is to also inform and acknowledge the place of young people in the church as well as their perspectives on youth participation.

I came across a little book my late grandfather Reverend Elder Faigame Tagoilelagi wrote as a contribution to the International Youth Conference in 1980 in his role as a Christian Education Coordinator for the Pacific Conference of Churches in Fiji. I found that a lot of the issues he raised still exist some 30 years later and it very much represents many views of not only the youth today, but also some adults and leaders of the church today:

- “The Church is not moving with time and changes” (p.2)
- “Taking children seriously in the Pacific world is less important than taking adults seriously who are manipulating churches and governments” (p.2)
- “Culture and ways of living today is determined by the amount of money you have” (p.4)
- “Adults are the only important people in a community church, children are left out in discussions, their only place is in the Pastor’s school and Sunday school where young people are not allowed to talk in church affairs” (p.4)
- “Membership of children is a conflicting one and is still uncertain” (p.5)
- “Traditional concepts of Sunday school should continue with some adaptations to meet the present situation” (p.5)
- “The Church brainwashes the pastor, the pastor brainwashes the people... Today we would like to see a worshipping/learning community of believers expressing themselves freely in their own ways in which they learn and discover God in their worship. What could we recommend?” (p.6)
- “The preaching of the Word of God should be shared by committed members of a worshipping community, rather than entirely by the pastor. This will help pastors who have been in churches from ten to forty years repeating stale sermons” (p.7)

- “The role of the Church today as a worshipping community should guide a community to experience the reality of God in their daily lives and serving God and neighbour in response to God’s love in Jesus Christ” (p.8)
 - “What is needed is a renewal of the image of the Church not to be served but to serve” (p.9-10)
- (Tagoilelagi, 1980).

My grandfather’s notes in this book further encouraged my interest in the role and position of youth in the EFKS church in New Zealand. How does it meet the spiritual needs of our EFKS youth? How does the EFKS church help youth in the ‘*diaspora*’ with issues and matters that are ‘not spiritual’? How does the church assist youth with their educational and social needs? These are just a few of the questions that motivated my topic of youth participation for my thesis.

As mentioned above, there have been a number of motivators that have contributed to the focus of my particular research. The greatest hope is that it will bring about a positive outcome or information for the EFKS community and its youth, no matter how big or small. Most important of all, this document is intended to be a voice for the youth which gives an opportunity to collect and obtain the narratives of EFKS young people in South Auckland. This can be added to the limited data available on Samoan youth experiences not only around the globe but in New Zealand. Tuafuti (2011, p. 34) expresses that whether the “storying or re-storying are personal, communal or representational stories, they are significant sources of data in any type of research that involves Pacific people”. The purpose of this research is to obtain youth’s stories and to explore their experiences of today and for today on youth participation. Without the stories of the youth, this research would not be possible. Tui Atua (1995, p. 37) the current head of state of Samoa states:

“I am equally convinced that for my country, we must rediscover and reaffirm our faith in our values - the vitality of our past, our culture, so that we may develop our own uniqueness, our own ways of doing things, our own solutions to our problems”.

If one is given an opportunity to research, why should it not reflect one’s values and be of one’s people? One great purpose of this study is to find solutions to different barriers and factors that hinder positive youth participation in EFKS churches.

Significance of Study

There is very little research written on Samoan youth in any discipline, and even less research written on Samoan youth within the church context. This research and its analysis on youth participation in the EFKS church will add to the small pool of studies that capture the stories of young Samoan people living in the *diaspora*.

This study shall also contribute to the global pool of youth research for Samoan people living in the *diaspora* as more and more Pacific peoples migrate to other countries from their homelands. Whatever critiques and perspectives the youth have, it will be respected and used for this research as I believe it can only be used to prompt further thinking and goals for the church in ensuring the EFKS is ever present in New Zealand for another 50 years. The church is seen as an extended family by many, where the Samoan language is treasured and maintained. It is also a place where spiritual and cultural values are not mere theories but are used and lived by and through its people and programmes. And although this research is Samoan-based, the findings may pertain to other Pacific or minority church groups in New Zealand.

This research also has significance as it will increase the understanding of youth participation in traditional churches and its relevance for young people in *diaspora*. It will provide a foundation for how the church acknowledges young people. Many EFKS churches provide homework centres, sports programmes, bible studies, prayer groups, junior youth groups that are separate from the traditional *autalavou* and other initiatives to address the spiritual, cultural and educational needs of young people. However, this is not reflected in all churches as all are not the same and all are unique and different. This study therefore has worth in capturing an overall picture for a crucial moment in time where many of young people face several problems of today. The rapid changes in technology have excelled much faster than spiritual and cultural beliefs, possibly another reason why our young people face many challenges and troubles.

Limitations of Research

As with any research, there are limitations to consider. One main limitation is the sample size that when compared to the thousands of EFKS youth in Auckland and wider New Zealand, the selection for the research is relatively small (12 youth participants of the Manukau region or *matāgaluega*). Financial and time constraints

prevent research with a larger number of youth, however having a restricted number of participants allows for more in depth *Talanoa*.

I am also mindful of the changing aspects of insider and outsider research, and recognise that I will be both an insider and an outsider at different points in my research. As mentioned, my role as a *Faletua* with the EFKS church played a major role in obtaining ethics which makes me both an insider and an outsider. It is acknowledged that I am an insider as I was brought up in the EFKS church, but I am also perceived by some as an outsider because I am no longer seen as a youth member due to my role as a *Faletua*. I am an insider because I speak the Samoan language and I am from South Auckland. However, I may also be seen as an outsider due to very same reasons I am an insider.

Saovana-Spriggs and O'Collins (2003, p.3) state that "the dilemma facing those who share insider and outsider perspectives is that, whether they seek this role or not, they are often called upon to act as mediators or cultural interpreters." I feel this is true in that the young participants see me also as a link between them and elders or leaders of the church. This too makes me both an insider and outsider. I am a young Samoan *faletua*, this and my western education may be seen as a hindrance, but because the young people are aware of these factors before they volunteer to become participants I have confidence they will be comfortable to share their views with me.

Organisation of Thesis

This thesis is presented in six chapters. The first chapter is the *Introduction* which sets the context and motivation for this thesis. Chapter Two, *EFKS* follows and outlines the history and background of the EFKS church in Samoa and Aotearoa¹¹. It is important to understand the context of this research as this needs to be understood before youth participation in the EFKS can be explored. In addition, there will be specific references to the *fa'aSamoa* and *gagana*¹² Samoa that are very much entrenched in the EFKS church. Chapter Three will then be a literature review on *youth development and youth*

¹¹ *Aotearoa* – Māori translation for "Land of the long white cloud" often used as a Māori version of the word "New Zealand" but incorrectly so.

¹² *Gagana* – Language.

participation. This will be an analysis of general research available on Pasefika¹³ and Samoan youth as well as youth in the church framework. This chapter sets to expand on what youth participation may be for EFKS youth. Youth participation cannot be explained without touching on youth development and this is why it has been included in the discussions of this chapter. Chapter Four, *Methodology* and Research Process will be presented in two parts; Part one explores Talanoa Methodology. Part two looks at the research process. Challenges encountered during recruitment and the research is also noted here. Chapter Five, *Talanoaga ma le Tupulaga: Interviews* begins with a brief background of the 12 youth participants and the findings of the *Talanoa* are reported in themes according to the research questions and their views. Finally, Chapter Six, *Conclusion and looking forward* provides a summary of the discussion and findings from the research as well as recommendations for achieving effective youth participation in the church. This closing chapter serves not as an end for the research but as an acknowledgement that there is always work to be done.

¹³ *Pasefika* - the unique cultural perspectives and beliefs embodied in the values, customs, rituals, dance, song, language and cultural expressions of the individual Pasefika nations (<http://www.creativenz.govt.nz/en/getting-funded/contestable-funding/glossary>).

Chapter 2

A brief history and background of the EFKS

“To Be Samoan”

*Educate yourself enough
so you may understand
the ways of other people
BUT not too much
that you may lose
your understanding
of your own.*

*Try things palagi
NOT so you may become palagi
BUT so you may see the value
of things Samoan.*

*Learn to speak Samoan
NOT so you may sound Samoan
BUT so you may feel the essence
of what it is to be Samoan*

*Above all
Be aware and proud of what you are
so you may spare yourself the agony
of those who are asking...
...Who am I?*

*Tate Simi
Elderly Samoan Statesman
(as cited in Solomona, 2010)*

Introduction: Researcher Position

The above quote by Tate Simi acknowledges the place of Samoan people in *diaspora*. It is a beautiful acknowledgement of the Samoan culture, language but also identifying that Western values and education are much a part of Samoans lives residing in New Zealand. In this thesis-writing journey, people have often asked me ‘What is your topic?’ and when I tell them it is ‘Youth participation in a Samoan traditional church’ I received some puzzled looks. ‘What is a Samoan traditional church?’, ‘But why?’, ‘Is it an important topic?’, ‘What do you get from this kind of research?’, ‘Does that even exist?’ or ‘Is there nothing else to research?’ To which I answer, I believe it is important that any thesis demonstrates the passion of a researcher, and that in the

process it will be of some worth to people in some way, shape or form. It is also vital for research to be of value to the group and last but not least of all to be something of great worth and significance to the ‘researcher’. So, because of my faith, love and passion for my community, I have chosen to focus on Samoan youth in the EFKS church in South Auckland. How can the church assist and guide young people to become confident young adults? How can the church encourage young people to achieve personal goals within and outside of the church?

For that reason and as a daughter of my South Auckland community, my family and Samoa, I feel that the quote by Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Ta’isi Efi¹⁴ –applies in my motivation and inspiration for this thesis.

“I am not an individual, because I share a “tofi” (an inheritance) with my family, my village and my nation. I belong to my family and my family belongs to me. I belong to my village and my village belongs to me. I belong to my nation and my nation belongs to me. This is the essence of my sense of belonging. These are the reference points that define who I am, and they are the reference points of other Samoans” (Tui Atua, 2003, p.51).

My duty as a *faletua* extends to the young people of the church. I have often spoken to youth in my line of work and have expressed to them that their words and their actions reflect where they come from. I keep with me the notion that my words and my actions are often seen as a representation of my family and ancestors. The common questions of “*O le tama a ai?*” (Whose child is he/she?) or “*Po o fea se nu’u?*” (Which village is he/she from?) are often asked by Samoan people in many different situations. Whether a child is receiving an award or detention from school, this question is asked by Samoan people. My *tofi*¹⁵ as a daughter, sister, cousin, aunty, granddaughter, niece, friend, an ex-youth worker, wife, mother and an EFKS church member all make me the person I am today.

I have a great sense of belonging to my South Auckland community, my family, my church, my faith, my culture and my beloved homeland Samoa; and I am extremely proud to say that these are what define who I am. It is for these reasons also, that those who know me well and know me best would not be surprised by my chosen research

¹⁴ Tamasese is the former Prime Minister of (then) Western Samoa and is a dominant *matai* of Samoa. He is widely regarded as an expert of *fa’a Samoa* and is the author of a number of works on Samoan culture and custom.

¹⁵ *Tofi* – Inheritance.

topic. A well-known quote by Thomas Jefferson states ‘When a man assumes a public trust he should consider himself as public property’ (The best leadership quotes, 2013). I am aware that because of my role as the *faletua*¹⁶ of an *a’oa’o*¹⁷ Malua – Sapati Tima, I have the automatic trust and respect of so many people – both the younger and older generations of the EFKS church. As a result of this, I know and accept that I instantly become their representative and servant.

I grew up in the EFKS church, as a granddaughter of an elder minister, a youth and choir member, attending Sunday school until I became a teacher at the age of 18. I feel indebted to the church for playing a great part in instilling in me the values I hold today. The EFKS church’s involvement in my life meant that my language and culture did not have to be compromised just because I was not born in Samoa. The church taught me selflessness through service and giving and now, as a *faletua* my role has shifted towards being a leader within the church. I believe I have been exposed to many different views, roles and perceptions of the EFKS church in New Zealand and more specifically South Auckland in which I was born and raised. I thought about the commitment of my grandparents in serving God under the EFKS church and the positive influence they had on my own life. To serve others was very important and other values such as education, the Samoan culture and speaking only Samoan at home were strictly adhered to. It is my history and background that have contributed to me choosing youth participation in the EFKS as my research topic.

I was a youth coordinator for the YMCA¹⁸ in Otahuhu and briefly an Alcohol and Drug practitioner with Youthline Manukau before I started my role as a student advisor at AUT¹⁹ University – Manukau campus. I was also one of the ‘leaders’ and administrators for an unofficial EFKS youth MSN²⁰ web page for a few years from 2002 which was used as a discussion forum and communication board for over 2000 members especially youth from New Zealand, Samoa, Fiji, Australia, America and beyond. It is through these roles and casual conversations with EFKS youth that I

¹⁶ *Faletua* – Wife of a High Chief. Post Missionaries, the title of *Faletua* was bestowed upon the wife of a chief. However, the Church plays an integral role in Samoa and the title of *Faletua* is now also used for the wife of a Minister, Pastor or and *A’oa’o*.

¹⁷ *A’oa’o* – Male who is a student or graduate of Malua Theological College in Samoa where the EFKS ministers are trained. An *a’oa’o* is a theological student and can be from any of the other theological colleges in Samoa.

¹⁸ YMCA – Young Men’s Christian Association. A somewhat inaccurate title as the YMCA now caters to both young men and women.

¹⁹ AUT – Auckland University of Technology

²⁰ MSN – Microsoft Network

became more exposed to the views and perspectives of young people – all were not positive. Plato stated ‘that silence is giving consent’ (The best leadership quotes, 2013), I believe that this thesis is one way of acknowledging that our youth are indeed valuable members of the EFKS today and that youth participation in the church as it currently stands should not be settled for. This document is one of many ways and tools to allow youth to know that their views and their experiences are of great importance.

In addition to my history and background, it was conversations or *Talanoa* that took place in many different places from riding on the bus for undergraduate university classes to malls and libraries. There were young people who talked about how they enjoyed other churches better whether it be another EFKS church or another denomination all together. Others shared how they could not understand a *lauga*²¹ or *tatalo*²² and there were also young people who spoke about their problems and that they did not know who to turn to. This reflects the NZ statistics in that the number of Samoan language speakers has declined. I questioned this and thought surely the church can help our young people; however it was not as simple for the youth to open up or approach their own families and different church leaders. On the other hand, it has also been very inspiring to see and hear other youth encourage one other. Many youth had great suggestions and wonderful insights on finding solutions to their problems which ranged from family, church or school concerns to drug and alcohol issues.

Reverend Elder Maligi Evile, a retired Minister of EFKS Kingsland, Auckland stated “One must remember that culture, leadership and interpersonal skills are God given gifts... The ultimate challenge lies with the utilisation of these skills for the benefit of all concerned” (2007, p. 83). Evile’s words confirm my belief and hope that this thesis is one great opportunity I have to better skill myself for the ministry in working with the people of my community and church. It is also an opportunity for me to gain more knowledge and awareness of youth issues in the church. My husband, Sapati Tima, has been called to the EFKS Taeaoafua to be its church Minister – a new and small church welcomed into the Manukau i Sisifo *Pulega*²³ in November 2012. This church is the 7th church of the Manukau i Sisifo *Pulega* and is the first church to be initiated in the

²¹ *Lauga* – Sermon or formal Samoan speech.

²² *Tatalo* – Prayer or Pray.

²³ *Pulega* – Sub-District. EFKS Manukau i Sisifo *pulega* translates in English to CCCS Manukau West sub district.

pulega in over 30 years. The other 6 churches of Otara, Otahuhu, Magele i Sisifo (Mangere West), Magele i Sasa'e (Mangere East), Pakuranga and East Tamaki long stood in the EFKS community before I was born.

I make note here of an interesting Listener article titled *Breaking the Pacific tethers: Do cultural and family pressures in Pacific Island communities hold back individuals?* (Milne, 2011). It was an article on 'successful' Pasefika peoples of different Pacific backgrounds in education, sport and business. What was common in their beliefs is that they felt they had to break themselves away from their communities in order to achieve and succeed in their fields. I thought to myself "Is this a true definition of success?" Can success in the Western world only be achieved by breaking away from their culture communities? I found this to be the opposite of my own values and on what I deemed success to mean. As a young person, there were times I felt the church was 'in the way'. When there were school exams to prepare for, there would be Sunday school exams on also. When there were social events and school concerts, the church programmes again would take priority. Now, as an adult, I look back in hindsight and see that these events taught me time management skills and perseverance. These experiences also built my personal values on spirituality and what was most important in life – a relationship with God and His people. To achieve individual success at the expense of losing my faith, culture and language, is not success.

Tui Atua (2008) writes of his final years with his brother before he passed away. He would often say to him "*Ae a pe a e alu ese ma lena pumoo, ae alu e manava se isi ea fou? Ta o i Niu Sila!*" – "Get out of your cubby holes and get some fresh air, let's go to New Zealand!" (p. 115). His brother replied "*Ou te le mana'o e seu la'u vaai mai mea taua o le olaga nei, ma o mea taua lea i lalo le isu*" – "I don't want to be distracted, I want to focus on the most beautiful things in my life and for me they're right here under my nose". Tui Atua (2008, p. 207) also remembers the time a leader of his family grabbed his arm and said "*Tautuana ma oe le atunuu*" – "Bear in mind the land of our fathers". These beautiful conversations reflect my passion, values and desire to serve my community. What is most important to me is right here with my people in South Auckland. If my incentive and drive to do anything is for personal gain that may affect the wellbeing of my community, I would then consider that failure on my part. In the Samoan culture, it is never about you or I, it is always about us collectively.

Wilson (2010) also expresses that when a Samoan person takes their last breath, particularly elders, they would often say ‘*tautuanā ne’i vale tuulima le tofi*’ – behold your inheritance, your rights and responsibilities, lest they be lost. Samoan people believe everyone has a *tofi* – and this has never referred to one’s individuality. My maternal grandmother has not been in the best of health this year, and when feeling weak in physical strength she will talk to us all her children about taking care of our family unit and putting God first. These conversations take precedence over any other matters of worldly values.

Helu-Thaman (2007, p. 3) believes that the “values of our various Pacific communities need to be identified and supported... in order for more Pacific children to learn about their responsibilities to themselves as well as their communities and countries”. This research is about me providing as safe a space for EFKS youth to share their values and beliefs. It is also an opportunity to document EFKS values for young people to refer to. It is about not letting just anyone tell the precious stories of our precious youth. The opening quote of Chapter One is by Samoan writer Albert Wendt depicts why more histories and stories about Pasefika people should be written by Pasefika people. This is not to discount Pasefika research written by non Pasefika people but rather to encourage and acknowledge that we too can contribute to the collection of Pasefika research today.

“What does it mean to be Samoan in Aotearoa? For some it is a determination to recreate the home they have left. For others there is a determination to leave behind the old life. For all there is the hope of fresh opportunity, education, employment and prosperity for the next generation and beyond” (Havea, 2010, p. 54).

The above quote by Havea highlights the conflicts and challenges that Pasefika people face in *diaspora*. It can also be used to represent the hopes and dreams of EFKS people in New Zealand. The church is often viewed as a village setting, a second family to many. The church too can be seen as either the problem or the solution for people and their daily struggles regarding finances, health, education or employment. For the church to be a solution and to be a positive aspect in the lives of young people, it is important to have some understanding of the history and background of the EFKS and its operation in both Samoa and New Zealand.

EFKS History

To begin with, Christianity has been regarded as the realisation of the Samoan war goddess Nāfanua's prophecy made to one of Samoa's most important chiefs of the time, Malietoa Fitisemanu (Meleiseā, 1987). Missing out on one-of-the-four paramount or *pāpā* titles since Nāfanua had already distributed them, Fitisemanu was promised by Nāfanua; “*tali i lagi se ao o lou malo*” (Fauolo, 2005, p. 90), meaning to await the head (*ao*) of his government from heaven. It was not until Malietoa Vainu'upō, the son of Fitisemanu became successor of the throne that this prophecy came true. As well as being bestowed *Tupu*,²⁴ Vainu'upō also became the paramount chief of Samoa after being granted the most respected honour, in holding all four *pāpā* titles at once and becoming the *Tafa'ifā*²⁵ of Samoa (Meleiseā, 1987). This was very significant in the evangelisation of Samoa following the missionary strategy of seeking the support and protection of a powerful chief (Coxon, 1996; Kamu, 1989).

Arriving in Sapaali'i aboard the *Savali o le Filemu* (Messenger of Peace) boat in 1830, the Samoan people after seeing Reverend John Williams and the other European missionary Charles Barff, referred to them as *papālagi* meaning 'sky bursters' (*Papā* = burst, *Lagi* = sky or heaven) in believing that they had burst out from heaven (Tanielu, 2004). Tima (2013) further explains that Vainu'upō, on the premise that this was the fulfillment of Nāfanua's prophecy to his father Fitisemanu (“*tali i lagi se ao o lou malo*”) peacefully accepted Christianity and made Christianity the head of his government. Virtually all of Samoa was converted shortly after, where new rituals and ways of discipline and worship were put in place by the *papālagi* missionaries. Samoa's acceptance of Christianity brought about also the introduction of Western ways, and Western practices which had a great influence on Samoa and its traditions. Below is a brief chronological account of a few of the many significant developments Christianity passed on to Samoa (EFKS, 2013; Oka, 2005, Tanielu, 2004; Tima, 2013):

- In 1839, the first 12 Samoan missionaries left for mission work in Melanesia.
- In that same year, 1839, was the setting-up of the first printing press in Falelatai.
- In 1844, Malua Theological College²⁶ (MTC) was built.

²⁴ *Tupu* – King.

²⁵ *Tafa'ifa* – The 4 Paramount Chiefly titles of Samoa: Malietoa, Tamasese, Mata'afa and Tuimalealiifano.

²⁶ *MTC* - Malua Theological College was established in 1844 and provides training for the ministry of the Congregational Christian Church Samoa (CCCS)

- In 1855, led by Reverend George Pratt (Misi Parate), the translation of the Holy Bible into the Samoan language was achieved.
- In 1891, the Papauta Girls College²⁷ was established
- The lecturers of MTC were missionaries and it was not until 1967 that the church appointed its first Samoan principal for the college, who was Reverend Mila Sapolu.

The independent EFKS – Ekalesia Fa’apotoptoga Kerisiano Samoa or the CCCS – Congregational Christian Church Samoa, officially adopted its name in 1962 at the *Fono Tele*, the General Assembly of the Samoan Church, officially breaking away from LMS²⁸ authority (EFKS, 2013; Tima, 2013). This occasion marked the beginning of a new journey for the Christian church in Samoa and especially for the Samoan people. The name Congregational Church in Samoa was a name that was suggested by Stuart Craig (Misi Kereta) who was serving as the secretary of the Island Committee of the LMS at the time. He was invited by the Samoan Church in an advisory role on this topic and was a highly respected missionary who had a long association with the Samoan Church. After much deliberation it was decided that the name suggested by Craig would be used, but would have ‘Christian’ inserted (EFKS, 2013). Many of these basic facts about the history of the EFKS would not be known by young people or even adults of the church. This also indicates that more education is needed to inform young people.

EFKS in NZ

As mentioned, nearing the end of 2012, the EFKS church celebrated its 50th year in New Zealand since its establishment in 1962. Fifty years on, the EFKS church in New Zealand has grown significantly and has become a well accomplished and widely established ministry (Tauafiafi, 2013). Today, there are currently 73 EFKS congregations stretching from Invercargill, Christchurch, Wellington and all across Auckland. This does not include the several EFKS missionary posts currently under development at different locations of New Zealand such as Rotorua and Te Kuiti of the EFKS Manukau *matāgaluega*. What had begun as a small church has built up in membership numbers over time. With 31.8% of the Samoan population attending

²⁷ *Papauta Girls College* - A female boarding school run by the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa

²⁸ *LMS* – London Missionary Society.

EFKS parishes in the homeland of Samoa (Esera, 2012) and a census of 25,377 people registering as members of EFKS in all of New Zealand (The EFKS 50 Aotearoa Komiti, 2012), the EFKS church remains the strongest church denomination in Samoa with a great number attending in New Zealand. However, Ernst (2006) reports that the number of EFKS membership in Samoa is declining. This makes the ever-present hope greater for EFKS leaders and members (Tauafiafi, 2013) to better the state of its church in order for it to flourish for another 50 years. The 12 youth participants all had great views on how this could be achieved specifically with the EFKS Manukau *matāgaluega*.

Reverend Elder Lucky Slade, one of the three *Komiti Faatonu*²⁹ of Auckland, in an interview with Samoa Observer agreed that change is needed in the church (Tauafiafi, 2012):

“When our parents and grandparents first came to this land, they went through hardships,” he says. Waking up early in the morning going to work in the rain, sun, snow, freezing temperatures. Yet they worked two to three jobs so their children can have an education which they saw as the doorway to a better future. Not just for them and their families, but also for our country, Samoa”.

“There are a number of E.F.K.S. men and women with university and other qualifications together with many others attending tertiary institutes... signs our forefathers saw the world of today, and they laid the foundation for us to do well if we are committed and work hard”.

“They have succeeded and now it’s our turn to prepare our young people with the same vision for the next fifty years. But to do that, a number of things need to change”.

The development of the Samoan church was due to the desire for Samoan people to worship in their own language in New Zealand. This saw the movement of others from the PIC church in the late 1970s (Hunkin, 2007; Siauane, 2004; Tanielu, 2004). This produced congregations and churches being built for the EFKS, the Samoan Methodist church, the Samoan Seventh day Adventist church and many other denominations which required Samoan Ministers or Pastors (Hunkin, 2007). The EFKS formed their *aulotu* or *ekalesia* as their religious organisations for worship, in spite of the presence of the Christian church as a well-established social and religious organisation in NZ society. In the early 1970s and 1980s many Samoan migrants arrived in NZ with the

²⁹ *Komiti Faatonu* – Elder Minister of mātagaluega or church district

“highly valued advice of their *aiga* and *faifeau* in Samoa that they must go to church and must keep close to God for help and support” (Hunkin, 2007, p. 61). In addition, since their arrival from Samoa in large numbers, their *aganu’u*³⁰ and *fa’aSamoa* which had nurtured their lives and socialised them into adulthood in Samoa accompanied them and assisted them immensely in settling down into their new lives in Aotearoa (Hunkin, 2007; Tanielu, 2004).

Coping in a new environment was not easy for the early Samoan migrants, and the EFKS church came to replace the village and extended family setting where Samoan culture and traditions are taught and developed. Tima (2013) agrees in that Samoan people found the *ekalesia* or *aulotu* not only as centres for worship, but they became invaluable social organisations for the continuation as well as the maintenance of the principles and values of their *aganu’u* and *fa’aSamoa* (Hunkin, 2007; Tanielu, 2004). The EFKS church holds cultural orientation and Samoan language maintenance in high regard.

Malua Theological College (MTC)

Malua continues to provide the training for the ministry of the EFKS church. Throughout these years, the College has adapted and developed itself to meet the many changes in the life of the church and the people and community it serves (Malua Theological College, 2013). The minimum age a male EFKS member can sit an exam to enter Malua is 21 years of age which includes our young people. There has been debate over this age as to whether it is too young, and debate also of whether a much older Malua *A’oa’o* or student who enters the theological college is too old. It is no secret that there have been Malua students who do not complete their four years due to being ‘*fa’asala*’³¹ at the college because of various reasons such as alcohol. This usually happens to the younger students of Malua. Discussion has also included church leaders asking Malua if their programmes and support of the students is sufficient when ill matters arise. In turn, Malua have asked church leaders if the students that are ‘sent’ from their churches are ‘Malua worthy’.

³⁰ *aganu’u* – culture.

³¹ *Fa’asala* – Penalised or Punished for bad behaviour.

Still, Malua is held in very high regard and status by the EFKS people and congregation. Malua students and graduates are often referred to as '*lupe faalele*'³² or '*taulaga tagata o aiga ma nu'u*'³³. The exam and the process to enter MTC are most certainly not easy and there is usually a period of meditation and prayer by the prospective student's own family and church family. The blessing of the *faifeau* is endorsed where the church leaders 'see and deliberate' first whether the prospective student is worthy of Malua and being a future leader of the church.

A recent change of significance is the introduction in 1997 of a degree programme. This change involved a significant development extension of the role of the College. In addition to and complementing the training of ministers for the Church's congregations (the College's traditional role), Malua now also provides an advanced academic programme offering the degrees of Bachelor of Divinity and Bachelor of Theology, in addition to the Diploma of Theology (EFKS, 2013; Malua Theological College, 2013). The EFKS male members who sit the exams can be from any of the EFKS churches in Samoa, American Samoa, New Zealand, Australia, America and Hawaii.

What is also included at MTC is the practical training provided by the Women's Programme that includes flower arrangement, sewing, Sunday school teaching amongst many other things. In addition to and complementing this, is the Theological Education of students' wives in affirming the principle of 'partnership in mission' that Malua is committed to. Here, the student's wives or *Faletua* at the end of the programme may receive a Certificate in Theological studies or Diploma in Theological studies. The aim is to provide quality theological education that acknowledges, nurtures, engages, and develops the creative intellectual potential of *Faletua* (Malua Theological College, 2013). Furthermore, a Bible College is run from Malua that is open to men and women of the community. Its mission is to deliver basic theological education and to promote a better understanding of the Bible. This has been a popular course or programme especially for that of *tiakono* and the *a'oa'o fesoasoani*³⁴ in Samoa.

