Talanoa: A Contribution to the Occupational Health and Safety Management of Pacific Peoples in the Construction Industry?

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Glossary

fakaāue lahi mahaki – thank you very much

fia iloilo – want to be clever

fiapoto – trying to be clever

fono – formal meeting

kakala - garland

kia monuina – many blessings

matua – elderly

noa – of any kind, nothing in particular

Palagi/Pākehā – New Zealander or European descent

tala – talk, tell

talanoa – talking, chat, discussion; Pacific Island research methodology

taoga – treasure, gift

smoko – morning tea/lunch break

si vaevae – patterned quilt

va - weave

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.

Hailey Ida Mona Vaiola Feilo

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Acknowledgements

This thesis is dedicated to all the Pacific Island individuals that gave their time to share their stories and lived experiences.

Thank you, fakaāue lahi mahaki.

Ethics Approval

This research was approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on the 8th of October, 2015, Ethics Approval Number 15/340.

Abstract

The New Zealand construction industry is comprised of a diverse workforce with a substantial number of Pacific Island workers whose employment is more often than not precarious in nature (Lamm et al., 2010). Government statistics also indicate that Pacific Island construction workers are over-represented in injury and fatality rates and precarious employment (Jager et al., 2013; Statistics New Zealand, 2013a, 2013b). Applying the Pacific research methodology talanoa, the aim of the research reported in this thesis was to investigate how best to manage occupational health and safety (OHS) among precariously employed Pacific Island construction workers.

Given that orthodox, single-method, survey-based research designs are inadequate when trying to attain information about the Pacific Island group of people, talanoa was arguably a more appropriate research method to use in this study. Talanoa is the traditional Pacific Island method of communicating and its principles have been used to illuminate often inaccessible individuals working within industries, such as construction. The talanoa approach overplayed all exchanges between the researcher and the participants and informed the unstructured/semi-structured interview schedule (Vaioleti, 2006).

The findings presented here highlight the complex set of issues that surround the sample of Pacific Island construction workers. The talanoa sessions with the participants provided an in-depth understanding of their views about OHS within their working environment. It showed the tension between trying to financially survive in New Zealand and being relegated to working in dangerous, demeaning and dirty jobs. Another key finding is that imposing OHS policy and practices onto a Pacific Island workforce that emanate from a different cultural perspective may not be effective. Moreover, as supported by the literature (Loosemore & Lee, 2002; Ochieng & Price 2010), a multicultural workforce can also create unique challenges around communication. The cultural appropriateness must be considered, therefore, in order to accommodate the diverse workforce operating in most construction sites. However, a diverse workforce may not necessary be undesirable as different points of views and varied talents can be drawn upon to create robust OHS policy and practices.

The contribution of this study is to highlight the fact that one of the greatest risks in the construction industry is to ignore the issues around managing a culturally diverse workforce, in particular, communication issues and issues stemming from cultural insensitivity. More research, however, is needed on how to best manage this culturally

diverse workforce as there is still a sizeable gap between the views of management on one hand and the workers on the other. Improving our understanding of how Pacific Peoples view their jobs and what their experiences are of their pay and working conditions will enable the formulation of more appropriate OHS policies and practices.

Chapter 1 Introduction

The primary research question of this thesis is: Can the use of talanoa help to improve occupational health and safety (OHS) among precariously employed Pacific Island construction workers in New Zealand? That is, the aim of this research is to establish whether the talanoa method can help provide a better understanding (Lester, 1999) of how to reduce the high level of work-related construction injuries and fatalities among Pacific Island workers and, how would they prefer or would like to be managed in respects to health and safety in their workplace. The work lives and experiences of this particular group can hopefully provide some indication of what exactly is occurring in the industry to help learn about barriers to improvement and answer the question of why precarious workers appear to do worse than average.

What place do Pacific Island communities currently hold within New Zealand, "the land of milk and honey"? Is the dream to work a Palagi job and to earn Palagi money really just that – only a dream?

Understanding Pacific Island identities in New Zealand people involves a number considerations such as attitudes, perception of topics, the value of the individual versus the collective, culture, ethnic background, language and familial and social relationships. The cultural diversity within New Zealand and especially within the construction industry calls for a culturally appropriate research method that can bridge the gap and overcome certain challenges such as the health and safety management of Pacific Peoples. This Introduction explains the topic of the research reported in this thesis and why it is important.

Occupational health and safety is no new phenomenon; it concerns the welfare of individuals and workers within a workplace. The construction industry is a large contributor to society, providing employment opportunities and enabling economic development. It is also a very complex industry that involves many hazardous and labour-intensive activities. Pacific Peoples are heavily involved in this industry within New Zealand, as Chapter 2 will show in more detail.

In order to determine what is occurring within a culturally diverse workplace like the construction industry and to assist in analysing such a nebulous concept as "culture", an inclusive and multidisciplinary research approach is widely recommended (Lamm, Frick, Jamieson, Martin, & McDonnell, 2013; Teariki, Spoonley, & Tomoana, 1992; Te Awekotuku, 1991). In this thesis the Pasifika research methodology talanoa is used to

analyse the experiences of Pacific workers in the New Zealand construction industry. Talanoa is named after the traditional Pacific Island method of communicating. This approach involves an exchange between the researcher and the research participants via a dialogue that takes the form of an unstructured/semi-structured interview (Vaioleti, 2006). This method has been shown to encompass for Pacific Peoples' unique epistemologies as well as lived realities (Lamm et al., 2010; Lamm et al., 2011; Lamm et al., 2013; McFall-McCaffery, 2010; Prescott, 2008; Southwick, Kenealy, & Ryan, 2012; Vaioleti, 2006, 2013). Talanoa has been used successfully in a number of studies and in a range of disciplines, such as anthropology (McFall-McCaffery, 2010), community health (Southwick et al., 2012) and accounting (Prescott, 2008).

The talanoa methodology challenges Western traditions about research and presentation of findings because, when using talanoa, irrespective of the context, there is usually a beginning but no clear end to research (Halapua, 2013). There is no set structure of the topics to be discussed in participant interviews and, just as importantly, the identity of the researcher is fully presented to explain how this influences the position and process of the research.

Structure of the Thesis

Following from this Introduction, Chapter 2 provides background to the construction industry in New Zealand as well as OHS in the country. The industry itself not only involves many different activities but also activities that are hazardous to the workers themselves. The industry is fast-paced and pushed to meet timeframes that are sometimes challenging. It also has many participants that are directly or indirectly involved to ensure the project can be completed on time, such as engineers, principal contractors, sub-contractors, architects, and many more. The nature of work and employment within this industry is frequently transient and often involves non-standard hours.

Chapter 3 conducts a review of the literature on OHS within the construction industry. Through this review, it is aimed at establishing the current state of knowledge regarding the effectiveness of OHS practices and policies in NZ construction with regards to Pacific Peoples. The findings of previous studies are used to identify gaps in knowledge, the filling of which will provide a better understanding of OHS in the industry.

Pacific Peoples' culture and diversity and how they communicate are important as they affect their health and safety attitudes and behaviour. Workers are no longer bound

to their home countries as they can seek better opportunities and better lifestyles elsewhere. The diversity of the many different cultures in the industry must be considered. The concept of talanoa is discussed in detail in this chapter as an appropriate research methodology for these groups.

Statistics show that migrant workers such as Pacific Islanders are over-represented in precarious employment and are likely to be exposed to hazardous conditions (Jager et al., 2013; Statistics New Zealand, 2013b). The construction industry is complex in that it has a large and diverse workforce and comprises a network of supply chains involving a prevalence of small and medium-sized subcontracting firms. These firms also operate within multiple site configurations, which are often culturally diverse and precarious (Department of Labour, 2009; Quinlan, 2012b).

The ability of management to effect engagement also needs to be explored because such engagement is one of the significant factors for keeping safe within a construction site. This is also a requirement of new legislation enacted in April 2016 in New Zealand. This chapter not only conducts a literature review but also informed the researcher on what to ask the participants in the talanoa sessions, and helped establish the main purpose of this research. The chapter also helped to structure the conversation that led to the findings of this research.

Chapter 4 describes how talanoa was chosen as an appropriate methodology to answer the research question of this thesis. The qualitative methodology of phenomenology is an umbrella term which encompasses both a philosophical movement and a research approach and gives validity and reliability to study findings. Under this umbrella, talanoa offers inclusiveness and a multidisciplinary approach in attaining the information that can help us to understand what is occurring within this industry and this particular group of people.

The findings from the talanoa sessions with the participants of Pacific Island construction workers and those of the stakeholders that are directly or indirectly involved in the construction industry are presented in Chapter 5. The topics are categorised into key themes based on the talanoa sessions. These key themes are: culture and influence, communication, perception and expectation, management, and most importantly who participants think they work for. These key themes are used to structure the discussion of the findings in Chapter 6.

Chapter 7 concludes the thesis and answers the research question after bringing Pacific peoples' stories and thoughts together with the findings of the previous literature.

In addition, the limitations of the research are discussed and directions for future research identified.

Chapter 2 Background

Introduction

This chapter provides background to the New Zealand construction industry and the Pacific Peoples working within it. In particular, this chapter outlines why this industry is important and highlights the labour force and OHS characteristics. It also details demographics of the Pacific Peoples living in New Zealand and provides some context around their working conditions.

The New Zealand Construction Industry

The construction industry plays a vital role in the social and economic development of all countries (Ali, 2006), including New Zealand. According to WorkSafe, "it is the fifth largest sector with over $30 billion plus industry generating around 6% of gross domestic product (GDP) and it employs almost 194,000 people" (WorkSafe, 2011–2016).

Compared with other industries, the construction industry is labour-intensive. Historically, this industry has always experienced a high rate of injuries, illnesses and fatalities, and this continues to this day (Hinze, 1997; Hinze & Appelgate, 1991; WorkSafe, 2007–2013, 2011–2016). The dangers to health and safety exist within the industry because of its fragmented nature, complexity of work, and forever changing environments, as well as financial and time pressure (Ali, 2006).

The construction industry involves a mixture of different types of stakeholders directly or indirectly involved in the construction process of a project. These stakeholders include but are not limited to architects, engineers, quantity surveyors, contractors, labourers, subcontractors and specialist tradesmen. The construction site itself also involves complexity, with hazardous activities like working from heights, demolition, scaffolding, ground works, heavy equipment, and so on. That the work is often of a transient nature, the workforce usually has low to no education, and there is high level of subcontracting which are all major contributors to poor health and safety in the industry (Dearlove & Saleeb, 2016; Schneider, 2006).

The construction industry accounts for a large proportion of work-related fatal and non-fatal injuries worldwide (Waehrer, Dong, Miller, Haile, & Men, 2007) and in New Zealand a large proportion of Pacific Island people are employed in this precarious

industry (Lobb & Woods, 2012). During the period 2011 to 2013, there were 144 deaths; 180,000 claims for work-related injuries (WorkSafe, 2007–2013); and a higher than average claim rate for Pacific Peoples of 111 claims per 1,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees within New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2013a).

An average of almost 10 individuals were in fatal accidents annually between 2008 and 2014 within the New Zeeland construction industry (WorkSafe, 2007, 2016). Moreover, exposure to harmful substances such as silica, dust and asbestos was estimated to have caused 185 deaths and 731 hospitalisations in 2010. Vehicle-related accidents (49%) were the main cause of fatality in construction. The majority of these accidents occurred on worksites (70%) while a small portion were off-road traffic incidents (21%). Falling from heights (18%) and being hit by falling objects (10%) were two main causes of fatal accidents. These were mainly through internal openings in buildings and skylights (WorkSafe, 2016).

WorkSafe identified three main causes of severe injuries in the construction industry within New Zealand: injuries from lifting, carrying items, and straining. This has resulted in workers having between 21 and 34 weeks off from work, which inevitably contributes to the fact that productivity in the construction industry is low. The productivity of the construction sector was $14 less per hour than the New Zealand average, only generating $34.28 per hour (WorkSafe, 2016).

Moreover, the construction workforce in New Zealand is predominantly male (8 out of 10 workers) with a very high proportion of workers with low or no qualifications. These statistics do not show a full picture of the construction industry, however, as there is a serious level of under-reporting of harms and accidents that have occurred on-site (WorkSafe, 2016). This has been recognised by many researches and academic literature (see Lamm et al., 2013). The constant changing of the environment within a construction site is also a contributor to reporting difficulties (Ali, 2006).

The increase in workload with the Christchurch Earthquakes rebuild, an increase of housing demand and infrastructure in Auckland, and remedial work with leaky homes and buildings have contributed to the health and safety challenges of the construction industry in New Zealand. Pacific Island construction workers are over-represented in injury and fatality rates and hazardous employment (Jager et al., 2013; Statistics New Zealand, 2013b). Pacific Island individuals often work as labourers, machinery operators or in other similarly low-paid, precarious and hazardous positions. This explains why the injury, illness and fatality claim rates are so high among this group (Lovelock & Leopold, 2008; Ministry of Health and Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2004; Otero & Preibisch,

2010; Schenker, 2010a; Statistics New Zealand and Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2010).

With the construction industry, men aged between 41 and 65 years make the highest number of compensation claims for work-related injuries and illnesses (Department of Labour, 2012; Statistics New Zealand, 2013a). While the statistics show that there has been a decline in the number of incidents within the workplace in recent years, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2001) found that "New Zealand ranked last for overall occupational safety performance with an average rate of 4.2 occupational fatal injuries per 100,000 person years. The best rates (below 2.0 occupational fatal injuries per 100,000 person years) were reported in Finland, Sweden, Norway and the UK" (Construction Industry Council, 2005–2010; Lilley, Samaranayaka, & Weiss, 2013, p. 6).

These statistics indicate that OHS among Pacific Island workers is a major issue that needs to be addressed; however, the topic has so far received little attention (Lamm et al., 2013; Pidgeon, 1998; Schubert & Dijkstra, 2009). In particular, there is a paucity of published research specifically addressing problems associated with the work-related health and safety of Pacific Island construction workers (Department of Labour, 2012).

One of the main reasons why there have been so few studies investigating the OHS of Pacific Island construction workers is the absence of an appropriate, robust methodology. Lamm et al. (2013), Statistics New Zealand (2010) and others argue that there are a number of issues when researching ethnically diverse participants, specifically with Pacific Island interviewees. They are described as a group that can be difficult to reach as they are generally mobile, are likely to work non-standard hours, and their employers can be hostile to intrusion. Therefore, in light of the above statistics, the benefits of OHS prevention and investigation must be seen within the context of a cross-cultural milieu (Lamm et al., 2011; Lamm et al., 2013; Mearns & Yule, 2009; Pidgeon, 1998; Prescott, 2009; Schubert & Dijkstra, 2009).

Pacific Peoples

The country of New Zealand has always been described to Pacific Peoples as "the land of milk and honey", and as "the land of opportunities and possibilities" (McKenzie et al., 2007). During the 1950s Pacific Island people began migration to New Zealand in increasing numbers to pursue dreams of a better life. According to the Ministry of Pacific

Island Affairs (2016), by 2026 Pacific peoples will make up 10% of the total of the country, compared to the 6.5% in 2001.

The relationships built between Pacific Island nations and New Zealand have increased over the years, and nations like Niue and the Cook Islands have free association agreements with New Zealand, whereby substantial funding and budgeting assistance is provided, as well as New Zealand citizenship (Heritage, 2016). Other Islands such as Tonga and Samoa have a "treaty of friendship", also known as the quota system and the skills that Pacific Island individuals have are sought after in New Zealand, especially in the horticulture and viticulture sectors (Lamm et al., 2011). Pacific Peoples were and still are encouraged to migrate to New Zealand to work in the unskilled labour force (Këpa & Manu'atu, 2011). There are a number of Pacific nations represented in New Zealand, with 92.9% of Pacific Islanders living in the North Island, almost two-thirds of whom (65.9%) live in the Auckland region (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). The Samoan population represents the largest Pacific ethnic group in New Zealand, with 144,138 people, followed by Cook Islands Maori (61,839), Tongans (60,333), and Niueans (23,883) (Statistics New Zealand and Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2010; Statistics New Zealand, 2014).

A large proportion of Pacific Island workers are labourers (22,300 workers) or machinery operators and drivers (13,900 workers). These industry sectors are characterised by low wages, non-standard working hours and have low future growth (Department of Labour, 2012; Lovelock & Leopold, 2008; Ministry of Business Innovation & Employment [MBIE], 2013; Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2010; Otero & Preibisch, 2010; Schenker, 2010a, 2010b; Toh & Quinlan, 2009).

The findings of Allen & Clarke (2006) and the statistics presented in the previous section indicate that Pacific Island workers are over-represented in New Zealand's work-related injury and illness statistics. Anecdotal evidence also indicates that these figures are higher for this group of workers compared to neighbouring countries such as Australia (Kendall, 2006).