³² *Lupe fa'alele* – *lupe* means dove, *fa'alele* refers to 'flight or fly'. *Lupe fa'alele* refers to a son or daughter of an EFKS church that have entered the ministry.

³³ *Taulaga tagata o aiga ma nu'u* – *taulaga* – offering, *tagata* – people, *aiga ma nu'u* – family/families & village(s). This refers to the offering of one's life for the ministry, often seen as a family and village's offering for the ministry when their son or daughter enters or is in the ministry.

³⁴ *A'oa'o fesoasoani* – lay preacher.

Malua also has a junior youth group that is made up of the children of Malua students and teachers. Many EFKS young people outside of Malua including the participants voiced that they would like to visit Malua at some stage especially during the *Fono Tele*.

Amituanai-Tolosa (2011, as cited in Fouva'a, 2011, p.65) argues that "*in the context of Pasifika students there are three things that students need to be true to themselves about; they have to know who they are; where they come from; and where they are going. She argued that when students are confident about these three things, there is every possibility that their language and culture will be maintained because they will be motivated to learn about themselves and their families.*"

The prospect of these notions being achieved for EFKS young people can be heightened when they visit Malua during the *Fono Tele*, especially when together as a youth group. In this environment, not only can the identity of being Samoan be reinforced but also the identity of being God's child; or that of being a son or daughter of the EFKS. Young people here also have a glimpse of why there continues to be a passion for the EFKS from countries outside of the homeland.

Criticism of the EFKS

There has been criticism of the EFKS for being overly traditional which has been discussed also in the *Talanoa* with the youth participants. Issues of the Samoan culture or financial offerings and its practice in EFKS affairs have at times been questioned. At the 2013 EFKS *Fono Tele* held in May, Tupufia (2013) reports that the selected delegates from all countries involved including reverends, committee members and church goers discussed the need to put a stop to traditional gifts being given to ministers during *fa'alavelave*³⁵. This Samoa Observer newspaper article was posted on the EFKS facebook page, others commented that the change is needed as members are declining and people are suffering. Others voiced that it is not the *fa'alavelave* that makes people poor but it is pride and people themselves. The motivation behind giving, making giving a competition and the true meaning of Samoan culture was discussed by all.

³⁵ *Fa'alavelave* – to disturb or trouble. Often referred to for family or community events such as weddings, funerals or church events.

Topics involving financial obligations have been talked about informally in conversations, in the media as well as in the EFKS context itself at church *fono* and in the *pulega tofiga* and *matāgaluega tofiga tele*. This tends to have a great effect on the young people of where there is a little understanding of certain Samoan customs. Although the preservation of Samoan traditions and culture as well as financial offerings are vitally important in building and developing the EFKS in New Zealand; it is not faultless in that there are challenges faced by the EFKS leaders and the people in finding a common ground with various protocols and events. However, like in any community there are always differences and questions. The challenge here is to find an understanding between generations, leaders and the parishioners to ensure that whatever decisions are made and whatever protocols and practices are continued are in the best interest of the EFKS people and its doctrines. The EFKS in New Zealand has provided a safe environment where Samoan immigrants are able to continue their cultural traditions. It also provided an area for the early migrants to recreate the traditional hierarchical social structure within the church (Hunkin, 2007). Is the EFKS in New Zealand still a relevant and safe environment for Samoan people? This question is also touched on by the youth participants in their *Talanoa* presented in Chapter 5.

EFKS Structure

Each EFKS church or parish is headed by a *faiifeau*. A group of parishes within close proximity of each other make up a *pulega* (sub-district), where there is an appointed Elder Minister or *Toea'ina*. The amalgamation of two or three *pulega* together forms a *matāgaluega* (district), and of the Elder Ministers in the *matāgaluega*, there is one selected to be the Representative of the *matāgaluega* in the Ministerial Sub Committee (*Komiti Fa'atonu*). The *pulega* is controlled by a council called a *tofiga*, consisting of *faiifeau* and deacons and their wives, while the *matāgaluega* has a representative body called the *tofiga tele*. Issues and topics raised in local delegations are brought to the *tofiga* of a *pulega*. From there, they are addressed and discussed at the *tofiga tele* of a *matāgaluega*. After they are motioned or passed at *tofiga tele*, these subjects are then taken to the *Fono Tele* (General Assembly). At present there are 17 districts – 7 in Upolu, 2 in Savai'i, 3 in NZ, 3 in Australia, and 2 in America, each sending *faiifeau* and deacons to the *Fono Tele*, which meets annually in May at Malua. In 2011, youth delegates for the EFKS *Fono Tele* were introduced in compliance with discussions on

change in the area of youth participation in decision-making processes of the EFKS. Each section of the organisation has its prescribed functions where the local organisations amending the business brought before the national body (Tima, 2013). As outlined, special honour is attached to the chartered office known as *Au Toea'ina* (committee of elders).

The following table is by the EFKS 50 Aotearoa Komiti (2012) which outlines the churches in New Zealand as of October 2012. It gives a clearer picture of the *pulega* – sub districts and *matāgaluega* – districts of New Zealand. The table shows that South Auckland (*Mātagaluega* Manukau) has the most members of a *matāgaluega* of the EFKS churches across Aotearoa.

Table 1: Number of EFKS NZ population as of 2011

Faaitulagi a Niu Sila

Matagaluega Aukilani – Auckland District

Pulega & Aofai Tagata Lotu	Aulotu	Auauna Galulue
Waitakere 4325 10 Churches	Te Atatu	Lucky Slade FT & Terri Slade
	Blockhouse Bay	Sesera Tolovaa FS & Litarā Tolovaa
	New Lynn	Maaola Saseroma FS & Molly Saseroma
	Massey	AVANOA
	Ranui	Iatua Mulu FS & Pegauiai Mulu
	Waterview -Penisula o Petesa	Faapaia Seumanutafa FS & Faatonu Seumanutafa
	Point Chevalier -Peteleema Fou	Afiga Timu FS & Pepe Timu
	Titirangi	Tafesilafai Lavasii FS & Miriama Lavasii
	Glen Eden	Aleki Nanai FS & Eta Nanai
	Green Bay	Lama Milford FS & Mapusaga Milford
Waitemata 3250 7 Churches	North Shore	Fiatepa Faa'e FT & Penina Faa'e
	Westmere	Vagatai Vaaelua FS & Lusā Vaaelua
	Glenfield	Iosefa Rimoni FS & Lagimaina Rimoni
	Grey Lynn	Avanoa
	Kingsland	Avanoa
	Mount Eden	Togafiti Tuaoimaalii AM & Masae Tuaoimaalii
	Mangere, Favona	Avanoa
Maungakiekie 4355 10 Churches	Panmure	Pouniu Faamausili FT & Aniva Faamausili
	Sandringham	Dr Featunai Liuaana FS & Virginia Liuaana
	Avondale	Auvaa Eneliko FS & Anofale Eneliko
	Onehunga	Naketoa Talagi FS & Tufosa Talagi
	Hillsborough	Maoge Leausa FS & Faafetai Leausa
	Owairaka	Kafareli Sasagi FS & Imelda Sasagi
	Mount Roskill	Iosefa Tiata FS & Renita Tiata
	Greenlane	Misikopa Loli FS & Talalelei Loli
	Mangere Bridge	Tone Leituala FS & Aoao Leituala
	Orakei	Penisula Tuaniu FS & Fasia Tuaniu

Matagaluega Manukau – Manukau District

Pulega & Aofai Tagata Lotu	Aulotu	Auauna Galulue
Manukau i Sasae 2009 9 Churches & 1 Missionary Post	Papakura	Tavita Taule'alo FT & Tumanu Taulealo
	Papatoetoe	Alosina Vavae FS & Otaota Vavae
	Manurewa	Talia Tapaleao FS & Feiloaiga Tapaleao
	Weymouth	Silo'a Lologa FS & Lotofoa Lologa
	Hamilton	Anatu Reupena FS & Mataina Reupena
	Tokoroa	Taihia Hasini FS & Kapuna Hasini
	Takanini	Palemia Lafolafo FS & Rosa Lafolafo
	Manukau - Sulu o le Ola	Iakopo Isaraelu FS & Kuini Isaraelu
	Wiri - Sulu o le Malamalama	Iosefatu Patea FS & Mafumaiala Patea
	Rotorua (Misionare)	Samuelu Punivalu FS & Ollie Punivalu
Manukau i Sisifo 4500 6 Churches	Otara	Tanielu Mamea FT & Feu Mamea
	Mangere West	Petaia Lokeni FS & Seira Lokeni
	Mangere East	Victor Pouesi FS & Salome Pouesi
	Pakuranga	Vaaelua Patu FS & Nila Patu
	East Tamaki	Eperone Futi FS & Salataima Futi
	Otahuhu	Ata Milo FS & Mouaana Milo

Matagaluega Niu Sila i Saute – NZ South Island District

Pulega & Aofai Tagata Lotu	Aulotu	Auauna Galulue
Ueligitone i Matu 3038 11 Churches	Ketese mane (Porirua)	Popo Su'a FT & Epenesa Su'a
	Cannons Creek (Porirua)	Aufaga Faafia FS & Sina Faafia
	Porirua	Nove Vailaau FS & Penina Vailaau
	Masterton	Meki Lauvi FS & Maria Lauvi
	Levin	Elekana Tuialii FS & Laganofa Tuialii
	Palmerston North	Periti Fauolo FS & Tiana Fauolo
	Marton	Nevin Atoa FS & Mile Atoa
	Wanganui	Taipisia Lauvi AM & Toiata Lauvi
	New Plymouth	Faafetai Milo FS & Nila Milo
	Hastings	Vaimoso Apineru FS & Filiata Apineru
	Napier	Arthur Talaga FS & Gese Talaga
Ueligitone i Saute 2500 7 Churches	Lower Hutt	Senetenari Iupeli FT & Roseta Iupeli
	Wellington	Tautiaga Mamea FS & Tina Mamea
	Petone	Fereti Tutuila FS & Sosefina Tutuila
	Wainuiomata	Henry Iputau FS & Maresa Iputau
	Hutt Valley	Faatulituli Setu FS & Meripa Setu
	Upper Hutt	Vaegaau Liko FS & Keiti Liko
	Newlands	La'aulepona Fereti FS & Pepe Fereti
Motu i Saute 1400 7 Churches and 3 Missionary Posts	Christchurch	Tumama Vili FT & Elisapeta Vili
	Dunedin	Posala Tioa FS & Philippa Tioa
	Nelson	Faleulu Malaulau FS & Luaipou Malaulau
	Hoon Hay	Reupena Muaimalae FS & Tagiilima Muaimalae
	Wainoni	Pelenato Fonoti FS & Eseta Fonoti
	Invercargill (Misionare)	Valloa Lemamea FS & Vitolia Lemamea
	Ashburton (Misionare)	Nathan Lima FS & Regina Lima
	Timaru	Uosepi Pa'ia'a FS & Tumanu Pa'ia'a
	Shirley	Perkins Waterhouse FS & Leone Waterhouse
	Blenheim (Misionare)	Menu Puni FS & Filifilia Puni

- List taken from the EFKS website and updated by the Komiti.

- 25,377 - Aofai o Tagata Lotu faamauina mai Faigame 2011 - EFKS population 2011
- 2005 - Resitalaina i Niu Sila i lalo o le tulafono New Zealand Charitable Trust Act 1957. EFKS was incorporated under the New Zealand Charitable Trust Act 1957 in 2005

(Table retrieved, 4 April, 2012 from <http://www.efks.co.nz/>)

EFKS Fono Tele – Youth roles

In 2011, the youth groups or *Autalavou* from the Queensland *matāgaluega* (district) presented a paper in front of all the delegates of the *Fono Tele* at Malua. Their presentation was centered on the Holy Spirit and how it is experienced and felt by the *Autalavou* in the 21st century. It included the influence of technological developments like the internet on the EFKS youth of today. This was seen as important in that the youth's limitation of linguistic abilities in a sense affected their spiritual side, but engaging them through social media networks may help strengthen in some way the spirituality of EFKS youth (CCCS Queensland District Youths, 2011). In 2012, Fale Lesā from the Manukau i Sasa'e *pulega* was an invited speaker to the *Fono Tele* in

which he addressed the distinguished *faifeau* and delegates on ideas and development prospects that may aid the spiritual growth of EFKS youth, particularly those living abroad. Both these presentations direct to the fact young people have the talent and knowledge to build on old ways to meet the modern times of today in addressing how they can better understand things of the church.

It must be commended that young people were able to present at the *Fono Tele*; as there is a feeling of celebration as this would have been unheard of twenty and even years ago. However, what would be beneficial is for more opportunities and a more regular basis for young people to share their views and perspectives in a ‘similar and safe environment’ within their respective churches as well as *pulega* or *matāgaluega*. Young people in churches must also be respected enough to be able to participate and contribute to things that affect them in the church. This can simply mean being able to and being encouraged to speak at bible studies and church services.

As mentioned, young delegates or youth *usufono* were introduced in 2011 for the *Fono Tele*. Prior to this, the role of young people at the *Fono Tele* was solely to help with the chores and work of their own *pulega* or *matāgaluega*. Different *Autalavou* are also invited each year for the ‘*Aso a Tupulaga*’ to perform skits, dance and songs (both traditional and Christian hymns). Mass youth choirs have participated from Aukilani (Auckland) *Matāgaluega*, Manukau *Pulega* Manukau i Sasa’e, Ueligitone (Wellington) *Matāgaluega*, Amerika (America), Queensland, Melbourne and so fourth. It is indeed a day of great performances and talent by the young people of the EFKS. One church service during the *Fono Tele* is also dedicated to the youth where young people have roles in Bible reading, prayer and more.

EFKS branches – Youth Membership and Involvement

The *Aoga Aso Sa* or Sunday school is held on Sunday mornings before the main church service in which children learn spiritual and learning skills mostly in their mother tongue. There are different classes for the different age groups in which men and women of the church are selected by the *faifeau* to be Sunday school teachers, or in other cases, men and women of the church offer themselves for this very important role and responsibility in the church. Sunday school teachers do not necessarily need to be

tiakono or of a *matafale* entity. However, in other roles such as the *failautusi*³⁶ and *teutupe*³⁷ of the church, these are normally held by *tiakono* of the churches. It is very rare for women or even younger untitled men to be appointed or voted in as *failautusi* or *teutupe* unless one holds a position in society such as that of being a *matai*³⁸, lawyer or accountant where their skills and knowledge is specific and useful for the roles mentioned.

In the *Autalavou*, as is the *Aoga Asa Sa*, the roles can be granted to that of young untitled men and women. There are many EFKS churches in New Zealand that have an *Autalavou* and an *Autalavou laiti* which is briefly described in the next chapter. In the EFKS body, Youth day or *Aso o Tupulaga*, is held on the same Sunday in the month of February, where the youth of a *pulega* are able to fellowship together to celebrate with a theme for the day. *Siva fa'aevagalia*,³⁹ hymns and plays are performed on the day. There are usually sports activities and Bible studies held weekly, fortnightly or monthly in the individual EFKS churches. However a number of young people have voiced their concern at the inconsistency of programmes delivered at churches where they feel left out or disadvantaged when they hear of certain programmes being held elsewhere.

I was born in the EFKS *Magele i Sasa'e* (Mangere East) church, here in addition to the *Autalavou* and *Autalavou laiti*, there was a young unmarried women's group named "*Tama'itai Puaseisei*" or *Teine Puaseisei* which was established in 1998. This group was an illustration of youth development and youth participation. They planned and held their own prayer meetings, annual camps and vacations and they held monthly prayer and devotion for the church minister and his wife at the church manse (Tagoilelagi, 2003). Here, they in turn gave words of encouragement and comfort to the church leaders also thanking them for their leadership and guidance. At the start of each year, the *Tama'itai Puaseisei* would set their calendar and its programme for the year, once done they would ask for advice and blessings from the *faiifeau* and *faletua*. Although this group was made up of young unmarried women, they had the strong support of their parents because of its purpose and programmes. Perhaps, programmes and groups such as these can be implemented into church groups as young men and young women face different sorts of challenges in life.

³⁶ *Failautusi* – Secretary.

³⁷ *Teutupe* – Treasurer.

³⁸ *Matai* - Chief

³⁹ *Siva fa'aevagalia* – evangelism dance or creative dance.

Throughout the year, youth programmes and workshops are held in Samoa and New Zealand which are set up by its leaders or the *Ofisa Aoga Kerisiano*. These range in spiritual and social workshops from the regular Bible studies, *Eleiga*⁴⁰ classes, even Zumba classes to that of social issues that include drug and alcohol. For example, in Samoa a workshop on the prevention of drug and alcohol abuse was attended by eight student representatives from each of the respective EFKS colleges or high schools in Samoa. Tuasivi Secondary College, Leulumoega Fou College, Nu'uausala Secondary College, Maluafou College, Papauta Girls College and Congregational Senior College were all in attendance with representatives. The workshop's participants were not just students of the EFKS faith, but from different denominations. This is of a positive note for the EFKS on prioritising education no matter what denomination a student belongs to (EFKS, 2013). However, these combined programmes have not been offered or made available for young EFKS people in New Zealand. What kind of effect can this have for our young people if workshops and programmes are not offered to help address their social issues and educational needs?

Ofisa Aoaoga Kerisiano / Christian and Education Youth officer

There is an *Ofisa Aoaoga Kerisiano* role for every single EFKS *matāgaluega* in New Zealand, Samoa, Australia, America and Hawaii. In 2009, my husband was appointed by the EFKS body in the role of *Ofisa Aoaoga Kerisiano* (Christian Education Officer) for the Manukau *mātagaluega* which at the time included 15 churches not counting EFKS Taеоafua. His role was not officially recognised under the EFKS body until it was passed at the *Fono Tele* of 2010. His duty was basically to initiate services and activities that may help strengthen the spiritual lives of the youth – under the consent and guidance of elder ministers (*faiфеau toeaina*) of the Manukau district. Moreover, he is occasionally invited by *faiфеau* to facilitate Bible studies or different programmes like prize-giving and so forth. One of the benefits of this role he says, is that by engaging with the different church youth groups/*Autalavou* he has grown to realise the importance of flexibility since every *Autalavou* is different and thus requires different methods of approaching and communicating with each independent group.

⁴⁰ *Eleiga* – Traditional fabric printing

An example of this is that for the Bible studies duties, Sapati at one church was advised by the *fai feau* that he did not need to wear a *pelaue*⁴¹ or tie; as it is an informal gathering with young people and everyone should feel comfortable. So when another invitation was received to lead a Bible study of another neighbouring EFKS church, Sapati attended wearing the usual *ie fai taga*⁴² and a collared shirt with no *pelaue* or tie. Here, he was told by a *tiakono* in front of the *Autalavou* that he should be in the full formal attire. This expresses how people have their own beliefs and thoughts on different traditions and protocols. People also hold different priorities and values with *fa'a Samoa* in terms of language, dress, and dance within the EFKS church. As a leader too, it is important to always be prepared and to have one's own set values and protocols. This is the same in how young people should be approached. Not all young people are the same, even if they share the same church affiliation, spiritual values and ethnic backgrounds, young people still have unique needs.

EFKS Sulu Samoa

The setting-up of the first printing press in Samoa in 1839 saw the first publication of the *Sulu Samoa*⁴³; this was a mark of the missionary passion to bring the people to understand the gospel through the written word (EFKS, 2013). The *Sulu Samoa* is a monthly bulletin or newsletter that is distributed to all EFKS churches around the globe from Samoa. Unfortunately, due to time and financial constraints, sometimes the *Sulu* newsletter is received months later from churches outside of Samoa. However, with technology advances these are now available on the EFKS website.⁴⁴ Other publications such as the syllabus for the Sunday schools are also available as PDF documents online. The *Sulu Samoa* includes sermons, obituaries, Malua graduations, anniversaries and events of the EFKS and its churches as well as quotes, proverbs and a page dedicated to youth. The *Sulu Samoa* has long been in existence serving to inform and report on EFKS matters and messages. It is also used as a record of the history of the EFKS where the *Sulu Samoa* newsletters or journals have been grouped and bound into books.

⁴¹ *Pelaue* – suit jacket – a formal wear for the men of the EFKS church.

⁴² *Ie fai taga* – traditional Samoan skirt for men, usually worn to church and traditional events

⁴³ *Sulu Samoa* – Samoan Torch

⁴⁴ http://www.cccs.org.ws/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=132&Itemid=138

However, of the 12 youth participants interviewed, 7 said they had picked up and read ‘a bit’ of the *Sulu Samoa* at least once in 2012. Reasons such as too much wording or all information is on churches and people in Samoa only were told by the young people as to why they had little or no interest. This illustrates that the *Sulu* currently does not attract the interest of young people and it is important to address this it is one source that can inform young people of information. How can the *Sulu* be more relevant and interesting for young people? This leads us to the use of Facebook, especially by young people which provides the same sort, if not more information then that of the *Sulu Samoa*.

EFKS Youth Facebook Page

There is an official EFKS youth Facebook⁴⁵ page – the EFKS/Congregational Christian Church Samoa – *Lauga Tusi Faitau Aso*⁴⁶ that is recognised and supported by the EFKS body. The administrators of this page are Malua graduates who facilitate the weekly IBRA commentaries that are written by EFKS leaders, Malua students and graduates from different countries. Those in *Faifeau*, *Faifeau Toeaina*, *Ofisa Aoaoga Kerisiano*, *Misionare* and *Faletua* roles have contributed to the online sermons that is available to be read by all. There is also a chance here for young people to ask questions and make comments. In addition, youth members have also had the opportunity to write sermons and commentaries as it is important to see and read messages from a youth perspective. The main purpose of this page is the commentaries which are written in both the English and Samoan language.

There are other existing EFKS youth Facebook pages – such as the EFKS/CCCS page,⁴⁷ here EFKS people and youth are able to post up videos, photos of events happening in their areas. Announcements of church events such as the Pacific or World’s Womens’ annual church service, car washes and fundraisers are posted on this page. Newspaper articles on youth programmes and their achievements as well as educational information regarding programmes and enrolment are put up by the administrators and young people to motivate each other. Messages such as “AMAZZING! We should have a *aso tupulaga world youth day conference in Samoa for EFKS! LOL iaiaaaaaa kai a mo le avanoa*

⁴⁵ Facebook is a free and popular social networking services that allows over one billion active users to stay connected with family and friends (Retrieved 16/07/2014 from <https://www.facebook.com/facebook/info>)

⁴⁶ <http://www.Facebook.com/EFKS.CCCS>

⁴⁷ <http://www.Facebook.com/pages/EFKS-CCCS/168948239798541>

LOL” are posted. These Facebook pages have created a comfortable platform for young people to express their thoughts and feelings as this is completed on a daily basis, something that does not exist outside of facebook in ‘real life’. It is admirable in that where there is much more freedom and anonymity to write ‘anything’ on these Facebook pages, the Samoan value of *fa’aaloalo*, *va fealoa’i* and *va tapu’ia* (Anae et al., 2010; Tuagalu, 2008) has been upheld.

A third Facebook page worth noting is the Tupulaga EFKS page.⁴⁸ Like the EFKS/CCCS page, YouTube videos of EFKS youth performances and songs are uploaded as well as albums of EFKS leaders past and present. Without this, the young people would not have a window to see the faces of fellow EFKS young people and EFKS leaders around the globe. The different pages have also been used to find out where EFKS churches are by people visiting the areas, for example: “*If there is an EFKS in Sydney near campsie please let me know :) and the times of the service on Friday and Sunday, fa’afetai*”. Furthermore, there are countless EFKS pages for the individual churches. These are used by its members for reminders of youth or choir practice as well as awareness for different events. One illustration is that of EFKS Hamilton, all its members, young and old held a ‘Shave to Save’ event to support one of their youth members with cancer. This raised awareness and in turn support and prayers were offered for EFKS Hamilton. Many church leaders and ministers have joined Facebook to support these pages as with changing times and modern ways, social networking and technology has become a popular tool for communication between young people. The fast advancement of technology has meant that young people have used the internet to communicate with one another.

Samoan Language and Culture / Gagana Samoa ma le Fa’aSamoa

The EFKS without doubt continues to value *gagana Samoa* and *fa’aSamoa* in its programmes and practices. The youth participants were not shy to ask questions about the value, relevancy and inconsistency of its use within the EFKS. The honourable Miss Hekia Parata, the Minister for Pacific Islands Affairs⁴⁹ at the time, acknowledged

⁴⁸ <http://www.Facebook.com/tupulaga.efks>

⁴⁹ *The Ministry of Pacific Islands Affairs* is the New Zealand (NZ) government’s primary adviser on policies and interventions to promote the social, economic and cultural development of Pacific peoples in NZ. (Retrieved 19 July, 2014 from <http://www.mpia.govt.nz/about-us-2/>).

the role of the EFKS church in upholding the Samoan language and culture in New Zealand at the opening of the EFKS 50 year's celebration in December, 2012.

“One of the most notable achievements of the church during the past fifty years is its successful maintenance of the Samoan language and culture. The EFKS model of promoting the Samoan language and culture through bilingual teaching is one the wider community gains inspiration from.” (Tauafiafi, 2013)

Children are taught in the *Aoga a le Faifeau*⁵⁰ to *tautala lelei* or speak good Samoan. Tanielu (2004, p. 151) argues that the “*Aoga a le Faifeau* played and still plays a significant role in the education socialisation and enculturation of Samoan children in the CCCS in Samoa and New Zealand”. This is achieved when there are quality Sunday school teachers and programmes available for young children. Reading, math, writing and literacy is taught in Sunday Schools in classes for that range from *Vasega Pi* or *Vasega Amata* (Beginners class). Fouva’a’s (2011) Auckland based research and Wilson’s (2010) study in Wellington asserts that language maintenance is a growing concern as Pasefika languages including Samoan are declining. Wilson (2010) found that the responsibility for Samoan language maintenance is shifting from the home to the church as parents are working longer hours. In agreement, is Goldring (2006) in her study on Christchurch young people who assert that the ability to speak fluently, and learn in their first language promoted a sense of identity and self worth. This makes it even more crucial for the EFKS church to prioritise the Samoan language over the English language.

Fa’alau (2011) states that speaking and understanding the Samoan language creates strong connections and positive relationships in families and this demonstrates a positive effect on the lives and wellbeing of young people. Fouva’a (2011) concurs expressing that young people understand the importance of listening and observing senior people at church articulating their views in the Samoan language. They saw this as an opportunity for them to enhance their knowledge of the Samoan language. “Young people also purposely observe in the church because they believe it is important to know how things in the church are carried out” (Fouva’a, 2011, p.130). *Gagana Samoa* thus allows for more communication between generations and it also creates a

⁵⁰ *Aoga a le Faifeau* – (Church Minister or) Pastors school – in this context the EFKS Pastors school

closer relationship between Samoan people. The Samoan language having great value is shared by Tamasese, Peteru, Waldegrave and Bush (2005, p. 301):

“In the Samoan context, the nuances of the Samoan language hold the key to understanding the meaning of important cultural concepts. As well as being the vehicle by which beliefs and values have been transmitted from generation to generation, a person’s first language houses their sense of belonging and identity and best explains their world view.”

All these writers reflect critically on the place of Samoan language in New Zealand whereby ways of living and our relationships with others is of great importance. Helu-Thaman (2007) further enhances this position stating that the ideal person in many Pacific communities is the one who behaves and performs in culturally appropriate ways in different and specific contexts. “In Tonga for example, the ideal citizen is one who is *poto*⁵¹ – one who knows what to do and does it well. This is achieved through the correct and constructive use of *‘ilo* – defined by Tongans as knowledge, skills, understanding and values that a person acquires through the process of *ako* or learning (Thaman, 2007). This is very much true in the Samoan community where one can be judged harshly by their own people if specific protocols and processes are not followed in cultural or church settings. This is expressed in the research by Fa’alau (2011) where young people are expected to be respectful and to use appropriate language when communicating with church members.

Another component of the EFKS that promotes the Samoan language is the *Aoga Amata*⁵² or Samoan preschools in New Zealand. There are many centres under the EFKS Manukau *matagaluega* such as *Seugagogo Aoga Amata* of EFKS Otahuhu, *Mataniu Feagai ma le Ata Aoga Amata* of EFKS Mangere West, *Savali o le Filemu Aoga Amata* of EFKS Weymouth and *Fetu i Sasa’e Aoga Amata* of EFKS East Tamaki. These are only a named few of the early childhood centres under the EFKS umbrella in New Zealand that value and promote the Samoan language. In this context, *fa’aSamoa* is also encouraged from a young age. For example, prayers before meals and learning to say *tulou*⁵³ when walking in front of people are encouraged in the *aoga*.

⁵¹ *Poto* – smart or wise

⁵² *Aoga Amata* – Samoan Early Childhood Language Nest.

⁵³ *Tulou* – excuse me

Although the Samoan language is a chief component of the *fa'aSamoa*, there are other components that make up the Samoan culture. Mulitalo (1998, as cited in Apulu, 2010, p. 29) shares that:

“Fa'aSamoa is the total make up of the Samoan culture, which comprises visible and invisible characteristics and in turn forms the basis of principles, values, and beliefs that influence and control the behaviour and attitudes of Samoans. Fa'aSamoa is the ‘umbilical cord’ that attaches Samoans to their culture.”

Conclusion

The traditional EFKS branches in the church such as the *Aoga Aso Sa*, *Autalavou*, *Aufaipese*, *Mafutaga a Tina* (Tanielu, 2004; Tima, 2013) have now too extended to *Autalavou laiti*, *Mafutaga a Tama*, *Mafutaga a Tiakono*, *Aufaipese a Tupulaga Talavou*, Young Women's groups and more over time. Some EFKS churches have introduced a space for young couples who do not fit in either the *Autalavou* or the *Mafutaga a Tama* groups. These groups have been created to meet the changing times as well as the changing environments our people and youth continue to encounter and experience, especially away from the homeland in Samoa. There are existing youth programmes in the EFKS, yet it seems that there are more services and workshops available for the young people in Samoa than those living abroad. This is understandable as the EFKS base in Samoa is where processes and issues need to be passed first. However, this warrants attention as there is a need for the programmes that are conducted in the homeland in countries abroad. The young people in Aotearoa feel left out and not valued when there are different standards between *Autalavou* groups.

“E lē mafai e soo se malosi faalelalolagi ona liua le faamanuia a le Atua”

– Rev Elder Faigame Tagoilelagi (1980)

The EFKS has identified the shifting ways of the world and has therefore attempted to develop and adapt to these changes to meet the needs of its congregations and members today. The quote used above in my acknowledgements always makes me think of our young people in Aotearoa. With limitations, boundaries and challenges, the youth still thrive and achieve. The young people who want homework centres in their churches continue to graduate from universities and the young people who are not heard in the church, continue to speak up for their parents in contexts away from the church. The

young people who are ridiculed for not knowing enough Samoan, still want to learn *fa'aSamoa* and identify themselves as being Samoan. The young people who question the financial responsibilities and obligations in the church nevertheless contribute and give support to their parents and families. No person or strength in this world can stop the blessings of God upon the (young) people.

However, it is the duty and the mission of the EFKS church to ensure that our young people and their development and participation in the church is encouraged and supported through its programmes and leaders. How is this achieved? How can it be improved? The church needs to provide more opportunities for young people to ask questions and to be given answers so that there is a (better) understanding of not only the EFKS protocols, processes and doctrines but of the Samoan language and culture also. The following chapter, a literature review on youth development and youth participation will help to explore these questions and notions.

Chapter 3

Literature Review

[12] Aua ne'i inoino se tasi i lou taule'ale'a⁵⁴, a ia fai oe ma faa-a'oa'o i e ua faatuatua, i le upu, ma le amio, ma le alofa, ma le loto, ma le faatuatua, ma le amio mamā. [14a] Aua ne'i faatalale i le meaalofa na tuuina atu ia te oe...

- 1 Timoteo 4:12, 14

[12] Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. [14a] Do not neglect the gift that is in you...

- 1 Timothy 4:12, 14

Introduction

The above quote from the Bible without doubt reflects the 12 youth participants of this research as it is they who displayed much love and faith in who they are and their churches. This verse serves as a reminder to that no one is ever too young to learn, to teach, to question, to speak and to lead. This message should be used to guide youth development and youth participation in the church. How then can this Bible verse be applied to this thesis and especially to achieving effective youth participation for young people of the EFKS? This chapter is organised in three parts. Part One will briefly outline what youth development is, as this is the makeup of what youth participation is about. Part Two will be the core and central focus of this chapter, analysing what youth participation means, especially in the church context. Part Three will present the literature available on youth development and youth participation in a Pasefika and Samoan context. Here, I give my own definition of youth participation and what it should look like in the church.

Young people are surrounded in an increasingly difficult circle of influence including peers, school, and media. In addition, the increasing emphasis on individualism in Western culture has resulted in an increase in youth independence and responsibility in society and an increasingly interdependent parent-youth relationship (Dollahite &

⁵⁴ *taule'ale'a* – young man, youth or untitled man. Although this word refers specifically to male youth in this context, but it also includes that of female youth.

Thatcher, 2008). This is mirrored in the social and economic wellbeing of Pacific young people which differs considerably from that of other populations in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2006; Crothers, 2012). Evidence indicates that Pacific young people are disproportionately disadvantaged by low educational achievement, poor health and poverty, providing considerable barriers to their participation in employment and their long term economic and social wellbeing (Dunphy et al., 2008). These challenges for young people have prompted numerous youth development and participation views, youth networks, strategic frameworks and mentoring programmes in New Zealand and countries abroad. This makes it all the more important for the EFKS to address youth problems and issues in order to achieve positive youth participation in churches.

Part 1: What is youth development?

There are many definitions of youth development by different youth organisations not only in globally but in New Zealand. The Ministry of Youth Development (MYD) (2013) states:

Youth development means growing and developing the skills and attitudes young people need to take part in society, now and in the future. Youth development is about young people gaining a:

- *Sense of contributing something of value to society*
- *Feeling of connectedness to others and to society*
- *Belief that they have choices about their future*
- *Feeling of being positive and comfortable with their own identity.*

It's about building strong connections and active involvement in all areas of life including:

- *Family and whānau*
- *Schools, training institutions and workplaces*
- *Communities (sports, church, cultural groups)*
- *Peer groups.*

It is also about young people being involved and having a say in decisions that affect them, their family, their community and their country and putting into practice and reviewing those decisions.

McLaren (2002, p. 7) declares “in positive youth development, we are interested in what is needed for young people to grow into constructive, autonomous individuals with a high level of well-being”. Flanagan and Faison (2001) see the importance of the inclusive of all youth in defining group goals for positive youth development. A major youth development research in America gathered findings on positive development programmes and that this concept of positive youth development is not yet well defined. However, it identifies the features positive youth development programmes generally seek to achieve. This includes one or more of the following objectives (Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak & Hawkins, 1999, p. 8).

- *Promote bonding*
- *Foster resilience*
- *Promote social, emotional, cognitive, behavioural, and moral competence*
- *Foster self-determination*
- *Foster spirituality*
- *Foster self-efficacy*
- *Foster clear and positive identity*
- *Foster belief in the future*
- *Provide recognition for positive behaviour and opportunities for pro-social involvement*
- *Foster prosocial norms (healthy standards for behaviour)*

The above definitions or understandings of youth development all have the key words of identity or being individuals. There is emphasis on involvement and contribution which clearly expresses the importance for youth to have a voice and a role in things that concern them. Dunphy et al. (2008) stresses five points on youth development and that it is shaped by the big picture, it needs good information and it is about young people being connected. The last two principles of youth development states that it is based on a consistent strengths based approach and it happens through quality relationships and youth participation.

Each young person has a number of key tasks to undertake on the path to adulthood. How well each of these is mastered affects the degree of success each of them will experience in their adult life. In positive youth development, we are interested in what is needed for young people to grow into constructive, autonomous individuals with a high level of well-being (McLaren, 2002, p. 7).

McLaren’s (2002) research tells that parents, schools, peers and communities can make a big difference by providing positive conditions and situations that make it more likely

for young people to thrive. Caddie (2011) agrees that families and communities are important for positive youth development as historically, young people in Māori communities participated in a series of developmental processes to prepare them for adulthood and to mark the transition to roles of responsibility within their *whānau* and *hapū*. This is similar in the Samoan context in that the *tatau* was once seen as an initiation for young Samoan male into adulthood (Solomona, 2010). Positive youth development needs to be culturally appropriate and this is recognised by the MYD (2013) and Ministry of Social Development (MSD) as policies and programmes can no longer be designed as one size fits all as all personal, cultural and social realities are different.

“Māori Elders were and are considered a ‘great storeroom’ of information and their wisdom and knowledge is considered essential to the teaching of practical and social skills, ethics and knowledge” (Hemara, 2000, p. 43). Caddie (2011) expresses that inter-generational sharing and communication of knowledge and values was and still is vital to the wellbeing of the *hapū* where it involved passing on the skills and understanding that were vital for economic and social wellbeing. Hemara (2000) adds on to this stating the Māori development process was initiated before birth and carried on throughout childhood and adolescence where “children were active participants in political affairs and were encouraged to engage in community discussions and activities from an early age” (p. 15). Cultural backgrounds and histories need to be acknowledged and understood for positive youth development to be achieved in the church.

Youth development is about young people being connected (MYD, 2013; MYD, 2009). This is expressed by Caddie (2011) as vital for Māori *rangatahi* as strong bonds between individuals and *whānau* are based on trust and respect that ensures the wellbeing and growth of *rangatahi* and the community. It is also to benefit the welfare of future generations. Dunphy et al (2008, p.20) also addresses similar views as for a “Pasefika young person, individual success is attributed to, and is secondary to the success of the family”. Yet this collective way of being, is frequently challenged by Western values and New Zealand society today where individual success takes priority. As a result, a young Pasefika person needs to be skilful to constantly move between two cultures as well as have an appreciation of both to be successful, which are notions that

have been researched by writers in New Zealand such as Siuauane (2004), Tiatia (1998), Wilson (2010) and So'o (2007).

It is important to include in this review the three strategies below by Caddie (2011, p. 10) that were commonly employed to ensure young people developed in customs, ways and behaviours that were strong. Here, it is vital to equip the *hapū* with people who can protect and enhance the interests of the community:

1. Pūkengatanga: One of the most common and important strategies was where an elder (pūkenga) took a young person under their care and taught them directly, as a mentor to feed them knowledge. The student would accompany the elder to hui and special occasions, the child functioning as a link between generations that ensured the survival of critical knowledge about connections between people, places and the natural world (Stirling, 1980, pp.88–93, as cited in Caddie, 2011, p. 10).

2. Whare Wānanga: Whare wānanga were formal structures established to pass on specialist skills and knowledge; participants were often selected because they displayed gifts in the particular interests of each whare wānanga (e.g. diplomatic skills, cultivation, physical aptitude, carving, etc) (Royal, 2003, pp.73–79; Best, 2005, pp.62–63, as cited in Caddie, 2011, p. 10).

3. Urungatanga: This approach has been termed 'education through exposure', where participants were not given formal instruction but were exposed to a situation and expected to work out what was going on and solve problems that arose. This type of education included areas as diverse as cultivation, childcare, and public occasions such as the structure and roles within hui and tangi (Hemara, 2000, p. 21).

Māori youth development and its common approaches are most relevant to the context of Samoan youth development and youth participation. In the Māori community, traditionally a code of ethical practice lived within every community through the practice and maintenance of tikanga and kawa and other concepts such as *tapu*, *noa*, *utu*, *hara*, *murū* and *koha*. These code of ethics were not written but were developed and maintained through enduring relationships within *hapū* (Caddie, 2011). Helu-Thaman (2007) has similar beliefs expressing the importance of the network of

relationships reflected in many Pasefika cultures' idea of a metaphorical space between and among persons known in Samoan as the *va* (Tuagalu, 2008). These spaces which can refer to the relationship between young people and communities need to be 'protected and nurtured with respect, tolerance and responsibility' (Helu-Thaman, 2003). These cultural indicators are vital in achieving positive youth development in the church.

Finally, the Māori youth development practise and its theories for application is much more relevant to the Samoan youth of the EFKS church than that of the general youth development and its principles defined by the MYD. The *va*, connection and relationship between the elders and youth, and between traditions and modern values need to be upheld for youth development to be successful in the church.

Part 2: What is youth participation?

Youth participation cannot be explained without first exploring youth development. Effective youth participation is creating opportunities for young people. Successful youth participation allows young people to be involved in influencing, shaping, designing and contributing to policy and the development of services and programmes (Ministry of Youth Development, 2009). All people and communities "can contribute to the positive development of young people by creating opportunities for them to influence, inform, shape, design and contribute to an idea or activity" (MYD, 2009, p. 3). Through this, positive participation is achieved. Including young people in the development of procedures, services and programmes for them, it can reassure them that they are valued and important in the church. Young people as well as adults can gain experience and new skills through youth participation (MYD, 2009; Wyn & Harris, 2004; McLaren, 2002).

McLaren (2002) expresses that youth participation is also about community activities that make a difference by expressing and reinforcing a young person's identity. Dunphy et. al (2008), CCCS Queensland District Youth (2012) and Fa'alau (2011) all agree that parents and families that are involved in community activities themselves and actively encourage and praise their children for getting involved increase the likelihood of youth participation. Research by Fouva'a (2011) also addresses the importance of

young people being involved and participating in family or church fono⁵⁵ as it can create unity within communities as well as increasing their understanding and knowledge of processes including the Samoan language. These are some of the benefits of youth participation when practised and valued in the church.

Principles of Youth Participation

“Access to effective youth participation in our communities is important for young people’s wellbeing and their sense of belonging, identity and citizenship”
(MYD, 2009, p.5).

The MYD (2009, p. 6) bases youth participation on five principles:

- *Youth being informed*
- *Youth having an effect on outcomes*
- *Youth organising themselves*
- *Youth making decisions or being involved in decision-making*
- *Youth being involved in follow-up*

The youth participation principles suggests real opportunities need to be offered for young people to be actively involved in decisions that affect their lives and communities. The ‘Keepin’ it real’ document by the MYD (2009), states that before involving young people in any decision-making, there are a number of steps that need to be facilitated to ensure good youth participation practice. Other youth participation principles are presented together by the Australia’s National Children’s and Youth Law Centre (1995), United Kingdom’s International Save the Children Alliance Ltd (2005) and New Zealand’s MYD (2009, p. 12) to help support organisations and communities in involving young people meaningfully and effectively in decision-making. There are three steps presented to achieving youth participation:

Step 1: Get organisation commitment

- *Support staff doing youth participation.*
- *Allocate adequate resources.*
- *Offer real roles and relevant issues to young people.*
- *Value young people’s contributions.*
- *Involve young people from the beginning to the end of the process.*

⁵⁵ fono – meeting(s)

Step 2: Create space for young people's involvement

- *Acknowledge young people's cultural beliefs and values.*
- *Invite a diverse range of young people to participate.*
- *Ensure participation opportunities are accessible.*
- *Inform young people about opportunities and that they are under no obligation to participate.*
- *Recognise participation is beneficial to young people.*

Step 3: Create a youth-friendly environment

- *Build positive relationships between your organisation and young people.*
- *Develop a sense of belonging and security for young people.*
- *Create youth participation that is fun and challenging.*
- *Provide young people with information about the issue and the decision-making process.*
- *Provide young people with timely feedback about the decision-making process and how their input was used.*

As mentioned above with Pūkengatanga, this is also common in the Samoan culture where an elder takes a young person under their care, to teach and to mentor them. This is *va tapu'ia* and *va fealoa'i* (Tuagalu, 2008) between generations is observed, learnt and lived. Retired EFKS Reverend Evile (2007, p. 81) shares this view and states:

“Frequently the congregation hosts visiting preachers requiring a to'onai after the service. Here again the exhibition of fa'aSamoa is put into practice in a combination of Christian love and traditional hospitality, although the full expression of a kava ceremony is denied in view of the day. I have used this kind of situation as a classroom for the youth fellowship to try their skills on the pronouncement of food and presentation of the sua”.

Benefits of Youth Participation in churches

The research of Hoge and Petrillo (1978) is still relevant today expressing that at the time a strong factor in youth's participation in church youth programmes depended greatly on the qualities of the adult leaders as well as the quality of relationship the young people had with their families. Having a poor relationship with family and adults in the church can transfer into poor youth participation resulting in young people leaving the church (Hoge & Petrillo, 1978; Tiatia, 1998, Tunufa'i, 2005.) This notion is

extended by Wagener et.al (2003) describing that not only are relationships important in the church but church-based programmes were more effective than community-based or school-based programmes involving youth mentors. This is further supported by Maton and Wells (2005, as cited in Wagener et. al, 2003, p. 272):

“Formed mentoring relationships in a religious setting reported more positive effects from the mentoring, achieved greater school attendance and better high school grades, had fewer school drop-outs and had longer term mentoring relationships than young people who had formed mentoring relationships outside of a religious setting.”

Mentors in this context can and does include church ministers, youth leaders and members of the church. This study shows some evidence that churches can have a greater and positive influence on young people than schools and other community groups. Flanagan and Faison (2001) expresses this view stating positive youth participation in programmes and organisations allows for young people to explore what it means to be a member of that group and to define what it means to be a part of that group. McLaren (2002, p.142) sees the benefits acknowledging that “positive youth participation in positive community activities has a positive impact on young people, including less drinking, drug taking and truanting, better education and career outcomes, less delinquent activity and better attitudes and behaviour regarding sex”. A keyword here is ‘positive’ which further enhances the notion that programmes and activities for young people must be of quality.

A recurring theme is the importance of positive role models who are representative of the Pasefika groups that young people belong to and who are able to show them that it is possible to succeed. Good role models are needed in churches for positive youth participation to be achieved. Dunphy et. al (2008) shares that when young people see others of the same cultural group succeed, this has a profound positive impact on both their cultural identity and aspiration levels. To have meaning, the role modelling must be within the context of a real and close mentoring relationship, built on trust and reciprocity. A chief principle of youth participation advises that before involving young people in any decision-making, there are various steps that will help guarantee good youth participation practice and preparation (Ministry of Youth Development, 2009). Role models of the same cultural background and of the same context can be achieved in

the EFKS church, this is one step closer to ensuring positive youth participation exists in the church.

Part 3: Pasefika and Samoan Youth Development and Youth Participation

I initially had two sub-headings with Pasefika youth and Samoan youth, but with limited data and great similarities I have decided to put all the information together. In a review of 26 articles on youth mentoring which had some inclusion of Māori and Pasefika youth, it showed that while almost all programmes and associated research were culturally appropriate to the overall New Zealand context, they tended to be less culturally appropriate for programmes working with Māori and Pasefika youth (Farruggia, Bullen, Solomon, Collins & Dunphy, 2011). This mirrors that also of reviews and research on youth development and youth participation specific to the Pasefika or Samoan young people.

The official definitions of youth development and youth participation as outlined by the MYD (2008) are very generic in that it is not exactly relevant to Māori and Pasefika youth. In relation to Pasefika youth, like Māori, they have a need to understand their personal and ancestral history (Farruggia et al., 2011). This is also the reason a ‘Pacific youth development strategy document’ was created by the Ministry of Social Development (2005). Huffer (2006, p. 8) agrees with the notion of family in Pasefika youth participation as “community and family play an important role in making sure children become socially responsible and productive members for the future”. In the Samoan cultural context, identity is linked to three main elements that include belonging and connection to *aiga*,⁵⁶ ancestral land, and knowledge of the Samoan language (Le Tagaloa, 1997). The youth participants in their *Talanoa* often referred to their families, their place of belonging in South Auckland and their respective EFKS churches as well as the homeland of Samoa. They also often discussed and expressed their passion and love for the Samoan language, especially living away from Samoa.

However, there has also been research that discusses the challenges of Pasefika youth in balancing the values of Western Society with traditional values (Anae, 2001; Solomona, 2010; Tiatia, 1998; Tunufa’i, 2005). This can be connected to the differences in the

⁵⁶ *Aiga* – family which includes extended family.

individualistic and collectivistic ways of living, as in Western society, individual achievement is highly valued, contrary in a collectivistic or communal environment, success and achievement is about the whole group or community. The EFKS embraces collectivity where much literature on Samoan data by Samoan researchers (Meleiseā, 1987; Tinitali, 2002; Tuisuga-le-taua, 2009) confirm this notion that continues to illustrate the way Samoan communities operate and function. In addition to this, the hierarchical nature of Pasefika communities means the concept of “youth participation in governance is alien or even regarded as unrealistic in Pacific communities” (McMurray, 2006, p. 19). McMurray (2006) claims that few Pasefika people understand that how youth participation can advance the flow of information within communities and lead to improved decision-making, without reducing respect for elders. This thesis, has been written so that the concept of youth participation is acknowledged in existing in the EFKS churches, but a change in attitude is needed towards youth participation by some Samoan and EFKS communities.

A book titled ‘*O si manu a ali’i*’ by Simanu (2002) is a text for the advanced study of Samoan language and culture. The author tells of the story and context of the title of her book.

In the Samoan culture, children are not allowed to be in close proximity of the chiefs particularly when they are in meeting. In ancient times, Chief Fānene of Falealili violated this tradition by allowing his grandson to climb about him and make noise while the chiefs were seating in ceremony. The gathered chiefs became concerned and called the child an animal (manu) that should be taken away. Fānene begged forgiveness and, through his gift of oratory, referred to the child as an ‘animal for the chiefs’ – ‘o si manu a ali’i’ (Simanu, p. 9).

‘*O si manu a ali’i*’ captures the legacy and the spirit of the *fa’aSamoa*: to learn through serving and through living the culture – in the case of Fānene’s grandson, through his future *tautua* or service to the chiefs. Here illustrates another side of youth development and youth participation from the Samoan culture. When leadership roles in the church are appointment or voted for, people first look to see who has been serving them. Traditionally, it does not matter how ‘clever, experienced or qualified’ one is for a leadership role in the church, if they have not served the people and congregation first then they would not be considered.

However, the EFKS and Samoan leaders have also acknowledged the changing times. The EFKS 50 year anniversary in New Zealand was celebrated in December 2012. Here, a youth summit was held as part of the celebrations where over 1,700 young people registered, the summit raised their issues and concerns by discussing three themes (Tauafiafi, 2012):

- Thank you God for the past 50 years
- Thank you God for me arriving in this 50 years
- Tell me God, what should I be doing for the next 50 years?

This summit was the first of its kind held for young people of the EFKS in Aotearoa, where youth were invited from all three *matāgaluega* of Auckland, Manukau and the South Island district to attend and participate. At present, the Summit report is being compiled by a committee with resolutions to be acted on.

Youth participation is indeed a child or young person's right. Still, their definitions and understandings can vary with different generations and cultures. At an international level, the cultural rights of children are specifically recognised in 'The Convention on the Rights of the Child' (CRC) where all Pasefika nations have endorsed the CRC (Huffer, 2006) in spite of the fact that the *idea* of rights of the child is not always well accepted in the Pasefika regions. Huffer (2006, p. 6) outlines that within the CRC, the right to culture is upheld in four main areas.

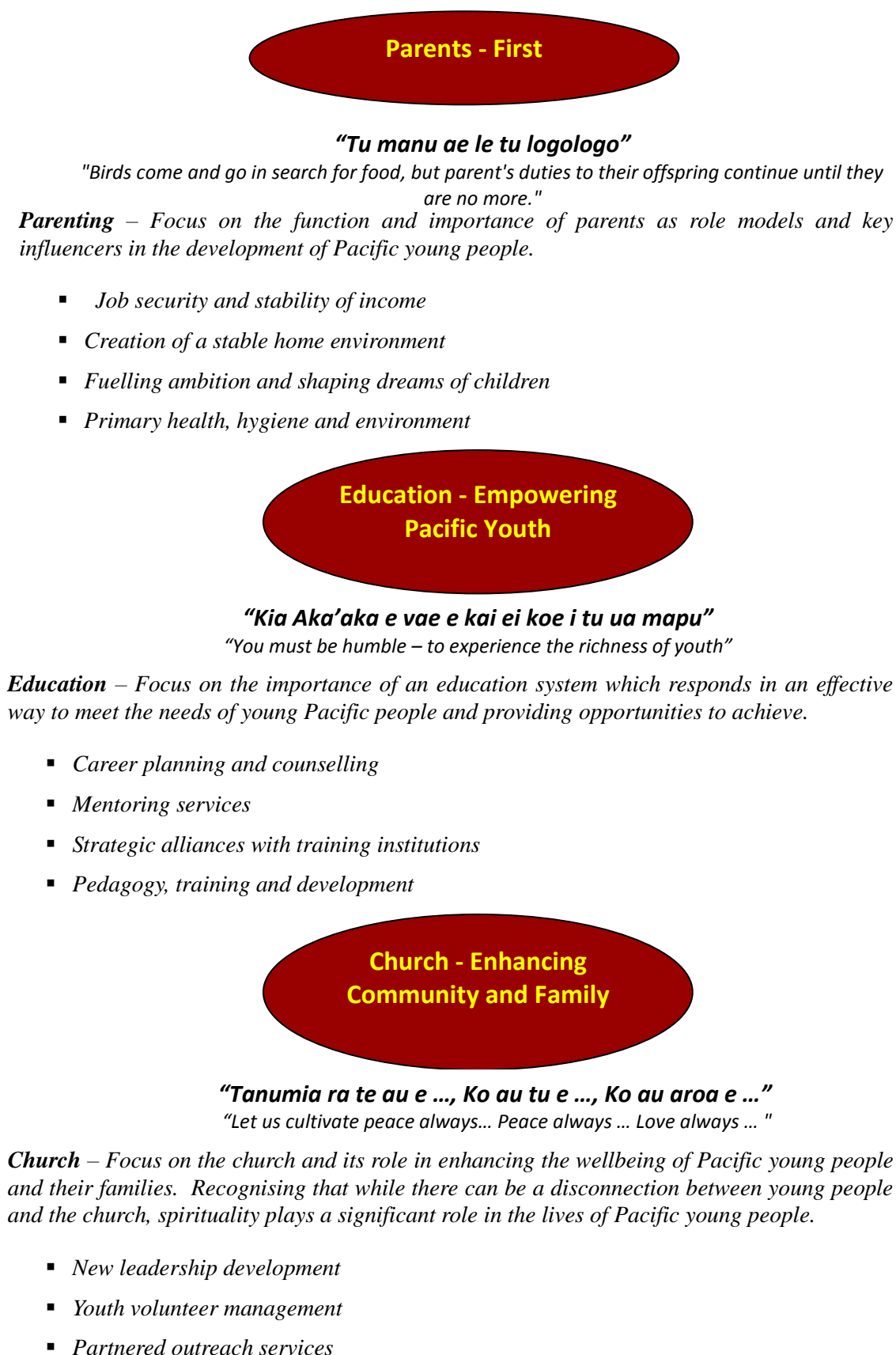
- i. *Access to information*
 - ii. *Education*
 - iii. *Identity*
 - iv. *Participation in cultural life.*
1. *Article 17 seeks to ensure that the child has access to information and material of "social and cultural benefit", from a "diversity of cultural sources"; and calls on State Parties to "encourage the mass media to have particular regard to the linguistic needs of the child who... is indigenous". It also requires State Parties "to encourage the dissemination and production of children's books".*
 2. *Article 29 affirms that education should be directed towards, inter alia, "the development of respect for the child's... own cultural identity, language and values".*

3. *Article 30 states that a “child... who is indigenous shall not be denied the right... to enjoy his or her own culture... or to use his or her own language”.*
4. *Article 31, inter alia, 32 engages State Parties to “recognize the right of the child to... participate freely in cultural life and the arts”; and “to respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life”, and to provide “opportunities for cultural [and] artistic... activity”.*

It is also interesting in this document by Huffer (2006) where at a ‘Children’s Rights and Culture in the Pacific’ conference, she explains that children are groomed to learn who they are and how they should behave through their elders who tell them stories and legends. This supports the notion or idea of the right to culture is upheld through identity. On the other hand, in a modern world with many influences of technology, children are less exposed to culture. Children have easy access to information through technology with media and the internet. It has become a world where young people seek assistance, advice and information from the internet and modern resources rather than through their parents, grandparents and families. The four main areas to uphold the right to culture can either contradict one another or complement one another depending on how it is used by communities and individuals. If young people seek further knowledge from the internet without consultation and learning from ‘experts’ or determining first that the information is of a reliable source, then false or incorrect information can be received and accepted by one as the truth.

On the next page is a strategic framework for achieving youth participation suggested by the Ministry of Social Development (2005, p. 7). The church for Pasefika youth is clearly identified as being an important role in enhancing the wellbeing of young people and their families. This further expresses the significance of the EFKS church in South Auckland in contributing and helping its young people, especially with the negative stigma that is often associated with South Auckland and youth offending, youth gangs and youth crime (Crothers, 2012; Solomona, 2010).

Figure 1: STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK - Underpinning Strategies



The church and its role in the lives of young people transports us to our final, but very important discussion on youth and spirituality. Participation in church is another chief component in identity construction and is considered a great ‘partnership’ of cultural immersion in many parts of the Pacific (Huffer, 2006). Children are reminded of what is expected of them and how they should behave where the *aoga faifeau* is instrumental in teaching the *gagana Samoa* as well as literacy skills to the children (Huffer, 2006; Tanielu, 2004). Tunufa’i (2005) who investigated the departure of young New Zealand-born Samoans from Samoan Seventh-day Adventist churches in South Auckland concluded reasons such as the lack of youth participation and their limitations of the Samoan language resulted in youths exiting these churches. Tiatia (1998) also researched youth of the Pacific Island Presbyterian Church (PIPC) over 10 years ago where youth struggled to find a balance within the traditional role of the church and the society they had been brought up in. This is also represented in the study by Taule’ale’ausumai (1991, p. 12) who stated “Being Samoan in New Zealand (NZ) can be very tiring for the NZ born generation. At home one is taught the Samoan way of doing things, but at school one is taught the NZ way of doing things, often these two ways conflict and contradict each other”.

The late Reverend Elder Leuatea Sio who founded the Newton Pacific Island Presbyterian Church (PIPC) – the first Samoan Church in New Zealand in 1947 stated in an interview with Taule’ale’ausumai (1990, p. 23) that “the Christian way of life is so overlapped in many ways with the *fa’aSamoa* that you would find it difficult to see whether the people are Christian Samoans or Samoan Christians”. The 12 youth participants voiced that they had much pride in the EFKS church and its role in maintaining the *gagana Samoa* and *fa’aSamoa*. Unlike the research of Tiatia (1998) and Taule’ale’ausumai (1991) decades ago, there is a shift in the attitudes and perspectives of Samoan youth in their identity. The youth of today appear to be able to walk more comfortably in both worlds even with challenges before them. Flanagan and Faison (2001) highlight that youth need to know the ‘full story’ and not just the ‘good parts’ of history. This further emphasises the need for young people to have access to knowledge and information from its church leaders and church programmes. Many still are not able to answer or comment on the relationship between culture and Christianity.