Like all peoples, Pacific Island people's approach to life is highly dependent on their ethnic background culture and upbringing. This is not only reflected in their homes but also in their daily working lives. The findings of a recent case study on Pacific Island workers in the manufacturing industry highlighted that individuals' specific culture (e.g. Samoan) influenced and reflected their behavioural attitude. Key characteristics of Pacific Peoples were identified as respect followed by humility, loyalty and hard work (Department of Labour, 2012, p. 48). The anecdotal evidence shows that within the diverse workforce of the construction industry, the main issues are related to culture and

diversity as well as language barriers. These can be major factors relating to injury and fatality within the construction industry (Department of Labour, 2012; Lamm & Walters, 2003; Vickers, Baldock, Smallbone, & Ekanem, 2003). The next chapter conducts a literature review to explore these cultural, diversity and communication issues further in order to understand how and why these are major factors for Pacific Island workers' over-representation in OHS statistics.

Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of the construction industry within New Zealand and given a broad outline of the Pacific peoples living in the country. In order to help reduce the high level of work-related injuries and fatalities among Pacific Island workers within the construction industry, one must understand the industry itself and Pacific Peoples who work in it. The revealing of what exactly is occurring "on the ground" in the industry through the words of Pacific island workers by the use of the talanoa methodology could potentially improve OHS on construction sites and answer important questions such as why precarious workers appear to do worse than average.

The following chapter reviews the relevant literature to further understand the roles of culture, diversity and communication within the context of the construction industry. It will also look at the nature of Pacific peoples' employment as vulnerable workers and the role of management in increasing engagement in OHS.

Chapter 3 Literature Review

Introduction

Building on the background to the New Zealand construction industry and description of Pacific Peoples given in Chapter 2, this chapter conducts a review of the relevant literature to establish whether the Pacific Island research methodology talanoa can contribute to the OHS management of Pacific Peoples in the construction industry. The literature review aims to examine what culture, diversity and communication mean in the context of the construction industry in general and of Pacific Island construction workers in particular. It also explores the nature of Pacific peoples' employment as vulnerable workers and the role of management in increasing engagement in OHS. Gaps in the literature and areas where there is a need for further research are also identified.

Culture

Culture is a complex, multidimensional construct that can be studied at all levels: internationally, national, regional, business and organisational. Culture refers to acquired knowledge of what individuals interpret and which generates to social behaviour (Kirk & Luo, 2007). This in turn forms values, creates attitudes and exercises a pervasive influence of behaviour. Its distinctive characteristics of values can be learned as it is given or passed on by parents, it is shared, trans-generational and cumulative, adaptive and capable of change. It is patterned as changes in one area of culture impact on other aspects (Kirk & Luo, 2007).

The determinants of culture can be norms and value systems like an individual's religion, political and economic philosophy, education, language and social structure (Guiso, Sapienza, and Zingales, 2006). This creates dimensions of culture, which Hofstede (1984, 1986) described as: "the collective programming that distinguishes one group or society from another". Hofstede (2011) proposed a model that groups dimensions into a number of categories that reflect aspects of culture: namely: individualism-collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, long- and short-term orientation and masculinity/femininity (Hofstede, 2011).

The individualism-collectivism dimension is the degree to which individuals are integrated into groups. The individualism aspect of this dimension refers to the degree the

individual is expected to stand up for themselves and to be their own person, while the collectivism aspect refers to the importance given to the group as a whole. The power distance can be measured by the perception of who the power holders are and who are the followers. Individuals with low power distance, for example, can easily express their perceptions; in contrast, individuals who cannot easily express their perception have high power distance. Uncertainty avoidance is the extent to which individuals cope with certain aspects of a society my avoiding the situation. The long- and short-term orientation concerns whether a society puts more importance on the future and fosters pragmatic values such as saving and capacity for adaptation. The dimension of masculinity/femininity relates to the distribution of roles as certain cultures place more emphasis on gender roles than others (Hofstede, 2003, 2011).

What Hofstede, (2003, 2011) and others demonstrate is that culture is still a very complex term which cannot be described in simple terms (Potter, 1989). That is, culture is not monolithic as it can have many elements that are incompatible and yet also have many elements that are similar. It is but a social construct which can refer to a vastly complex set of phenomena (Jahoda, 2012). In other words, the fact that culture has been defined in numerous different ways proves how malleable a construct is.

According to the findings of Hofstede (1984), an organisation is built according to people's values, and society is composed of institutions and organisations that reflect the dominant values within one's culture. He found that it was impossible for management to coordinate the actions of people without a deep understanding of their values, beliefs and expressions as the organisation is constrained by its cultural context.

In opposition to the individualism-collectivism theory of Hofsteder (1984) and Triandis (1995, 1996), other theorists argue that individualism-collectivism theory pigeonholes a whole culture into a dichotomous category and disregards the rest of what makes a culture, it's like history and levels of development (Cai, 2005; Voronov & Singer, 2002). Pacific peoples have their own unique cultural synthesis of information, stories, realities, emotions and epistemology. The attempt to fit a Euro-American theoretical approach or methodology designed to identify issues in a dominant culture is therefore unlikely to provide solutions for minority cultures such as Pacific Peoples (Lilomaiava-Doktor, 2009; Vaioleti, 2006).

Lamm et al. (2013) and Vaioleti (2006) argue that a more appropriate approach to analysing such minority cultures was needed. In particular, the findings of Vaioleti (2006, p. 22) identified that Pacific peoples have unique origins and therefore "researchers whose knowing is derived from Western origins are unlikely to have lived realities that allow

understanding of issues pertaining to knowledge and ways of being that originated from the *nga wairua* (spirits) and *whenua* of Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu or other Pacific nations".

Diversity

Diversity relates to the differences of members within a group or an organisation which encompasses a broad range of individuals with attributes of different gender, race/ethnicity, age, nationality, culture, education, tenure, religion personal goals, and many others (Gonzalez & Zamanian, 2015). In other words, the perception of reality drives behaviour and it is important to acknowledge all members of an organisation as their behaviour contributes to the culture and diversity of the organisation (Cox, 1993). Attitudes towards knowledge, respect, and understanding, appreciating, and sharing and finding solutions determine differences between people. In other words, diversity can be defined as a point of difference. It is a term for promoting differences, similarities and unique characteristics of groups and individuals in different areas in the world (Gökçen, 2012). It is also proposed that diversity is a malleable concept like culture, and is capable of being used either to attenuate or enhance racial inequality (Unzueta, Knowles, & Ho, 2012).

Diversity is a complex concept and can include a wide range of demographic dimensions like race, religion, age, education or sex. The growing complexities of diversity throughout the labour market require a more complex view of organisational diversity than visible differences. To maximise the potential of a business and its individuals, it is necessary to understand and respond to the background, skills, understanding and motivations of all workers at all levels of the organisation (Watson, Spoonley, & Fitzgerald, 2009). Work-group diversity is a fact of all workplaces as employees have become more diverse in terms of demographic composition over the years and will continue to diversify in years to come (Knippenberg, Dreu, & Homan, 2004; Williams & O'Reilly, 1998).

The environment that is created by management to encompass diversity within its workplace and their level of commitment to the overall cohesiveness is one strategy that can help encourage all individuals within the workplace to embrace each other's differences and unique value and characteristics (Barling & Hutchinson, 2000; Gökçen, 2012). Team cohesiveness can help promote health and safety practices. This aspect of team cohesiveness is important to an industry like construction as it involves working together using complex machinery and the aspect of safety within the workplace is

paramount. The commitment to diversity must be deeply engrained in the organisation's culture as this can help produce appropriate norms for constructive and productive behaviour by all employees (Clarke, 2003; Slater, Weigand, & Zwirlein, 2008; Watson et al., 2009).

Although in theory working in teams with diverse talents can be an effective strategy, in practice this can create unique challenges and often can result in suboptimal performance or conflict within a workplace (Bouncken, 2004; Cox & Blake, 1991; Devine & Philips, 2001; Easley, 2001; Horwitz & Horwitz, 2007).

The dynamic interplay of the many dimensions of diversity can have both positive and negative impacts (Gonzalez & Zamanian, 2015) and the research findings are mixed as it depends on what kind of differences constitutes the diversity in question (Ely & Thomas, 2001; Horwitz & Horwitz, 2007; Shachaf, 2008).

On the other hand, when an organisation manages diversity well, especially when it comes to effective communication, this helps to attract and retain the best staff. It brings to the workforce loyal, hard-working and highly motivated workers from migrant populations, such as Pacific Peoples in New Zealand (Polzer, Milton, & Swann, 2002; Watson et al., 2009).

Communication

The diversity of cultures and ethnicities in an organisation creates complexity in how people communicate and interpret information. The Auckland region has the highest number of multilingual speakers and Pacific Peoples make up 49% of this population. This is higher than the overall New Zealand population of multilingual speakers (18%) (Statistics New Zealand and Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2010; Statistics New Zealand, 2014). In Australia, research on construction site workers found that over 50% spoke another language other than English at home and over 50% were born in another country (Loosemore, Phua, Teo, & Dunn, 2012). Earlier research showed that high proportions of migrants naturally revert to their first language in order to communicate with other colleagues (Trajkovski & Loosemore, 2006).

One of the main issues in the construction industry which has a significant culturally diverse workforce, is the language barrier. This factor is closely related to injury and fatality within the construction industry. Investigations into workplace fatalities, injuries and illnesses have indicated that the root causes are often lack of communication or the inability to make sense of the communications where cultural diversity factors are

at play (Bust et al., 2008; Lamm et al., 2011; Mearns & Yule, 2009; Prescott, 2009a). An earlier study found that having a non-English-speaking background (NESB) increased the risk of work-related incidents caused by language communication barriers (Trajkovski & Loosemore, 2006). At that time however, there was limited research addressing the relationship between language and health and safety.

As stated earlier, language communication barriers arise from the diverse cultural backgrounds of construction workers. One's culture decision-making and verbal and non-verbal communication styles are different to those of other cultures (Shachaf, 2008). The cultural aspect determines how one encodes and decodes messages, the meaning of the message, and how that message was sent, noticed or interpreted. The social structure and social status also influences how communication is delivered and received (Trajkovski & Loosemore, 2006). The interpretation and perception of the message being encoded depends on an individual's cultural frame of reference. The more different the communicating cultures, the greater the problem (Triandis, 1977).

Effective communication is vital within a construction site because "the inability to communicate on a construction site represents one of the major barriers to successful management of health and safety. The messages are sometimes lost in translation" (Bust et al., 2008, p. 587). The various different languages spoken on a construction site can create a difficult environment when trying to manage health and safety and generate ideas for building accountability and responsibility (Haslam et al., 2005). The different communication methods used by each individual can lead to different interpretations, depending on the sender and receiver of the message, and can be influenced by many aspects such as social structure and status. It all depends on how the individual relates to the content of the text. Studies have found that people interpret messages depending on their own existing cultural and personal stereotypes (Bust et al., 2008). Each individual worker has their own perceptions influenced by their own experience-based knowledge about working environments and practices (Loosemore & Lee, 2002).

The pilot studies by Bust and Gibb (2006; as cited in Bust et al., 2008) found most workers do not understand the health and safety obligations of their employer as set out in official health and safety regulations. Their findings showed that workers within the construction industry believe that if they have an injury, they inevitably have no influence on the matter. There were even situations where they risked their own safety in order to complete a job faster. This corresponds with other findings indicating that production rate is usually prioritised over safety in daily on-site activities (Kines et al., 2010, Wadick, 2007). Other recurring themes include slower pace leading to lower wages, reluctance to

report minor injuries, and the fear that reporting mistakes or injuries could lead to dismissal and loss of income (Department of Labour, 2012; Kines et al., 2010; Lamm & Walters, 2003; Vickers et al., 2003; Zohar & Luria, 2003).

In the United Kingdom (UK), section 2 (c) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires employers to take information, instruction and supervision to ensure reasonable practical steps are taken to ensure the health and safety of workers in the workplace is upheld. Despite the different methods of conveying health and safety messages to employees in the construction industry, there were supervisors that were not aware of being required to explain unfamiliar signs to their employees or explain to them what to do when they see a safety sign (Bust et al., 2008).

A number of studies suggest many underlying issues for such communication problems, such as company culture, the site environment and its structure, training, learning styles, language barriers, literacy and ethnic group structures (Department of Labour, 2012; Jaselskis, Strong, Aveiga, Canales, & Jahren, 2008; Mullen, 2004; Toh & Quinlan, 2009; Trajkovski & Loosemore, 2006). Individuals who can speak multiple languages view the world differently and, as pointed out earlier, people are contributors to a cultural agreement within an ethnic community and that in turn arranges, organises and attaches significant meaning and ideas in certain ways (Finegan, 2014; Wardhaugh, 1993). In the context of Pacific Island cultures and individuals, this cultural agreement "is guided by rules of relationship and kinship, sharing ways of knowing and knowledge, and worldviews" (Nabobo-Baba, 2006).

Communication and culture are interlinked and are inseparable concepts because both are learned and maintained through human interaction. Culture not only determines who talks to whom, but it is also dictates how communication proceeds. Culture is the foundation of communication and this can create major differences when interpreting the meanings and intentions of messages (Loosemore & Lee, 2002).

Interestingly, some studies have found English to be of a minority language on some construction sites (e.g. Migliorino, Miltenyi, & Robertson, 1994). The English language is inflected, which causes difficulty for adults learning the language (Trajkovski & Loosemore, 2006). Individuals learning a new language often revert back to simple phrases which can in itself cause misinterpretation; for example, "it's unfortunate" may be replaced with "it is not lucky" (Trajkovski & Loosemore, 2006).

Another problem for language learners relates to syntax, where the meaning of a word can change depending on its position in a sentence. Sound patterns and accent also need to be considered as learners attempt to mimic sounds of a new language. For

example, in Pacific Island languages there is no "b" sound, which leads to "p" being used for "b" of Pacific Island learners of English, with words such as "bill" being pronounced "pill". Pronunciation can therefore distort the meaning of an instruction, which can be a contributing factor to workplace injuries within the construction industry.

When a child learns a language, it gradually accumulates different meanings of words and their different contexts. Adults, however, take longer to develop this, especially with a language such as English. As indicated by the findings of Trajkovski et al. (2006), there are certain expressions that can be interpreted directly or indirectly for migrant workers learning the English language. A statement "such as "please put your safety helmet on" is a prompt or a requesting act. The expression "do you have your safety helmet on?" is indirect statement requesting verification from the addressee with the implicit demand (suggestion or hint) to put the helmet on. The hidden messages or hints within languages can be easily misinterpreted by migrant workers" (Trajkovski et al., 2006, p. 448).

This is not to say that the construction industry has not attempted to rectify this situation. On the contrary, to capture attention, overcome the diverse cultural backgrounds of individual workers and to inform workers of the importance of health and safety messages, large signs and bright colours help to convey their meaning and importance (Bust et al., 2008; Leiner, Handal, & Williams, 2004; Racicot & Wogalter, 1995). However, some researchers have stated that the evidence is still inconclusive on how such translation of health and safety messages and pictures affects the diverse workforce (Bust et al., 2008; Lim & Alum, 1995; Loosemore & Lee, 2002).

Intercultural communication is an important method whose effectiveness is supported by research findings (Black, 2005). Intercultural communication relates to shared values, beliefs and traditions and having an understanding of each other's culture and heritage (Loosemore & Lee, 2002). There is a general understanding that to be competent in intercultural communication, one has to be aware of his/her own culture as well as other cultures. In line with this reasoning, cultural awareness was treated as a critical core element to intercultural communication competency. Others however, theorise such competency involves being mindful, resourceful and creative when dealing with face-to-face scenarios. These are crucial components to being competent in intercultural communication (Arasaratnam & Doerfel, 2005; Chen & Starosta, 1996; Dai, 2010; Deardorff, 2006).

The development of intercultural communication competency has been focused more on cultural knowledge as opposed to the process of how it is shaped. This is because

we all process different realities and the opportunity to learn from each other and mediate different perspectives in order to become intercultural speakers helps achieve understanding in a meaningful way (Zhua, 2013). Engagement in a collaborative manner, even if there are conflicts or disagreement, helps participants share stories and experiences that are imbued with a powerful quality, and such communication is different from the issue-oriented discussions (Black, 2005, 2008; Langellier, 1989).

In the context of this research, the communication-based approach is exactly aligned with the theory informing studies by Black (2005, 2008) and Langellier (1989). Pacific Peoples have their own unique cultural synthesis of information, stories, realities, emotions and epistemology (Fairbairn-Dunlop & Coxon, 2014; Otusuko, 2006; Vaioleti, 2006). Stories link dialogue and deliberation because stories have potential to invite others to participate with their views and deliberation. This is recognised by many scholars as dialogic interaction (Black, 2005) and by Pacific Island researchers as talanoa.

Talanoa

Talanoa can be understood as a conversation, a talk or an exchange of ideas of thinking, whether formal or informal (Kagawa-Singer & Kassim-Lakha, 2003; Prescott, 2008; Vaioleti, 2006). Talanoa has been discussed by many authors, such as Nabobo-Baba (2006), Otsuka (2005), Latu (2009) and Meo-Sewabu (2014). It is always carried out "face to face. *Tala* means "to inform, tell, talk and command," as well as "to ask or apply". *Noa*, on the other hand, means "of any kind, nothing in particular, purely imaginary and ordinary". In other words, talanoa means talking about nothing in particular, and interacting without a rigid framework" (Vaioleti, 2006, p. 23).