The change in views and perspectives of young people towards the Samoan language and culture and the church is reflected in recent studies by Apulu (2010) who states that family, church and community should be linked together for youth work and should not be separated. He also states that the ability to use the Samoan language helps build trust between Samoan people. Fa'alau (2011) and Fouva'a (2011) also find the church a valuable institute for Samoan language maintenance. Young people today have more confidence in their cultural identities and express more appreciation and value for the Samoan language in the church. However Taule'ale'ausumai (1991, p. 26) who reported that within the church there are questions of tradition verses commitment mirrors issues young people face today in the church. This creates a problem of communication between parents and children, where the children view their parents' faith as one of tradition minus to spiritual commitment and the parents view the changing faith direction of their children as emotive and detrimental to their Samoan cultural upbringing (Taule'ale'ausumai, 1991). This sees young people questioning the church still today about traditional gift giving and monetary obligations (Lesa, 2012). What is the sole purpose of church? Many churches and its people forget the answer to this question. Before answering Samoan language maintained, education and family, spirituality should be first and foremost.

Benson and Roehlkepartain (2008, p.13) define "spirituality as a deep reality, commitment, and set of practices that are grounded in thousands of years of tradition and divine revelation". Arnett (2000) sees young adulthood as a time for when many directions in life are possible and it is a time for when many are making crucial decisions in life. In agreement, Lerner, Roeser and Phelps (2008) assert that this is a time when youth can discover their life purpose and therefore need proper guidance to become major positive contributors to society. Here, Benson and Roehlkepartain (2008) believe that spiritual development is a missing priority in youth development. Samoan people are spiritual people and this is an important component that needs much addressing with youth participation. At church, there is shared understanding and common interests between people.

Church leaders of all Christian denominations (should) want to know what factors produce Christian adults who have an active spirituality and are engaged in their churches. How important are childhood experiences for

determining adult church involvement and personal religiosity? What kind of adult experiences have the most long-lasting spiritual effect? What causes some young adults to remain involved in church and others to depart? Do adult experiences supersede or build on youthful influences in determining adult spirituality and church behaviour? Do structural influences such as denomination or gender interact with individual factors to produce greater or lesser involvement in religious practice? (O'Connor, Hoge & Alexander, 2002, p. 723).

The above excerpt is from a research in America that discusses the church involvement and youth participation in different Christian churches. Much of the research available on youth and spirituality is from America where there is very little exploration on this theme in New Zealand. However, their findings and information can still be used to address youth development and youth participation in New Zealand in general and with Pasefika youth also in church settings. These questions are all thoughts that prompt ideas and understanding for EFKS youth as well as its adults and leaders. As discussed in the previous chapter, the EFKS has the highest percentage of people attending the EFKS church in Samoa with a membership of over 20,000 people in New Zealand. The church ministers in New Zealand have the role of high chiefs where they lead church communities. Therefore, as McMurray (2006) states traditional and church leaders should be involved in innovative projects as their outlooks shape those of the community.

Conclusion

This chapter analyses some of the experiences, connections and identities young people in South Auckland have in reference to their culture and especially their place in the EFKS church. There is a lot of information and resources available from the MYD website for youth and organisations that work with youth to help with the acknowledgement and understanding of the two notions – youth development and youth participation. However, this is still very much open for debate and discussion by different cultures and communities as groups and individuals have their own set of identities and values. It also challenges the EFKS church to create its own manuals and reports on how its leaders and programmes can ensure quality, positive and effective youth development and youth participation is accomplished.

Although this is so, the outline of youth development and youth participation as well as the definition of *tupulaga talavou*, all come to an agreement that young people are important contributors of society. Family, education and schools as well as communities which include churches, cultural and sports groups are vital connections and strategies youth need to achieve positive youth development and participation. It is important to recognise that these two notions do not only benefit young people but the whole community as well. Although there are resources and understandings available, what must continue to be recognised is that every young person is still an individual with their own independent thoughts, backgrounds, abilities and values.

I will conclude this chapter with the following quote, which I believe summarises the importance of youth participation and youth development in our churches and communities.

“When neighbourhoods lack strengths, family strengths become even more important.

When families lack strengths, neighbourhood strengths become even more important”

(McLaren, 2002, p. 133).

Chapter 4

Methodology and Research Process

“We must examine our own ways of thinking and knowing and explore how they might be changed in order to create a Pacific studies that is Pacific in orientation and inclusive in its processes, contexts, and outcomes” (Helu-Thaman, 2003, p. 14).

Introduction

There has been significant Pasefika research in the past decade; however a great majority of it represents the perspectives and viewpoints of outsiders or non-Pasefika peoples. Still, it must be acknowledged that much of the Pasefika research by non-Pasefika peoples has created a pathway and foundation for recent research. Professor Cluny Macpherson, who is of New Zealand European and Māori descent, is a great example as he is considered by a number of Pasefika peoples to be an insider and a Samoan in his own right, not necessarily because he is married to a Samoan, but because of his work and respect for the Samoan people and that of any Pasefika research. Strengthening this claim is the fact that he has immersed himself in Samoan culture by also learning the *gagana*. In Pasefika research, there is an increasing desire for Pasefika indigenous interpretations of their own histories, traditions, cultures and developments which has also reflected in the growth of Pasefika researchers seeking to develop appropriate research methodologies (Gegeo, 2008; Helu-Thaman, 2003; Vaiioleti, 2006).

Solomona (2010, p.51) states: *“What should drive us as researchers in seeking appropriate research methodologies is the desire that the research will support beneficial outcomes for our people. Our research ideally should not only describe and help understand our experience but also work towards providing adaptive solutions to areas of collective concern”*.

It is vital that a researcher chooses the best methodology for their research, regardless of it being a Western or Pasefika methodology. What makes a methodology the best option? It is one that reflects the ethics and principles of both the people and researcher,

because with any Pasefika research it is essential to consider Pasefika knowledge systems and most importantly its people. Just as the relationship between a parent and child is sacred, the same belief applies to the ‘va’ or ‘relationship’ between the researcher and the people (Tuagalu, 2008). This chapter will be presented into two parts, where part one will outline the *talanoa* methodology used for this research highlighting the vigorous ethics process which raised questions about insider and outsider research. Part two will describe how the research process was carried out.

Part 1: What is the best methodology for Pasefika research?

It is important to choose a methodology that has the best outcome for both the participants and researcher, whether it is a Western or Pasefika methodology. Solomona (2010, p. 37) stated, “Qualitative action research - appealed to me because of the fact that it can be used with a view to improving a situation”. This resonated with me as I remembered an encounter with an ‘academic’ who found out that I was about to start my thesis. She said to me “*Oh ‘it’ doesn’t matter, they just want to know that you can do research, that is all you need to prove*”. I remember feeling let down and discouraged because I was not about to embark on a research journey just to prove to someone that I can do research. A Master’s thesis to me is much more than that; for one, it is a great opportunity to give back by doing something for my Pacific people and community. Like Solomona, I wanted my research topic and methodology to ‘count’ for something and be of ‘value’ not only for the people involved but for me as well.

Vaioleti (2006, p.22) states “*Research methodologies that were designed to identify issues in a dominant culture and provide solutions are not necessarily suitable in searching for solutions for Pacific peoples, whose knowledge and ways of being have unique epistemologies, as well as lived realities here in Aotearoa*”.

Just because one methodology may work well for one research does not necessarily mean it will work well for another. I was on a quest for a methodology that was culturally appropriate and ‘academically fit’ for my research and the people involved. To explore the perspectives of Samoan youth in a Samoan traditional church in Aotearoa, I needed a methodology that would help unpack and unravel the stories of the youth participants. This could not be achieved with a survey or questionnaire.

Qualitative Methodology

Historically, research has been determined by hypotheses and often by any institution's approved questionnaires and theories (Vaioleti, 2006). I felt for my research, a qualitative methodology would be the best option to obtain the true stories, experiences and *Talanoa* from the youth. Quantitative research does not require a personal connection or relationship between the researcher and participants and for me this would not achieve an empowering research for the youth or myself. Mo'ungatonga (2003, as cited in Vaioleti, 2006, p. 23) who was involved in a major Pacific families' research project for numerous years reported that Pasefika people were tired of surveys. They were often greeted with 'How long will this take?' This is of no surprise, as Pasefika people have long been treated as just objects and fillers for research.

Qualitative research looks for description, a better understanding of human behaviour and experiences where some seek to empower and change (Bogdan & Bilken, 2003). Imagine if I were to put research questions in to a survey and send this through to all the EFKS churches of the Manukau *matāgaluega* for any interested youth to complete and send back to me. This may have been the easiest option, but this would not have been accepted by the gatekeepers or *Faifeau* of churches. I presume the parents of the youth would not be impressed also as the concept of surveys are very much alien to that of Pasefika thinking. There is the hope however, that in the future the negative stigma on surveys will vanish as statistics and numbers can also tell a story through graphs displaying the number of youth programmes that are currently available to young people. This is one main aspect that is missing from this research.

In any Pasefika setting, there is always an introduction and acknowledgement of the people at present. More importantly, a qualitative research allows for the most important part of the research - the participants, to have their voices heard in the way they want to be heard and not sanitised or minimised by impersonal data and surveys.

Vaioleti (2006, p. 23) states "for Pasefika peoples, the historical pattern of data collection, knowledge creation and theorising has been established by outside researchers gathering Pacific people's stories. They then try to make sense of the stories, and retell them, from their own sense-making stances". I have a vivid memory of a European couple who visited my grandparents at the church manse in the early 1990's. I believe I had not turned 10 at the time, but this couple came in to ask my grandparents questions. I am not certain of the nature of the questions but all I

remember was this feeling of anger, because this couple would shout questions very slowly to my grandparents who were very capable of speaking and writing in English! There was no conversation or *Talanoa*; there was no *mafana*⁵⁷ in trying to get to know the ‘participants’ who were my grandparents. The couple were only interested in getting the boxes ticked on their survey. “Qualitative researchers want to know when, how and under what circumstances behaviour comes into being. What historical circumstances and movements are they part of? Each act, word and gesture is significant in the eyes of the qualitative researcher” (Bogdan & Bilken, 2003, p.1).

Pasefika Methodology

Until 1970, most of the literature about the Pacific and Pacific peoples was written by people living outside the Pacific (Tawake, 2000). Tupuola (1994) expresses that there needs to be a change in the perception that Pacific methodologies are not of academic or scholarly standard. Tui Atua (2009, as cited in Tuafuti, 2011, p. 37) agrees with this view, stating “Pacific people should draw on the strengths, understandings and meanings of their worlds and have their own role models leading (the research)”. I feel very fortunate that the scholars and academics of the last few decades and their writings have allowed me more freedom and choice in the methodologies and theories I have today. Here, I feel it is important to acknowledge work by scholars for Pacific works by writing and valuing our own Pacific works and research. Helu-Thaman (2003, p. 11) writes about her memories as an undergraduate student at the University of Auckland in the 1960s:

“I learned that in order to be modern and successful at university I had to hang my cultural orientation and identification on the trees at Albert Park and forget who I was for a while. But this is the twenty-first century and things have changed. Postmodernists tell us that there is no real justification for claiming that any type of knowledge or perspective is a better representation of reality than any other, making different perspectives just as valid and worthwhile as one’s own”.

⁵⁷ *Mafana* – warm and mutual relationship.

There is a great need for our Pasefika people to reclaim their own knowledge, values and methodologies as to make the research and work more relevant and meaningful for our communities. There are currently different models of Pasefika research which include Professor Konai Helu Thaman's metaphor of *Kakala* (1988) and Teremoana Maua-Hodges's *Tivaevae* model (2000). There is also Fuimaono Karl Pulotu-Endemann's *Fonofale* model of health and Tamasese, Peteru and Waldegrave's *Fa'afaletui* model which are two great examples of Pacific approaches used to address Pacific health issues (Health Research Council of New Zealand, 2005). There is a significant amount of Pasefika research methodologies and conceptual frameworks available as legitimate and authentic options for Pasefika researchers today. This has seen the increase of Pasefika and Samoan researchers using Pasefika methodologies in their research (Solomona, 2010; Penn, 2010; Wilson, 2010). McFall-McCaffery (2010) positions Pacific research as important to consider Pacific knowledge systems as they provide for perspectives of Pacific peoples to be represented and embodied in culturally appropriate ways.

Phenomenology

To capture the voice of the youth participants, phenomenology methodology is used as it focuses on people's attitudes and perceptions in regards to events or experiences. Social phenomenology is an approach that explores the 'whole' people's values, principles, knowledge as well as their understandings of the past, the present and the future. This fits with the Samoan worldview of acknowledging cultural values and knowledges which are essential to an understanding of the Samoan construction of reality. This includes "practices which are essential to the development of an effective and productive research relationship between researchers and participants in Samoan settings" (Fa'alau, 2011, p.90). I decided to employ the concept of phenomenology as a key aspect of research methodology as I felt the concept of 'bracketing' was very relevant and useful in my communication with the youth participants. This called for me to just stand back from my comfort zone and to just listen to the youth participants (Tuafuti, 2011, p.38). Phenomenology allows for every person to have their own realities, their own truths, and these are taken as significant in their own right (Wilson, 2010). This understanding is important in working and discussing different notions with the youth participants.

Talanoa Methodology

Talanoa is a word used in several of the native languages in Oceania to refer to three interconnected events: story, act of telling (of memories, stories, longings and more), and occasion of conversation (teasingly and critically, and usually informally). Talanoa is more than one or two of these, for Talanoa is all three events – story telling, conversation – together. Talanoa is a point of intersection, like a passage in a reef, through which currents and waves whirl with the rising and receding tides (Havea, 2010, p. 11).

Of all the Western and Pasefika methodologies available to me, I chose *Talanoa* for my research. There are many reasons for this, but the most important motivation was that at the end of the day I did not want my choice of methodology to be seen as a ‘worthless work or wasted effort’ for the youth participants and me as the researcher. Vaiioleti (2006) notes that Pacific people have endured years of disempowering research, with little social or economic development in their health or education and that on the basis of results like these, it can be argued that the inclusion of Pacific peoples as research participants over the years has been valueless work and unused effort. I wanted the youth to feel a sense of achievement even before my thesis was to be completed, I wanted them to feel respected and that their time used to *Talanoa* with me was valued and appreciated. *Talanoa* would not be a foreign concept for the youth as well and if at the end of this research journey all the youth participants had gained was a feeling of respect for their opinions, experiences, concerns, challenges and stories, then my decision to choose the *Talanoa* methodology would be vindicated.

“*Sasa’a faaoti le utu a le faimea*” is a Samoan proverb that refers to the complete emptying of the bamboo vessel or holder of a fisherman. It is generally used to back up an earnest desire for as many songs or stories that a visitor can give (EFKS, 2013). This proverb illustrates what *Talanoa* means for me in this research. It is my goal, my duty as a researcher to choose a methodology that provides a safe and relaxed space for the youth to empty and pour all their stories and experiences about any matters and issues no matter how sensitive. Havea (2010, p. 15) articulates that “*Talanoa* has become an opportunity for peace building, and for (national) reformation and reconciliation between warring sides”. Although there is no “war” as such in the EFKS church, there has been dialogue and perceptions that a generational gap does exist within the church

between adults or elders and youth. The challenge is how to make the *Talanoa* last longer than the event itself. I find the *Talanoa* process to be of great value as it allows for learning and reflecting on the past as well as giving hope and faith for the future. I had advised the youth participants that our *Talanoa* does not have to stop with this research and that they were most welcome to see me again based on the principles of inclusion and our most common factor of being in the EFKS church.

This brings us to the wise words of Helu-Thaman (2003, p.11) who states “Pacific programmes need indigenous cultural knowledge in order to validate and legitimize their work, particularly in the eyes of indigenous peoples”. This can be represented with Pasefika research, where more community based research needs to be conducted and completed by its people. The limitations and boundaries of ‘insider’ research can be seen too often as an escape to writing and researching about one’s own people. I was determined to not only explore the perspectives of EFKS youth, but to also conduct the interviews myself. In *Talanoa*, “tellers and listeners sit in the same circle; they are the same people” (Havea, 2010, p. 17). The young people appreciated the opportunity given to *Talanoa* about their own position and experiences in the church.

Havea (2010) further expresses that *Talanoa* requires participants to be responsible for each other and that *Talanoa* is what brings them together. It is an event in responsibility, in the spirited sense that ‘responsibility’ has to “do with response-ability, that is, *Talanoa* has to do with the ability to respond” (p. 12). If a researcher does not have the ability to respond to the participants and does not feel a responsibility towards them, then *Talanoa* as an option of methodology should not be available to them. Finally, Vaiioleti (2006, p. 23) writes “Pasefika peoples may see research as work that will contribute to enhancing their ability to meet their cultural roles and obligations. This perception is reflected in a question often asked about research: ‘*Who is this work going to be useful for?*’”

Ethics

Before any field work and interviews could be conducted, approval from the AUT Ethics Committee (AUTECH) was attained in accordance with the AUTECH policies and processes (See Appendices – Appendix IX on (pp. 162-163).

Insider/Outsider Perspective

The common question of whether qualitative researchers should be members of the population they are studying or not is one that is continuously debated. Although this issue has been explored within the context of qualitative research, it has mostly been reserved for discussions of observation, field research, and ethnography (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). The ethics committee were very thorough in questioning my role as a *faletua* of an *a'oa'o* in the church and whether this was a conflict of interest. Although this was frustrating at times, it was also a good opportunity to explain how things are not always as black and white and how Western and Pasefika concepts can be very different. It also proved that ideas, perspectives, processes and protocols between communities can differ in ways of doing things.

In any Samoan context, a person's identity is always asked of. Introductions include names, genealogies and histories. Tui Atua (2008, p. 207), as a keynote speaker for the Faculty of Arts Māori and Pacific Leadership Programme Dinner, University of Auckland, states "In Polynesia we are often asked: where is your *turangawaewae* (or in Samoan your *tulaga vae*)? This is a question about place. Knowing your indigenous reference is a question about identity. Both are core to the question of Māori and Pacific leadership." These words were vital in this research as young people are often the group that are most exploited in whatever context and they are also the group whose voices are least heard. Therefore my position as a researcher was important for the youth, their parents, families and churches. Who was I to interview them? Who was I to show interest in the youth of the EFKS? In fact, the youth and their families would ask the following questions:

- Who are you to do this research?
- Who are your parents and grandparents?
- Who is your family?
- What gives you the right to ask these questions?

Maykut and Morehouse (1994, p. 123) found that "for insider research one must be aware of how one's own biases and preconceptions may be influencing what one is trying to understand". This was important for me to address even before I made an ethics application and even before I decided on my research topic. Being an insider or

an outsider or both does not make one any better or worse as a researcher, I believe these are only notions that one must consider and think of carefully before embarking on any research. Here, the Ethics Committee had their concerns and asked me to answer the two following questions:

Dwyer and Buckle (2009, p. 58) states: “*As is clear, there are costs and benefits to be weighed regarding the insider versus outsider status of the researcher... the positive and negative elements of each must therefore be carefully assessed*”. Here, I acknowledge that I am an outsider as I am no longer a member of the youth group because of the status that an *a’oa’o* and a *faletua* have within the church. Like Tuafuti (2010), as a Samoan researcher and community member, this research journey has allowed me to study and learn how to overcome challenges with research. This piece of research reflects the ongoing work, roles and responsibilities the EFKS church has for its people and also that of the EFKS people for the community in Aotearoa.

Part 2: Research Process

Recruitment

There was much discussion and debate in what process to use in recruiting youth for the research interviews. I had initially convinced myself that attending the 15 different youth groups to briefly explain my research and invite them to take part would be the best idea. Moreover, I thought it would be culturally appropriate as this way I could acknowledge, inform and ask *Faifeau* for their blessings and support for my research. However questions arose around youth feeling obliged into becoming youth participants for my research. In addition, due to time and financial constraints this would prove to be difficult with limited resources. It was then decided to give ‘handouts’ that consisted of a letter advising of my research proposal, my contact details and an invitation for them to ask me any questions as well as a plea for a letter of recommendation to support my ethics (AUTEC) application. This was a daunting task for me as these were given to the *Faifeau* and their wives at the end of a *matāgaluega tofiga* in June and July of 2011 with the help of my husband. I did not know what kind of reaction I would receive or if any support would be given.

As the EFKS Manukau *matāgaluega* consists of 15 churches from Tokoroa to Pakuranga, it would prove to be a timely and costly process. Even more challenging, would be limiting the number of youth participants to be interviewed to 12 if there were to be a great interest or response from the youth. To address this problem, a Facebook advertisement to inform of my research and a single information session would be held was announced in a post. This message was posted online for one week on an existing EFKS page, my own personal page and individual EFKS church pages of the Manukau region that I had access to. It was also made known from the start that I, a wife or *Faletua* of an *A'oa'o*, was the main researcher so that youth were aware of my role. I also felt this was an important part of the process so that the youth did not have any unnecessary surprises on my part. This again would allow for the youth to make a decision whether they would like to be participants or not before attending the information session.

On this day, everything was in place along with food and drinks to accommodate the youth. However, things did not go to plan as after an hour not a single youth member had showed up for the information session. This experience made me reflect on how different Western and Pasefika concepts are. It was obvious that an information session was not a safe and comfortable space for them or it could have been organised for the wrong time. An alternative that was culturally appropriate and youth friendly needed to be offered for the youth to become participants. This was achieved when individual interviews were offered to the young people.

As I reflected on my initial feeling of being let down by the initial nonappearance the youth for my research, I was comforted by what Solomona (2010) had stated in his thesis regarding that same issue of feeling let down by his participants;

“...What I learned about these young men and most likely many others like them who live in South Auckland was that my research may not have necessarily been as important to them as it was to me” (p. 115)

Sample

As this thesis is qualitative, a small number of 10 participants were agreed upon for the interviews to ensure that in depth knowledge and rich information was sourced. There is a common misconception that the sampling size in qualitative research is unimportant, however determining an adequate sample size is ultimately a matter of

judgement and experience by the researcher to ensure that the sampling strategy employed meets the research purposes and product intended (Sandelowski, 2007). In the end, I had 13 participants in which 1 participant's interview had been withdrawn from the data. This participant had not disclosed that she was not with an EFKS church which became evident during the interview which was a vital criterion in being a participant. For this study, I aimed for a balance of female and male participants as well as a balance in the age groups and their characteristics are displayed in the table below.

Table 2: EFKS Youth participant characteristics

Youth	Gender		Age	Birthplace
	Female	Male		
Kenese	✓		20	New Zealand
Naumia	✓		24	American Samoa
Eseta	✓		26	Samoa
Numera	✓		20	New Zealand
Levitiko	✓		22	New Zealand
Salamo	✓		13	New Zealand
Faamasino		✓	13	New Zealand
Samuelu		✓	22	New Zealand
Ruta	✓		26	New Zealand
Tupu		✓	24	New Zealand
Esekielu		✓	14	New Zealand
Ieremia		✓	18	Australia

Data collection: Talanoa

It was important that I was ready for whatever time the youth were available to be interviewed as these came in different requests and times. Although the majority of the interviews were held at AUT Manukau, one interview occurred at a Manurewa McDonalds carpark, another at a park in Mangere and another at the house of one of the participants where the family felt this was most suitable for their son. All interviews were conducted at any time the youth were available before 5pm and were held random days during the week. For example, one *Talanoa* session was held at lunchtime on a

weekday when one youth leader had driven from his workplace to be interviewed; he had advised his supervisor of an extended lunch break. This was the only time he was available to be interviewed. Qualitative research is described as “fluid and ever-changing”, as having a dynamic nature because it employs and follows complex ways of doing things (Lichtman, 2006, p. 9, as cited in Tuafuti, 2011). To be flexible was the only way this research and the interviews would work, if not, I could have missed the opportunity of the many rich *Talanoa* I had with the youth participants. Vaioleti (2006) mirrors this belief in that participants will disclose information only when they feel the time is right and the context appropriate.

Of the 12 participants, there were only 2 I had not previously met. In the EFKS community and because I have been a part of it since I was born, it is fairly easy to meet and be acquainted with other EFKS people. However, there are 6,509 EFKS people in the Manukau *matāgaluega* alone. Whether I was familiar or not with the youth, it was important that I established if not reaffirmed a rapport with the participants. I was very mindful of my position in letting the youth know this, but also not overstating the fact as to differentiate myself. This could easily discourage the youth participant if I were to constantly remind them of my position as a *faletua*. As I am fluent in both English and Samoan, the youth were free to dialogue and *Talanoa* in either language. Of the 12 participants, only 1 chose to speak only in English. The other 11 participants were bilingual and used both languages.

There were 8 individual interviews and small focus groups in total. In *Talanoa*, “people are flexible and open to adaptation and compromise” (Vaioleti, 2006, p. 25). There were youth who requested one to one interviews and there were three interviews that consisted of two groups of two youth participants and another with three youth participants. This is what they felt comfortable with and it was my role as the researcher to accommodate them. Food was also provided for each youth participant at the interviews, because with providing food was just common sense.

I am reminded that service is at the heart of being a leader in the church. The word *Faifeau*, which has been given as the title of a Minister of a church, literally translates to *fai* – do, *feau* – work. To do work, to do chores, to serve is what the word *faifeau* means. Tamasese (2008) affirms this concept in that the main qualification for leadership is service to the community. Tuagalu (2008, p. 108) states that “The va, as

social and spiritual relations between people, is an important concept in understanding the ways that Samoans relate with one another and the world at large”. People have questioned whether the *va* is still relevant in Aotearoa, away from the homeland. I answer this with a big yes and as long as I identify myself as a Samoan then the *va fealoaloa’i* (social space) and *va tapuia* (sacred space) I have with my people shall always be cherished and protected.

The teu le va approach is the single most important aspect in moving beyond just the identification of and procrastination about the state of things, to a place/space/site of action getting things done, in a win-win situation which benefits all stakeholders and which upholds the moral, ethical, spiritual dimensions of social relationships for all participants/people/stakeholders involved in these relationships (Anae et al., 2010, p. 45).

For these reasons, I felt it was important and natural to provide food for the youth participants. At the end of each interview, a small *meaalofa*⁵⁸ or *koha*⁵⁹ in the form of a Westfield voucher was given to each youth participant. Although these gestures were small, the youth were very appreciative and grateful of the food and *meaalofa* especially as it was not expected. This is the Samoan way and I felt that this was one way of acknowledging who we are as Pasefika and Samoan peoples in a western concept of doing research - a thesis.

Data analysis

Each interview was recorded with an audio player and the *Talanoa* was transcribed by me. Although I was given the opportunity to seek a second party to help with transcribing I felt it was important that I looked after this myself, especially when I guaranteed the youth participants full confidentiality and anonymity. When the *Talanoa* was analysed, they were placed into themes according to the research questions and the main topics that were discussed by the young people. The transcripts were returned to the research participants to read over. They were encouraged to make any changes where they felt were necessary; when this was completed the analysis process was continued for this research.

⁵⁸ *Meaalofa* – gift.

⁵⁹ *Koha* – Māori word for gift.

There was no time limit to the *Talanoa*, where the shortest interview was approximately 45 minutes; the longest was nearly 2 hours and 45 minutes. The shorter interview I believe would have gone on much longer, but the participant had her parents waiting in a car outside. I advised this participant that if she had anything else she wanted to add; she could call, email or come see me again in person. All youth participants were given consent forms or assent forms as well as information sheets. The youth participants were made aware that their experiences and stories would be recorded and they would remain anonymous. However, it may be read by their families, communities and church leaders. The youth understood also that they were able to withdraw from the research at any time before the thesis was put to print. I also kept in touch with the youth and updated them on my progress as they were anxious and excited to read about their views in a document

Conclusion

I am aware that as an insider and an outsider to this research there are many notions to consider in safeguarding both the participants and myself. Social science research and Pasesika research are both morally and methodologically challenging and this is why the ethics process is most important and necessarily robust. As an insider, Bogan and Bilken (2003) summarise that researchers are concerned with controlling their biases as long as they are not powerless by them. The idea is not to be a 'clean slate', but rather more an opportunity to reflect and be conscious of how 'who you are' may shape and enrich what you study. If for one second, I had any thought that my position in the church or being an insider had any negative effect on this study, this research would not have gone ahead.

The next chapter, chapter 5 is the most important chapter of this research. It presents the rich knowledge and experiences of the EFKS youth and their place in the church. This chapter is the heart of this thesis.

Chapter 5

Findings

Interviews: Talanoaga ma Tupulaga

“I think the barrier and challenge for us is being the underclass” - Levitiko

The meticulous and robust ethics process for the interviews was worth every effort as the youth and their views are at the core of this research. Although there is research and information available on Pacific youth in Auckland, it is sadly very limited. This piece of research and the sharing of the youth means there is fresh and current ideas, knowledge and information available that is valuable for Samoan or Pasefika youth development and participation in New Zealand. This chapter presents the EFKS youths' views and findings about youth participation in their respective churches and their place and role in the church where the excerpts used in this thesis will be verbatim of what the participants said at the interviews. Although the youth touch on their experiences at home, this research focuses mainly on their involvement in the church. The value and challenges of *Gagana Samoa*, *fa'aSamoa* or *aganu'u* are sub-themes the youth explore as 'Diasporic' Samoans of first or second generation attending a traditional Samoan church in Aotearoa, New Zealand. Social issues discussed by the youth such as aspirations and goals, faith, financial issues and church resources are also expressed in this chapter.