This meaning of talanoa resonates across neighbouring Pacific Island nations such as Niue, Tonga, Samoa, the Cook Islands, Fiji, and many more throughout the Pacific. The concept reflects the values within the Pacific Island nations and supports safe spaces in which people can share stories, experiences, understandings and differences that broadly support their common humanity (Fairbairn-Dunlop & Coxon, 2014). According to Vaioleti (2006, p. 24), talanoa "is the ancient practice of multilevel and multilayered critical discussions and free conversations. It is a way where communities interact with each other to make decisions about civil, church and national matters".

The quest for understanding Pacific Peoples raises a number of challenges as it needs to consider their attitudes, perceptions of research, values, culture, ethnic diversity, language and relationship with one another and the researcher (Prescott 2008, p. 3;

Statistics New Zealand, 2010). Talanoa is a method that is somewhat similar to what is called an "unstructured interview" by Western researchers. The difference is that talanoa is centrally focused on the relationships between participants whilst the unstructured interview is primarily focused on gaining knowledge.

The concept of talanoa removes the distances between researcher and participants, and provides the participants with a human face they can see and relate to (Department of Labour, 2009; Premji, Messing, & Lippel, 2008). Participants also have a chance to ask the researcher about who they are as a researcher and where are they from. The simple interaction between the researcher and the participants is the beginning of talanoa. It helps build a relationship (Meo-Sewabu, 2014) among participants who begin to understand each other in relation to their culture and heritage (Nabobo-Baba, 2011).

The information derived from talanoa also reflects the Pacific Island notion of respect (Premji et al., 2008; Statistics New Zealand, 2010). In any Pacific Island culture, respect is one of the defining characteristics, followed by humility, loyalty and hard work (Gifford & Boulton, 2007). Respect not only relates to the hierarchy within an organisation, but to those who are mature and experienced, such as elders (Department of Labour, 2012; Lilomaiava-Doktor, 2009; Premji, Duguay, Messing, & Lippel, 2010; Premji et al., 2008; Tiatia, 2008). In this context, the talanoa methodology seeks to "build an understanding and respect of the competing claims of rights and obligations that each party values and shares" (Statistics New Zealand, 2010, p. 171; also see Kagawa-Singer & Kassim-Lakha, 2003).

Pacific Peoples are "conditioned from early childhood to learn passively, primarily by careful observation and listening, reinforced by admonition so they become sensitized to other people at an early age" (Helu-Thaman, 2010, p. 8). Children are taught to respect the teacher as someone who is knowledgeable and has authority. In the workplace, Pacific Island migrants display this passive behaviour and tend not to question their employer's decisions, as this would be seen as being disrespectful. "The appropriate behaviour considered in many Pacific contexts is not asking questions and not interrupting those in authority, including elders" (Helu-Thaman, 2010, p. 8). This is a significant behavioural trait within the workplace and in general can also be seen in migrant workers of similar cultures.

Pacific Peoples have been considered notoriously difficult to research and are therefore likely to be marginalised and invisible (Lamm, 2014; Lamm et al., 2013). Smith (1999) challenged the traditional Western ways of researching and called for a new agenda for appropriate indigenous research. There are positives and negatives that can

arise from any type of methodology, including talanoa. The question would then be: To what degree of accuracy can non-Pacific researchers interpret the realities of Pacific Peoples when researching them? The research indicates a discourse of negative narratives associated with Pacific Peoples (Fairbairn-Dunlop & Coxon, 2014).

The dominant ethnic groups in any country are influential in shaping identities of minority cultures, such as Pacific identities in New Zealand. The attempt to disregard negative responses often arouses vulnerable feelings in participants, and one participant in Fairbairn-Dunlop and Coxon's (2014) book commented that Pacific Peoples often acknowledge and know they are inferior to the Pākehā/Palagi, and thus start behaving in that particular way.

Social realities are human creations, and if you fail to construct your own reality, then other people will do it for you (Hauʻofa, 2008). The notion of being stuck in someone else's story and being constantly defined by the dominant discourse in New Zealand shapes individuals' interpersonal interactions and, in most cases, filters one's own perception of oneself. Smith (1999) drew on Edward Said's *Orientalism* to describe travellers' views of indigenous people as being encoded as the authoritative representation, thereby framing discourse attitudes towards indigenous people. Smith (1999) described this as the marginalising of the stories of others.

The term research as used by Smith (1999) is inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism. It is considered a "dirty word" (p. 1), and whenever it is mentioned, it reminds indigenous people of unwanted bad memories. As a Pacific methodology, talanoa requires the researcher to be "knowledgeable or skilled in the realities of Pacific peoples; otherwise they cannot accompany their participants to the cultural, contextual and spiritual depths of their sharing and theorising" (Vaioleti, 2006, p. 32). Vaioleti (2013) further argues that the researcher would need to be a person of the same culture: "If phenomenology is about an authentic and true interpretation and description of (Pacific) phenomena, then what more authentic way for Pacific Peoples to describe their phenomena than using their own tools preferred over thousands of years (what Heidegger refers to as 'ready to hand'), such as talanoa."

Talanoa is an inclusive approach with an epistemology that is respectful and gives voice to the knowledge and experiences of migrant Pacific Peoples to potentially help overcome the cultural, communication and ethical issues they face (Smith, 1999). That very little research has been conducted on this population is a direct result of decades of disempowerment endured by Pacific Peoples (Helu-Thaman, 2003). Therefore, as more appropriate research methodology that is in tune with Pacific Peoples' ways of operating,

talanoa was selected as the most appropriate framework to answer the research question of this thesis.

Gray (2009, p. 576) defines epistemology as "a branch of philosophy that considers the criteria for determining what constitutes and what does not constitute valid knowledge". In other words, it provides background for deciding what knowledge is legitimate and adequate. Pacific Peoples have their own culturally appropriate methods of determining their reality and everyday lives and that is why many researchers have identified talanoa as a possible method that could be used in researching this particular group of people. A Euro-American theoretical approach or methodology designed to identify issues in a dominant culture may not be best suited to providing solutions in the context of Pacific Peoples (Lilomaiava-Doktor, 2009; Smith, 1999; Vaioleti, 2006).

The development of knowledge builds on the works of others, expanding on and enriching what has been established. Methodologies such as storytelling give deeper understanding of human lived experiences of the world around us (Geia, Hayes, & Usher, 2013). Storytelling bridges dialogue and discussion by inviting group members to participate in the conversation. It helps negotiate the tensions of self and of others.

Researching the OHS of vulnerable workers in a complex industry such as construction can be challenging, and it is necessary to fully understand the nature of the employment of the individuals under study.

Nature of Employment

Substantial changes in work organisations are evident in the 21st century, with many individuals looking for employment opportunities that are outside their parent countries. These changes have led to the expansion of part-time and fixed-term or temporary employment and outsourcing/subcontracting (Quinlan, 2003). The proportion of the workforce being employed in small-to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) or self-employed has increased.

The prevalence of non-permanent employment has led researchers and policymakers to turn their attention to how this is affecting OHS outcomes. The non-permanent labour market is growing to such an extent that employment relationships and the work itself has been described as precarious (Lewchuk, Clarke, & De Wolff, 2008).

The construction industry is notorious for the many complex tasks that are undertaken every day to complete a project on site. It involves many individuals with many different specialities that sometimes cannot be found internally within a company.

As a result, subcontracting is a standard practice employed by general contractors for a project's execution (Hsieh, 1998). The acquiring of goods and services by employing contractors and subcontractors from external sources can help to achieve specific tasks (Johnstone, Mayhew, & Quinlan, 2001). In the construction industry, about 90% of any project is contributed by contractors and subcontractors of different trades (Beach, Webster, & Campbell, 2005; Matthews, 2000; Nobbs, 1993).

The extent and nature of subcontracting is not possible to define because "it entails a range of closely related forms of work organisation which overlap including self-employment, outsourcing, body-hire, independent contracting, and agency labour. The boundaries therefore, are blurred as some workers may shift from one category to another and then back at different times" (Mayhew & Quinlan, 1997, p. 164). Subcontracting falls under the term "non-standard work", where it is defined as work that is not full-time (30 or more hours a week), permanent, or have regular hours over the whole year (Butcher, 2002).

There is evidence to suggest that industries involving subcontracting and self-employment show higher injury and fatality rates (Mayhew et al. ,1997). Others have supported this finding and shown that there are serious adverse effects to OHS from small-scale subcontract employment, with SMEs struggling to meet the obligations of legislation (Lingard & Rowlinson, 2005; Quinlan & Mayhew, 2001).

Subcontracting is therefore a double-edged sword, as it has its drawbacks as well as its advantages. If managed effectively, subcontractor's help contractors achieve market leadership by providing services and absorbing the erratic work load of contractors (Chiang, 2009). The reliability of the main contractor is what can or should hold together a fragmented and sometimes chaotic process. It is clear that certain skills are needed to enable an effective control system of OHS in any industry (Wadick, 2010).

Van Mieghem (1999) defines subcontracting as the acquisition of an item (i.e. a product, component or service) which the firm is capable of developing, whereas outsourcing involves the acquisition of an item which the firm is not capable of producing internally to a satisfactory level. In other words, a company pays another company to do some work for them (Belcourt, 2006). A specialised vendor is more efficient, as Belcourt's (2006) findings suggest, and they can spread the costs of training personnel.

The individuals that are employed or contracted by either the contractor or the subcontractor are contractors themselves. This creates confusion as to who is responsible for what specific area or tasks within an industry like construction (Hill & Ainsworth, 2001). Loosemore and Andonakis (2007) found contractors believe that the principal

contractor is responsible for meeting OHS regulations and for informing others of what they need to comply them. The authors suggest this belief may be related to the culture of reliance on security, access and payment on the principal contractor.

In the construction site, each individual's perceptions of what is a good health and safety practice differ widely. The legal framework provides an industry with what is required, ensuring that people in charge of the work are competent to manage OHS obligations. The nationally accepted framework in New Zealand specifically articulates who needs to do which task and what competencies are required. It mirrors the framework of other nations like the UK and Australia. Throughout the history of building, safety has been integrated into core business activities, but it is not necessarily defined anywhere.

The development of an individual's skills and safety behaviour results from making judgements about the hazards and risk being faced daily in the workplace. The government legislates what risks are permissible and what are not, but companies are often reluctant to spend what little profit they make on OHS training. The resulting situation is enforcement strategies with paperwork compliance, which does not necessarily produce the effects sought after: producing a safer workplace or best practice (Wadick, 2010).

Studies relating to the construction industry have identified this industry to have ambiguity and uncertainty surrounding the status, rights and responsibilities within the employment relationships (Ankrah, 2007; Mayhew et al., 1997; Toole, 2002). The ambiguity in task definition and the existence of foreign workers who are under-qualified or lack specific trade or workplace knowledge and experience (i.e. chemical substances, storage of hazardous goods) affects workplace OHS. This is because contemporary work is no longer defined to a standard employer and employee status. An individual that turns up at a construction site can be employed by the subcontractor who is a self-employed contractor himself. The subcontractor may have employed this contractor from an agency. This multilayering of subcontracting does not end here.

In the UK, a government inquiry into underlying causes of fatal accidents on construction sites found subcontracting and multilayer subcontracting to be a contributing factor (Manu, Ankrah, Proverbs, & Suresh, 2013). There have been subsequent findings and reports by Toscano and Windau (1994) in the United States; Blank, Andersson, Lindén, and Nilsson (1995) in Sweden; and Mayhew et al. (1997) in Australia, all associating subcontracting with OHS outcomes in industries such as construction. In several other countries like Spain, Malaysia, Poland, Hong Kong and China the adverse influence subcontracting has on OHS has also been noted (Ankrah, 2007; Chiang, 2009;

ILO, 2001; Johnstone et al., 2001; Manu et al., 2013; Quinlan, Mayhew, & Bohle, 2001; Yung, 2009).

The multilayered complexities of working on a construction site have a flow-on effect which influences OHS, especially if the supervision and the control methods are not regularly assessed, there has been minimum to no training, or employees have not been properly being inducted (Mayhew et al., 1997). The work to be undertaken by subcontractors is based on the amount of work that is done rather than the period of time spent on a worksite. The pressure for quick completion of certain tasks results in subcontractors pushing themselves hard and working long and excessive hours, compromising their health and safety (Gunningham, 2006; Mayhew & Quinlan, 1999; Mayhew et al., 1997). This affects not only the individuals themselves but also those who are directly or indirectly involved such as families and the organisation's productivity.

When individuals are killed or injured at work, or suffer from a work-related disease, huge personal, social and financial costs arise, estimated to be $3.5 billion or more each year in New Zealand (MBIE, 2012). In 2002, the total costs of fatal and non-fatal injuries in the construction industry in the United States was estimated at US$11.5 billion (Waehrer et al., 2007). When an individual is injured or killed, the personal cost involves that of his/her family losing out on the financial income and the loss of life. In a country such as New Zealand workers rely on the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) to provide comprehensive, no-fault personal injury cover. The more claims individuals lodge, however, the higher the levies individuals have to pay.

It is important to note that not only direct or tangible costs can occur from occupational injury or disease; there are also intangible or indirect costs that can result from occupational injury (Evans, 2004; Goertz & Mahoney, 2012; Goetzel, Hawkins, Ozminkowski, & Wang, 2003; Malek, Safty, Safety, & Sorce, 2010; Oxenburgh & Marlow, 2005). The direct or intangible costs include medical bills, physicians, rehabilitation, home care, medical equipment, burial costs and any other costs that would have to be paid by the individual or the individual's immediate family. The indirect costs refer to loss of wages incurred from not being able to work, and ACC does not necessarily fully cover the loss of wages/income. Quality of life must also be considered as the pain and suffering of the victim(s) and their families' experiences are results of the injury or illness (Waehrer et al., 2007).

The impact of an individual being injured or killed at work also affects the organisation itself. A lost time injury (LTI) can cause insurmountable financial loss to a construction project. Not only is that individual having to be replaced to do that particular

job, but other individuals that work within that site can be affected by the incident. Their level of productivity may be compromised as incidents such a fatality on site can cause different reactions amongst individuals, which in turn can lead to less productivity.

The literature explores the relationship between OHS and productivity but stresses that it is an area that is not straightforward. On the one hand good health and safety practices are good for business and productivity, while on the other hand OHS interventions are time-consuming and costly (Lamm, Massey, & Martin, 2006; Shearn, 2003). Having good health and safety practices contributes to reduced absenteeism, increases motivation and performance, and thereby increases productivity overall and cost reductions (Riedel, Lynch, Baase, Hymel, & Peterson, 2001). An effective OHS control system must be in place to diminish the exacerbating risk factors associated with culture, diversity and communication barriers (Dwyer & Raftery, 1991; Mayhew et al., 1997). The challenge within the construction industry, however, is that the tendering process leads to the minimisation of OHS considerations.

Survival for SMEs in New Zealand can be tough and by injury and illness causes economic pressure for the self-employed and contractors and subcontractors. The findings of Wadick (2010) and Mayhew et al. (1997) identified that workers who were self-employed took less time off work if injured, and frequently would try to "soldier on". This contributed to a greater incidence of chronic disability amongst the self-employed and earlier retirement.

Moreover, SMEs consist mostly of less than a handful of employees and having to create OHS regime can be costly. Compliance costs and ACC levies of SMEs would increase dramatically if an incident were to be reported. Therefore, the situation of companies not reporting at all is highly likely. This does not necessarily mean that the contractors see OHS as a low priority, but by compliant with only slim profit margins can sometimes be a struggle.

The evolution of contemporary work means workers are no longer confined to standard hours of work and employment. The workers for construction SMEs are often migrant workers, who are often taken on or laid off as demand dictates, and often have little or no understanding of safety practices or the law. The incentive for employers to provide a good working environment or health and safety training is not great enough for SMEs to invest in, especially if the individual they train may be laid off if there is not enough work (Lamm et al., 2013). As such, investment in training an individual is not seen as worthwhile by some SME organisations. This in turn provides little to no

opportunities for individual migrant workers such as Pacific Peoples to find promotion in any given industry.

What Is a Vulnerable Worker?

It is important to remember that the system of permanent full-time employment was established whereby a worker provides the time for work in exchange for money, and the worker is placed on the organisation's payroll and provided with the benefits of healthcare, paid sick leave and a pension. The regulations of such employment were established after World War II and the subsequent collective labour agreements provided most workers in permanent employment some protection from unsafe working conditions, unfair dismissals and discrimination (Lewchuk & Clarke, 2011). This is still the case to this day with the employer-employee contractual framework.

On the other hand, with globalisation and individuals migrating to other countries in seek of better opportunities, the nature of standard full-time employment has changed and more people are now either self-employed or work for an SME. These changes in the employment world have removed the standard regulatory and social support mechanisms of protection from those not in permanent full-time employment (Lamm et al., 2010). Individuals that work non-standard hours and are contractors or subcontractors are excluded from the rules regulating unions and are less able to exercise their rights in workplace health and safety regulations (Lewchuk & Clarke, 2011).

Many individuals that work casual or non-standard hours, or on a contract basis (contractor/subcontractor) face uncertainty about future employment and the terms and conditions of employment (Lewchuk, de Wolff, King, & Polanyi, 2003). As noted in the previous chapter "vulnerable" in this sense does not refer to the workers themselves but to their employment situation, which is one of precarious work and other disadvantages relating to cultural status and other characteristics (Lamm, 2014). It is also a term that is linked with precarious work and they can sometimes be used interchangeably (Sargeant, 2009).

There are many complex reasons for vulnerable workers (Trades Union Congress, 2008), who exist because the law is not strong enough to prevent the mistreatment of individuals. This provides employers with the opportunities to treat staff badly, thereby resulting in workers fearing for job security and receiving reduced rights because of their immigration status. A vulnerable worker is therefore "someone working in an

environment who risks being denied employment rights because they do not have the means or capacity to protect themselves from abuse" (Sargeant, 2009)

There are degrees of vulnerability because some individuals and some groups are more exposed to abuse than others. There are multiple layers of vulnerability in OHS, especially for migrant workers. This particular group generally perform non-standard work. An SME typically has a short life cycle of operation, and therefore trying to collect meaningful data that could be analysed has proven to be difficult (Lamm, 2014). The precarious employment that Pacific Peoples have is notoriously transient and they are likely to be marginalised and invisible (Quinlan, 2012; Sargeant & Tucker, 2009).

Sargeant and Tucker (2009) identify a number of factors that explain the employment vulnerability of migrant workers. These include 1) migration status; 2) the characteristics of migrant workers; and 3) the conditions of the host country. The term migrant can be defined in many different ways, but it can be simply defined as an individual who moves from one country to another to find work or better opportunities or have resided abroad for a year or more with the intention to stay a year or more (Robinson, 2002). In many countries, migrant workers are more likely to work on fixed-term contracts and in some countries, such as New Zealand, seasonal work opportunities are granted with short-term work permits.

The different employment relationships relating to working conditions, political and economic variables and inequality of vulnerable workers, including migrant labour, have been identified in the conceptual frameworks developed by the World Health Organization's Employment Conditions Knowledge Network (EMCONET) (Benach, Muntaner, Santana, & Chairs, 2007) and by Sargeant and Tucker (2009). This work aimed at mapping the complexity of factors that impact the health and safety of vulnerable workers (Lamm et al., 2010). While EMCONET focused on the concept of vulnerable workers, Sargeant and Tucker focused on a subset of these, the vulnerable migrant workers. Their model identified that the health implications of workers are interrelated to the conditions of their employment and can affect their level of poverty, living conditions, political participation and education (Lamm et al., 2010). Sargeant and Tucker's (2009) three layers of vulnerability help illuminate often inaccessible populations such as the Pacific Island construction workers in New Zealand. These are explained in detail below for assessing OSH vulnerability of migrant workers.

Layer 1 – Migration factors	Layer 2 – Migrant worker factors	Layer 3 – Receiving country factors

• Migration security
  o Existence of legal status in receiving country
  o Whether status tied to contract of employment
  o Duration and conditions of right to remain
• Role of recruitment agents
	• Socio-economic conditions in home country
	• Education and skill levels
	• Language skills
		• Socio-economic conditions in receiving country
		• Sectors in which migrant workers employed
		• Access to, and strength of, collective representation
		• Access to, and strength of, regulatory protection
		• Social inclusion/exclusion
		  o Living on employer's premises
		  o Urban/rural location
		  o Racialised group/target of xenophobia
		  o Role of unions/civil society groups

Source: Sargeant and Tucker (2009).

Layer 1 – Migrant Factors

Migrant status relates to an individual's sense of vulnerability. Being on a temporary work visa, reporting hazards or speak out about certain issues can be of repercussion to migrants. In some situations migrant workers fail to report poor working environment as either they are vulnerable workers and afraid of the above consequences. Many Pacific migrants highly value the job that they have been given and feel obliged to be loyal to and respect their employer (Department of Labour, 2012; Hudson, 1999; Shachaf, 2008). Moreover, Lamm and Walters's (2003) interview data revealed that Pacific Island workers are often employed by business operators to undertake precarious tasks because they ask few questions and don't complain. These individuals may not have complained because sometimes the status of the visa can be tied to that of the employment contract and the duration and conditions of right to remain in the country. Individuals who are in this position would most likely not risk the repercussions (Lamm et al., 2013; Sargeant & Tucker, 2009),

Layer 2 – Migrant Worker Factors

The reason for migrating to another country varies from one person to another. Often the need to provide support for families in the home country is a driving force behind

migration. The conditions of the home country are less favourable than those of the host country, therefore the opportunity to work longer hours and have more money in the host country is seized upon despite the conditions they have to work in. This is the second layer of vulnerability.

Layer 3 – Receiving Country Factors

The third layer of vulnerability for migrant workers is the host country and whether the conditions within that receiving country provide the individuals fair representation and access to regulatory protection. Migrants who have migrated for work are sometimes those of very little education. Most are without higher qualifications and speak English as a second language. This does not provide many opportunities for individuals to attain employment that can lead to career advancement. They therefore often occupy lower-skilled jobs and jobs that are considered dangerous and precarious. The fact that English is not the migrants' first language can cause various problems within the workplace. The intentions of certain messages may not be conveyed efficiently and effectively; and this goes both ways with employees and employers. If the message is lost in translation, this creates a gap between the expectations of the employers and those of the employees within the workplace.

Engagement Effect

It is important in the context of OHS to have all stakeholders of the industry such as construction be engaged and participate to improve its safety standards. The nature of employment and why the Pacific Island individuals are considered vulnerable workers provides a better capacity to understand and identify what best approach to use for better participation and engagement.

The level of employee engagement is difficult to gauge, however the aspects of reporting (Department of Labour, 2012), behaviour (Garavan & O'Brien, 2001; Hoyos, 1995), social and organisational structure (Mullen, 2004), performance perception (Staw & Ross, 1985) and so forth help provide an understanding of what is working and what is not working and encourage a positive health and safety culture and environment within the workplace. Unfortunately, good data collection is incompatible with the industry (Hasle & Limborg, 2006; Knippenberg et al., 2004; Lamm et al., 2013) and what kinds of engagement could work and to what extent are yet to be determined because of these shortcomings.

The Department of Labour (2012) found that a key perception of migrant Pacific workers is that if they report a near miss or an accident, they may be reprimanded and lose their jobs. In turn the loss of income will impact on his or her family as Pacific Peoples are heavily reliant on family support. Moreover, if they voice their uncertainties, they could be seen as being disrespectful to their employers (Department of Labour, 2012; Lamm et al., 2013; Lamm & Walters, 2003; Mullen, 2004). This can create a dissonant work environment which can lead to unsafe working conditions.

Hoyos (1995) and Garavan and O'Brien (2001) concluded that human behaviour was a contributing factor of major accidents and injuries in the workplace due to the unsafe work practices of workers rather than the working conditions they were working in. Mullen (2004), however, showed that they failed to consider other implications that may have influenced the safety behaviour, which could have directly or indirectly preceded the act. Mullen further argued that other studies have revealed that an organisation and its social structure is not to be overlooked because it influences heavily on safety behaviour. The nature of the construction industry, the risk associated with the work is present and accepted. Therefore construction companies cannot say it is solely the unsafe work practices of workers causing the injuries (Choudhry & Fang, 2008). These contrasting arguments led Choudhry and Fang (2008) to argue that there has been little to no attempt by construction companies to understand workers' perceptions or viewpoints on what might contribute to the increased risk within their working environment.

Situational variables such as pay and working conditions are commonly isolated as determinants of job attitudes and the perception of these aspects is combined into models of job satisfaction (Staw & Ross, 1985). For management to encourage a safe working environment, visibility in the workplace helps provide greater detection and immediacy (Kines et al., 2010). In the construction industry there is relatively low visibility on site depending on site conditions, building type, and stage of the construction site. Several studies have shown that providing management support, showing involvement and commitment to safety helps to generate satisfactory OHS levels (Jaselskis et al., 2008; Sawacha et al., 1999). Relationship-orientated supervisors were also found to have workers that perform safely under their supervision (Langford, 2000).

Engagement of individuals, whether they are directly or indirectly involved is crucial because it affects every health and safety situation. It connects the organisation to management, and those of management to its individual workers. It influences

participation and knowledge which provides consistency to promoting safety motivation (Neal, Griffin, & Hart, 2000).

Management/Leadership

Effective management is needed for high performance in OHS. Enhancing understanding of motivational sets amongst Pacific Island staff by management could increase meaningful participation and help drive down incident and fatality rates.

The difference between management and leadership depends on the individual holding the title and how they perform in terms of chaos and order. Managers seek stability and control and try to resolve an issue before understanding the full scope of the situation. In contrast, leaders tolerate chaos and lack of structure and they are more willing to understand the scope of the situation fully before making a decision (Zaleznik, 2003). Although the two terms have distinct meanings, in this thesis they are used interchangeably because the focus here is work conditions in the construction industry and not leadership styles.

An organisation's environment is set by the management. If the management encompasses diversity and understands the dynamics of overall cohesiveness, this will improve the behaviour and culture of a working environment. As noted above, the acceptance of differences promotes inclusive cultural practices (Barling & Hutchinson, 2000). This is an outcome that organisations aspire to.

The attitudes and behaviours of individuals within the workplace depend on relationships within the organisation. Commitment and job satisfaction amongst workers are related to the health and safety within the workplace (Clarke, 2003). Therefore, commitment and job satisfaction needs to be considered by management in order to provide a safe working environment.

Planning, procedural documentation and resources are very much in management's hands as they relate to the system approach to safety (e.g. role description, developing policies and procedures, allocation of resources). These resources are then used by the workers within the workplace (Törner et al., 2009). There could be misalignment when some of the policies and procedures are implemented on a work site. The basis of the system maybe of solid structure, however the implementation may not be executed well as possible. This relates back to the importance of communication and how the interpretation of individuals can vary from one to the other. In this scenario,

policies and procedures, for example, can be misinterpreted by workers within the construction site.

The viewpoint of a construction worker may not be the same as the viewpoint of someone in a management position. Production incentives need to be compatible with safety performance, especially in the construction industry. The time constraints of the project can cause some misinterpretations of what are considered acceptable work methods. Mullen (2004) postulates that a positive reinforcement for workers is money and therefore operatives that are paid by productivity are led to achieve higher production at the cost of safety. Sawacha, Naoum and Fong (1999) verify that people tend to commit unsafe acts because they are financially rewarded for doing so. The fact that these are the assumptions of the operatives provides an indication of how the message or intentions can be lost within a working environment such as a construction site, which has multiple complex networks.

Company policies and procedures, and role descriptions aim to create good safety performance (Hudson, 2007). If supplementary approaches are need to simplify systems that are complex, this defeats the purpose of having the system implemented in the first place. Or if a system becomes too elaborate, complacency then becomes a worry (Törner et al., 2009). The implementation of the system approach to safety is therefore of great necessity within any workplace or industry.

High management commitment to the safety and wellbeing of individuals within a working environment is a key dimension of safety, performance and the work environment (Flin, Mearns, O'Connor, & Bryden, 2000; Neal & Griffin, 2006; Pousette, Larrson, & Torner, 2008). Cooperation on all levels calls for open and rich communication which is the key element for the development of safety (DeJoy, Schaffer, Wilson, Vandenberg, & Butts, 2004; Jeffcott, Pidgeon, Weyman, & Walls, 2006; Reason, 2016; Zohar, 2002). These studies have found that job involvement and organisational commitment are related to safe working environments. It is also argued that workers' safety attitudes are the most important aspect in creating safer environments and these could help encourage certain behaviours throughout the workplace (Clarke, 2003).

Support provided by management creates a positive climate that encourages good health and safety practices and gives individuals trust in their management (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990). This in turn predicts a lower frequency of occupational accidents (Wallace, Popp, & Mondore, 2006). Trust of management by individual workers in the construction industry can provide a platform that encourages

participation and enthusiasm for safety, and therefore engagement is also an important factor (Allen & Clarke, 2006).

Summary

This chapter has conducted a literature review in order to establish the current state of knowledge regarding effectiveness of OHS practices and policies in construction and in NZ. It provided a deeper understanding of culture, diversity and communication in the context of the construction industry. Pacific construction workers' employment conditions identify them as vulnerable workers, and the importance of effective management/leadership in providing OHS has been demonstrated by a thorough survey of the relevant literature. There are clearly many challenges to consider when researching the OHS of this group of people, especially those that are in vulnerable work for SMEs. It is equally clear that further research is needed as this area is underdeveloped and fraught with difficulties. Despite this the literature provides strong evidence that a research methodology such as talanoa is the most appropriate in this context to provide a cultural synthesis of the Pacific Island construction workers' stories, emotions and perceptions.

The following chapter describes the broad philosophical underpinnings of talanoa and the research design of this study, adding further justification for its appropriateness in this context.

Chapter 4 Methodology and Research Design

Introduction

In this chapter, the qualitative research methodology applied in this study is presented, along with how it provides critical validity and reliability to this research. An initial discussion of theoretical underpinnings leads into a description of how talanoa was used in this study as well an outline of the data collection and analysis methods.

Qualitative Methodology

A qualitative methodology involves interpreting naturalistic contexts and affords insights into the views, reasoning and lived experiences of people (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Fossey, Harvey, McDermott, & Davidson, 2002). The integral component of any research is understanding the nature of the study itself and qualitative methodology allows the interaction of a researcher with the participants to collect in-depth information of their perceptions and experiences.

Qualitative research follows an interpretivist paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). A paradigm is "a set of suppositions and ideas that provides pathways to see what the world looks like when its scientific aspects is related to its assumptions. It provides questions and puzzles to be revealed and interpreted and it indicates the research method to be used" (Bishop & Glynn, 2003, p. 298). In other words, it is the set of basic beliefs or the principles about what is and what is not. Bishop and Glynn (2003) drew on Kuhn's paradigms that rules and techniques that help identify and illuminate a problem. This could provide some further direction in solving and providing results and justifications, such that the scientific community finds them acceptable.

The interpretivist paradigm is a view of the world which allows individuals to form their own reality in different contexts through interactions with other individuals. The world is perceived to be different because of the different experiences and perceptions in different contexts (Bishop & Glynn, 2003; Carson & Fairbairn, 2002; Fairbairn & Carson, 2002). The selection of the interpretivist paradigm enables different perspectives rather than a single perspective. This would in turn helps authenticate the research findings, assuring a comprehensive illumination of the present research topic. Furthermore, it will enable the researcher to listen to "hidden voices" through the means

of talanoa in terms of stories and lived experiences of Pacific Island workers within New Zealand construction industry relating to their views on health and safety.

A research paradigm contains elements such as ontology (concerning the nature of reality), epistemology (the way knowledge is acquired) and research methodology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Lekoko, 2007). The epistemology of a study illuminates the purpose of the present research, which is to gain deeper understanding of the experiences and lived experiences of those researched.

Epistemological Reflection

Epistemology is a philosophy of truth, knowledge and belief. A study is strongly influenced by a researcher's position and is inevitable the researcher's identity will directly or indirectly influence the research process, irrespective of the methodology used (Richards, 2015; Wagle & Cantaffa, 2008). The inclusive epistemology of this study – the use of talanoa to acquire knowledge – helps to give the individual participants voice through the expression of their own reality and lived experiences. The choice of talanoa was intended to help overcome the complex cultural, communication and ethical issues involved.

The conventional Western methodological constructs tend to utilise single-method, survey-based research designs on culturally diverse migrant and Pacific populations (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; see also Possamai-Inesedy & Gwyther, 2009). The talanoa method as used by successful number of studies and in a range of disciplines is argued to be more appropriate for researching solutions for Pacific Peoples as it is ecological, oral and interactive, allowing pure, real, authentic information to be available (Prescott, 2008; Smith, 1999; Vaioleti, 2006).

Identity of the Researcher

As mentioned earlier, a researcher strongly influences directly or indirectly the discussion, generalisation and conclusion of any research, irrespective of the methodology employed. Their identity is unavoidably interlaced with the research. The disclosure of the researcher's identity to participants at an early stage of the research is important because it provides a deeper understanding of their position to enable all parties to relate and make connections with each other. Accordingly, to be able to critically

reflect on the findings of research, consideration of one's own influences, stories and life experiences can help create connections.

There were favourable connections that gave the researcher advantages when researching this particular group of people, such as a shared Pacific Island cultural background and upbringing. The disadvantages – such as its gender being female and studying a male dominant industry with academic background outweighed the advantages. In attempting to research a predominate male industry and of similar cultural background, it automatically creates a disadvantaged point because within the island community, this would be known as a "know-it-all" or "trying to be clever" (*fia iloilo* in Niuean, *fiapoto* in Tongan). To Island communities, "it can mean asking about things which should not be asked and for being challenged as to what gives the researcher the right to speak the Pacific voice" (Fairbairn-Dunlop & Coxon, 2014, p. 18). Due to the nature of the participants' employment (see Chapter 3) and the nature of the construction industry, most participants worked variable and often unpredictable hours in different locations. They also had significant family and/or other commitments like church, sports, etc.