Introducing the youth

The 12 youth participants were interviewed between 30 November 2011 and 06 January 2012. The participants from five different churches in the EFKS Manukau *matāgaluega* include 5 males and 7 females ranging from the ages 13 – 26. The *Autalavou* is the church youth group, but in the Samoan context this can and does have the involvement of parents and grandparents. The ages for this research will focus on the youth age according to the Ministry of Youth Development (2012) which states the New Zealand youth age is bracket 12 – 24. Youth often have the least opportunities to talk openly in the church or in a cultural context, and therefore will be at the heart of this thesis. Four youth leaders aged between 24– 26 years were interviewed as well to include another perspective or view from a 'young' youth leader in this study.

In keeping to the theme of youth participation in this thesis, I asked the youth what alias names they would like to use and to let me know. Three female youth participants replied with the alias ‘Ruth’ to represent one of the favourite women of the Bible whilst another replied with ‘Beyoncé’! The rest said that I could choose what alias names to use that would tie in with my research. Initially it was agreed upon that the names of Jesus’ 12 disciples would be used. However, because all 12 disciples are male, we did not want to give the female participants masculine names. In the end, the youth participants were happy to use the Bible chapters from the Old Testament as their alias names. I believe it is important to include brief profiles of the youth participants to gain an understanding of the background of the youth participants in order to comprehend their views and perspectives.

Kenese⁶⁰ -

“I guess with my church, our Faifeau wants the youth involved more but I guess it’s the youth themselves who holds themselves back”.

“Although they say New Zealand is the land of money and all that... we don’t use all the resources we get for us here in New Zealand to establish youth programmes especially for our own youth”.

Kenese first found out about the study from a fellow youth leader and because she is passionate about her youth and is also familiar with the AUT Manukau campus, she did not hesitate in contacting me. Our meeting and *Talanoa* was the first time I had met Kenese as well and I learnt in this meeting that her father passed away just the year before and that she was the eldest of her siblings. To help support her family, she put her tertiary studies on hold to find full time employment. She had also attended 5 different EFKS churches in New Zealand including the South Island; the least amount of time she had spent at any of these churches was 1 year.

Nauma⁶¹ -

“I have been playing the piano since I was 16 because there was no one else to play the piano for church”.

“I speak Samoan fluently, but it’s just the fa’aaloalo words I don’t really understand. Everyday language I am all good, but not the Matai language”.

⁶⁰ Kenese – The book of Genesis (date of interview: 30/11/2011)

⁶¹ Nauma – The book of Nahum (date of interview: 01/12/2011)

Nauma was born in American Samoa but migrated to New Zealand in 1989 with her family at the age of three. She plays the piano for her church choir is a youth leader and is the eldest of her siblings. Nauma attends both an EFKS church and a charismatic⁶² church on Sunday evenings and sometimes during the week for youth Bible studies or youth worship services. At the time of the interviews, Nauma expressed that she loves the EFKS church but feels she needs to attend a modern church for more spiritual nourishment. She works with troubled youth and enjoys this type of work. In an email update with Nauma, she expressed that after the EFKS 50 year celebrations, she felt that there has been a lot of positive changes for the youth in her *pulega*. Her exact words “*Have I updated you on our pulega? It has changed immensely after the 50th ☺*”. A smiley face icon was added in her email which to me, indicated that the changes were positive.

Eseta⁶³ -

“Even with kids who are educated, I have a degree but yet I am not confident enough to say things, it’s because we have been brought up to ‘ssh! ssh! ssh!’”

“I like that our church is mamalu”.

Eseta works for a government organisation and finds that this and her undergraduate university qualification helps her greatly in assisting her family with different matters. She is the second eldest and has seven siblings and was born in Samoa but migrated to New Zealand with her family when she was 10 years old. She feels comfortable talking to her parents about church issues and trying to determine what *fa’aSamoa* really means in Aotearoa. She feels comfortable critiquing the church and says that she will always be with the EFKS and has already talked to her future husband who is of another religion group that they will attend her church once they are married.

Numera⁶⁴ -

“Maybe it’s just our church where it’s not about God”.

“The main reason I go is for my friends. I try to pray in church but I get put off easily”.

⁶² Charismatic church – opposite of the more traditional more established churches. These churches tend to have a very short history of around 10 to 15 years compared to the more traditional churches which have been around closer to 50 to 60 years in NZ.

⁶³ Eseta – The book of Esther (date of interview: 03/12/2011)

⁶⁴ Numera – The book of Numbers (date of interview: 03/12/2011)

Numera is a youth member that I am familiar with and thought to be a shy and reserved person. In our *Talanoa* session, Numera was very easy to interview as she talked openly and passionately. She had limited time for the *Talanoa* as she had come with her parents who waited in the carpark of AUT Manukau. She felt grateful that she had the time and opportunity to express her views. Numera had attended a charismatic youth group for a few months until her mother said to her she could only attend one church, in which Numera chose the EFKS church. She talked about her plans also to study at tertiary level once her sister graduates from university. Numera felt that having two members in the family at university would be too much of a financial strain on their family.

Levitiko⁶⁵ -

“Can being in the church aufaipese mean youth participation? Can we say that is youth participation as well although it’s a church aufaipese not a youth aufaipese? Would you say that is youth participation?”

“I hear of heaps of youth stuff happening in our churches in Samoa”.

Levitiko is the sister of Numera. She is in the final year of her tertiary undergraduate qualification and is the eldest of their siblings. Levitiko is open about the financial worries her family faces and how sad she feels that their family would not attend a service if they did not have the money for certain church affairs on a Sunday. Levitiko, of all the participants, contacted me regularly to casually discuss youth issues via text or email. She is confident with her *fa’aSamoa* and values the language encouraging her younger siblings to speak it also.

Salamo⁶⁶ -

“To me, there is enough stuff at church to help us learn our culture and fa’aSamoa”. “Sometimes I’m lazy to go church because there is too much talking and I just sit there”.

Salamo being young at 13 was incredibly shy and reserved. Unlike the interviews before her, Salamo needed more prompting and encouragement to speak. Here, I found one of the benefits of *Talanoa* is that “it makes people and in this case me as the researcher learn to listen not just to the louder voices and the main lines of *Talanoa* , but also for the soft, whispering and subversive voices” (Havea, 2010, p. 20). In the other

⁶⁵ Levitiko – The book of Leviticus (date of interview: 03/12/2011)

⁶⁶ Salamo – The book of Psalms (date of interview: 12/12/201)

interviews, the *Talanoa* flowed freely but here I had to find alternative ways and questions to give confidence to Salamo to reassure her that there was no wrong answer or words that she could say in the interview. She has never been to Samoa but is fluent in the Samoan language and is also the eldest of her siblings and attended an *Aoga Amata*. After asking scenario type questions such as “if you were a youth leader, what would you do?” Salamo started to talk more freely about her experiences and perspectives on the place of youth in the EFKS church. She voiced that she would like to attend university and is thinking of becoming a primary school teacher.

Fa’amasino⁶⁷ -

“Sometimes problems at our church is youth sitting with their own friends and leaving other kids on their own”.

“I think it should stay the way it is, young people need to listen and learn from the old people”.

Fa’amasino is the youngest of his siblings, although also at the age of 13, he had more confidence in the interview. He attended a bilingual primary school and enjoyed this because he too valued the Samoan language. Just like Salamo, Fa’amasino did not know exactly what the abbreviations EFKS stood for. Although they commonly use the phrase and refer to it constantly they both did not answer correctly. I was surprised at this as I only asked what EFKS stood for to prompt the participants to talk. Fa’amasino has aspirations to attend university but was not sure yet on what he wanted to do. Salamo and Fa’amasino are both 13 years of age, and although of different gender, it was interesting to note that they both felt there were enough youth programmes in the churches they attended.

Samuelu⁶⁸ -

“I haven’t been to church in 5 weeks though because I have been working 7 day weeks”.

“Some youth, like our age youth, sometimes they won’t come to Bible studies but they will make it to ta’aloga’s.”⁶⁹ Some reasons for that is that Bible studies start at 6 but that’s when some finish work and then they can make ta’aloga’s coz that starts at 7pm”.

⁶⁷ Fa’amasino – The book of Judges (date of interview: 12/12/2011)

⁶⁸ Samuelu – The book of Samuel (date of interview: 15/12/2011)

⁶⁹ Ta’aloga – Games.

Samuelu is a youth leader and although he is working extra hours and days, he finds the time to attend church activities. He has aspirations to join the Police force and has also thought about sitting the exam to enter Malua Theological College in Samoa. However, right now, Samuelu is concentrating on supporting his family as he is the eldest of the boys in his family of five siblings. He has a supervisor's role in his workplace and is a very hard worker who felt comfortable disclosing his goals for the future.

Ruta⁷⁰ -

“EFKS leaders all start from Malua also, and Malua it can just be embarrassing these days. When you hear someone made it into Malua it's like “oh wow” now and you hope it is someone good where before it was like awww it's so mamalu⁷¹”.

“There are families that don't have food sometimes, but we don't help them? We should donate cans, bring it to church and then those families can come get it”.

Ruta is in her final year at university as an undergraduate student. She is a confident woman who is critical of the church but is also hopeful and positive; I believe this is because she is a mother of three. Her critical outlook could also be partly due to her years at university. Ruta's critical view of Malua is also due to her experiences in attending Fono Tele at Malua when younger with her father who held a leadership role within the church. She believes the standard has changed over the years, and it is not for the better. However, her hope remains that 'things will change.' As a youth leader and in the older age bracket of the youth interviewed, Ruta had many ideas to share about youth programmes and workshops that could be held with the church. Ruta is married and is now at a stage in her life where she can make more decisions for herself and her family. She expressed that if her situation in the church does not improve she would leave to attend another church.

Tupu⁷² -

“I want to go to a church where there is no competition”.

“With some people at church, it's like they are its like they are God and can let us in to heaven or not (laughs)”.

⁷⁰ Ruta – The book of Ruth (date of interview: 28/12/2011)

⁷¹ Mamalu – Sacred.

⁷² Tupu – The book of Kings (date of interview: 28/12/2011)

Tupu has grown up in the EFKS church and has attended the church he was born into his whole life. He has held leadership roles in the church and since he has had a family he feels he has had less time for church activities. He values the lifelong friendships he has with other young people of the church, but is sad that many of them have also left or have stopped going to church once they have families of their own. Born and raised in New Zealand, Tupu can speak Samoan fluently and is comfortable speaking to his elders in the language. However, like all the other youth participants, he wishes to know more of the *fa'aaloalo* language and the *matai* language.

Esekielu⁷³ -

“A challenge in the church is not learning much from the adults”.

“I wish there were more programmes for the youth”.

Esekielu is 14 years of age, and although one of the younger participants he was open with his views and experiences with the church. He constantly expressed the need for adults to share their knowledge seeing that he was eager to learn more from them. Esekielu is the youngest of five siblings and is not too sure about his aspirations for the future just yet but was interested in computers and technology. He too values his friendships at church. Born in New Zealand, Esekielu understands the Samoan language well and is able to speak fluently also. He does however admit that using the English language is much easier for him.

Ieremia⁷⁴ -

“Gagana Samoa is important; I’d be stupid to say it’s not important even though I can’t speak it as good”.

Ieremia was born and raised in Australia where he attended three different EFKS churches with his family throughout his life. English is his first language, but he expressed his passion for the Samoan language and that he is happy to be in New Zealand where he has learnt more of the language from his church peers and environment. He is very interested in hands on work and carpentry and said that one day he would like to build his own home. Although Ieremia had a limited ability to speak the Samoan language compared to the other youth participants, he demonstrates

⁷³ Esekielu – The book of Ezekiel (date of interview: 28/12/2011)

⁷⁴ Ieremia – The book of Jeremiah (date of interview: 06/01/2012)

every other essence of being Samoan. Ieremia talked about doing well in life to honour his parents and their hard work for him and his siblings. Unlike six of the youth participants born in New Zealand, Ieremia did not attend an *Aoga Amata*.

On the next page is a table of the profile or background of the youth to help illustrate the makeup of the participants. The numbers in the brackets represent the number of the churches the youth was a member of, for example - “EFKS (3) NZ” represents 3 different EFKS churches in New Zealand.

Table 3: Profile of the youth participants

Birthplace	Gender, Age & Birthplace	Church History	Employment/ Education	Church Participation	First Language
Kenese NZ	Female 20	EFKS (5) NZ	Full time employment	Youth leader Sunday school Choir member	Samoan
Nauma American Samoa	Female 24	EFKS (3) NZ Charismatic church (1) NZ	Full time employment - Youth worker	Youth leader Sunday school Choir member and leader	Samoan
Eseta Samoa	Female 26	EFKS (1) Samoa EFKS (1) NZ	Full time employment - government	Sunday school teacher Youth member	Samoan
Numera NZ	Female 20	Mormon church (1) Charismatic Church (1) EFKS (1) NZ	Tertiary student	Youth member Choir Sunday school	Samoan
Levitiko NZ	Female 22	EFKS (1) NZ	Tertiary student	Youth member Choir Sunday school	Samoan
Salamo NZ	Female 13	EFKS (2) NZ	Secondary school student	Youth member Sunday school	Samoan
Faamasino NZ	Male 13	EFKS (1) Samoa EFKS (2) NZ	Secondary school student	Sunday school	Samoan
Samuelu NZ	Male 22	EFKS (1) NZ EFKAS (1) NZ	Full time employment	Youth leader Sunday school Youth choir	Samoan
Ruta NZ	Female 26	EFKS (2) NZ	Tertiary student Mother	Youth leader	Samoan
Tupu NZ	Male 24	EFKS (1) NZ	Tertiary student	Youth member	Samoan
Esekielu NZ	Male 14	EFKS (1) NZ	Secondary school student	Youth member Sunday school	Samoan
Ieremia Australia	Male 18	EFKS (3) Australia EFKS (1) NZ	Polytech student	Youth Sunday School	English

The youth voices

All the youth were Samoan speakers but most felt comfortable using English to express their views. I too admittedly felt more comfortable speaking in English as like the youth I find it easier to express myself in English. This does not take any value away from the Samoan language, but rather the opposite as all wish and hope for their Samoan language fluency to be at an advanced level. The youth participants used the Samoan language to enhance a message they had said, and used it also when speaking of proverbs. There are many expressions and proverbs that would lose its true meaning and essence if translated into English. This is further expressed by Albert Wendt in an interview who states:

“I would encourage you to choose the language of the people themselves, their own language. I’m sure if I did write in Samoan, my insights into my own people would be much deeper because the Samoan language would better convey what Samoans are as people. When you’re describing someone whose language is not English, you can go so far, but you cannot go all the way. If I translated my novels into Samoan, they would be very different. But never mind, even in English, I try to work out a style of language that includes some Samoan concepts. For instance, I always use the word aiga for family, even when I’m writing in English (as cited in Helu-Thaman, 1993, p. 124).

The *Talanoa* generated some very rich and deep discussions as the youth participants also felt that they were the representatives of all other EFKS youth. They were motivated to share their experiences and perspectives on ‘all things youth’ in the church. The *Talanoa* yielded themes of *Gagana Samoa*, *Fa’aSamoa* in terms of traditions and protocols and youth participation. From this, key issues emerged which included social issues, aspirations and goals for the future, financial issues, church pride, challenges in the church, faith, gender issues and resource use. All transcripts were printed from the interviews which did not necessarily go in the order of the interview questions. This made it easier for me to highlight the reoccurring words and terms used by the youth participants. “In a good *Talanoa* encounter, *noa* creates the space and conditions. *Tala* holistically intermingles researchers’ and participants’ emotions, knowing and experiences” (Vaiotele, 2006, p.24). I was also able to identify themes from the

interviews realising and acknowledging what young people felt strong about and what they felt was important. Sub themes were also produced from their *Talanoa* about *gagana* Samoa which included identity, a link to the *Fa'aSamoa* and culture.

Identity and Culture

Ramsden (1993, as cited in Borell, 2005, p. 3) states

“The future of our people cannot be stereotyped by our current versions of Māoriness. Major cultural markers such as the language of our ancestors, the marae and tangihanga must be retained at all costs, but, under pressure of changing time, many more adjustments are likely. These choices are for Māori to make, they are a matter of mana... How each of us expresses our Māoritanga is the product of a variety of experiences. None of us is today are what our ancestors were, and our descendents will not be like us. With aroha, knowledge, strength, commitment and politicisation our descendents will be Māori, their way... Our work as today's version of Māori is the same as that of our tipuna: to continue our story, to strengthen it according to our times and to add the next chapter. That will be done”.

This quote acknowledges that change is inevitable and that many adjustments will happen, consciously or unconsciously it will happen. This Māori worldview connects to the Samoan worldview in that both strongly believe in their cultural identities and that there is not one way to being Māori or Samoan. Both peoples are communal, not individualistic where aroha or alofa (love) is of great value to its cultures. Ramsden's words are valuable as it confirms the notion that young people and their cultural identity will never be at a standstill, it is ever-changing. Taule'ale'asumai (1991, p.12) identified this decades ago also in that, "Being Samoan in NZ can be very tiring for the NZ born generation. At home one is taught the Samoan way of doing things, but at school one is taught the NZ way of doing things, often these two ways conflict and contradict each other". Although this has been seen as a negative in the past, I believe today the differences between cultures and people need to be celebrated, especially with our young people. It should be seen as a positive as people within cultures will have their own strengths and knowledges to share and bring into different communities as highlighted by Ramsden.

All 12 participants but two were born outside of Samoa or American Samoa. However, not one of the youth felt that the Samoan language was not an important component of the Samoan identity.

I think it's good and it's important, the gagana Samoa. It's good to know your background – Samuelu

My partner doesn't speak proper Samoan. I always say to him "aren't you ashamed of yourself, it's a disgrace" (laughs) but I know it's not his fault. To value the Samoan language is important, especially now because we live in NZ. – Eseta

Speaking Samoan is my identity, and if I didn't know how to speak Samoan then I'd be ashamed. – Fa'amasino

When I have kids, I want them to know the Samoan language and be better than me at it. I haven't heard of any Aoga Amata in Australia, that is why New Zealand is good having them. In Australia, I find the youth definitely talk more English than Samoan. – Ieremia

Growing up in NZ, my first language I got taught from mum and dad was fa'aSamoa (Samoan). From an early age, Dad would say to us o le fa'aSamoa... it is practically your heritage, it's yours, it's a gift from God. And if you lose that gift, you've lost... if you've lost your native tongue you've lost your gift. – Kenese

Many felt that the Samoan language was at risk. This is reasonable as living away from the homeland in New Zealand, English is the dominant language⁷⁵.

It's important to know how to speak Samoan now because a lot of people don't know how to speak it these days. If people can't speak it they can lose their culture. – Salamo

Most of the kids are losing their fa'aSamoa and can't speak Samoan properly now because even the leaders and adults are speaking more and more English at church. Hello? We are all Samoan in here! – Tupu

⁷⁵ English is the dominant language in New Zealand and 82.2 per cent of the population is monolingual (able to speak only one language – in this case, English) (Retrieved 4 August, 2014 from <http://leap.tki.org.nz/Pasifika-languages-in-New-Zealand>)

Samoa Language maintenance in the church

There were many responses that pointed to the church being an important institute for Samoan language maintenance. The participants also admired and valued the use of *gagana Samoa* in church programmes.

It's really good that EFKS includes Gagana Samoa that is what I love about it, is that we use our own language. A lot of EFKS children speak it. – Ruta

I think learning our gagana, our language is good, e a'oa'o ai tamaiti⁷⁶ and little kids. In our Aoga Aso Sa, all the kids speak Samoan even the ones that were born here, they are really good. With most grandparents, they bring their grandchildren because they think it's good. It's good when someone can speak both English and Samoan. – Eseta

When people at work say people in the Bible in English I'm like what is that in Samoan? And I say sorry but my church is in Samoan (laughs). – Eseta

The church helps us with fa'aSamoa by making us speak Samoan and helping us learn words we don't know. It will be easy for us to lose the Samoan language if we don't speak it. – Fa'amasino

We learn how to read the Samoan Bible; we learn new words and the meaning of it for the Samoan words we don't understand. Sunday school helps me with my fa'aSamoa and we learn heaps. – Salamo

Challenges with the Samoan language in the church

However, young people also faced their own challenges and difficulties in understanding the Samoan language yet still acknowledging that it is a part of their culture and identity.

Sometimes like myself, I don't understand some Samoan words they use. I understand better when he (faifeau) uses some English words as well. But I think we should actually learn more Samoan, because it's our culture and it's who we are. – Samuelu

⁷⁶ E a'oa'o ai tamaiti – to teach the children

The EFKS church is good because the youth like me, we pick up on the Samoan language because it is used all the time, but the bad part of it is when the oldies don't really explain to you how to say a tatalo or something, they just tell us instead of sitting down with you to really show and teach you how to do and say stuff. Also, it's a challenge not understanding when the adults use big and long Samoan words. – Ieremia

Young people don't really understand sometimes – the lauga with the fa'aSamoa. I wish I could understand a bit more. We should have some classes for aganuu. – Tupu

Young people too felt ridiculed for not knowing 'enough' of the Samoan language. Four respondents commented that more youth based programmes in the church should be about teaching the language.

My first language is English but I understand Samoan. My Samoan language is not up there, but I am still learning and I want to learn more. At church, when I can say things in Samoan I will say it but if I know I can't pronounce it properly then I will use English. I think youth should have more activities, not just sport, but other stuff like to do with learning Samoan language, the aganu'u. It is not enough them just talking Samoan... Because there are some youth like me that can understand it but talk broken Samoan. – Ieremia

Young people feel left out when they don't understand. – Tupu

At church sometimes when an adult tells us to do the tatalo, some of us are born here (in NZ) and our fa'aSamoa is not very good, it's not flash. They are like why can't you speak Samoan? But we are still learning, they don't help you, they pressure you and say how come you don't know it instead of encouraging us. There is a bunch of people that don't encourage you. They make you feel like a disgrace. They don't make you feel like you should learn... – Numera

The fobs, the little Samoan kids would get all the parts, the main parts for Lotu Tamaiti to play because they can pronounce it properly. They can a'o (learn) it all in one day. But the NZ kids (laughs) that is why they get the one fasi pepa (piece of paper) and miss out (laughs). – Kenese

Young people don't really understand sometimes the lauga with the fa'aSamoa. I wish I could understand a bit more. We should have some classes for aganu'u.
– Tupu

Seven respondents at some time during their life felt the Samoan language was too hard to understand when adults in leadership used formal language. All 12 youth shared that there have been many times they have left church on a Sunday not understanding the *lauga* (sermon) of the *faifeau*.

I find the language barrier a bit hard, especially coz during sauniga the faifeau would ask after the reading of the Bible "ia tamaiti, tupulaga o le fesili...." and then from then on "everyone... doof (does action head down)... punou... And hiding behind the other in front of you" (laughs). It's just the little aoga aso sa kids who put their hands up and want to answer because they don't know what's happening... and then when he says tupulaga everyone is like "ohhhhhh, please don't choose me"... (laughs) – Kenese

We used to go to youth programmes at other churches, because here at our church we don't understand. I used to think before there was too much fa'aSamoa, we wouldn't understand that whole fa'aSamoa talk. – Numera

Sometimes I don't talk because I don't understand. – Esekielu

Use of the English language in the church

Eight of the respondents felt that using 'a little bit' of English in the church context would help understanding services and materials better. Three acknowledged that their *faifeau* would try to explain information in the English language but sometimes it wouldn't help.

Some have left because they don't understand. And sometimes when the leaders translate to English its broken English (laughs). – Ruta

I guess the kids find the English Bible much (more) easier to read and understand, but if they don't have it ua kau kilokilo (go searching) and it's like what does that mean?... I guess it's really hard for youth, especially NZ born youth to kind of grasp of what the faifeau tries to teach. Our faifeau tries to say stuff in English to try for the youth even though his English is off too (laughs). He is trying just for the youth. That is why I've kept it up, although I try to

explain as much as I can in Samoan to the youth it's really hard when they don't understand so you kind of have to mix it up. – Kenese

The maintenance of Samoan language in New Zealand requires Samoan people to regularly communicate in their language (Hunkin, 2007). Wilson (2010) finds that there is research that claims language maintenance efforts must focus on the home, but what happens outside of the home is also important. Although the youth were grateful to have a setting away from the homeland where the Samoan language was spoken, they sometimes felt marginalised if they could not understand certain words and phrases. The youth also discussed the importance of their parents' role in maintaining the Samoan language and its use in the home.

Importance of Samoan language at home

It is no surprise that the youth participants talked about the value of speaking Samoan in the home. Eleven of the youth participants mother tongue is the Samoan language where four had attended an *aoga amata* early childhood education. All spoke highly of speaking and maintaining the language in the home.

Dad would say “a o'o i le fale, fa'asa ga gagu, se'i loga e ke alu i le aoga (when you come home, no English is allowed until you go back to school) then you can speak all the English you want”, but in the house – Samoa. He will see it like as a failure to him if I lose my language. – Kenese

My mum's always saying 'Don't think a gagu loa le kamaikiki ua poko' (Don't think that when you can speak English then you are clever) and I always say that to my partner. I say to him our church kids speak English and Samoan and I am so proud of that. – Eseta

One youth participant joked about about a parent who would sometimes speak English to them at home.

My dad will be like learn to speak Samoan. No one is allowed to talk if you don't speak Samoan, my mum would speak English to us and dad would get mad (laughs). – Samuelu

Wilson (2010) finds that there has been a lack of qualitative investigation of the perceptions and views of language shift held by the different groups in the communities being researched. She also expressed the “importance of recording the views of the younger generations – who will be the future users and advocates of the language but also the views of the older generations, the group which, it is argued, will teach and pass on the languages” (p. 36). Other factors to take into account that Tanielu (2004, p. 27) raises is that in New Zealand some EFKS families are prevented from providing literacy skills needed to reinforce language maintenance in the home because of circumstances beyond their control, such as working parents. Tagoilelagi (1995) reflects that Samoan children and parents share a collective culture developed and enhanced through social and verbal interactions. This is mirrored in the *Talanoa* of a youth participant:

“I was born in NZ but I am so into my fa’aSamoa. I’m so into it, but I feel I don’t get enough of it at church but more so from home than at church. We do a lot of loku⁷⁷ at home, everything we do at church we kind of recap at home. That way no one is faifeau or no one is a leader, no one is in a special role, we are all the same”. – Levitiko

For Levitiko, the social and verbal interactions at home help with her *gagana Samoa* and *Fa’aSamoa* through the *lotu* that is done at home. It was important to her also that there was no status or position of authority in the home to be able to conduct a *loku* at home.

What is Fa’aSamoa?

A lot of discussion and dialogue occurred around the concept of *Fa’aSamoa* and *Aganu’u*. This was expected as the EFKS church is known as a traditional church where the services are mainly in the Samoan language and where *Fa’aSamoa* plays a major element in its protocols, processes and services. “The Samoan *ekalesia*⁷⁸ or *aulotu* is not only a centre for worship but an invaluable social organisation for the continuation as well as the maintenance of the principals and values of their *Aganu’u* and *Fa’aSamoa*” (Hunkin, 2007, p.62). All the youth said that upholding *fa’aSamoa* is

⁷⁷ *Loku* – When written it should be spelled *Lotu*. Only when orally articulated is the use of ‘k’ in the word ‘*Loku*’ acceptable. *Loku* – means church, but in the context of the home, *Loku* is a daily gathering of the family by the Father or head of the family to fellowship in a message from the Bible, followed by a prayer and finished with a hymn.

⁷⁸ *Ekalesia* and *Aulotu* – is the Congregation.

important to them living away from the homeland; and just like Samoan language maintenance, the church has a main role in teaching *fa'aSamoa* in New Zealand.

At X Church, they have the ie toga programme and all that, it's so good they do that to help the youth learn more about our Measina. – Eseta

You learn a lot from church like traditions and what to do and how to act as a Samoan and have manners. Like to say tulou (excuse me) when you walk in front of someone, and how adults eat first. You learn rules there like to respect your elders. – Fa'amasino

So we teach our youth to be mindful of how you talk to your elders and are mindful of how you talk to each other because you got to respect each other for adults to see you deserve respect. Especially when you see youth talking while the adults or elders are sitting and they are standing... it's like "don't talk don't talk!" that's rude. That aganu'u part is quite important, most of the other NZ born girls don't know how to ka'i the sua,⁷⁹ they always see the same people ka'i the sua and they always ask how come they always get picked and I'm like "its coz you're wearing a t-shirt and ie lavalava⁸⁰ or you know "normal clothes"" and it's not coz they don't like you, you got to know the protocols... – Kenese

Thoughts were also shared on how workshops programmes are anticipated and needed for young people to learn more about *Fa'aSamoa*. There was disappointment in that discussion was made around *Fa'aSamoa* education but that this is where it stopped. There was no follow-up on organising any youth programmes.

It's what we always said, it's showing our little ones what we're doing because we're the example to them, and when they grow up they can show the next lot. It's like, kind of that way, its examples we are showing our little ones that's even with the language we use at church. Our faletua and faifeau are always saying 'tautuana ia outou le kou kaukala i luma o kagaka',⁸¹ especially with our language because most of our elders... once they hear you say a bad word it's

⁷⁹ 'Ka'i le sua' – a traditional ritual of showing your respect to a visitor or guest. Used for formal occasions like weddings, funerals, important gatherings.