Facing these challenges and disadvantages, the researcher went through considerable soul-searching, wondering whether it was actually possible to complete the research. However, once the hurdle of finding participants was achieved and the talanoa sessions were being conducted and the individuals' stories and viewpoints were being heard, the realisation of what this project could mean to these individuals provided a new perspective to the researcher. The research became about giving a voice to those who would not be heard otherwise. These, therefore, are their stories, their *taoga*, and their treasure.

People's communication methods are based on their cultural background, whether by verbal communication, paraverbal (how we say it), non-verbal (body language) or through actions, whether consciously or unconsciously (Bust, Gibb, & Pink, 2008; Langford, 2000). In the context of this thesis, the researcher's cultural background enabled better understanding and to be able to relate to its participants lives and their stories (Thompson, Pollio, & Locander, 1994). The understanding of what talanoa means in other similar cultures, whether it is Tonga, Samoa, Fiji or other Pacific Island culture, the meaning of talanoa remains essentially the same. It is for storying and listening and providing opportunities to agree on or challenge any particular subject under discussion (Fairbairn-Dunlop & Coxon, 2014).

Accessibility to the Group of People Being Researched

The construction industry is diverse and involves many complex formal and informal systems, including different company sizes and multiple site configurations (Martin, De Borde, Guarnieri, & Lamm, 2010). A challenge for this research was accessibility to individuals who could contribute their stories, working lives and experiences was potentially difficult. This particular group of individuals have been identified as often inaccessible population to research (Lamm et al., 2010) and are also described as "vulnerable" workers. It is important to clarify that it is not the workers themselves that are vulnerable but rather their employment situation, which is precarious. A disadvantages relating to their cultural status (Lamm, 2014).

These vulnerabilities are very visible in the business sector, especially in the construction industry. This is because work within this industry often falls outside the realm of standard work arrangements. The International Labour Organization (ILO) (1996–2016) describes the sector as defined by "temporary or fixed-term contracts, dispatched work, dependent self-employment, as well as part-time work, including marginal part-time work, which is characterized by short, variable, and often unpredictable hours". This leads to individuals being frequently transient and likely to be marginalised and "invisible" (Lamm, 2014).

This was predominantly what was found with the majority of the participants who were willing to have talanoa sessions. Their work hours were long and physically exhausting, so taking the time to have a talanoa session would have been not very high on their priorities list. Understanding the participants' obligations however did delay the progress of such research. However, giving voice to those of the Pacific Island individuals that cannot be heard gave meaning to this research. These are their stories, their *taoga*.

Taoga for Pacific Peoples are great treasures or things of great importance that are invaluable. Storytelling within this cultural context it's a *taoga* the participants' stories are of great importance. Storytelling is a sharing of their knowledge and understanding, and in the context of this research it has directly contributed to its success.

Participants

The objective of this research was to focus on the stories, lives and lived experiences of Pacific Island construction workers within the construction industry and to gain insights from key stakeholder(s). For ethical reasons, the confidentiality of participants was

guaranteed at the beginning of the study. Participants' names and their work sites will not be mentioned at any time and pseudonyms will be used for all participants involved.

Sample Composition

The experience and knowledge of Pacific Peoples working within the construction industry is very important as they can contribute to theories of learning and development in the field. The answer to the question often asked by those researched – "Who is this research going to be useful for?" In this case, it was the participants themselves. The usage of the indigenous methods encourages discussion of the deep cultural concepts that affect Pacific Peoples' realities in New Zealand and allows contextual interaction with Pacific participants, creating a more authentic knowledge leading to solutions for Pacific issues (Bishop & Glynn, 2003; Vaioleti, 2006).

While some of the individuals that were approached in the early stages of recruiting were somewhat reluctant, others were very forthcoming and also helped recruit more individuals in the industry. The individuals that continuously kept in contact with the researcher found the time because of their sense of respect for the individual that helped with recruiting individuals for this research.

That particular individual was seen as a *matua* or elder within the industry and individuals respected him for how he had helped them with on the job site. The sample size was dependant envisioned for 2, however, the stories that were shared by the participants became the reasoning to continue with this research despite the encountered disadvantages.

The only way to share their *taoga* respectfully was to present their stories in a form that could be heard by others stakeholders, directly or indirectly attached to the construction industry. This thesis provides the arena for them to voice their stories, their thoughts and perspectives about their own work. Western traditions are considered hard concepts for these individuals to break through, and providing them with the means to contribute their own stories gave purpose in this research.

Selection Participants – Pacific Island Construction Workers

The selection of participants was dependent on their having a Pacific Island cultural background and they had to be working within the New Zealand construction industry (full-time and part-time). The Pacific Island construction workers who participated had all been working in the construction industry for a number of years. The researcher

approached a total of 18 individuals to ask them if they were interested in participating. All were male with Pacific Island backgrounds. Although 10 of the 18 agreed to a talanoa session, ultimately only 8 were able to attend. The two that did not manage to attend the talanoa session were female and aged 20 to 40. Therefore, all participants in the talanoa session were male. One individual was both a stakeholder and a worker because he managed a team and reported to the management team. For the purposes of this research, however, he was consider a Pacific Island participant rather than a stakeholder.

The individuals had learnt their trade by working on the job and by means of apprenticeships. The men aged ranged in age from 20 to 40 and had received their training in both New Zealand and in the Pacific Islands. Five were born in the Pacific Islands while the 3 were New Zealand-born. The former had learnt how to speak English by means of English classes and audio tapes. Everyone in the talanoa session spoke relatively good English and had a fair understanding of the English language. The majority of the participants worked in groups to perform the tasks required, with only two participants working with one other individual. All individuals had young families whom they provided for.

Table 1: Pacific Island participants (P.I. = Pacific Islander)

Participant type	Approach method	Cultural background	Theme description	Agreement
P.I.	*Friend of Friend*	*Samoan*	P.I.1	Yes
P.I.	*Friend of Friend*	*Samoan*	P.I.2	Yes
P.I.	*Cold Calling*	*Samoan*	P.I.3	Yes
P.I.	*Friend of Friend*	*Samoan*	P.I.4	Yes
P.I.	*Friend of Friend*	*Tongan/Samoan*	P.I.5	Yes
P.I.	*University*	*Samoan*	P.I.6	Yes
P.I.	*Friend of Friend*	*Niuean*	P.I.7	Yes
P.I.	*Friend of Friend*	*Tongan*	P.I.8	Yes
P.I.	*Friend of Friend*	*Samoan*	-	No
P.I.	*Friend of Friend*	*Samoan*	-	No
P.I.	*Cold Calling*	*Samoan*	-	No
P.I.	*Friend of Friend*	*Tongan*	-	No
P.I.	*Friend of Friend*	*Niuean*	-	No
P.I.	*Cold Calling*	*Niuean*	-	No
P.I.	*Cold Calling*	*Niuean*	-	No
P.I.	*Friend of Friend*	*Samoan*	-	No
P.I.	*Friend of Friend*	*Samoan*	-	Yes - *but could not make it*
P.I.	*Friend of Friend*	*Samoan*	-	Yes - *but could not make it*
			P.I. Yes	***10***
			P.I. No	***8***
			P.I. Final Talanoa	***8***
			TOTAL:	***18***

Selection of Participants – Stakeholders

The stakeholder participants were included to provide perspective on how they saw their industry in relation to Pacific Island construction workers and their health and safety environment. Of the 13 stakeholders approached, 9 agreed to a talanoa session but only 7 managed to allocate the time required. The individuals were directly or indirectly involved in the construction industry. They included a son of a Pacific Island construction worker, a supplier for health and safety personal protective equipment (PPE), a scheduler for workers dispatched for work, a development manager, and two directors of a construction company. All these individuals have some form of direct or indirect impact on the construction industry relating to health and safety.

Table 2: Stakeholder participants

Participant type	Approach method	Cultural background	Theme description	Agreement
Stakeholder	Work	Caucasian	S1	Yes
Stakeholder	Cold Calling	Caucasian	S2	Yes
Stakeholder	Cold Calling	Samoan	S3	Yes
Stakeholder	Cold Calling	Samoan	S4	Yes
Stakeholder	Cold Calling	Tongan	S5	Yes
Stakeholder	Cold Calling	Samoan	S6	Yes
Stakeholder	Cold Calling	Maori/Niuean	S7	Yes
Stakeholder	Neighbourly	Tongan	-	No
Stakeholder	Work	Caucasian	-	No
Stakeholder	Work Colleague	Caucasian	-	No
Stakeholder	Colleague	Unknown	-	No
Stakeholder	University	Caucasian	-	No
Stakeholder	Cold Calling	Unknown	-	No
			S - Yes	7
			S - No	6
			TOTAL:	13

Phenomenology

Phenomenology is an umbrella term that encompasses both a philosophical movement and a research approach (Baba, Mahina, Williams, & Nabobo-Baba, 2004; Lester, 1999). It is the study of phenomena, their nature and their meanings, focusing on the way things appear through experience or in our consciousness (Finlay, 2002; Vaioleti, 2013). The phenomenology movement that Baba et al. (2004) drew on was initiated by Husserl (1859–1838) as a new way of doing philosophy, and was later expanded by Heidegger (1889–1976), who moved "away from the philosophical discipline which focuses on consciousness and essences of phenomena, elaborating existential and hermeneutic (interpretive) dimensions" (Vaioleti, 2013).

Phenomenology is responsive of not only the phenomenon but the interconnectedness of the researcher and the researched (Pene, Taufe'ulungaki, & Benson, 2002; Taufe'ulungaki, Pene, & Benson, 2002). It focuses on people's perceptions of the world they live in and what it means to them, their lived experiences (Manu'atu, 2000). It is an overarching perspective which is conceptualised as a philosophy (Kepa & Manu'atu, 2008). Qualitative research findings do not speak for themselves, but as Pene et al. (2002, p. 2) argue, they are born within the "researcher/co-researcher encounter where they intermingle". Noy (2008) and Pene et al. (2002) argue that researchers have a responsibility to build an interactive relationship between themselves and their

participants which establishes ongoing mutual influence which systematically affects and is affected by others. The talanoa method resonates with these views.

Talanoa

Talanoa, as discussed in Chapter 3, is an approach that is part of the phenomenological research family which embodies the understanding of the inner feelings and experiences of who we are, what we want and what we do within the community (Finlay, 2002). Talanoa is referred to as a conversation, a talk or an exchange of ideas of thinking, whether formal or informal (Kagawa-Singer & Kassim-Lakha, 2003; Prescott, 2008; Vaioleti, 2006). It is a topic that has been discussed by many authors, such as Nabobo-Baba (2006), Otsuka (2005), Latu (2009) and Meo-Sewabu (2014). Talanoa is "always carried out face to face. *Tala* means "to inform, tell, talk and command," as well as "to ask or apply". *Noa*, on the other hand, means "of any kind, nothing in particular, purely imaginary and ordinary". In other words, talanoa means talking about nothing in particular, and interacting without a rigid framework" (Vaioleti, 2006, p.23).

According to Vaioleti (2006, p. 24), talanoa "is the ancient practice of multilevel and multilayered critical discussions and free conversations. It is a way where communities interact with each other to make decisions about civil, church and national matters". Talanoa creates a space where everyone has a story to tell. It is about recalling stories from the past to the now, and stating what you want to achieve in the future. Talanoa has a clear beginning but no clear end, providing the link between the topic of discussion and the building of democracy and governance, which in turn would build a story and meaning (Halapua, 2013).

Talanoa then is an interpretivist methodology, which "seeks to explore peoples' experiences and their views or perspectives of these experiences. This type of study typically is inductive in nature and often associated with qualitative approaches to data gathering and analysis" (Gray, 2009, p. 36). Talanoa is somewhat similar to what is called an "unstructured interview" by Western researchers. The difference is that talanoa is centrally focused on the relationships between participants whilst the unstructured interview is primarily focused on gaining knowledge.

Talanoa removes the distances between researcher and participants, and provides the participants with a human face they can see and relate to (Department of Labour, 2009; Premji, Messing, & Lippel, 2008). Participants also have a chance to ask the researcher about who they are as a researcher and where are they from. The simple

interaction between the researcher and the participants is the beginning of talanoa. This helps build a relationship (Meo-Sewabu, 2014) among participants who begin to understand each other in relation to their culture and heritage (Nabobo-Baba, 2011). Talanoa is the ideal methodology for this research because trust and relationships are the foundation on which most Pacific activities are built on. Vaioleti (2006, p. 26) adds that "the mutual exchanges made from Talanoa will raise expectations that researchers and participants have of each other, promoting accountability, which adds to the trustworthiness and quality of the research". The giving of time and knowledge of an individual would be expected to be honoured and respected and to be used well (Helu-Thaman, 1997).

The establishment of trust and relationship with Pacific Peoples and letting them openly discuss and talk about what they think enables them to encounter different perspectives (Black, 2005). Embracing cultural diversity encourages respect between the employer and employees, who are empowered to decide what is right or wrong, safe or dangerous.

Insider/Outsider Perspective

The decolonization of Pacific studies and indigenous studies in general over the last two decades has led to critical reflection on the nature of colonialism in the Pacific, particularly the impact of research representation and its legitimacy (Smith, 1999). The Western research paradigms led to indigenous people being researched as "subjects" and "authoritative" representations that have framed the wider discourse and attitudes towards indigenous people. Indigenous people were thus researched "through imperial eyes" (Smith, 1999) and alternative readings were marginalised.

The power of research can sometimes be a disadvantage to those who are being researched, and Pacific Peoples have only very rarely been allowed to voice their own views and realities because they have been interpreted by outsiders. In other words, indigenous people are not well represented in the forums that create these particular "truths" about them. However, we are slowly progressing towards a more articulated process where indigenous people are beginning to have their preferred processes of knowledge gathering, processing and disseminating acknowledged by academia and institutions (Nabobo-Baba, 2011). We have made progress from the idea that the knowledge of indigenous peoples "can only be considered legitimate and real knowledge if it fits within the Western framework" (Wilson, 2001, p. 214). The question has been

raised concerning the degree of accuracy with which non-Pacific researchers can interpret from the nature of realities of Pacific Peoples. Nabobo-Baba (2011) has highlighted the inappropriateness of careless and unchecked research frameworks that did not take into consideration aspects of indigenous protocols, language, philosophies and principals.

Talanoa is a Pacific methodology and if a researcher is not knowledgeable or skilled in the realities of Pacific Peoples, they cannot accompany their participants to the cultural, contextual and spiritual depths of their sharing and theorising (Vaioleti, 2006). Pacific Peoples today are beginning to articulate their preferred knowledge, and their own thought processes of what is legitimate and what is not (Nabobo-Baba, 2011).

Indigenous academics are now scrutinising Western legacies, philosophies, ideologies and pedagogies as they have not recognized the contextual and spiritual depths of what underpins the belief systems of indigenous people (Helu-Thaman, 2003). Having policies and methodologies underpinned by the cultural systems of indigenous peoples is advocated by Smith (1999), Bishop (1998), Helu-Thaman (1996, 2003), Baba et al. (2004) and Taufe'ulungaki et al. (2002). Their call highlights the need for more critical understanding of research and practices that involve indigenous communities, especially when discussing fundamental issues (Otunuku, 2011).

Bishop (1998, p. 199) voiced concerns of "educational research being slow to acknowledge the importance of culture and cultural differences being the key component of a successful research practice and understandings". The perpetuated colonial values were seen as undervaluing and belittling the knowledge and learning practices and processes of indigenous peoples. While non-indigenous researchers can genuinely believe they are doing what would benefit those they are studying, they may not be able to see the contradictions of their findings and recommendations (Helu-Thaman, 2003). Such contradictions can lead to individuals feeling like they have been misrepresented and this leads to distrust and cautionary measures when they are approached again. This corresponds with Smith's (1999) point about indigenous people being cautious and considering research as a dirty word. She calls for a new agenda relating to indigenous research because it is critical to understand what motivations and values inform researchers and scholars. The guidelines set out in her book *Decolonizing Methodologies* discuss fundamental issues that she considers appropriate for non-indigenous researchers to consider when involving indigenous people (Otunuku, 2011).

The question of whether qualitative researchers should be members of the population they are researching in or not is continuously debated. Vaioleti (2006) argues that "the researcher needs to be a person of the same culture". Silence, for example, which

is a mark of respect in Pacific cultures, can be interpreted in terms of the Western tradition as rude or as the individual not understanding the question. The emphasis is on understanding what is culturally and emotionally embedded and can be reciprocated between researcher and participants. This requires a deep understanding of interpersonal and emotional relationships, where all parties are involved (Farrelly & Nabobo-Baba, 2014; Otsuka, 2005).