⁸⁰ *Ie lavalava* – Samoan sarong

⁸¹ 'tautuana ia outou le kou kaukala i luma o kagaka' – be mindful how you talk/speak in front of people

like “*ka igoigo e...*”⁸² (laughs) Our peresetene wants an aganu’u lesson especially if we want a so’otaga⁸³ with another Autalavou. That’s what we have always been talking about for the last year... and it hasn’t happened still. – Kenese

They need to get the youth together, teach them all the Samoan words and go deep in to the Samoan language and culture. Because there are some people I know too that can speak the language but don’t know the Matai language. It would be good if they could explain these things. The meaning of Fa’aSamoa also and that stuff. – Ieremia

I remember we had aganu’u classes before, but it’s always like that it starts off really well then it dies off. Everything is pushed by the leader, so it should be the adults who push for it. Everyone is fa’aaloalo to the adults and the elders, so we would do it. It’s like with our parents; if they are lē ago⁸⁴ to something then we won’t either. – Levitiko

All youth felt proud of the Samoan culture and one gave their own definition of what Fa’aSamoa is.

What Fa’aSamoa means to me... it is very important for Samoans. Fa’aSamoa is like a traditional way of being for Samoans. Like they have their own... what’s the word? Like customs! Fa’aSamoa... Our own way of doing things. Different from any other culture... that’s really cool. – Nauma

One participant felt confident with his Samoan culture and instead felt there should be more spiritual programmes available for youth.

To me, there is enough stuff at church to help us learn our culture and Fa’aSamoa. I get a lot of that at home too. But I do think there should be more Bible classes and lessons with the Faifeau. – Salamo

The Faifeau needs to bring the youth together to teach them the Samoan ways, like using the fusipa’u⁸⁵ (laughs). – Ieremia

⁸² ‘*ka igoigo e*’ – although it depends on the context and can be said as a joke, the general definition of this term is ‘I am appalled’.

⁸³ *So’otaga* – Gathering of group for an event.

⁸⁴ *Lē ago* – do not acknowledge or do not care

⁸⁵ *Fusipa’u* – translates to belt as in the one which holds up one’s trousers.

Taule'ale'ausumai (1990) identified that within the church there are questions of tradition versus commitment. This in itself has created a problem of communication between parents and children, where the children viewed their parent's faith as one of tradition without spiritual commitment and the parents viewed the changing faith direction of their children as controversial and negative to their Samoan cultural upbringing. It is heartening in that Samoan youth, more than 20 years later are able to find or identify a balance between the two worlds – traditional and modern. However, there is still discussion about the uncertainty of certain *fa'aSamoa* protocols and traditions especially in the church context.

Challenges of Fa'aSamoa in the church

Some of the youth found that *Fa'aSamoa* was not useful in the church or with life in New Zealand. It is inevitable that the young people of the EFKS church, if they choose to stay in the church, will become *tiakono*, *Autalavou peresetene*,⁸⁶ *ta'ita'i o le Aufaipese*,⁸⁷ *failautusi o le Mafutaga a Tinā*⁸⁸ and some will even become *faifeau* or *faletua*. Not once, in the *Talanoa* with the youth participants did they voice wanting to be in these positions now as young people. Nevertheless, they did feel as though there were not enough opportunities or 'safe spaces' given to them to learn or be informed. There are many EFKS protocols and procedures the young people are unfamiliar with; this may affect 'their sense of belonging, identity and citizenship within the church'. As the youth participants expressed, they 'just want to learn' from the adults and leaders of the church so that when their time comes to lead in the church, they are confident and ready. The young people were eager for knowledge and understanding.

At times it's sometimes a clash. When they bring the fa'aSamoa in to the church and you're thinking nah it's wrong? But I always think is it fa'aSamoa to do this and that? Sometimes I think nah that is wrong. ????

I think church and fa'aSamoa should be two different institutes, they should keep it separate because the ideas of fa'aSamoa it sometimes contradicts with what religion is. All people that go to church, especially us EFKS, we say ia manatua le aso Sapati, ia fa'apaiaina. Right? So it's up to us that we keep to that and then if we bring the fa'aSamoa here, that's where it goes wrong? We sometimes abuse the fa'aSamoa. There is a time and place for fa'aSamoa, some people use

⁸⁶ *Autalavou peresetene* – Youth president.

⁸⁷ *Ta'ita'i o le aufaipese* – Choir leader.

⁸⁸ *Failautusi o le mafutaga a Tinā* – Mother's or Women's group/fellowship secretary.

it for their convenience. Some people do change it and you're thinking... (puffs). That is why I say fa'aSamoa and church should be separate. I hope I'm answering the question! (laughs) – Eseta

Some of the youth felt that the meaning or definition of *fa'aSamoa* and *aganu'u* was not clear in the church:

The Fa'aSamoa part I don't like about church is... is that Fa'aSamoa? to compete? When adults say this is the Samoan way, I think is it? – Eseta

My partner and I are planning on getting married, so like mo le faifeau you give this, the A'oa'o's you give this, you must keu the guys family etc here... that is Fa'aSamoa... but do you have to apply that to the church? And how does that come out? It comes out differently. That's what I mean what is fa'aSamoa? – Eseta

There's a thin line between church and aganu'u. Just like that faifeau who was fa'asala coz his wife got a Malu,⁸⁹ so you know they need to make it clear what is allowed and what is not allowed. – Ruta

The notion of *fa'aaloalo*⁹⁰ was also discussed by the young people. The guidance from adults and elders was valued and respected by the youth participants. However, they felt that this was not always provided in the church setting. Young people are taught not to 'talk back' when spoken to by adults, this was a challenge for youth as they were unsure how to communicate with adults without seeming disrespectful.

You have to always listen to your parents... it's not a bad thing coz they know more than what we know, they've lived longer than us. But then it's really good for the youth to have a voice as well instead of being back fired by the parents, the adults... you know how they always say, aua le fai aku ae oso mai lou guku,⁹¹ but it's not aye you are just trying to share what you think.

When adults ask questions and we don't know (the answers) they're like we're dumb but they don't help us learn anything. They expect us to know and say (that) we don't listen but they don't even teach us. – Tupu

⁸⁹ *Malu* – Traditional Samoan Woman's Tattoo

⁹⁰ *Fa'aaloalo* – Respect

⁹¹ Basically meaning -don't answer back.

Youth Participation

Before the youth were given definitions and descriptions of what youth participation is or could be, they first gave their impressions on what they thought it was or what it should be.

Youth participation means having a leader that is a good role model that knows what they are doing and setting up a future plan, in a good positive way. And getting youth people involved in anything, to make them feel included. – Nauma

Can being in the church aufaipese mean youth participation? Can we say that is youth participation as well although it's a church aufaipese not a youth aufaipese? Would you say that is youth participation? – Levitiko

Time and time again, the respondents would talk about the use of workshops and programmes to help them better understand protocols and values of the church.

I think Youth participation can be increased if they have more programmes for the youth and to get our youth leaders to be more involved. They don't get to do their roles because the adults and leaders want to do everything. They should share duties instead of thinking someone is going to take over their role. – Ruta

I think YP can be increased if they do more programmes for the youth and to get our youth leaders to get more involved. – Ruta

Youth were also aware themselves that the church is a classroom for them to learn in and that listening to adults and their parents is important.

No, I think it should stay the way it is, young people need to listen and learn from the old people. You learn a lot from church like traditions and what to do and how to act as a Samoan and have manners. Like to say tulou when you walk in front of someone, and how adults eat first. You learn rules there like to be respectful to your elders. – Faamasino

*We all know what Samoans are like you know, a fai aku le mea e fai ia iloa fai.*⁹²
– Nauna

⁹² Translation: When I ask you to do something I expect you to know how to do it.

Nauna and Faamasino bring about a good point in that for youth to be able to share their thoughts and opinions, church leaders and adults need to have an open mind. They also acknowledge that there is much to learn from their elders. A 'safe and comfortable space' needs to be provided so that young people are offered safe avenues and feel secure and confident to speak. Examples of this can include group presentations, where young people present in groups through creative methods on their thoughts and perspectives.

Responses also highlighted the importance of the role of the people and the church in working together. Good communication and a good relationship between the two are needed to achieve positive youth participation.

I want them to come church not to text during the tatalo but to actually learn something; they can always ask the faifeau after about something they can't understand. But then yeah, I can't help them if I can't use my own advice. – Kenese

Young people are not really supported because the adults don't help young people learn more and that. – Esekielu

Youth participation in the church

The youth talked about what works well for them and the youth in their respective churches, young people were especially appreciative of bible study classes as these were either non-existent or infrequent in their churches.

We have youth Bible study once every month on a Sunday. Everyone is getting back into it. He gives us a sheet and he has pinpointed, highlighted notes and has tried to translate it for the youth to understand. And the youth actually kind of get excited from that. – Kenese

Fellowship between young people and fellowship between young people and adults was shared by the young people as being crucial in the church.

I think our favourite Autalavou gathering would be the one where we get together with the other churches, when we do our fa'afiafiaga⁹³ there is always a speaker after it. And the one for this year we had the pepa on love, and the faifeau emphasised to the youth kids do not go out with your brother or sister from your youth group (laughs). He taught the different loves and the different meanings and religions and how they express love. – Kenese

Because when you don't bring the youth together, that is how gossip starts. That is why youth leave, because the bond is not strong. If the bond is strong, there wouldn't be any gossip. The faifeau and parents don't know what's happening with gossip. If they had a strong bond, I reckon they won't talk about each other. They don't know they just judge the book of the cover, I mean cover of the book (laughs). – Ieremia

One participant had various ideas on achieving youth participation in the church. He himself was part of committees in his own church that sourced methods and funds for youth programmes.

Most of the youth they crave to have Bible studies, and they ask the faifeau if we can have it. We have a monthly youth service too now. There is a youth service committee, where we just organise the programme for that day. There is a lot of youth in our church fundraising board, where we had 7 weeks training on how to apply for funds and grants and fill out forms... coz the first shot is the only shot. That way they can involve more youth, with youth doing more events like youth services and just do giveaways like that. So it will be the youth participating, with the old people coming to support and that. – Samuelu

I reckon if more of the youth are assigned duties for youth, I reckon they will come more. Say you have a committee for the homework centre, then they will probably all work together and it will build their confidence. Because that was the only way I learnt, because they will have to go as they have that role and responsibility. And as time goes on they will probably enjoy what they do. I think if they get more involved they will enjoy it. And that way they can interact with other youth as well. – Samuelu

Ten of the twelve participants were aware that the *fono tele* now consists of one youth representative for each *matagaluega*. They felt this was an important milestone in the

⁹³ *Fa'afiafiaga* – celebration, entertainment or performance.

EFKS church but that perhaps the youth representatives could be increased to one per *pulega* instead of *matagaluega*.

The other idea I like from the fono is how youth can participate in the fono now. I love that idea! I think it is the best idea since the fono started. The fono would be a good opportunity for youth to know what Malua is about. – Eseta

I really want to go to a fono, I have never been but our faifeau said for the fono this year or next year the sui⁹⁴ may be the youth. We try to hint for him to choose us and do the feaus so that he can choose us (laughs). – Kenese

Knowing one's place and position in the church was identified as youth participation in the church.

At our church, most of our youth leaders we don't have to be fa'atonu twice it's because we know our roles, we have to do feaus⁹⁵ that the faifeau does not have to call for us to come do things, like we would know to put salt on the table if there is nothing there you know 'alu e ave le masima' (laughs) – Kenese

I love being a Sunday school teacher. I feel like I'm giving something back to the children and I love working with the children. – Eseta

I reckon if more of the youth are assigned and like duties to do in youth, I reckon they will come more. Say you have a committee for the homework centre, then they will probably all work together and it will build their confidence. Because that was the only way I learnt, because they will have to go as they have that role and responsibility. And as time goes on they will probably enjoy what they do. I think if they get more involved they will enjoy it. And that way they can interact with other youth as well. – Samuelu

Youth participation and sports

Many youth commented that the main activity for youth programmes at church was sport, and that this was not enough. They discussed its importance and its popularity in the church with youth but that they did not think it was fair when youth would attend and *toaga* (commit) more to the sport than that of other church programmes.

We hear every year we are going to have matāgaluega games, pulega versus pulega... and I'm like "yayy, I can finally play against my friends at Church X

⁹⁴ *Sui* – Representative.

⁹⁵ *Feau* – Chore(s).

and beat them (laughs). I would really love to see the matagaluega get together more. I wonder who makes up those rumours coz it never happens (laughs). – Kenese

What about when this guy came to ask if he could play in our youth games, they said no. But you read in the Bible, help thy neighbour and all that. You never know he could have gone and jumped off a bridge or have been welcomed by a gang, because he wasn't welcomed by us. – Tupu

For our church in particular, we don't have much youth gatherings or like events or stuff like that. We should have more, all we gather for is sports, and everyone knows that. The youth just come maopopo for ka'alogas and then everything like loku is like nah. – Levitiko

I can tell you when it comes to ka'aloga you see all the youth. The ka'aloga, it's effective because the kids come and play. You see kids love sport and you can see a lot of talented kids in our pulega, they are very good. But we should have Bible studies also so they can learn and enjoy coming and do things to motivate them to participate. – Eseta

It's cool having sports for our youth, because that is how our youth get involved. But we need to try other ways; it gets to a point where sports are not enough. – Ruta

Even Easter, an important time in our Christianity timeline, but it's like it's not important. We play sport on the aso maliu (Good Friday) and that's the youth programme for that day. That's sad. – Ruta

How to increase youth participation in the church

The youth had many ideas about how youth participation can be achieved and increased in their churches or the EFKS community. They had dreams about where they would like the direction of EFKS to head as they still wanted to be a part of the church in the future. They felt that there was a lot more participation and involvement that could be achieved.

Imagine if all the EFKS churches in NZ got together, how cool would that be? We can hire out the museum and a massive park (laughs). – Nauma

They need to offer something that youth can't get anywhere else. You can get sports at a social club. We need more things like Aoga Tusi Paia,⁹⁶ camps or even trips like beach trips, I think we have a lot of money but they can't even do that, a beach trip. – Ruta

All youth participants at some point questioned why there were not many combined youth programmes and events throughout the year. They also had their own thoughts on why this may be. Financial reasons and the structure of the EFKS body itself were talked about by five of the older participants. The three youngest participants did not discuss touch on any financial issues of the church.

Why won't they organise youth events? Is it money-wise reasons? – Nauma

The EFKS is different. If there was a set thing to do, like for example if it was a requirement for every church to do all things like youth events and activities then there would be more youth events and then other churches won't miss out on having them because all churches have to do it. There's so much you can do as young people. For example, there can be different youth leaders from different auloku to form a pulega youth committee to bring different ideas in and more. I know it's easier said than done, but it is much more difficult if the adults and leaders don't support it.

You see youth doing fundraising with sausage sizzles also, why can't we do that? That is why I came here for this interview because I had so much to say about all of this. – Eseta

It would be nice for the kids to decorate the hall and church together – Tupu

There needs to be a balance of the 'old and the new'. Youth development and its principles or policies in the EFKS church needs to be 'culturally' appropriate while meeting the modern times of today.

Two youth participants mentioned the importance of scholarships being offered for youth in the EFKS church. This is one important avenue for young people to be supported and valued in their quest and journey for self-development and further education.

⁹⁶ *Aoga tusi paia* – Bible Classes.

For example, if they love sport or art give them scholarships for it. Help them to dream big. I know our Pacific island people, we settle for little things. But we are so capable of going further. These are some things we can maybe implement. – Eseta

What about scholarships? Are there scholarships available for us? – Tupu

Can we have more programmes?

Many youth participants discussed the need for more youth programmes and that this would increase youth involvement in church activities.

We should do more youth things like for Easter, Christmas and even birthdays and this will make them more involved too. – Salamo

We need more programmes and the youth too have to run a couple of stuff, we can have our youth leaders help run it and have some control. – Tupu

Young people need responsibilities to be more involved. I know it happens at other churches but it's hard to see it happening at our church. There hasn't been sivas⁹⁷ in ages too like for our own aganu'u or anything. – Tupu

It is possible to have more stuff, we have educated people and well knowledgeable people in our church that can do workshops & things like that. – Ruta

The pulega yeah we get together but it's like what? twice a year? It's not a bad thing but it's only just twice a year... and you want to get to know everyone, and fellowship and see how everyone is doing with their walk with God & you know. – Nauma

During the holidays, they should have programmes where the kids can also learn how to cook also and that are their lunch for the day. There are so many ideas and things we can do. – Tupu

The youth talked about the challenges they face in their churches as young people or young leaders and they also discussed youth issues within their churches. They felt that knowledge was not as freely passed on and shared with young people when it should be. It was very heart-warming to hear and see that the youth were eager for knowledge, that

⁹⁷ Siva – Dance.

they were hungry for not only cultural understanding but also spiritual feeding. The youth spoke about not wanting to leave their churches for the modern and charismatic churches available to them today; instead they spoke openly and broadly about their needs in the EFKS church today.

Data from initial surveys for a Community Network for Youth Development (CNYD) in San Francisco based on a youth development framework indicated that many organisations were not providing as many of the basic supports and opportunities as they wanted to (Pittman, 2003). Here in New Zealand, the 'Keepin it real' (MYD, 2009) guide was developed in response to requests from organisations and agencies about how they can increase youth participation in their policy development, programmes, services and organisations. Pittman (2003) agrees with these notions in that when youth lack opportunities for meaningful involvement, their chances of attaining good developmental outcomes decreases. This suggests that if 'youth programmes' are held for young people, but it does not allow for them to feel connected and welcomed, or positive and comfortable with their identity, then it can pose even more problems and issues. To put it frankly, it would be better if no 'ineffective' youth programmed was offered.

And it sux also that it's mostly just men who speak. I know there is so much to say, but youth can't fa'aali⁹⁸ it. They should have an opportunity to say something. The youth should be able to participate more. – Levitiko

... It doesn't help us with the fa'aSamoa either, at church sometimes when an adult tells us to do the tatalo,⁹⁹ some of us are born here (in NZ) and our fa'aSamoa is not very good, it's not flash. He's like why can't you speak Samoan? But we are still learning, he doesn't help you, he pressures you and says how come you don't know it? Instead of encouraging us. But there is a bunch of people that don't encourage you, they're just like... They make you feel like a disgrace. They don't make you feel like you should learn. – Numera

Levitiko and Numera's experiences mentioned here are only a few that were voiced about how the youth can feel marginalised and put down in the church even at

⁹⁸ Fa'aali – show or share.

⁹⁹ Tatalo – Pray or prayer.

programmes that are held specifically for them. More of the youth participants' *Talanoa* about their perspectives will be presented in Chapter 5 which also outlines how youth development can be nonexistent at youth programmes in the church. It shows here that it is very important for youth to be engaged and comfortable also. Pearce and Larson (2006, p. 121) states "how youth become engaged or motivated is vital to youth development programmes, because engagement influences not only programme retention but the likelihood of youth gaining the benefits that programme offers".

At the time of the interview, Kenese and Nauma voiced how it would be great if all the EFKS churches in NZ came together. This came true during the 50 years celebration of the EFKS church in New Zealand. December 2–14 of 2012 saw different events to honour and acknowledge what has been achieved since the first EFKS church was established in Aotearoa 1962.

Sharing knowledge

Responses relating to the need for more youth workshops and programmes have been presented separately for young people's request for more opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding. This is because the young people would express their views as two separate notions. The desire for knowledge from young people did not need to be in the form of a workshop or programme. Young people felt this could be achieved through one to one communication and mentoring.

That's the stupid thing I hate about some people, they don't want to share their knowledge. – Eseta

We are here for a reason, why can't they (the church) use us? – Levitiko

I hope the churches and leaders see a value in us trying to do things instead of thinking we are fiapoko. – Eseta

I wish people would just stop being selfish and help the youth. – Eseta

A challenge is not learning much from the adults. – Esekielu

When adults ask questions and we don't know they're like we're dumb but they don't help us learn anything. They expect us to know and say we don't listen but they don't even teach us. – Tupu

One participant joked at how outrageous she believed that the sharing of knowledge could not be as easily achieved in the church as she thought. She expressed this by

suggesting that maybe even church leaders felt tied down to introducing and providing youth initiatives.

Just imagine if the faifeau thought the same way as us but could not do anything about it. Who is the CEO? (laughs). – Nauma

We can't say anything, all the old people, they don't get it. I think that is why we are struggling. Our youth, it's like they are getting married and leaving. Levitiko would be one of the oldest youth members. – Numera

Another barrier for the youth is the older people talking about them instead of helping them. – Levitiko

Disappointing but not surprising is that many young people felt their views and thoughts did not matter. There was also the false pretence

When you voice your opinion, you get shut down. That is why we Samoans are too afraid to speak our minds. – Nauma

When we have aufaipese meetings, there are a lot of old people. When they ask for ideas, and then the old people are going off with their ideas then the faipese says "ae ia oukou ia laiki". We say what's the point of saying what we think because it's not going to go anywhere. They say "leai o mea ga e... we are too makukua... o le a le mea so'oga fai ai ga mea"... and that's how it is. – Eseta

Young people also voiced that they were and never are a part of a decision-making body but were still expected to do as they were told. I found the comment of this particular participant powerful in that this young person viewed themselves as the underclass.

I think the barrier and challenge for us is being the underclass. Like in our church, the youth is never involved in mea lautele. I don't know about other churches, but in our church I see it... Like we are never involved in the lotu decisions. We are part of the church, youth are part of the church... there are some issues where youth can chip in their manatus but we are never asked. They look down on us. – Levitiko

I don't know if that is the fa'aSamoa way or just their way or maybe it's a bit of both. Because I know in a Samoan family, the old people always make the decisions. It's like that at church, but still they should have a representative from the youth, even if it's just to listen to what we think and believe. – Numera

The people are the good points and the people are the bad points of a church. – Ieremia

The youth participants identified that people can be both the positive and negative influences in the church. Many felt that there were not enough opportunities given to them and that knowledge and information was not readily available. It was no surprise that the young people wanted to learn more about church issues, culture and traditions and they did not want to wait until they were older as adults or in leadership positions.

Social issues

The youth participants in addition, felt that there were many social issues affecting them in the church context. This ranged from alcohol to employment. Thoughts were shared on how youth in churches can contribute to issues affecting their communities.

We need to do more community work, youth getting together to do charity work and more here in NZ, it's not all about Samoans. I get frustrated being a youth leader because there is so much I want to do but I know I can't do it. Especially when you have mouths coming right left and centre going "blah blah blah", it's like what do you want me to do? Nothing is happening. – Nauma

We need to help social issues as well. Because if all is well in church and maintained to keep kids in line at church, why would they go out and cause problems in society looking for friends and excitement... to help them with their everyday life problems as well, help with jobs and more, give them self-confidence. To tell them you can do whatever you want to do and you can do anything..... – Eseta

We can make a difference. We can prevent people from leaving the church, we need to help social issues as well. Because if all is well in church and maintained... and to keep kids in line at church, why would they go out and cause problems in society looking for wrong friends and excitement. That way, it will help them with their everyday life problems as well, help with jobs, and give them self-confidence. To tell them you can do whatever you want to do and you can do anything. – Eseta

It was mainly the youth leaders who shared their views on social issues in the *talanoa*. Their thoughts extended to the need for churches to help young people raise their own

educational levels in New Zealand. The church should also be seen as a place for help for things non-spiritual also.

Even though church is firstly for spiritual reasons, it shouldn't be the only reason; we need to help them in other areas also. We can statistically put up the number of people in education and in other things. We need to make the church not just a place to go for spiritual things, if we help our youth in this circle (draws circle) then they won't go out there causing trouble or having problems.

– Eseta

Because when you don't bring the youth together, that is how gossip starts. That is why youth leave, because the bond is not strong. If the bond is strong, there wouldn't be any gossip. The faifeau and parents don't know what's happening with gossip. If they had a strong bond, I reckon they won't talk about each other. They don't know they just judge the book of the cover, I mean cover of the book (laughs). – Ieremia

Ieremia expresses the importance of having a bond between young people in the church and tells of the negative impact of a community when there are no 'close ties, relationships or fellowship'. Other participants also shared their views on alcohol and drinking and what it means the church context.

I used to drink so much every weekend and then go church hung over; no one would hold me to account for it. So what does that mean? – Nauma

Some adults even set a bad example. We need to discuss important matters from nowadays with drugs and alcohol, things that affect the youth, not cutting your hair and making sure it's neat, that's not going to affect your life. – Ruta

Some tiakono are not a good example also how they drink together. That is why a lot of our youth drink coz they see the adults and their parents do it too. –

Tupu

The youth also felt that sometimes their churches are too exclusive and that there are too many rules, regulations and policies that hindered what a church should first and foremost be – that is, the church should be about providing spiritual wellbeing of people, and being a 'community'.

It's like there are different rules for adults and different rules for young people.
– Ruta

Aspirations for the future

All of the youth participants interviewed except for the two young male participants knew their goals or had some idea of their goals for the future. Family played a major role in their aspirations and it was interesting to hear that four of the female youths would consider entering Malua if female were accepted into the theological college.

I also think about human resources or a bachelor in Youth studies... But for now it's business. I joke to our faifeau 'you may need a new keukupe in a few years' time'. My dad always wanted me to continue with my studies, so it's definitely to finish school. He gave me a list before he passed away and I ignored him and I said you know you are going to be around for that and crying. He said to 'koaga i le lotu, le Aufaipese, Aoga Aso Sa' I said 'Dad I think I'm nearly 20 now' and he reminded me what our faletua said 'you are in the Aoga Aso Sa until the day you get married'. – Kenese

I'd love to go Malua and experience what the people there experience... like everything. If I was a guy, I would definitely want to go Malua... 21? Sign me up! – Kenese

I'd love to become a minister or pastor for the EFKS church. – Nauma

I'd like to go Malua, jokes (laughs.) – Tupu

*You know my 21st birthday, shux I got a Bible from our faifeau and faletua and they wrote a big story in it saying next 2-3 years I should look at Malua. Now that you are 21 you can go Malua... 'nekk minit'... (laughs) At times I do think about it because I do enjoy church, but there are other times I drift away from God. I have to find my way back and wait for the right time. I was wanting to be a policeman too. It was funny coz I was like oh yep, I can go after I graduate as long as I have policing then after I can go Malua. I was planning it. Coz yeah end of 2009, when I left my other workplace, ***** told me about WINZ trying to start up a police thing. I started going to seminars, doing trainings but there wasn't enough applicants so they didn't continue it. After that, I just lost the buzz. – Samuelu*

Two of the three university students or graduate shared that they wanted to further studies into postgraduate.

My future, I want to do my postgrad studies, and then I can help the church because I am going towards teaching. – Ruta

How do you get to do your masters? I am thinking of doing a diploma in health and safety, to give me the basics about what that is all about. If I get through, then I can do a masters. I know there is a big lack of knowledge in our community about what we do. You find that half of the people don't even know who we are. They ask "are you immigration?" (laughs). Even with the employment law, public holidays, annual leave. This is knowledge I can share with our church people. So if people have a problem with this or that then they can say "you can go see blah blah for this". – Eseta

Another two participants shared their goals which had their communities and churches at heart.

One of my goals is to build my own house. I can then help the church with building work too. – Ieremia

Wouldn't it be cool if all our EFKS churches had an Aoga Amata. – Salamo

Financial issues

There was much *Talanoa* on the financial obligations, responsibilities and offerings in the church. Many youth had little understanding of why certain donations were done and others expressed how it sometimes affected their church attendance or situation at home.

At a youth gathering, there were a lot of questions where the kids questioned the taulaga. What is a certain amount or limit to give? The faifeau said it is something you are happy with, there is no point in giving something and then komumu¹⁰⁰ after. I think everyone said o le ave ma le loto malie and giving it whole heartedly. I guess it kind of woke a lot of our church youth groups because we always komumu (laughs)... and when someone mentioned toll tickets, we all looked at the churches we know that do the toll tickets because that's a whole different story (laughs). – Kenese

¹⁰⁰ *Komumu* – Slang/Colloquial word for "Complain".

Nine of the participants shared that they have had discussions with their parents around the financial obligations of the church. They felt it was a big barrier to the church and it often affected youth development and youth participation, as money is almost always involved for any church programme.

When it comes to the taulaga, the young people go why is there a competition? Where is this money going? I had to ask my parents where and they go 'o kupe ga le ave e fund ai aoga i Samoa',¹⁰¹ Malua and I'm like oh true. See we are not told these things. – Eseta

I don't even like the bank idea that the EFKS is talking about, it contradicts the whole idea of church – religion, and spirituality... it's contradicting. There are not enough programmes to do. And then if there are programmes, money is always involved. – Eseta

All four youth leaders addressed that people also put themselves under pressure to give more than they can afford to the church. Eseta whom I had the longest interview with, shared her thoughts about financial responsibilities in the church, but was always willing to give money to her parents to help with church costs.

We wonder where the money is going... I always ask my parents where the money is going. But we still give, because we are generous like that. – Nauma

You know when we get criticised in the newspaper or when people ask don't you have to do a lot of taulaga? I'd say look I know some bad things lately about the church come in the media, but it's not the church it's the people that go to church that make the church look bad. Because we don't give 1000 or 5000 to a taulaga, it's a personal choice. If you think you are well off you give this much or if not then you give another amount. I know there's a behind the scene thing with the faifeau going "rarararra" but I don't think it's the church it's the people. – Eseta

I had this argument with my parents with taulaga, and they said o lea e kofu uma makafale ma le afe (each matafale has \$1000 each for their annual church offering). I said look, don't look at other people, do it yourself and do what you are happy with. No point to komumu after. – Eseta

Financial issues and donations were not part of my research questions, but it was very evident that the topic of money in churches had a huge effect on them. The participants

¹⁰¹ 'o kupe ga le ave e fund ai aoga i Samoa' – that money goes to the funding of the schools in Samoa

recognised that this was one main reason people left the church. It also discouraged them from attending certain events and services.