Research Design

Ethics Considerations

In undertaking this research, it was fundamental to adhere to the ethical principles of AUT to protect the participants at all times and ensure that their safety would not be compromised. The research designs and procedures had to meet the ethical standards set by AUTEC. The ethics application for this research project was submitted on 17 September 2015 and granted acceptance on 28 September 2015. The Participant Information Sheet (PIS) and Consent Form are included in the Appendix.

Compiling Resources for the Literature Review

The foundation of the study reported here was the readings paper that was undertaken as part of a Master's degree. The assessments for that paper were combined with the field research of a fellow colleague and presented at the Association of Industrial Relations Academics of Australia and New Zealand (AIRAANZ) 2014 Conference held in Melbourne, Australia. The other papers that was taken in the postgraduate studies also informed this thesis. Some resources such as journals, books and magazines were attained via the AUT library or its online access portal. Although there is a wealth of information available from a range of sources, current and peer-reviewed articles from reputable journal publications were preferred.

Data Collection – Talanoa

As discussed previously, the talanoa method was used to collect the data for this research. The first two pilot tests provided opportunities to change a few aspects of the method of approaching participants. This depended on the feel of the individuals and also the

researcher. The participants had the option of nominating a particular venue and time for the talanoa sessions to take place.

The uniqueness of this research is that through the talanoa session the participants and researcher listened to and contributed stories. It was a session of critical dialogue that was shared with laughter and discussions of shared beliefs and disagreements. As Bishop (1998) indicated, talanoa has a clear beginning but no ending and while the individuals and the researcher knew what the topic of talanoa was, there was no clear ending to our storytelling discussion.

Each participant had their own stories to tell and having the talanoa session face to face made the experience more meaningful to the researcher. The nervous anticipation of meeting someone for the first time and knowing their input is the key to everything weighed a lot on the researcher.

Pilot Testing – Initiation Process

The first pilot testing was conducted with the Pacific Island participants and gave some valuable insights as to how the talanoa sessions should be conducted with other individuals. The initial process of conducting the research was to structure how everything was going to work when out on the field. Once with the participants, the researcher introduced herself, explained the purpose of the research and provided them with a copy of the Project Informaton Sheet (PIS).   Their participation was all voluntary and they were at any time not obligated to participate if they did not wish to proceed. Assurance of ethical due diligence was initiated before proceeding with the talanoa session.

Learning from the Pilot Process

The understanding of talanoa in the context of the researchers culture was of an informal discussion about topics of any kind and anyone who wishes to participate are more than welcome to do so. However, there are certain rules – like young children should not talk or contribute to the discussion of talanoa as they know nothing of "big people's business". The more formal way of discussing serious matters would be a *fono* or formal meeting.

The participants were recruited through a networking system (friend of a friend) and at the beginning, talking about various non-related topics helped build the space for openness of discussion. The commonality at the beginning was to chat a little about how things are going and about the common friends and how we know them.

This research project has been guided by questions of wanting to know the unknown, focusing on a distinct research space and using the processes of qualitative research to illuminate the lived experiences of the participants. Being aware of the research process entangled with the identity of the researcher and explicitly reflective of its own identity position. The work of Wagle and Cantaffa (2008) brought the situation into perspective and challenged the researcher not to hide behind a false veil of neutrality and disembodiment, but to use its identity as a means to define how this research project is embedded within the participants' identity.

Ensuring the participants were fully informed of their rights and the obligations of the researcher to them was a necessity, but the application of a non-Western methodology theory within a Western university research project, the use of a voice recorder, and the requesting of participants' signatures combined to create a formal, rather than informal, space. Vaioleti (2006, p. 23) describes what the researcher experienced very well:

> *"Even Pacific researchers, endeavouring to create Pacific Knowledge with their own people, must strictly adhere to research methods that are foreign to them. The impact of such action sanitises out elements such as unseen loyalty to kin system, actions associated with recognition of spiritual or cultural order, church obligations and deep cultural concepts that affect Pacific Island peoples' realities in Aotearoa. These research approaches may fit traditional thought processes and institutional research conventions but they have little use in Pacific situations".*

The stories that the participants chose to share were of great value. The stories of these individuals revealed insights into the industry they worked in and specifically their experiences of OHS. To understand and see their world through their eyes resonates with the argument of Lekoko (2007) about storytelling and it being a cultural tool in indigenous communities used as a way of understanding the world.

The difficulty of this research was ensuring the validity of the data presented and the dependability of the stories told. Superficially, as mentioned throughout this thesis, talanoa is an informal process of exchanging ideas or thinking and of telling stories or related experiences. How can one validate if the stories are true or not, considering the framework that is not structured and aligned to the scientific method of reasoning?

One of the many lessons learnt from the pilot testing was that the use of a recorder was not appropriate. From the participants' body language, it was clear they were wary of the recording device and kept glancing at it. How could the conversation of talanoa

occur if the participants, including the researcher, were censored and cautious about discussing everything and anything? The quintessence of the talanoa concept is to share in the conversation, to intermingle the participants and the researchers' emotions, knowing and experiences. The usage of the recorder removed this intermingling and synergy that can lead to an energising and uplifting spirit to connectedness and enlightenment. (Manu'atu, 2000). Note taking instead of recording was thereafter adopted with the rest of the participants throughout the research process.

Field Research – After Piloting

The learning process continued with every aspect of the research. What was presented in the research proposal and the ethics application built the foundation of this study, as discussed earlier. It became clear after the initial talanoa sessions that the stories the individuals were sharing were encouraging the researcher to share her stories too. Every talanoa session began with a standard meet-and-greet, then proceeded to cover common topics such as who initiated each participant's recruitment, how they knew them and how they knew the researcher. The opportunity for the researcher to give participants an understanding of why they were there and why the research was being conducted established a relaxed atmosphere that enabled participants to feel comfortable sharing their own stories (Seidman, 2013). This created the *noa*, the space where researcher and participants can intermingle with connectedness and enlightenment. The participants could then make sense of the reality of the researcher's story and life, thereby creating the space for them to share their own. In this way the strangeness of the situation was effectively removed.

How the researcher came into contact with the participants was through a dynamic interaction with particular individuals, thereby generating an interactive connection with other individuals within the construction industry. In other words, "when methods are employed in qualitative research, they lead to dynamic moments where unique social knowledge of an interactional quality can be fruitfully generated" (Noy, 2008, p. 328).

The sensitivity of the situation related to Pacific Peoples being seen as a vulnerable population as they are more likely to be marginalised and invisible (Lamm, 2014). Researching this group of people, as mentioned earlier, is fraught with difficulties, and so the concepts of snowballing and chain referral brings to the fore relevant concept of power relations where various individuals refer others by means of multiple networks, enabling an expansion of the scope beyond one's social network (Penrod, Preston, Cain,

& Starks, 2003). The few individuals that were first approached at the beginning of the field research were asked to suggest other people they knew who might like to participate in the research. This later became a chain referral as the scope became wider and the individuals approached provided referrals to other individuals with different work tasks within the construction industry.

Not all of the individuals the researcher approached through this chain referral process worked in the construction industry, and this led to the researcher being invited to participate in a talanoa session relating to health and safety in another industry. This talanoa workshop provided the researcher with insights from both management and workers that were very valuable to the context of this research.

Data Analysis

The data collection method to capture the talanoa sessions was initially an audio recorder. However, after the pilot research the note-taking method was judged the most appropriate way of capturing data. Each talanoa session was treated as an individual case study and factual notes and observations were recorded for each. The factual notes identified what happened in the session, who was involved, where it happened and when, etc. The observation notes were descriptions of feelings, the content of the session (Vaioleti, 2013).

Interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) (Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006) encourages researchers to embrace the interpretive opportunities, to give voice to the concerns of participants. This method was used to explore in detail the process of participants making sense of their own experiences. It is a method that is considered to be accessible, flexible and applicable (Larkin et al., 2006).

Summary

This chapter has described and validated the methodology used in this research and situated it within the broader philosophical context of qualitative research and phenomenology. The design of the study has also been described, and how the data were collected and analysed has been documented. The culturally appropriate nature of talanoa helps provide a space that encompasses Pacific Peoples' culture, traditions and heritage.

The following chapter presents the findings of the talanoa sessions, including the views of both the participants and the stakeholders.

Chapter 5 Findings

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the talanoa sessions with the eight Pacific Island construction workers and seven stakeholders directly or indirectly involved in the construction industry. The focus of this research is made clear in its title: "Talanoa: A Contribution to the Occupational Health and Safety management of Pacific Peoples in the Construction Industry?" It seeks to determine whether the talanoa methodology can provide a better understanding of how to reduce high level of work-related construction injuries and fatalities among Pacific Island workers, and reveal how they would like to be managed with respect to their health and safety with their own industry.

The talanoa sessions provided emerging themes about health and safety within the construction industry. The emerging themes discussed in this chapter are lived, practised and shaped by the participants' lives, whether they are at home or at work. The themes aim to frame the ideas that were contributed to the talanoa and the intention is to allow the participants to speak for themselves, thereby allowing the reader to form their own meanings and understanding (Waller, 2005).

Theme: Culture and Influence
Does culture influence your decisions within your job?

There is considerable research on how factors such as age, nationality and culture impact heavily on the health and safety in the workplace, including literacy and numeracy (e.g. Department of Labour, 2012). All eight Pacific Island construction workers communicated within the talanoa sessions that culture heavily influences people within their workplace as well as their own. One of the participants (P.I.2) held the title of chief within his village, and when we ventured onto culture and whether culture influences certain things such as behaviour or expectations from others on a site, he commented:

> *"My title as a chief doesn't matter in NZ, especially if individuals are not of the same village. If they were, then that is a different matter. The people in a village have a chief in that village and they will respect that chief. I am a chief but that title would only carry weight when I am in Samoa and in my village. There will be respect from others of course but it is not the same." (**P.I.2**)*

The talanoa building on the knowledge of others and what their views and opinions about a specific topic were. Having a boss of similar culture came into the talanoa discussion:

"Sometimes when you are in a higher position than others, it gets harder for individuals to tell you what is wrong. I once had my boys out on a job and there was an incident that happened. They didn't tell me about it until later on. I was disappointed in my boys but I also understood that it's the position that I held made them hide what happened. They don't want to lose their jobs and covering up the incident at the time, I guess they thought it was a good idea. After I expressed to one of the boys that yes he would have been disappointed about the incident but he would be more concerned if anything serious happened to them, the individual didn't realise or thought that way." **(P.I.6)**

"I think having a boss of similar culture would make a difference as they can speak the same language as us." **(P.I.5)**

"I think that having a boss with a different culture like a Palagi manager helps islanders behave in a certain way." **(P.I.4)**

The seven stakeholders also agreed that culture heavily influences people in the workplace, especially their actions and decisions they make:

"I have worked in the learning industry for years, I see my people around me and how the pattern never changes. If you look at a typical island family, you have the father working in a labour job, eventually the son will finish school and follow the dad and do that exact same job or in a similar industry. The need to survive influences families to decide to encourage their children to go out and earn a living rather than going further in education. The less educated one is, the less opportunities happens for our people. This pattern continues." **(S5)**

The cultural aspect heavily influences individuals that hold a management position within a workplace and who have subordinates they manage who are of the same culture. It was interesting to see the perspective of a manager of a construction site who was the same culture as the individuals he managed:

"I started off in the lowest position on site but I strived to make something of myself with the industry that I was working in. I then started working at a site that managed 7 guys as I was the foreman there. I didn't know how to approach them about certain issues I needed to address with them. I always had my father in my head telling me I am to respect my elders. It was a constant reminder every time I tried to implement something, his influence was in my head constantly. One time, I had a toolbox meeting with the guys and one mature older worker told me I needed to do my job properly because I wasn't. The older worker asked him if he was not doing it properly because he wasn't good enough for the job or was it because the cultural aspect of him being young and them being older stopped him from doing his job properly. At that point, it shocked him, how much he had let

his father influenced him doing a job he was good at. That day onwards, he agreed with his guys that he will leave his cultural side at the door and be professional with them." (S6)

Two stakeholders held positions within their workplace that were influential and they tried to do as much as they could for their guys:

"We do certain things that those guys in there don't even know about because we care about our people. We make sure that they do what they need to do to rectify the situation before it escalates to a point it is beyond their control. Those guys in there don't know what we do to try and stop it before it becomes an issue. We work around people's schedules so that we can provide what they need. If they work at 1am in the morning, we will be there at 1am in the morning to follow through with what we need to do. Those guys in there (referring to the Palagi colleagues) don't know or don't really care about our people like how we do. They are our people. We care." (S6)

The individual who was both manager for his team and a worker for another manager commented:

"As a manager sometimes it's hard to tell my guys what to do because I am their manager but I am also a worker under my own manager… if that makes sense. When my manager gives me a list of things to run through with my guys on what needs doing like compliances that need to be followed, I know it's definitely not going to work if I do how they want it. So when we are having a smoko break, we have a good laugh and chat, I would then bring up what my manager has requested. We talk about it and its easy going and relaxed. I know if I took them into a meeting room and told them what we needed to do, I wouldn't get a response, and the setting is different." (P.I.1)

Theme: Communication

Communication within the workplace

All the Pacific Island construction worker participants could understand and speak English well. Three of the 8 participants were born and raised in New Zealand while the rest were born and raised in the Islands. The 3 individuals with English as their first language also held positions on-site that were of some influence. The 5 individuals who were raised in the Islands has English as a second language but also could speak other neighbouring Island languages.

The following chapter will discuss the findings of the literature in relation to communication being one of the prominent factors that influence health and safety, and this topic was repeatedly discussed in the talanoa:

"I have so much respect for P.I.6 because he was patient with me. He understood my struggles to understand the English language. I get really frustrated that is why I haven't been able to hold a job for that long. You know how Samoan's are famous for bashing people up? Yeah, well that was me too. I get so frustrated that people don't understand me I end up talking with my fists. P.I.6 tells me that I can't do that. I have to learn how to control my anger and talk to him if I needed help. I am doing ok so far and it's all thanks to him. I will do anything for him and that is why I agreed to meet with you." **(P.I.8)**

Communication methods and how they were implemented within a workplace can be perceived differently. In a formal setting, policies and procedures are implemented and rolled out by executives and management but individuals on a site with Pacific Island culture background tend not to receive such formalities well, especially if the organisation requires buy-in from the individuals. P.I.1 exposed his workers to the formal side of management in implementing health and safety and explained the structure of formal meetings. What he found with two of those meetings was that he did all the talking and none of his workers spoke. However, when he mentioned certain aspects of the health and safety topics in a general conversation on their lunch break, everyone contributed to the conversation. This included an individual who was not in the group and sitting beside them having his sandwich.

What P.I.1 learned from the two settings was very insightful and it helped him with his future implementation of the health and safety subjects. He would discuss in the talanoa sessions topics that were important to meet the health and safety regulations, but he also ensured that after the discussion formal documentation was signed to meet health and safety regulations. In other words, health and safety conversations – and education – were enabled by using talanoa.

The individuals who spoke a number of languages were very helpful to others on-site with very limited understanding of English:

"Individuals that I work with on the site have very limited understanding of English or even speaking it. Sometimes our supervisor would tell us what needs to be done in our toolbox meetings and when he (supervisor) sees some of the guys doing the opposite, he swears and question why they would do that when he said not to in the meeting." **(P.I.4)**

P.I.4 found that the individuals working alongside him on a construction site sometimes had very limited understanding of English. He found that sometimes when his supervisor would relay important information to them in meetings, later on he would see his work colleague doing exactly the opposite. He would then approach his work

colleague and question why he was doing something the boss said not to do. He knows from experience that some of his work colleagues rely on him to interpret what is said by the boss. He became the *matua* in their workplace not only because he was older but also because he spoke multiple languages. He could converse with individuals within the site in their first language. They showed him respect as a *matua* and as one of their own.

The stakeholders' talanoa session also discussed communication and how sometimes it is difficult to explain to Pacific Island construction workers the reasoning behind health and safety.

> *"These guys are working horses, they are hard workers and very loyal. They are strong, no doubt but they forget that when you are pushing a wheelbarrow from point A to point B, there are things to consider getting there. They see they need to get there and they go. However, they don't take into consideration things that can go wrong on your way to point B. Pushing a wheelbarrow to point B, you can trip from a pot hole, you can get hit by a moving machinery because you are so concerned about getting to point B you forget about everything else around you. I think that is a concern. That is what these guys are not linking how it can be of a big issue to them. As tough as we are as islanders, we are still vulnerable especially on a construction site with many hazards. How to communicate getting to point B ensuring identification and caution of your surroundings is just as important as going straight to Point B is still a struggle." (S4)*

> *I knew a guy that punched people because he thought they were swearing at him. He had no English so he could only presume that was the situation so he would whack them. (S1)*

> *"As a manager of my team, I make sure that to get their buy in, I talk to them. The smoko breaks that I mentioned to you about, those are the goods times to have a talanoa with them. I have my two nephews and brother in-law in the team but they can be harder to convince. Talanoa makes the discussion feel like it's an island family and we are having an island environment where no judgements. Just a good ol' chat. Once we have a discussion about it, then I get them to sign the documents. The documentation part is important these days because everything needs to be documented. I get that, but I guess it doesn't necessarily have to be communicated in a formal way for my guys to get the message." (P.I.1)*

Theme: Perception & Expectation
What is your perception and expectation of the construction industry relating to health and safety?