E lelei a kakou ia (We are good), our age group, we see the difference and we try to understand it but with the young kids still growing up who don't understand why we do this and that they get put off... especially with taulaga, you just hear them say "man!"... that's when you eat bread and elegi¹⁰² for a whole month (laughs). I think the kids should know where the money goes, especially taulaga and if this money is like going to fund programmes in Samoa, what about programmes for us here in NZ? – Eseta

Finance can be another thing, where some may leave because they think of the money too much instead of just giving what they can. We have a lot of people in competition with each other. That is why some youth are put off with church because of the money financial stuff. – Samuelu

I'm sure we are the biggest in NZ, the loku kaiki but it's sad to see kids not doing well. We need to get that idea away from kids that church is just about money. – Levitiko

It's like you need to have money to go church. Speaking from experience, sometimes my parents say o le a misi le loku nei e leai se kupe mo le alofa. It's that whole in front of people look, where they will be like 'vaai e leai se alofa'¹⁰³... but it's not about that. It's about God, that is what matters. – Levitiko

When I hear EFKS lately, it's like "ching ching" rings in my head as well. You always hear parents' komumu about money stuff but then when they are at fonos they offer to pay for this and that, and give more for this and that. – Ruta

The role of the faifeau in reference to money was also discussed by the young people.

Sometimes people don't respect what the faifeau wants, like when he says to give what you can and then the people set a limit to what should be given. – Tupu

In a way, not to be disrespectful but I think there is too much money stuff going on, too much money goes to the faifeau in one Sunday. My parents taught me if you give money you get blessings, but to this day I am still waiting for blessings (laughs). – Ieremia

¹⁰² *Elegi* – mackerel fish.

¹⁰³ Translation: Look! That family has not put in an offering.

The participants noticed when families were not at church on Sundays and they gathered that this was probably due to having no donation to give on that specific day.

Oh it's sad about the money, how some people can't afford certain things so they don't attend church and miss it. They shouldn't call out "e le'i o'o mai"¹⁰⁴ God knows, so why are they calling it out for. – Ruta

Tupu answers Ruta's words above by saying "well because they are God too" (laughs).

There are families that don't have food sometimes, but we don't help them? We should donate cans, bring it to church and then those families can come get it. – Ruta

There was a great perception that church required too many monetary offerings and donations. The participants also felt that youth programmes were hindered due to money.

Sometimes people are just like... I mean like we could all take a long walk, go to the park... something that doesn't involve money and I don't know... they think everyone costs money. – Salamo

It was not only the church that received reaction over financial obligations. Family and *fa'alavelave* was also discussed by four participants outlining the positives and the negatives.

For example, like fa'alavelaves, the first thing they do is call NZ. Fa'alavelaves... it's a good thing and a bad thing. It's good in a way because the whole family is involved and it brings them together but it also stresses the family out. It's like which bill am I not going to be able to pay? The downfall is the financial side of things... and the amount of time we have to work to try and get that money. – Nauma

The youth make specific references to 'competition' in the financial offerings. Many of the participants felt that their parents were giving money in competition with other families. This is a topic that is heavily debated in the community and in media and has been discussed by Samoan researchers and leaders. For the older youth participants in full time employment, they had strong relationships with their parents and families and for this reason contributed towards family *fa'alavelave* and church obligations.

¹⁰⁴ Translation: Money has not been put it.

Church Pride

Despite financial struggles, when the youth were asked what were the positives aspects of church or what made them stay in their churches, all the youth answered that it was the people or their friends. However, they also said, it is people who can also be the problem at church. Basically, the people are the best and the worst points of the church.

It is really cool, everyone is... it's a safe kind of environment you get there. Everyone is very friendly. There are no little gangs or little groups, everyone is the same. I love church; umm I think it's just like the atmosphere. I was brought up in EFKS and it is where my morals lie in, and it's a church that is well established and I have heard so many great things and I'm always like "hey I'm so proud". I have experienced big churches and it is kind of something I don't want to experience, so this church is perfect. – Kenese

I love EFKS, especially with pulega stuff we smile and wave to each other even if we don't really know each other. – Nauma

Participants did not discuss only fellowship and relationships with people, but they also shared their admiration for history and background of the EFKS. Once again, the notion 'it is the people not the church' is mentioned by four of the older participants.

I love being an EFKS member, because of the history and everything. I like that our church is mamalu. I am proud to be EFKS, because it's founded properly. The people are so atia'e lotu and that is because our people want to do better. The church is good; I don't think the church is bad. I think it's the people that go to church that can make it bad. So there is still room for improvement. – Eseta

That's another reason I like church, is the history and the people who have been there from the start. Some are fiapoko though (laughs).

The people. I think the people, well not all (laughs). And just the things we do, if there is more stuff to do you will enjoy it because you are accompanied with others and those who you want to be around. The people are important. Church helps me with my everyday life. When I go church I feel good, I like it because it's in my first language and I can relate to the people there. – Fa'amasino

X is the church I will bring my kids up in, and I want to galue until God vala'aus me.¹⁰⁵ It is such a loving environment. When people say the EFKS churches they go to, and I say I am from EFKS X, people are like 'where is that?' (laughs). – Kenese

Friendship and Family

The majority youth participants said they attended an EFKS church because of their upbringing and families, and although some at first felt it was mandatory to attend when they were younger, they now enjoy church. Friendship and fellowship in the church is very important for young people. The younger youth participants shared that their families and parents played a big part in church attendance. In addition, the young participants would also often refer to their church people as family (Penn, 2010) or having closer relationship and ties to them than their own extended families. The Pacific Conference of Churches here also acknowledges that “through the power of the Holy Spirit, true worship is about true commitment for the good of others” (Piula Theological College, 2011, p.4). Having a positive bond, relationship and connection with fellow church members is very important.

As time went by, I saw Church X as my second family and not just my church. I call my faifeau & his wife my second parents. Our faletua treats us like her own kids. – Kenese

I go to an EFKS church because I was brought up in one and my parents go to it. – Fa'amasino

I was born there and I will die there (laughs) but seriously. There are times I want to leave, I tried going to these other churches but then I felt different aye so I went back to church. – Samuelu

I go to church coz my whole family goes church, but I like church myself and all my friends at church. – Salamo

My parents, it's hard to disappoint your parents. I was reading the Bible this other day, because I had an argument with my dad (laughs). I was having an argument with my dad in regards to me doing pese. I already shared with my mum the relationship I want with God, she said to me 'I have no say over God, over God's work' I thought oh awesome... but then she ended off with 'but make

¹⁰⁵ Translation: I want work until God calls me or gives me rest.

sure you still come to pese(s)'... I laughed and thought have you not been listening to anything I have been saying (laughs). – Nauma

I go church because my parents attend (laughs)... no I love our church and I love being a Sunday school teacher. I feel like I'm giving something back to the children and I love working with the children. – Eseta

When I was young my mum & dad forced me to go church (laughs). But now I enjoy it. You know sometimes my parents won't go, like they will choose to stay home but I will go, as long as I have a car to go. – Samuelu

Three youth participants shared that many times they attended church was just to make their parents or family happy, but if they had a choice they would stay home.

I go to church because of my parents (laughs) and I want to make them happy. – Numera

I just go to attend, just telling the truth. To make my parents smile. – Levitiko

I feel like my grandma is a big part of why I go church right now, but I do think about going to another EFKS church or even Methodist. I still want to attend a Samoan traditional church but one that moves with the times. – Ruta

Long-life friendships are often formed in the churches. Three participants shared that sometimes it is only their friends at church that they looked forward to on Sundays

With our youth group is that if one youth is sad or has fallen, then everyone is. That is what I witnessed at my dad's funeral; to be honest we didn't even tell everyone or our whole family. But at our dad's family service, we saw how our church and our youth group went to great lengths to not cater only for our church youth but our family. Even people who we didn't tell about the funeral turned up. What I saw that night was the whole youth group coming together to support us. It really hit me, it was not what I expected and they supported us greatly. – Kenese

The Challenges of church

The young people face different challenges in the church have been recorded separately too although challenges were touched in all themes. The participants felt comfortable to share their views on matters that affect youth specifically in the church. Experiences included being teen mothers, not looking 'physically right' as well as being an 'insider

or outsider' of the EFKS community. Challenges also included not understanding what was happening in the church.

Sometimes I'm lazy to go church because there is too much talking where I don't understand and I just sit there. – Salamo

We have some youth that go sit outside after the lauga, but the whole church service is important. Our oldies see it happening but I think it's just become a normal thing. – Nauma

One youth participant shared an experience where young men are required to be clean shaven at all times. He felt this was a major barrier to youth participation as youth were judged on their outer appearance.

I think it's ok that you need to be clean shaven, but it's not worth forcing someone if that means they are not going to end up coming back. It's good to be clean shaven and have short hair but that's not more important than someone feeling they can't come church because of that. It's not worth losing people over that. We should accept people who want to come play sport with us, it's not good not letting outsiders play. – Tupu

*Person * didn't play cricket coz of his hair. Person** came church but after being told how many times to cut his hair and shave his beard he stopped coming. – Tupu*

Two participants were parents, and one mother shared her experiences being a young mother in the church. This story depicts yet another form of marginalization in the church.

Youth are not really encouraged and supported at church. They look down, if youth do something wrong, they don't want to go back to church. Speaking from experience, when I went through having a baby at a young age, I didn't want to go back to church for ages coz I felt embarrassed and I know exactly how the ladies are and how they all talk. So I would just want to stay home. – Ruta

Much of the challenges of the church were addressed as a result of the EFKS 50 year celebrations. An article by Tauafiafi (2012) who interviewed Rev. Lucky Slade gives some good information on the vision and plans of the EFKS in Aotearoa for the near future and for the next 50 years.

Faith

Two older female youth participants shared their stories and experiences about their faith in the church. Both had attended charismatic churches as they felt it was easier to understand and connect with people.

It helps us to understand, in that way that is our church (doing loku at home). I know God realises that's why he helps us. We are not there alone; I know God is there with us. He realises (knows) everything. We don't get anything from church, it's so faigata (laughs), not understanding and stuff. – Levitiko

I went to this youth rally and it was mixed, it had EFKS, Mormon, AOG and other churches. It had these female guest speakers who were so good, so I thought why don't we have more female leaders in the church? – Nauma

I have grown up seeing my cousins stray, although I think I only have a few cousins who have gone to uni. I don't want my kids growing up seeing the sacrifices my parents made for me... giving up everything just for our education. If I'm blessed with kids, I want them to like see and know what my parents did for me... education was the main thing and the loku... loku is... they said without the loku, without Jesus Christ you are nowhere. – Kenese

Other issues

One of the main purposes for this research was that the voice of young people is unheard of in the church context. Youth have the least opportunities to share their thoughts. This was addressed by five youth participants.

It's like our voices are never going to be heard, it's sad that all these thoughts we are giving you we can't share with the leaders. We will either be faake'a or be given the evils at church (laughs). – Ruta

Sometimes leaders are not open to other ideas. They are not open minded to ideas by young people. – Eseta

Gender issues and inequality was also recognised and observed by two youth participants. They felt this was unfair and contradictory to *fa'aSamoa*.

And it sux also that it's mostly just men who speak. I know there is so much to say, but youth can't faaali it. They should have an opportunity to say something. The youth should be able to participate more. – Levitiko

The mothers, women – wives should be able to sit down and eat with their husbands at church feasts or toonai. They all don't need to stand up and wait. – Ruta

Our church is so male dominated. I don't think they have had female ta'ita'is for the Aotalavou or aufaipese. They look down on women on being leaders. They are just secretary or treasurer but never the leader. – Ruta

At the EFKS 50 year celebrations, the youth summit provided an opportunity, if not the first opportunity for many young people to express their views and concerns. Revered Elder Lucky Slade in response to the event said “We acknowledge the courage of our young ones to say what they're feeling. They have woken us up about their issues and needs. So it's good” (Tauafiafi, 2012). The EFKS 50 Aotearoa Komiti (2012) also, in planning the week of activities recognised the importance of including youth specific programmes. Young people who wanted to understand more about the EFKS and had unanswered questions had the opportunity to address some of these issues at the youth summit.

Resources

Another common issue the youth talked about was their church facilities and human resources. Many youth felt that their church buildings, halls and rooms were not utilised by the church people themselves.

We have massive halls in our pulega but it's not in use, only used regularly for housie. We can do sleepovers at church hall if there is no money to go on camps, no point in the showers being there. We have the facilities but we don't use it. – Ruta

It's all for money. I bet you if we said we will pay \$2 each then they'll let us come to use the hall. – Levitiko

It (Church hall) should always be open for the church people, but it's not and that's why kids will just go hang on the streets. I think we don't use our facilities well. I think our church is one of the biggest facilities but we don't use it, like our hall and our rooms. We could have an after school homework centre, especially like this time to study for exams. – Levitiko

It's like the people use it more than us for weddings and stuff all for money. The non-church people use our hall more than us! The first priority should be the church things but no sometimes youth is cancelled for those things. – Numera

Conclusion

The *Talanoa* methodology worked out to be the best methodology for this research as the youth were able to share their insights, perspectives, challenges and experiences with the church. The data collected is rich in information and overall findings have will allow for greater knowledge and acknowledgement of youth issues and matters in the church. Although current research exists on the themes discussed by the youth participants, what they have further contributed is a specific practice and understanding to that of EFKS people and youth not only in Manukau but of other places and countries also.

The young people were able to share their views on *gagana* Samoa and how it is used and maintained not only in the church but at home as well. Discussion around the challenges of *gagana* Samoa in the church included limited knowledge of the language and not understanding the *fa'aaloalo*¹⁰⁶ or *matai* language. Most uplifting, was the fact that all 12 participants were eager to learn more. This was reflected with *fa'aSamoa* and youth participation as well. The youth participants felt that the church and people could do much more to share knowledge and understanding of traditions, protocols, and customs. Increasing youth opportunities and programmes was also expressed by the youth in the form of Bible studies, *fa'aSamoa* classes, educational and employment workshops, fellowship between different church youth groups, youth camps, holiday programmes and homework centres. It was acknowledged that some of these youth programmes existed in some EFKS churches and not in other churches. This would be due to different leadership styles and individual church protocols and processes.

All 12 youth participants expressed pride in their churches where they had friendships and connections with other EFKS people. Obvious from the *talanoa*, is that the youth felt comfortable to talk in detail about the financial obligations of the church that can cause financial difficulties at home. The notion of 'competition' was regularly mentioned in this context where young people did not understand why their parents felt the need to give more than they could afford. The youth participants had much to share about possible solutions and gaps that they identified in the church. Scholarships,

¹⁰⁶ *Fa'aaloalo* – Courtesy/Respect.

gender equality, use of church resources and buildings, as well as human resources were mentioned by the youth as areas that needed to be improved in the church.

Finally, the youth being able to share their aspirations and goals is vital as this helps to identify how the church can address youth issues and needs. There were 10 youth participants who had some idea of what they wanted to do and achieve. It was most interesting and remarkable that these aspirations were of jobs, careers and qualifications that would help their families and communities. I believe that interviewing a further 100 youth participants could not add any more depth and fullness in the findings as the 12 participants and their *Talanoa* have covered all areas of youth development and youth participation in the church. Overall, as a result of the *Talanoa* and findings, there is much more hope and faith for the young people and the EFKS community in working together for positive outcomes.

Chapter 6

Discussion and Conclusion – Looking forward

Reflections

This thesis endeavoured to discover and examine how youth participation exists in the EFKS church and how it can be improved. “Children have their own particular needs and they feel the world that surrounds them; young people respond to their environments” (Tagoilelagi, 1980, pp. 2-10). This study found that the young people although are proud to be a part of their EFKS churches and communities, also feel left out and marginalised. Reverend Maligi Evile, a retired EFKS elder minister wrote:

Oral traditions are passed down from generation to generation. There are no firm guidelines or set rules but we tend to rely either on personal instincts or the regularity of some words and actions we act and react to, in our daily lives as Samoans. I can honestly say that I am proud to be a Samoan cultural advocate and practitioner. It has given me much joy and satisfaction in many quarters of my life and (I) have shared the benefits it provides. I firmly believe you do not have to be a Matai to know the culture and traditions (Evile, 2007, p. 82.).

Tui Atua (1995, p. 40) also shares the words of Nyrere, a Tanzanian leader, who said that

“The purpose of education is to transmit from one generation to the next the accumulated wisdom and knowledge of the society and to prepare young people for their future membership of society and their active participation in its maintenance and development”.

Research has shown that good youth development is relevant to us all. “When young people develop positively, they boost the country’s earnings, increase the wealth of national knowledge and use fewer taxes on health care, prisons, police, welfare benefits and psychiatric services” (McLaren, 2002, p. 8). There is then the belief and notion that these funds can then be diverted to education and other essential services. Successful

young people function better in almost every area of life – as friends, parents, students, employees, spouses/partners, neighbours and community members when positive youth development is achieved (McLaren, 2002). This is achieved when effective youth programmes and support are offered. Therefore, the opposite can happen if ineffective youth programmes with little or no support is provided for young people. The words spoken by Evile and Tui Atua express the need for EFKS churches to be more open and available for young people. Without this, knowledges and traditions cannot be passed from one generation to another.

The EFKS church is also seen as a community and institution that can help the young people and their families in other aspects of life. A Canadian study of how people with close ties relate to each other sheds some light upon the kinds of help that communities can provide where support – emotional, practical and financial – is far more likely to come from communities and people with whom there are close ties (Wellman & Wortley, 1990). There is indeed much strength in this statement as with the EFKS, it is considered a family where children grow up together. Young people also form life-long friendships and relationships in the church family and often view their peers as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Pittman (2003) reveals that a healthy family and social relationship as well as community involvement are vital in a community action framework for youth development. This further supports the notion that the EFKS church must provide programmes that support and promote close ties and a close working relationship with each other to ensure the best possible results and outcomes for youth development and youth participation for Samoan youth in South Auckland. Lerner, Roeser and Phelps (2008) concur in that religious faiths are an important part of the lives of young people where they can discover their life purpose and develop their assets by receiving proper guidance from leaders and mentors.

“I am Samoan”

All 12 youth participants voiced that they wanted to know more and learn more about *fa’aSamoa*, whether it was the *gagana Samoa*, *gagana fa’amatai*, or Samoan *measina* such as the *tatau*. The *Talanoa* of the youth participants has demonstrated that their parents and the home also played a major part in their valuing of the *gagana Samoa* and *fa’aSamoa*; in fact there were more positive experiences of learning the *fa’aSamoa* at home than in the church. Tui Atua (2009, p.52) states “*Fa’aSamoa* is founded on *alofa*,

the message should then be framed in a language and tone that is gentle and persuasive. Harsh words and unjustified reprimand will alienate and antagonise unnecessarily”. When young people are mocked for not knowing certain Samoan words or practices, it only does damage to the self esteem, self belief and spirit of the young people. So, if the rituals, customs and cultures practised in the families and the EFKS are irrelevant to the young people today, what will become of it? More understanding and connections between the *fa’aSamoa* and contemporary or modern practice needs to be addressed and achieved. The Samoan proverb “*O fanau a tagata e fafaga i upu, a o fanau a manu e fafaga i fugalaau*¹⁰⁷” very much applies in this context. Tui Atua (2009, p.55) could not have explained this proverb in better words:

“This means in raising children, they must also be nurtured in good thinking and good behaviour. It is this nurturing that provides them with the moral compass to being, feeling, knowing and doing what is right. It is a responsibility shared by parents, elders, matai and the village and church hierarchy. The principal purpose of this nurturing is to identify, teach and respect the boundaries between child and parent, child and elderly, child and matai, child and child, child and village, child and church.”

“What money? There is no money left”

Another main theme that emerged from the talanoa was financial obligations in the church. The nine older youth participants had much to share about financial obligations and responsibilities of the church. This finding also illustrated that the three younger youth participants (aged 13-14) were not as affected, this may be because they are not an age where they needed to contribute or at an age where they could fully comprehend the ‘cost of living’. Experiences shared included not attending a Sunday service because their families could not afford the *alofa* or *atina’e* for that day and young people telling their parents to ‘just give what you can afford’ when their parents felt the pressure to meet the offerings or donations of other church families.

The participants also questioned where the traditional annual donations were given and what it was used for. For example the *taulaga* that is given in the month of November by all EFKS churches and congregations around the world and the *fa’amati* in March, when mothers of each church contribute to the betterment of the church manse and building. Tima (2013) supports the perspectives of the participants stating that as

¹⁰⁷ *O fanau a tagata e fafaga i upu, a o fanau a manu e fafaga i fugalaau* – meaning young birds are fed with the blossoms of trees, whereas the children of people are fed with words.

financial pressures from churches grow, many young people move to churches that make fewer financial demands on their members while meeting their spiritual needs. The young participants had little or no understanding of the history and concepts of many of the EFKS financial offerings and events. Reverend Elder Lucky Slade states in a Samoan Observer article posted on its website shortly after the EFKS 50 year celebrations (Tauafiafi, 2012):

“As Reverends, we fight for God. Secondly, we are on the lookout for things that will benefit our Samoan people. Be smart and exercise wisdom in carrying out our duties. And don’t let the church become something that will bring pain and hardship on our flock.”

It is clear here, that the ministry, the leaders and the church’s main purpose is to benefit the people physically, mentally and most of all spiritually. This was also addressed by Fa’alau (2011) who reports that families who upheld collective values and duties were able to provide financial and moral support for one another during family activities and also in their day to day lives. This needs to be reflected in the church. Tui Atua (1995, p. 51) challenges the church with the following three statements:

- 1. "Has the church a duty to identify the new issues and relate them to the Christian message? If it has, is it performing this duty effectively? Is there a Christian ethic that applies to building more churches than required? Is there a morality that affects building a grand and expensive edifice where a modest and inexpensive building will do?"*
- 2. "People should be discouraged from giving more than they can afford by way of parading a misguided generosity on the lame excuse that it is fa’aSamoa... If the practise of faasamoa impinges on Christian ethic the church should say so”.*
- 3. "Is it possible that a church project in itself can sometimes be identified wrongly with Christian virtue? Is it possible that appealing to the competitive instinct to motivate large contributions tends to emphasise things material at the expense of things spiritual, orienting Christianity perhaps unwittingly to a materialistic bias? If the point is legitimate, is the church addressing itself to it?"*

With the EFKS church, the congregation collects money for the *faife’au* every fortnight or once a month. Reverend Nove Vailaau of the EFKS church described this as being “done in the competitive manner of the chiefs, under whose name the family

contribution is publicly announced: the *Alofa mo le faife'au*, 'love for the pastor'" (Ernst, 2006, p. 549). Both Tui Atua and Vailaau raise important points of the fine line between church and finances, spirituality and alofa. Reverend Elder Lucky Slade also agrees in stating there are church members who give too much:

"I'm one of those Ministers who say to people they are giving too much to the church. And this is something the church needs to be mindful of. But the fact remains, there is no church, whatever denomination in this world that does not need money to develop. All of them need members to contribute. But it has got to be done in an educated and affordable way. The Bible teaches that things need to be done with care, that the lives of people are multi-faceted and their many needs are addressed collectively and individually. What's the use of standing up on the pulpit preaching while families in the congregation are poor or facing hardships" (Tauafiafi, 2012).

As mentioned, the EFKS has been criticised by different members and leaders also the church and the media as one of the reasons why Samoans face financial hardships, although Tauafiafi (2012) states a number of reports are based on weak and circumstantial evidence (2012). However, it is obvious with the *Talanoa* with youth that they are very much affected by financial obligations of the church. There needs to be more education, knowledge, information and discussion between youth and their parents, youth and the churches to make light of the unknown for young people. Why is there an *alofa* for the *faifeau*? What is the *taulaga* for? What is *atina'e*? What are the procedures and protocols within the church and why do they exist? Piula Theological College (2011, p.4) and the Pacific Conference of churches also "recognise that an unjust economic system perpetuates, breaks or fractures relationship between human communities and with the environment".

Young people and their place in the EFKS

McLaren (2002) in her literature review revealed that youth programmes that are conducted and run in a 'negative manner' can in turn be the opposite of positive youth development. Here, instead of building the confidence and strengths of young people it can destroy or diminish the spirit and abilities of young people.

A Bible verse that supports the crucial responsibility for we have for young people is:

You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. (Deuteronomy 6:7).

Research questions that were mentioned in the introduction are outlined below and after the *Talanoa* with the youth participants. I will attempt to address what ‘having a youth voice’ means in the church. Before the *Talanoa* interviews, my pre-conception of the young people attending would be to express their need and want for more of a voice in the church. However, the young people did not ask to have special attention or opportunities to speak before church leadership, elders or adults. Their main concern includes having more positive youth-focussed programmes and activities within their respective churches.

The data and information from this thesis can possibly help individual churches address positive youth participation for their young people.

Our young people – our leaders of today and tomorrow

All 12 participants continue to attend their respective churches. In informal updates, the participants were ecstatic with the 50 year celebrations and the opportunity to meet youth from all over NZ as it was the first of its kind. At this event, many of the EFKS leaders past and present, sportspeople and scholars were acknowledged. However, the main pioneers of the EFKS church in NZ as well as the mothers and fathers who worked 2-3 jobs a day to help start the EFKS churches 50 years ago across NZ were not recognised. Another critique of the event was the cost of the celebrations. Invitations for EFKS leaders around the globe and New Zealand were given with little notice also. However, at the end, the young people were grateful and happy to be a part of a historical event and EFKS milestone. Important updates on the youth participants include Eseta now being married and both Levitiko and Ruta have graduated from university with degrees. Our young people are not only leaders of tomorrow but they are also leaders of today.

To teach our young people about the main Samoan values of *alofa*, *fa’aaloalo* and *tautua*, we as adults and leaders must first live it (Apulu, 2010). “*E iloa gofie fanau e ola i le faatonuga e amio pulega*’ is another common saying that means ‘You can always identify the children who have been taught through loving discipline by the way

they do right by others” (Tui Atua, 2009, p.55). In conclusion, from the findings of this research, I will attempt to answer the following questions.

What is a safe avenue or method for youth to voice their opinions? What is a culturally appropriate way for youth to speak in church settings before their elders and church leaders? How can the youth be critical of church matters and not be seen as disrespectful? What does specific positive youth participation for Samoan and Pasefika youth look like?

What does youth participation look like in the EFKS? How can youth participation be achieved in the EFKS?

Suggestions

It is important to understand that all young people are important and that every single young person has their own set of skills, abilities and talents and many are yearning to contribute and participate in church activities. Church leaders need to provide programmes and opportunities for young people to thrive and learn. When young people feel ‘bored’ at church and no longer see church and its programmes relevant in their lives they either seek other churches or stop attending any church at all. It is vital that the church continues to meet the spiritual needs of young people as well as community needs that include sport, education, music and other factors. What must be remembered is the common Samoan saying “E sui faiga, ae tumau faavae” – which translates to “Ways of doing things change, but the foundation remains”. These words are very important in order for positive youth participation to exist in the EFKS.

Churches have the authority to create, facilitate or oversee *Autalavou, Autalavou Laiti* which in turn can provide youth representatives or youth boards. Youth representatives or youth leaders can be given opportunities to speak on behalf of young people at appropriate church meetings and groups.

- There are church matters and meetings that young people are affected by; before young people can speak they need to be in attendance to learn the essence of why protocols and processes exist. Here, young representatives or youth who are ‘*ekalesia*¹⁰⁸’ can be elected or chosen to bring forward youth issues or questions so that young people and adults

¹⁰⁸ *ekalesia* members are able to take part in the holy communion and have opportunities to attend and vote in church matters

as well as leaders have the opportunity to share knowledge and information. A common Samoan proverb, “*O le ala i le pule o le tautua*” translates to “The way to authority or leadership is through service”; this notion is very much valued and lived by in the Samoan community and context. This suggests that young people or all people serve in their communities before they can be in leadership. This is also reinforced by a research completed by a young Samoan man Apulu (2010) titled “*Tautua faatamalii: Servant hood with absolute integrity, engaging with Samoan young people*”.

At *Autalavou* groups and meetings, evaluations as well as recommendations can be accomplished through activities and presentations. Here, young people can make suggestions for annual programmes. If the context is not right for young people to speak, different methods need to be offered to obtain the thoughts and perspectives of young people.

- Wording is key and words spoken by representatives are crucial in upholding respect and the *va* between people. When groups present on their suggestions, examples of words spoken are, ‘*O se manatu fa’atauva’a, ae le fai a’i...*’ ‘*O na o nei motugaafa i le naunau e fa’alelei atili lo tatou polokalame*’ Humility and Respect is very important in the Samoan culture and if values are not kept, nothing will be achieved. Adults can teach young people about culturally appropriate protocols and ways when speaking in front of people.