People have different perceptions and expectations of any given situation as it all depends on where they stand at the time it happens, and on other influences that make them who they are. What is important to one manager may not be important to another manager and

vice versa. Construction workers have different views of their lives and working environment and do not necessarily hold similar views to their management or the company they work for.

> *"There are no expectations when it comes to work except to work hard and to finish the job well. This is what is expected of us when we are hired. Not to think but to do, to perform the job that is required and to do it well." (**P.I.4**)*

> *"It's a normal struggle that some management positions want what they want from a worker like me. The thing is, I know what I can do and I am good at what I do. If I see that it's not right what they want me to do, I leave. I am lucky that I am well educated and I am good at what I do. My skills are in high demand, so I don't have to do things that will not go well for me. Others are not so lucky." (**P.I.3**)*

> *"We get told by the boss that we have to wear our PPE gear because if we don't, we will get fined. We don't get told why we need to wear it except if we don't we will get fined heavily." (**P.I.6**)*

The stakeholders had their own views of the industry they work in:

> *"The users don't understand why they have to wear PPE gear and it's a major problem. The management tells the guys that to be compliant, you got to do this and you got to do that and you got to do this without the why." (**S1**)*

> *"I had four guys that was working for me and I dropped 2 of them off and the other 2 were going straight to the site. The next day when I turned up to check on them, and had one of the guys meet and he started walking to the house. I said to him, mate, why are we going into the house. Are you guys not working at the back? His worker turned around and said, just wait and see. As they walked into the house and towards the kitchen, I was shocked at what I saw. There was a massive hole in the kitchen which my guys were digging under the house and out to the back. I shut down the job immediately. I am not sure why my guys didn't tell me what the situation was but even his client knew that when he contracted them to work on his project, there are different skills that workers need to be qualified in, in order to do the work safely. This job required confined space specialists. I guess my guys thought that I knew what the job entailed and they needed to do their job." (**S3**)*

Perceptions and expectations on-site of course also varies:

> *"When I first moved here and I honestly couldn't speak English, I struggled. Even when I decided to do a physical job. When I was on site though, I felt like I was not good enough to talk to the others because I felt like when I did say something, they looked down at me. Even though they are of the same culture as me. I see how they look at me and how I shouldn't say anything because I didn't*

*know what I was saying because I couldn't speak English properly. It was hard. I guess that was why I used my fist to do the talking sometimes." (**P.I.8**)*

Theme: Management

How are you currently managed relating to your health and safety in the workplace?

P.I.1 and S6 identified above the differences in perceptions of workers and stakeholders relating to certain actions being required on site. Individuals like to know the reasons of why we do the things we do; we naturally want to learn about things and to understand the world that we live in. Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 legislation was implemented during the time this research, and the workers varied in their understanding of what it was about and how it affected them. The law requires management to inform workers of the changes and everyone and anyone directly or indirectly involved in a business:

> *"I have heard about the new law but I don't know much about it. My bosses haven't really said much. I have to go find out what it is all about." (**P.I.8**)*

> *"I know what the bosses has said to us and how the new law is coming through shortly, but they haven't really said much about it, so I don't really know." (**P.I.6**)*

Was there a disconnect between the management and the men on site? Are they on the same page as to what health and safety means? It was clear from the talanoa sessions that there were issues in this regard. In construction, there has been little to no attempt to understand the workers' perceptions or viewpoints on what might contribute to the increased risk of accidents (Choudhry & Fang, 2008). Two workers delved into this topic:

> *"I get what the procedure and policy makers are trying to do, but sometimes their stuff doesn't work. I get shown certain things on how it should be done and I want to say something but who am I to say it. So, I do what they say knowing it's not right but I mean, they are bosses for a reason right? Turns out, what I was thinking was right." (**P.I.8**)*

> *"We get given certain machinery to be used on the jobs, what we have is what we make use of, and sometimes it's not really appropriate for that particular job. The big bosses don't know that and they care I guess as long as the job gets done. My boys and I get the job done but it takes longer if the equipment is not right for the job"… **P.I.6**

Theme: Who do you work for?

This theme originated when a stakeholder told the researcher about a question he always asked his students: Who do you work for? The reality of that question in itself was a light bulb moment, not only for the researcher but the talanoa conversation that arose from it was enlightening.

The question was a simple one but a very valid one. To identify where an individual stood relating to its perspective within the workplace. The stakeholder (**S2**) that first mentioned the question in our talanoa session is very passionate about what he does and continues to do. Despite working the hours that he does, he knows why his role is important because that was his reality for years and he wants to make a difference. To help the guys that he use to work with.

He worked on construction sites with the last man on the line so to speak. He knows the struggles the workers have to deal with day in and day out. The passion that he has is driven by his experience of working closely with these individuals. He makes things real with his guys when he talks to them. It is how the question started. Who do you work for?

When the question was asked to the Pacific Island participants, "Who do you work for?" the responses were a mixture. There were 4 individuals that automatically said 'my family'. The others said 'my manager'. It is unsure whether they understood the meaning behind the question because the 4 out of the 8 that said they worked for the manager all had English as a second language. The interpretation of the question is simple, but if English is a second language, the simplicity of the question itself is not really simple. This is where the understanding of communication and interpretation of the meaning behind languages can get very confusing.

There are stakeholders that have passion for the health and safety industry and it shows with the amount of work they do which are sometimes outside the realms of the job description.

Summary

In summary, this chapter has presented the findings from the talanoa sessions with all the participants, both Pacific Island construction workers and stakeholders. The findings highlight the reality of their working lives and that their lives outside of the work

environment shape each individual's decisions on a daily basis. The talanoa concept provided the space for each of the individuals to openly discuss everything and anything that they wanted, with the main topic being OHS. That is, the use of talanoa gave them the freedom to be themselves and to express their thoughts around their own industry.

It is also clear from the findings that in order to create a positive, healthy and safe working environment, everyone directly or indirectly involved needs to work towards common goals. That is, by promoting positive, clearly communicated OHS goals in a culturally appropriate way at all levels of the organisation, individuals will have a better understanding as to why they have to do what they do safely. Moreover, if the organisation encourages safety behaviour, thereby enabling the project to be completed in a timely manner, then this in turn will help to increase productivity.

The findings also identified that Pacific Island workers are reluctant to speak in certain formal settings, and that if they are silent, it does not always indicate due to a lack of understanding. Instead, the use of silence is as conscious and meaningful as speaking. This use of silence illustrates the disconnection between the management and the workers and how they relate to health and safety in practice. Silence can also undermine the management of OHS as the identification of hazards etc. is dependent upon participation and engagement. The findings show that there is a need for more inclusive approaches to ensure participation and improve engagement. How the OHS messages are received and implemented within a culturally diverse setting is an area that requires further research.

The next chapter will discuss the findings in relation to the research question drawing on a combination of the findings of the talanoa sessions with those of the literature review.

Chapter 6 Discussion

Introduction

The thematic discussion presented in this chapter is based on the findings set out in the previous chapter, as well as those of the literature review in Chapter 3. In doing so the central research question of this thesis – Can the use of talanoa help to improve occupational health and safety (OHS) among precariously employed Pacific Island construction workers in New Zealand? – is answered.

Culture and Influence

Pacific Peoples, like all peoples, have an approach to life that is heavily influenced by their upbringing, ethnic and cultural background. The term culture has numerous definitions and each definition is determined by individual's way of thinking and doing things. As Vaioleti (2006) has stated, Pacific Peoples have their own unique epistemologies. This was evident in P.I.1's comment in the talanoa session:

> *"When we have the health and safety discussions like the talanoa during our smoko break, I know the guys feel like it is how they are back home, a village discussion you know. I know the things we talk about is important and formal and even though our setting doesn't exactly scream what we are talking about is important, but it's a better response than when I put them in the boardroom and structured it how the big guns do it."*

The definition of talanoa somewhat loses its meaning when it is translated as "talk about nothing" in English. The communication method of talanoa is not devoid of important information. Pacific Peoples understand this method as an ancient practice of various layers of discussion which is both critical and free. It is the way community, business, church and national matters are discussed. The formulation of national policies and proposals proceeds by means of talanoa from villages, government agencies and leaders (Morrison, Vaioleti, & Veramu, 2002).

Implementing certain approaches on individuals who are not of the dominant culture may not be appropriate, especially when they concern the health and safety of individuals (Vaioleti, 2006). The consideration of appropriateness must be considered to suit all who are on a construction site as lives depend on these certain approaches.

Cultural Dimension

P.I.1 commented that what was or can be considered appropriate to certain people and levels of authority in the business did not fit with his workers. He removed his workers from the environment they worked in and invited them to a formal meeting like the ones his manager requested his attendance at. What he asked his workers to attend the formal meeting, they provided little to no feedback and all of them felt uncomfortable and awkward in the setting. P.I.1 also experienced such feelings himself when he attended formal meetings. He became very quiet and reserved. He knows the position he holds and the hierarchy he is part of. These findings resonate with the Hofstede's (1984, 1986, 2003) cultural dimensions theory.

There are theorists that argue Hofstede's (1984, 1986, 2003) theory pigeon holes culture into a dichotomous categories and disregards what makes culture and its development in history (Cai, 2005). The cultural dimension theory however distinguishes worldwide differences in cultures. The unique characteristics of each country or region were considered by Hofstede, and his theory does put some of the stories shared by the participants into perspective. The five cultural dimensions, as explained in Chapter 3, are power distance, individualism, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity and long term orientation.

Large power distance characterises Pacific Peoples' upbringing. The parents teach children obedience, the young respect the elders, and from a young age you are only allowed to speak if you are spoken to and are required to respond. In this context, P.I.1 found that because he was of a lower position, he was obliged to respect the decisions made within the formal meetings he attended.

The other dimension that resonates with P.I.1's talanoa can be seen in his using a formal setting for a meeting to discuss health and safety. The individuals portrayed the uncertainty avoidance scenario where they were all quiet and did not contribute to the meeting. This dimension also informs P.I.6's experience as identified in Chapter 5 – despite his cultural similarity and relationship with his boys on the job, they still withheld an incident from him. The uncertainty of the situation and the possible reaction of P.I.6 may have prevented them from bringing it to P.I.6's attention.

P.I.4 also expressed similar experiences of avoidance:

> *"There is fear of the Palagi way. How would it affect us? The Palagi way is always right. Despite thoughts that may help the work or what we think would work, the fear of speaking out is more greater to us then speaking out, even if it's for health and safety reasons." (P.I.4)*

Cultural Relationship

As we saw in Chapter 5, P.I.8 expressed in the talanoa session that when he and his family first moved to New Zealand he was not able to speak English. He felt he could do more than the odd cleaning jobs here and there and physical labour was his strength. So, he became a labourer on construction sites. He was learning the English language at the time but when he was on-site, he felt like he was not good enough to talk to the others as he did not speak English very well. He even felt like others of similar cultures would look down on him because of his inability to speak proper English. So he would not say what he thought, even if he did not agree with the situation.

> *"I remember there was this time when our boss came on site and spoke to me and the foreman. He wanted us to do a specific task a certain way. I didn't agree with what he said and I wanted to say something but I was also scared that if I said something I was overstepping my supervisor. So, I did it how they wanted it even though I knew it wasn't going to work. I don't want to say anything on site because most of our work involves the whole team. If I say something and others disagree, there could be friction. I want to get along with them you know, so it's difficult for me to say anything."* **(P.I.8)**

This individual avoided speaking his thoughts because of fear that it would cause friction in the team. Having an opinion that is different from your superior's would move outside the norm of what he knew. This individual was born and raised to respect people within authority such as parents, and in a workplace setting that would be his foreman and his manager. It is therefore very difficult to break the known norm he had lived with all his life.

This situation P.I.8 described contradicts how Pacific Peoples are often characterised. People that are relationship-orientated or "Oceanic peoples" (Helu-Thaman, 1995) have cultural identities that link to networks of exchange and relationships. Moreover, Vaioleti (2006) argues that the researcher needs to be a person of the same culture as those researched. But does this only relate to research? If so, why? In P.I.8's situation, being of the same culture did not give him any advantage or confidence to rely on his fellow work colleagues to understand his viewpoint. This is not to say that P.I.8's situation was solely caused by cultural orientation. Various things can affect the environment such as the nature of the individuals themselves. The cultural relationship works only to some extent and this impacts on the talanoa method. The individuals themselves will influence the findings as some were born and raised in New Zealand and others were not.

Empowerment

The aspects of job autonomy and communication quality are related to positive safety behaviour, as found in the study by Parker, Axtell and Turner (2001), where empowerment can be expected to predict autonomy. Trust emanates from management to the employee, thereby giving trust for the employee to participate in decision-making that contributes to the overall success of the organisation.

There have been studies (e.g. Shannon, Mayr, & Haines, 1997) that have examined relationships of the workplace and the factors that cause accidents and injuries. What was found was empowering workers and delegating safety activities consistently lowered the accident and injury rates. Empowerment has somewhat less of a presence within construction sites usually, but P.I.1's situation was a clear exception to this rule.

The empowerment P.I.1 was given by his manager to run his team the way he saw fit provided the autonomy that Parker et al. (2001) predicted and positively affected his safety behaviour. That empowerment encouraged P.I.1 to employ methods that worked effectively amongst his workers, such as having talanoa sessions with his team when they were having a break. After individuals within his team understood the meaning behind the health and safety topics that he was required to discuss with them, he requested them to sign documentation describing the discussion. The documentation met the formal requirements, and he was free to disseminate the health and safety topics according to what he knew worked best.

P.I.1's manager has seen the dynamics of his team and how effective they are at the jobs they do. The manager then told P.I.1 how he wanted his other divisions to perform just how his team was. The willingness for his manager to take a risk and trust P.I.1 encouraged P.I.1 to act accordingly. If employees perceive safety to be one of the goals within their working environment and management trusts employees by empowering them, positive safety behaviour is likely to develop (Parker et al., 2001). The commitment of the organisation to individual and the individual to the company predicts safety compliance. P.I.1 took into account how the majority of his workers were of Pacific Island background and made it feel like they were part of a community, a village.

Experience and Diversity

Geller (2001) cautions that experience has its own dangers. Studies by Gherardi and Nicolini (2002) in the Italian construction industry revealed that despite experience giving an individual confidence and ability to deal with any eventuality, it also reduces

carefulness. One stakeholder (S4) felt that compliance depends on behaviour and Pacific Islanders do not like being told what to do, especially the older workers:

> *"Their views of it is, they have worked in the industry for a long time and have experienced no serious harm or illnesses. What is the difference now, why is it all of a sudden important?" (S4)*

S4 knew this challenge very well and because he was of a similar culture, he also knew how to convey certain compliancy requirements to such individuals. His culture and heritage being of a Pacific Islander enabled him to understand the dynamics of what is involved:

> *"It is sometimes not the information that the older generation is receiving that they can be negative towards. It is the way the message is passed on to them that they have their guards up and can sometimes have negative behaviour." (S4)*

Despite Pacific Island construction workers generally doing what they are told within the workplace, dealing with mature individuals within this group adds another layer of complexity. They are hard workers and they do what they are told, but individuals that have been within the same job within the construction industry for a long time can be even harder to reach. How S4 managed this group of individuals was to have an understanding of their views whatever they are, to be humble and show humility to convey the purpose of certain compliances required and to build rapport with them.

The characteristics described by S4 amongst his workers match precisely the findings of the Department of Labour (2012): respect, humility, loyalty and hard work.

The prospect of losing income can heavily impact an individual's decision whether to report an incident or not. Pacific Island participants in this research all portrayed this aspect of fear. A fear of speaking up was expressed by all participants. However, talanoa being used as a method by P.I.1 provided the opportunity for individuals of his team to contextualise their response, and as Prescott (2009a) described, talanoa helps to maintain the complex and contextual nature of the Pacific Islands. Using the talanoa method does not mean the topic of discussion is without content or focus. It is more of a pathway of various dialogues which are not fixed or predetermined.

Individual diversity within a workplace was considered by S4, P.I.1 and P.I.1's manager. They maximised the potential of the business and its individuals as they responded not only to what they understood of their own culture but also the motivations of other workers within their site (Watson et al., 2009). The diversification of individuals working within the construction industry can be effective as different kinds of talents are

brought in, but it also creates unique challenges and the greatest diversity factor is communication.

Communication

As discussed in Chapter 3, the diverse cultures and ethnicities on a construction site create complexity in terms of how people communicate and interpret information. The Auckland region alone has the highest number of multilingual speakers with English as a second language. It is indicated by various studies that many injuries and illnesses within the construction industry are due to the lack of communication of individuals or the inability to make sense of communications. Methods of policies and procedures must consider the different cultures present in an organisation (Bust et al., 2008).