There needs to be more opportunities for young people to visit Malua Theological College (MTC). The youth participants voiced their desire to attend a fono tele or to visit inside the gates of MTC. A report by Piula Theological College (2011, p. 3) along with the Methodist Church in Samoa, Congregational Christian Church of Samoa, Anglican Church of Melanesia, Congregational Christian Church of American Samoa, Catholic Bishops Conference of Papua New Guinea, Cook Islands Christian Church, Diocese of Polynesia, Ekalesia Kerisiano Niue, Ekalesia Kelisiano Tuvalu, Evangelical Church of New Caledonia and Loyalty Islands, First Samoan Full Gospel Pentecostal Church, Maohi Protestant Church, Nukuno Protestant Church Association, Pacific Island Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa / New Zealand, Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu, Samoa Council of Churches, United Church of Christ Pohnpei and

United Church of Papua New Guinea present a powerful statement on Youth empowerment and engagement in the church:

“We acknowledge that upon the young people of the Pacific rests the hopes of ecumenism now and into the future. We therefore call upon all PCC member churches to invest in the further development of their youth programmes, especially in the formation of the following: i) participatory decision making; ii) ecumenical relationships; and iii) servant leadership. We acknowledge that the youth has a meaningful role to play in the mission of the church, therefore we commit ourselves to investing more in our youth programmes.”

Young people need to be able to meet all three points of either participatory decision making, witnessing or observing how decision making occurs within the church. They will also have more exposure and opportunities to meet people and youth from EFKS churches around the world. Here they also have the opportunity to serve their people and elders through the many roles, responsibilities and tasks that are required during the fono tele. To have one youth representative per matāgaluega per year is not enough.

Technology is another major factor that needs to be incorporated into the church to achieve youth participation. In a modern world that relies heavily on technology, this is something the church cannot escape or ignore. The use of texts, Facebook pages and messages is crucial in the ‘youth world’. This has been achieved somewhat to a level as discussed in the EFKS chapter on current and existing Facebook pages. However, this is still insufficient. PowerPoint presentations, YouTube videos, video clips and visual aids are but a few examples of technology that can be used in churches today.

Andrew Fale Lesā (2012) is an EFKS young member of Weymouth, South Auckland has been a Manukau City Council advisory committee member and a youth advocate for the Youth Development Ministry; he expressed also that “the best way to leadership is through service”. What is important for young people to recognize and this is what all youth participants have expressed also is that there is no fast track, no short cut or automatic pathway to leadership in the church. There are many adults also who do not have a *tiakono* role or are part of a *matafale* that will have limited opportunities to speak also. However, although people know and are aware of their roles and positions in the

church, there still needs to be increased opportunity for people to address issues and express their views whether positive or negative.

The church hierarchy when explained in depth will have its own history and background so this is not something I will delve into. But, what is valued and should be valued are all voices, all people, all members of the EFKS as the word ‘congregation’ or ‘fa’alapotopotoga’ is at the core of what the EFKS church represents. Again, leaders and *le au fai tofā*¹⁰⁹ have the imperative role of making decisions that above all, is for the benefit and good of the church and its people – especially for the Praise and Approval of God and His teachings. Here, reflects how with the numbers of the EFKS congregation and people dwindling (Ernst, 2006), many will often look at the leaders and question why. This only further expresses the importance of having good programmes as well as good EFKS leaders for our young people. A leader must always be willing to make sacrifices for his or her people no matter what cost. An excerpt from an article by Teena Brown Pulu (2013, p. 102) also illustrates what this means and what it should mean to be a leader of any community:

“In February of 2013 when my matrilineal cousin Baron Fielakepa, the former noble of Havelu’loto, passed away, Lord Ma’afu, the head of the Ha’a Havea Lahi and noble of Vaini and Tokomololo spent a considerable amount of his personal savings on funeral proceedings. The provision of food baskets for thousands who attended was socially expected. Momentarily I thought he had truly gone nuts, asking him in a half caste Tongan Palangi tone-of-voice, why would he do that? My inquiry said more about me, the privileged ignorance of not being socially expected to possess Tongan etiquette due to cross-cultural contamination.

Ma’afu’s answer was straightforward: “This is my responsibility as the head of the clan.” His words stuck. Social responsibility was heavy. It was real. It had obligation. It meant duty.”

As a new and young leader in the EFKS church, I no longer feel only responsibility and concern for the well-being of my own family but also that of my community. When the words of Maafu echo through EFKS churches and leaders, the ‘choice’ to incorporate and use positive youth participation in churches should be easy.

¹⁰⁹ Wise leaders and decision makers

In ending, youth participation for the EFKS church is unique and does not necessarily entail all principles and notions by MYD (2013; 2009). Youth participation in the EFKS can only work when the Samoan values of alofa and fa'aaloalo are used; and this is a reciprocal relationship between young people and adults, young people and leaders and young people and the church.

The Ethics Process

I am grateful for the Ethics process as it was committed to the wellbeing and integrity of the youth participants and ensuring it was the priority of this thesis. The vigorous process however, with the back and forth applications and correspondence reveals a need for the ethical considerations for minority groups or Pasefika groups to be re-evaluated. In another thesis on Samoan people, researcher Penn (2010, p. 93) states "AUTEC may not have got it wrong from their perspective, but it is respectfully suggested that they might not quite have got it right from the perspective of Pasifika researchers."

Future Research

Spirituality development, church monetary obligations, *fa'aSamoa* for the 21st century are themes that can be used to develop future research as there are either little or no current research exploring these notions. This is important because it influences young Samoan people and their decisions to be a part of a church community or not. There is also value in this research because all three themes can contribute to a pool of Pasefika research that acknowledges what it means to be a Samoan in *diaspora* today.

"Ia outou manuia"

This research and all ideas derived from the rich *Talanoa* with the young participants. To acknowledge their valuable input I would like to illustrate the process of this thesis to that of the *tatau* process. For the *pe'a* it is undertaken by the *tufuga ta tatau*, for this thesis it started with God. In Samoan custom, the *pe'a* is only done the traditional way; with this thesis it has used a Pasefika methodology, *Talanoa* with the blessings of my elders, cultural advisors and prayers. The traditional way for this thesis however is more so in that the Samoan concepts of *alofa*, *fa'aaloalo*, *va tapuia* and *va fealoa'i* were

upheld throughout. It was and is vital that at the end of the *Talanoa* as well as the thesis journey, the young participants felt respected and valued.

In the *pe'a* process, there are also the assistants to the tattooists who are referred to as the *solo pe'a*, a Samoan word meaning to wipe, in this case the wiping of blood off the skin. The *solo* of my thesis are my elders, those who have passed and those who are present. They continue to be a blessing in my life and encourage me to keep going and that whatever challenges or obstacles I face can be overcome with faith in God. Their love and words of encouragement 'wiped' away all problems.

Furthermore, in the *pe'a* process, the *tufuga* will also place a complex system of taboos in which the tattooed must observe and adhere to until the tattoo is complete and healed. For this thesis, ethical obligations were put in place to ensure that the integrity and safety of the youth participants were kept. In the process of the *pe'a* also, families are often in attendance also offering encouragement through word or song. To my families, friends and supervisors – thank you for your support and patience, for messages of “*fa'amalosi, loto tele, fa'amoemoe i le Atua, aua le fa'avaivai*”.

Finally, although the history of the '*soa*' has different origins, today the *soa* is the partner who is the sharer of pain. To my *soa*, Sapati Tima – we did it and we made it to the end. This research journey was much easier because I knew you were going through the same struggles. I was able to learn a lot from you also to help with my thesis. The *pe'a* is described as being extremely painful, although I know there is no comparison to the suffering of Jesus – I attribute this pain to Jesus and His fight and love for His people. The young people, their spirituality and faith taught me so much during the *Talanoa* and that the youth participants most definitely view themselves as sons and daughters of God who want to learn more from their elders, congregations and people.

The tools of the *tatau* are usually made from pigs' teeth and are passed down through generations. The tools in this research are the knowledge and information gained from the *Talanoa* with our young people. The tools also are the Samoan values that we continue to hold with great worth although we live away from the homeland in *diaspora*. May we continue as our parents and ancestors have, to pass down our Samoan culture, custom and ways, especially that of *alofa* and *fa'aaloalo*. Like the

tatau, it will be done again, it does not end and it will live on. May this thesis, be one of many different sorts of work that will help to benefit our young people.

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GLOSSARY

Words

<i>Aganu'u</i>	Culture, conduct according to the customs of ones own country
<i>Alofa</i>	love
<i>Aoga Amata</i>	Samoan language nest, Samoan language early childhood centre
<i>Aoga Aso Sa</i>	Sunday School (in the church)
<i>Aufaipese</i>	Choir
<i>Aulotu</i>	Congregation
<i>Autalavou</i>	Samoan youth group (in the church), youth
<i>Aiga</i>	Family (nuclear and extended), a relative
<i>Fa'aaloalo</i>	Respect, pay respect to
<i>Fa'aSamoa</i>	basically - The Samoan way, in the manner of Samoans, according to Samoan customs and traditions
<i>Fa'alavelave</i>	To hinder or obstruct. Word usually used to refer to family events such as wedding, funeral or birthday.
<i>Fale</i>	House, building
<i>Falesa</i>	Church
<i>Fanua</i>	Land
<i>Folafola</i>	To spread out, unfold, declare
<i>Fiafia</i>	Joy, delight, dancing
<i>Fono</i>	Meeting
<i>Gagana</i>	Language
<i>Kirikiti</i>	Samoan cricket
<i>Kohanga Reo</i>	Māori language nest Māori early childhood centre (Māori)
<i>Lauga</i>	speech, sermon
<i>Lotu</i>	church service, prayer
<i>Mafutaga</i>	gathering, association, dwelling together
<i>Mafutaga Tinā</i>	Womens fellowship group (in the church)
<i>Mamalu</i>	sacred, to protect, influence
<i>Marae</i>	courtyard - the open area in front of the meeting house, where formal greetings and discussions take place. Often also used to include the complex of buildings around the <i>marae</i> (Māori)
<i>Matafale</i>	EFKS term for an officially recognized family or group in the church.
<i>Matai</i>	chief
<i>Meaalofa</i>	gift, token of appreciation
<i>Nu'u</i>	village
<i>Pālagi</i>	foreigner, European
<i>Pakeha</i>	European (Māori)
<i>Tagata</i>	people
<i>Ta'ita'i</i>	lead / leader
<i>Talanoa</i>	to talk, chat, converse with one another.
<i>Tamaitai</i>	a lady, young woman
<i>Tamaiti</i>	children
<i>Tangata whenua</i>	people of the land, Māori (Māori)
<i>Tauluga</i>	the covering of a ridge of a house, final dance
<i>Taulaga</i>	annual EFKS financial church offering usually during the month of November
<i>Tau'i</i>	reward, payment

<i>Taule'ale'a</i>	untitled male <i>tautua</i> to serve, service <i>tofi</i> an inheritance, responsibility, duty
<i>Tulāfale</i>	talking chief, orator
<i>Upu</i>	word(s)
<i>Vā fealoa'i</i>	relationship, relations or connections between persons or things
<i>Whakapapa</i>	genealogy (Māori)
<i>Whare Wānanga</i>	Māori traditional institutes of learning (Māori)

This glossary contains all non-English words and phrases used in the thesis based on *Pratt's Grammar and Dictionary* (1984), *Milner's Samoan Dictionary* (1993) and my own knowledge of the formal and conversational Samoan language. Phrases which are direct quotes from the data collection are left in their original form, and the alterative /t/ or /k/ style equivalent has been given where appropriate. The translations of the Māori words are based on the *Collins – Māori Phrase Book* (Tauroa, 1990).

Participant Information Sheet



Date Information Sheet Produced:

14 July 2011

Project Title

*Youth Participation: Does it have a place in the Samoan traditional church?
Exploring youth perceptions of the EFKS in South Auckland*

An Invitation

My name is Meiolandre Tu'i Tagoilelagi Tima, and I am a student in the Masters Thesis programme in Youth Development. I am also a Student advisor at the AUT Manukau campus. My undergraduate degree is in Social Sciences.

I would like to invite you to participate in this research. The aim of this project is to look at how youth participation is used in a Samoan traditional church – the EFKS church in South Auckland. I am interested in your perspectives as a young person of an EFKS church. This will help to assist and find ways to promote youth participation in our communities and how the church can better support young people.

Should you accept this invitation you will be interviewed by me personally in groups as well as one to one interviews if you prefer. Your participation is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from this research at any time prior to the completion of data collection. Your participation in this research will neither advantage nor disadvantage you.

What is the purpose of this research?

Through your perspectives and what you share in our focus groups, we can discover what youth participation means to Samoan youth at a traditional Samoan church. We also hope to find how youth participation can be effectively used at a traditional Samoan church and how the Samoan language (gagana), culture (agānu'u) and Samoan way of doing things (*fa'aSamoa*) affects youth participation at an EFKS church.

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

You have been identified and invited to participate in this research as you fit the criteria of being a young person (13 – 24 years of age) and an 'active member' of an EFKS church in South Auckland.

What will happen in this research?

You will be invited to two days (Saturdays) for our focus group interviews at AUT Manukau on the 10th and 17th of September 10-2pm. You will be sharing your views and perspectives on the research. This will also include lunch and snacks for the duration. The data collected from the interviews will be used only for the purposes for which it will be collected.

What are the discomforts and risks?

There are no obvious discomforts and risks in this research.

What are the benefits?

The findings will be used for this Masters Thesis which is anticipated to help find ways for churches and Samoan communities to communicate better with young people in traditional settings.

How will my privacy be protected?

You will remain anonymous in the publication for this Masters Thesis. No opinions you make will be attributed to you in any way that will identify you. The published results will not use your name but rather a pseudonym.

All personal details, information and opinions will be kept confidential. No other person besides myself and my two supervisors, will see the transcripts

What are the costs of participating in this research?

There will be no cost for you to participate in this research but you will be required to be at the two days for the focus group interviews. This will be 8 hours of your time on two Saturdays.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

If you would like to accept the invitation for this research, please return the consent form by 19 August 2011.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

You will need to complete the consent form which should have been given to you at the information session. If you do not have a copy please contact me and I can send a form to you. My contact details are below.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

Yes. The interviews and discussions will be digitally recorded so that I can ensure I capture the essence of the conversation. These conversations may be carried out in either English, Samoan or both. I will transcribe each conversation and return it to you for your approval. This is to ensure that I do not misunderstand any words or meanings.

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

If you have any concerns with the research please contact:

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Dr Josie Keelan, josie.keelan@aut.ac.nz, 921 9999 ext 6104.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTECH, Dr Rosemary Godbold, rosemary.godbold@aut.ac.nz, 921 9999 ext 6902.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Researcher Contact Details:

Meiolandre Tima
MA Student / Student Advisor AUT Manukau Campus
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Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee 28 November 2011, AUTECH Reference number *11/194*.

Fa'amaumauga mo lou silafia

Aso o le Tusi Fa'amaumauga:

14 Iulai 2011

Ulutala o le su'esu'ega:

O le auai o tupulaga talavou i galuega fai ma tapuaiga i le lotu Samoa

Fa'atala'ula

O lo'u igoa o Meiolandre Tu'i Tagoilelagi Tima, ma o lo'o ave nei la'u mataupu i le Iunivesite aoao o AUT Aukilani Niu Sila mo le fa'aailoga o le Masters tikeri; ae o lo'u Bachelor's tikeri sa fa'ataunu'u'ina i le mataupu o le social sciences. I le taimi nei o lo'o avea a'u ma student advisor i AUT Manukau.

Ou te fia fa'aailoa atu lo'u agaga fiafia e vala'aulia aloaia ai lo tou mamalu e 'togi sau ma'a' i lenei taumafaiga ina ia lanu atili ai lenei mataupu. O lo'u naunauta'iga pe fa'apefea ona amana'ia'ina manatu ma mafauauga a le tupulaga Samoa i totonu o le mafutaga fa'ale-aulotu – le Ekalesia Fa'apotopotoga Kerisiano Samoa (EFKS) i Aukilani Saute.

O le mafuaaga o la'u su'esu'ega o le fia fai se sao o le tupulaga Samoa aemaise ai le latou leo ua tau'au ina le fa'atāua'ina. E i ai lo'u talitonuga, a taulāmua e le lotu EFKS le lagolago'ina o tupulaga talavou Samoa, e faapena ona solo leleia ai foi a latou tausinioga i isi mafutaga e pei o i le faleaoga ma falefaigaluega.

A outou talia'ina lo'u fa'atalaula atu i ni tou manatu aga'i i lo'u mataupu; ma lo'u fa'aaloalo e tatau ai, o a'u o le ā fa'atalanoa'ina lo outou mamalu, ma e le taofia le fefa'asoa'a i i vaega pe ā tou le finagalo e fesaga'i na o lau susuga ma a'u nei.

O le autū o le su'esu'ega

O le aumaia o tou mafauauga fa'atasi ai ma ni o'u vaivaiga, e fa'amoemoe ia fausia ai le mau i le tāua tele o le auai ma fa'aali lagona o 'alo ma fanau talavou i totonu o talanoaga a le lotu aemaise i le tulaga o le atia'e'ina ma le fa'atumau'ina o le latou gagana Samoa, aganu'u, ma le fa'aSamoa.

Aiseā ua filifilia ai oe e auai i lenei su'esu'ega?

O le ala o lou filifiliga auā o oe o se tama/tamata'i Samoa e i le va o le 13 – 24 tausaga lou matua, ma o oe o se tasi e aulotu i se lotu EFKS i Manukau.

O alāfua e tatau ona uia mo lenei fa'amoemoe

E vala'au'ina lau susuga e auai i le fa'atalanoa'ina o le mataupu o lenei su'esu'ega o le'ā faia lea i AUT Manukau mo ni nai aso se lua (aso To'ona'i 10 Setema ma le 17 Setema). O le'ā saunia foi se taumafataga e faia mo aso ia e lua pe'ā ma'ea manuia le mataupu.

O a ni fa'afitauli ma popolega?

E leai se auala e ono tula'i mai ai ni fa'afitauli ma popolega fa'ataui i lenei su'esu'ega.

O a ni mea aoga e ono maua mai i lenei su'esu'ega?

O le naunauta'iga o lenei su'esu'ega o le fa'apupula'ina o le tāua o le i ai o se sao ma se leo o tupulaga talavou Samoa i totonu o mafutaga *fa'aSamoa*; i le ma le tāua tele o le tulaga o le lotu i le sailiiliga o auala ia mafana ai le mafutaga o le 'au matutua ma tupulaga talavou. Ou te taofi, a lagona e le 'au talavou lo latou tāua i totonu o se mafutaga, e lē gata ona avea ma ala latou te 'alo ese ai mai le anoanoa'i o fa'aosoosoga, a e atonu latou te u'u mau ai i lo latou *fa'aSamoa*.

E fa'aapefea ona leoleo'ina lou fa'asoa?

O talanoaga uma o lenei su'esu'ega, a oo ina lolomi, e lē fa'aailoa'ina lou suafa/igoa moni. A'o ou manatu fa'asoa mai e fa'aaoga ai se igoa e ese atu ma lou igoa. O itū eseese uma o lenei su'esu'ega e lē fa'aaoga'ina lou igoa moni, pe fa'aailoa'ina atu ai oe.

Pe mana'omia le totogi o se aofa'i tupe i le auai ai i lenei su'esu'ega?

E leai lava se fa'amoemoe i se tulaga tau seleni e taua'ao'ina mai i lau susuga. Tau a ona e auai i aso To'ona'i ia ua atofa'ina mo lenei fa'amoemoe. Fa'afetai.

O āfea e fa'apau ai lou ioega i le fia auai i le su'esu'ega

A e finagalo e fia avea lau susuga ma se tasi o tagata ua ioe i le fa'aaoga'ina o ou manatu mo lenei su'esu'ega, fa'amolemole faitau ma fa'atumu le consent form ma lafo nei loa i le tuātusi a'o le'i aulia le 19th o Aukuso 2011. Fa'afetai.

Fa'afefea ona ou auai i lenei su'esu'ega?

E tatau lava ona mua'i fa'atumu le consent form lea sa tufatufa'ina ma le fa'amoemoe ia tofusua ai uma o o tou mamalu i le aso o le information session. A e a le'i taua'ao'ina e lau susuga se consent form, fa'amolemole feso'otai mai a'u ala i le telefoni, po o le imeli mo se kopi (folasaga) o le consent form.

Pe toe maua mai fa'ai'uga o lau fa'asoa?

Ioe. E i ai le fa'amoemoe o le'ā pu'e'ina le ta talanoaga i le lipine ina maua atoa ai le feau o lo'o e taumafai e molimoli mai. E lē taofia le fa'aPeretania pe'ā lē gafatia le gagana Samoa. E muamua lava ona fofoga'ina lau susuga i fa'ai'uga o lou fa'asoa pe'ā mae'a ona ou fa'amaumau'ina i ona tulaga e tatau ai.

O le a le mea ou te faia pe afai e i ai ni a'u fesili po o ni popolega i lenei su'esu'ega?

A i ai ni au popolega aua lenei su'esu'ega, faamolemole feso'otai muamua le Taitai faiaoga, Dr Josie Keelan, josie.keelan@aut.ac.nz, 921 9999 ext 6104.

E mafai foi ona e feso'otai le failautusi, AUTECH, Dr Rosemary Godbold, rosemary.godbold@aut.ac.nz, 921 9999 ext 6902.

O ai e fesootai mo lenei su'esu'ega?

Tama'itai su'esu'e:

Meiolandre Tima
MA Student / Student Advisor AUT Manukau Campus
640 Great South Road
MB Building
mtima@aut.ac.nz / 021 1678 357 / 921 9999 ext 6704

Taitai faiaoga:

Foma'i Dr Teorongonui Josie Keelan
Deputy Tumuaki | Deputy Dean of Faculty
Te Ara Poutama
Reception, Level 3, WB Building
City Campus, Wellesley Street
Auckland
josie.keelan@aut.ac.nz / 921 9999 ext 6104

APPENDIX III

Consent Form

For interview participants



Project title: Youth Participation: Does it have a place in the Samoan traditional church?

Project Supervisor: Dr Teorongonui Josie Keelan

Researcher: Meiolandre Tu'i Tagoilelagi Tima

- ☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 13 July 2011.
- ☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ☐ 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 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 agree to take part in this research.
- ☐ I wish to receive a copy of the report from the research (please tick one):
Yes ☐ No ☐

Participant's signature:

Participant's name:

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....
.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee 28 November 2011, AUTEK Reference number *11/194*.

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form

Parent/Guardian Consent Form

For use in conjunction with either an appropriate Assent Form when legal minors (people under 16 years) are participants in the research or a Consent Form when involving participants aged 16-20 years whose age makes them vulnerable as concerns consent.

Project title: Youth Participation: Does it have a place in the Samoan traditional church?

Project Supervisor: Dr Teorongonui Josie Keelan

Researcher: Meiolandre Tu'i Tagoilelagi Tima

- ☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated dd mmmm yyyy.
- ☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ☐ 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 my child/children and/or myself or any information that we have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.
- ☐ If my child/children and/or I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.
- ☐ I agree to my child/children taking part in this research.
- ☐ I wish to receive a copy of the report from the research (please tick one):
Yes ☐ No ☐

Child/children's name/s :

Parent/Guardian's name & signature:.....

Parent/Guardian's Contact Details (if appropriate):

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee 28 November 2011, AUTEK Reference number *11/194*.

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

Assent Form

For completion by legal minors (people aged under 16 years). This must be accompanied by a Parent/Guardian Consent Form.

Project title: Youth Participation: Does it have a place in the Samoan traditional church?

Project Supervisor: Dr Teorongonui Josie Keelan

Researcher: Meiolandre Tu'i Tagoilelagi Tima

- ☐ I have read and understood the sheet telling me what will happen in this study and why it is important.
- ☐ I have been able to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ☐ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- ☐ I understand that while the information is being collected, I can stop being part of this study whenever I want and that it is perfectly ok for me to do this.
- ☐ If I stop being part of the study, I understand that all information about me, including the recordings or any part of them that include me, will be destroyed.
- ☐ I agree to take part in this research.

Participant's signature:

Participant's name:

Participant Contact Details (if appropriate):

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee 28 November 2011, AUTEK Reference number 11/194.

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

Indictative Questions

For individual interviews

Project title: Youth Participation: Does it have a place in the Samoan traditional church?

Project Supervisor: Dr Teorongonui Josie Keelan

Researcher: Meiolandre Tu'i Tagoilelagi Tima

Date /Time of interview:

Location of interview: AUT Manukau Campus, MB Building

Questions to be asked:

1. Tell me about the church you attend. Describe the people that attend and your involvement in the church groups
2. What do you know about the EFKS church?
3. Why do you attend an EFKS church?
4. What does *fa'aSamoa* mean to you?
5. What does gagana Samoa mean to you?
6. What does aganu'u mean to you?
7. What do you think are the barriers and challenges youth face in the EFKS church?
8. What do you value in your church?
9. What does youth participation mean to you?
10. Do you think youth participation is used in your church?
11. What ways do you think positive youth participation can be achieved in your church?
12. What should the future of EFKS look like?

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee 28 November 2011, AUTEK Reference number *11/194*.

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

APPENDIX VII

Pepa Faatumu

Maliliega mo e o loo auai i lenei su'esu'ega



Ulutala o le su'esu'ega: O le auai o tupulaga talavou i galuega fai ma tapuaiga i le lotu Samoa

Taitai faiaoga: Dr Teorongonui Josie Keelan

Tama'ita'i su'esu'e: Meiolandre Tu'i Tagoilelagi Tima

- Ua ou faitau ma ou malamalama i fa'amaumauga mo lenei su'esu'ega mo le aso 13 Iulai 2011.
- Ua ou maua le avanoa e tu'u fesili atu i ta'ita'i o lenei su'esu'ega ma ua ou taliaina fesili ma lo'u malie atoa i ai
- Ua ou malie o fa'amaumauga ma talanoaga uma ua ou tuuina atu i le tama'ita'i su'esu'e e mafia ona ia faaagaina mo lana suesuega. Ua ou malamalama foi e fa'aaoga le lipine mo faamaumauga.
- Ua ou malamalama e ia te a'u le loto faitalia e mafai ai ona ou faamumulu mai i lenei su'esu'ega i soo se taimi ou te mana'o i ai. E leai se mea leaga e tupu pe a ou finagalo e tu'u ese lo'u igoa ma o'u faamaumauga ma talanoaga mai lenei su'esu'ega.
- Ua ou malamalama a ou fa'amumulu ma i lenei su'esu'ega, o faamaumauga ma lipine o a'u talanoaga o le a le fa'aaogaina ma o le a fa'aleagaina.
- Ou te mana'o ma malie atoa e auai i lenei su'esu'ega
- Ou te mana'o ina ia tuuina mai ia te a'u se folasaga po o se kopi o lenei su'esue'ga pe a mae'a (Faamolemole togi le tasi): Ioe○ Leai○

Sainia lou suafa:

Tusi lolomi lou suafa:

Tuatusi ma le numera a lau susuga:

Aso:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee 28 November 2011, AUTEK Reference number 11/194.

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

Pepa Faatumu mo matua

Maliliega mo fanau i lalo o le 16 tausaga loo auai i lenei
su'esu'ega

Ulutala o le su'esu'ega: O le auai o tupulaga talavou i galuega fai ma tapuaiga i
le lotu Samoa

Taitai faiaoga: Dr Teorongonui Josie Keelan

Tama'ita'i su'esu'e: Meiolandre Tu'i Tagoilelagi Tima

- Ua ou faitau ma ou malamalama i fa'amaumauga mo lenei su'esu'ega mo le aso 13 Iulai 2011.
- Ua ou maua le avanoa e tu'u fesili atu i ta'ita'i o lenei su'esu'ega ma ua ou taliaina fesili ma lo'u malie atoa i ai
- Ua ou malie o fa'amaumauga ma talanoaga uma ua tuuina atu i le tama'ita'i su'esu'e e mafai ona ia faaagaina mo lana suesuega. Ua ou malamalama foi e fa'aaoga le lipine mo faamaumauga.
- Ua ou malamalama e ia te a'u le loto faitalia e mafai ai ona ou faamumulu lo'u tama mai i lenei su'esu'ega i soo se taimi ou te mana'o i ai. E leai se mea leaga e tupu pe a ou finagalo e tu'u ese lo'u tama ma ona faamaumauga ma talanoaga mai lenei su'esu'ega.
- Ua ou malamalama a ou fa'amumulu lo'u tama mai lenei su'esu'ega, o faamaumauga ma lipine o ana talanoaga o le a le fa'aaogaina ma o le a fa'aleagaina.
- Ou te mana'o ma malie atoa e auai lo'u tama i lenei su'esu'ega
- Ou te mana'o ina ia tuuina mai ia te a'u se folasaga po o se kopi o lenei su'esue'ga pe a mae'a (Faamolemole togi le tasi): Ioe○ Leai○

Igoa a lou tama tama/tama teine:

Sainia lou suafa (matua):.....

Suafa o le matua (tamā po o le tinā):

Tuatusi ma le numera a lau susuga:
Aso:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee 28 November 2011, AUTEK Reference number 11/194.

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



MEMORANDUM

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)

To: Teorongonui Keelan
From: **Dr Rosemary Godbold** Executive Secretary, AUTEC
Date: 11 November 2011
Subject: Ethics Application Number 11/194 **Youth participation: Does it have a place in the Samoan traditional church?**

Dear Teorongonui

Thank you for providing written evidence as requested. I am pleased to advise that it satisfies the points raised by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) at their meeting on 8 August 2011 and 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 28 November 2011.

Your ethics application is approved for a period of three years until 10 November 2014.

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/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 10 November 2014;
- 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/ethics>. This report is to be submitted either when the approval expires on 10 November 2014 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 AUTECH 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.

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 me by email at ethics@aut.ac.nz or by telephone on 921 9999 at extension 6902.

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

Yours sincerely

Dr Rosemary Godbold

Executive Secretary

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: Meiolandre Tu'i Tagoilelagi Tima mtima@aut.ac.nz