Language Barrier

There have been very few studies that have looked at worker communication, but those that have found individuals with English as a second language experience frustration when interacting with colleagues, managers and customers (Lin, Williams, Shannon, & Wilkins, 2007; Premji et al., 2008). This was the situation that P.I.8 found himself in. He could not express himself very well and he found that when he was frustrated he ended up in a fight and throwing punches. He had been dismissed from many jobs and only changed his behaviour when he met P.I.6. P.I.6 took P.I.8 under his care and became a mentor to him, telling him that he could not continue to behave that way and fighting was not the right way of improving his situation.

The language barrier that P.I.8 encountered despite being of the same or similar culture of other workers was the fear of speaking out as other individuals within the team would look down on him and cause friction. Other individuals such as P.I.4 and P.I.5 also expressed similar feelings of fear of speaking out because of how others would react. The fear of having friction within the workplace stopped these individuals from speaking out or expressing their views and opinions within the construction site. A sense of belonging is significant for an individual wherever they may be (Sandhu, 1999), and the thought of being excluded or causing friction with other workers on-site leads an individual to withhold their views, even if they find the situation to be dangerous. In other words, the fear of speaking one's mind could cause exclusion from a group or from society. This relates to the exclusion and consequences of perceived ostracism in the workplace discussed by Hitlan, Kelly, Schepman, Schneider and Zárate (2006).

Exclusion can lead to certain behaviour such as being aggressive and disengaged from those within the group, as P.I.8 displayed (Leary, 2015; Twenge, Baumeister, Tice, & Stucke, 2001). Fear of speaking out about their views can be considerably stressful as many goals are achieved through participation within the construction site.

Communication Diversity

The inability to make sense of communications or to communicate effectively and efficiently is one of the factors at play within a construction site that has been seen as a root cause of injuries and illnesses. It is reasonable to say that there are many contributing factors that cause communication breakdown. It becomes more complex when dealing with diverse cultures as silence can mean more than just not saying something (Nabobo-Baba, 2006). To object or to voice an opinion of the task at hand contradicts the values of Pacific Island construction workers. There are many misconceptions about Pacific Peoples, for instance that being quiet means the individual does not understand or is not listening. The silence of an individual as a Pacific Islander is a sign of respect. If the individual were to be asked something specific, then and only then would he/she would speak. To emphasise this point, talanoa is not all about what you say or even just about how one says it – silence is far from empty. In certain settings, it is as conscious and meaningful as speaking. It is a way of knowing that respects the eloquence in silence, and as Nabobo-Baba (2006, p. 94) states, "it is a pedagogy of deep engagement between participants".

There is a considerable amount of literature concerning communication problems in the workplace (Loosemore & Lee, 2002; Premji et al., 2008), however other studies on workplace accidents have found that people speaking different languages have different perceptions about things, which leads to different perceptions of what is considered to be dangerous in the workplace (Premji et al., 2008; Salminen & Johansson, 2000). These findings resonate with the comment of S4 about how driven Pacific Peoples are within their job and that they feel as though they are stronger and are invincible. The perception of what is considered hazardous or dangerous within jobs can vary for Pacific Island construction workers and those in management or policymakers.

Disengagement

The views of the stakeholders and their workers expressed in the talanoa sessions were not the same. The former, for example, tended to have a more positive view about health and safety in the workplace than the workers did (WorkSafeWorkSafe, 2016). The invitation to a group talanoa session relating to health and safety provided some useful insights from middle management and how they had spent millions of dollars on a software program in the hopes of increasing reporting and awareness of the health and safety aspects within their organisation. What they found was it was an investment that did not provide the results they were looking for. The program did not suit the purpose it was intended for as users were mostly computer illiterate or did not have access to a computer. The individual, who was in a middle management position, understood the dilemma they were in, but he felt that in his position he could not convince upper management against such investment. He felt that sometimes he was stuck in the middle and had to ensure that what upper management implemented was followed through by his workers. He indicated that there was a definite disengagement in his organisation about specific strategies that were implemented concerning health and safety.

The findings of Hofmann and Stetzer (1998) and Rochlin (1999) suggest encouragement from management with open communication about safety sends strong signals to employees that safety is valued and helps nurture cooperation and integration. However, implementation of appropriate methods is also crucial to ensure a successful outcome.

The disengagement of management from its workers was evident in the talanoa discussions, whether on how health and safety was implemented or how the workers communicated or liaised with management on the ground or those in upper management. There needs to be consideration of intercultural communication where values, beliefs and traditions are known and an understanding of each other's culture and heritage could help create a culture that nurtures good communication (Loosemore & Lee, 2002).

Bust and Gibb's (2006) pilot studies found most construction workers do not define health and safety in the same way as the official health and safety regulations do. The findings implied that workers within the construction industry believe that if they have an injury, they inevitably have no influence on the matter. They found that often

there are situations where workers risk their own safety in order to complete a job faster (Bust & Gibb, 2006).

Bust and Gibb's (2006) findings reflect the views of the Pacific Island construction workers in the talanoa discussions. The unfortunate reality for individuals of this group working within the construction industry is that sometimes the deadline of a project is the bottom line. The individuals are rewarded if tasks are completed ahead of schedule or within a time frame and sometimes it is at the expense of health and safety (Wadick, 2007).

Industry Pressure

The construction industry is made up of many complex networks of supply chains and contractors and subcontractors (Langaa Jensen, Laustsen, & Jensen, 2010). The use of contractors removes unnecessary economic pressure but often at the cost health and safety. Workers that are injured can easily be replaced (Schneider, 2006). Moreover, the industry is driven by profit margins and the tender to construct a specific project generally involves intense bidding. Who can complete the job the fastest under budget sometimes puts pressure on contractors to deliver which leads to intense overtime and compromises health and safety (Schneider, 2006). Workers are more likely to engage in short-cut work practices and forgo safe working practices if they feel the need to perform quickly (Mullen, 2004).

P.I.2 briefly commented about the pressure he and his employer were put under to complete specific tasks they were contracted to do. There were only two of them in their team and therefore time off sick or on leave was non-existent; the pressure to provide for the family is first priority. The concept of holiday pay or any type of leave P.I.2 acknowledged was non-existent for the majority of the people he currently works on site with:

> *"Most of the people that work on the construction site don't have holiday pay, sick leave or annual leave. If you get sick or is injured, you won't be able to get paid. If you speak out to the boss and say hey I think that is not right and I am not going to do it that is a black mark. The boss can make sure they will get rid of you and find someone that can do the job."* **(P.I.2)**

> *"You need the job, so you don't say anything, you just do it. Asking the boss to pay half of the PPE gear like a mask is a big ask, the boss see that you are asking too much. Even if they can buy the safety gear like a mask, that is out of the pay. I need that pay for the food on the table."* **(P.I.2)**

The case study conducted by the Department of Labour (2012) identified in the research within the manufacturing industry that individuals of Pacific Island background indicated that if they were to have an injury, and especially if it was because of their mistake, reporting it was out of the question. An injury can lead to days off, and having days off means no pay. Pacific Island construction worker participants in the talanoa session indicated that to report an injury caused by themselves could be of a disadvantage to them as job security was their main concern.

The construction industry is characterized by many competing forces, such as time and funding constraints. The pressure to complete a certain task within a specific time frame to a certain standard, despite not having the right equipment, resources and skills sometimes can be impossible. This leads to OHS problems, and the situation is exacerbated by individuals such as Pacific Islanders being reluctant to voice their concerns with their supervisor or management. As the example given by P.I.6 above shows, these worker may not be aware of the limits of what they are expected to do and not do.

Cultural Position

For S3, different perceptions as a result of one's cultural position were obvious. Pacific Island individuals continued to do the job despite it being dangerous. He was unaware of the conditions his men were working in until he decided to see how they were going with progress. S3 indicated in the talanoa that he could only presume his men continued to do the job because he employed them to do it, and because they were of Pacific Island cultural upbringing and he was of the same cultural background. It is hard to question an individual with higher authority, especially if they are of the same culture. The concept of respect and loyalty is very highly valued in the Pacific Island culture, and S3 believed that this was the only reason why his men would perform such hazardous tasks. He expressed his dismay at the fact that his workers continued to work in dangerous conditions but understood why they did so.

On the other hand, P.I.6 as a mature individual of Pacific Island background had workers reporting to him as he was at the time their supervisor for that specific job site. The individuals reporting to him withheld an incident that happened to them and only reported it months later. P.I.6 was disappointed but again understood why, and mentored the individuals on why it was in their best interests to report such incidents to him, even if they were scared of the consequences. He could not help if he did not know of the

situation and he expressed his understanding of why they withheld that incident from him. He acknowledged that he had to continue to encourage individuals that work with him that reporting an incident did not necessarily mean they would be terminated from their employment. In this way the dynamics changed considerably among the individuals he worked with and they know that they work as a team and that includes him.

Intercultural Communication

The findings of Black (2005) and Loosemore and Lee (2002) indicate that shared values, beliefs and traditions and having an understanding of each other's culture and heritage help overcome diverse cultural backgrounds. P.I.6 showed intercultural communication in how he related to his workers to understand why they withheld the incident mentioned above from him. Being a Pacific Islander also helped encouraged a level of acceptance of his suggestions. P.I.6 used his culture to build the foundation of communication, lessening the power distance between his position as a supervisor and those reporting to him.

In the talanoa session with the Pacific Island construction worker participants, there were mixed feelings on cultural differences. There were those who argued that a manager or a supervisor of the same culture has more understanding of their needs and can relate to their specific dilemmas. On the other hand there were those who argued having someone that is not of the same culture would be e advantageous to the site as certain behaviours would be encouraged as opposed to other behaviours with someone of the same culture.

The development of different methods to help overcome communication barriers in the workplace is still a work in progress but there is awareness and understanding of cross-cultural management, which involves understanding the behaviour of people that work within the organisation that are from different cultures (Bird & Mendenhall, 2016).

Reflections on Talanoa

The concept of talk, exchanging of ideas, thoughts, storytelling, formal or informal, is what Pacific Island cultures refer to as talanoa (Kagawa-Singer & Kassim-Lakha, 2003; Vaka'uta, 2014). Speaking and listening must always go together to build multiple perspectives, options and solutions or meaning. It is rooted in the oratorical traditions of many Pacific Island nations, which include but are not limited to Niue, the Cook Islands, Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, the Solomon Islands and Hawai'i (Morrison et al., 2002, as cited in Otsuka 2006, p. 3).

The validity of the talanoa methodology is as real to Pacific Island nations as Western research paradigms are to Westerners. How robust the method is for determining what is and what can be is still yet to be determined, however. With more and more indigenous researchers looking at this concept, they are slowly providing a foundation to acknowledge the epistemologies of those outside Western knowledge systems (Vaioleti, 2013).

The talanoa methodology used in this study focused on an emotionally charged topic that generated lively and productive exchanges between researcher and participants. The interpersonal and deep relationships created with the participants during this research made the researcher realise that the confines of a dominant culture do indeed contribute to the oppressed feelings and actions of these individuals (Farrelly & Nabobo-Baba, 2014).

The interconnectedness between the researcher and those researched was necessary in order for this study to challenge the knowledge that is currently known, as advocated by Vaioleti (2013). Phenomenology is responsive of not only the phenomenon but the interconnectedness of the researcher and the researched (Pene, Taufe'ulungaki, & Benson, 2002; Taufe'ulungaki, Pene, & Benson, 2002). It focuses on people's perceptions of the world they live in and what it means to them, their lived experiences (Manu'atu, 2000). Qualitative research findings do not speak for themselves, but as Pene et al. (2002, p. 2) argue, they are born within the "researcher/co-researcher encounter where they intermingle". The focus is on the way things appear through experience, which provides a hermeneutic (interpretive) dimension to the unique epistemology represented by talanoa.

The use of talanoa in this study was not without its challenges, however. Getting individuals to agree to a talanoa session knowing they are being researched was difficult. In many ways this group of Pacific Peoples was yet to be decolonised in Smith's (1999) sense. Trying to provide an interpretive dimension reawakened issues of oppression and how it is still a struggle for minorities to have their voices heard. In some way the talanoa sessions created more questions than answers, more confusion than clarity. However, as proved by P.I.6, talanoa can be used as a method of improving knowledge of health and safety regulations among Pacific Island construction workers in New Zealand. The question still remains as to whether talanoa can be effective in any context, or is only suitable in certain situations or certain research purposes. More research is therefore required to determine the potential of talanoa as a research methodology.

Summary

This chapter has addressed the central research question of this research: Can the use of talanoa help to improve occupational health and safety (OHS) among precariously employed Pacific Island construction workers in New Zealand? The use of talanoa has contributed to our understanding of workers' views on health and safety, which have been compared with the findings of the literature review.

Talanoa, as previous chapters have explained, is an unstructured, informal way of communicating. In using this method gave opportunities for individual participants to be open with topics of OHS which were useful for this research paper. The "who do I work for" is a great example as mentioned in the findings where it highlights the world view differences individuals have and what organisations need to know and respect.

The act of silence is not nothing happening but, in certain settings, it is as conscious and meaningful as speaking. When individual are silent in formal settings for example, it is because silence is a sign of respect. The view of organisations can be different in this aspect as silence could be interpreted outside the context of culture.

While some findings were not supported by the literature, it is important to remember that talanoa, while revealing the lived experiences of these participants, creates more questions than answers. There is therefore a need for further discussion and further debate in academic forums as to how talanoa can be applied more effectively, whether for construction industry health and safety or for other research settings.

Chapter 7 Conclusion and Recommendations

Introduction

This study has provided valuable insights into the experiences of both Pacific Island workers and stakeholders within the New Zealand construction industry through the application of talanoa. This final chapter summarises the main findings of the study and its strengths and limitations, and concludes with recommendations for future research and closing remarks.

Background

Chapter 2 provided background to the construction industry in New Zealand as well as OHS in the country before Chapter 3 reviewed the literature on health and safety within the construction industry. Chapter 4 described how talanoa was chosen as an appropriate methodology to answer the research question of this thesis and Chapters 5 and 6 then identified the key contributions made by the research and discussed to what extent further research is needed.

Qualitative Approach to Pacific Construction Worker Health and Safety Research

This research employed an approach that was considered the most suitable for its participants. A research approach that is culturally appropriate is needed "to address the numerous issues associated with empirical research on OHS of vulnerable workers in small business sectors" (Lamm, 2014, p. 168). In the construction industry, many of the workers are employed as subcontractors and there is difficulty researching particularly vulnerable workers such as Pacific Islanders. While talanoa has been successfully used in other disciplines, it had not been used within the construction industry before this study.

Chapter 4 described talanoa and why it was considered appropriate for the participants of this study. The use of talanoa in this study helped create an open and safe space for the researcher and the participants that encouraged open an honest discussions. Access to the Pacific Island construction workers was difficult, as predicted by many studies (e.g. Lamm, 2014). However, finding the right individual created a network that was able to provide sufficient participants for this research. Once the talanoa sessions were underway, the research process was very positive for the researcher and the

participants. The researcher being born and raised in the Islands and having English as her second language meant that the participants found something they could relate to with their experiences.

These advantages created a better discussion space that encouraged the participants to share their stories of their lives and their work, whether they were challenging or not. They created a forum that helped the participants to feel they were listened to, that their stories were not just for another research project but for a better outcome for themselves.

Pacific Island people are often targeted and as a topic of research, but are seldom the initiators. The agenda is usually determined externally and requires little or no input from the participants (Prescott, 2008). This in turn creates suspicion that gives Pacific Islanders the sense of being used and that the research is of no benefit to them. This study was effectively able to give voice to Pacific Island construction workers in New Zealand. This study therefore contributes to our knowledge of the OHS of Pacific Island construction workers through the use of talanoa.

Communication, Culture and Diversity

The diversity of the construction industry is complex in terms of skills, language and culture. Health and safety is severely compromised by cross-cultural misunderstanding. An individual's perceptions or expression of themselves are based on their cultural background and how one communicates, whether verbally or through body language or actions (Bust et al., 2008; Langford, 2000; Langford, Rowlinson, & Sawacha, 2000). Pacific Island participants in this research conveyed their realities and perceptions relating to health and safety. Their views of themselves reflected their actions and resonated with descriptions of the impact of colonisation on minority cultures (Smith, 1999; Vaioleti, 2006; Wilson, 2001).

One improves one's communication by learning how to better understand other cultures as well as one's own. This would clearly help interactions on the construction site. Self-awareness and cultural awareness can help achieve communication competency, especially when in a social setting. This would in turn help management, for example, to understand Pacific Islanders' beliefs, rituals, expectations and superstitions (Chen & Starosta, 1996; Loosemore & Lee, 2002). The prerequisite for relating to ourselves as well as others is an open attitude towards cultural differences. To see

different perspectives of individuals such as Pacific Islanders gives a willingness to accept different realities and increases acceptance of new ideas and readiness for change.

Talanoa is a traditional method of communicating within the Pacific Island communities. It still plays a vital part in passing on tradition and cultural heritage from the older generation to the younger generation. The talanoa sessions provided great insights and rich descriptions of the OHS experiences of Pacific Island construction workers. Their views and those of the stakeholders informed these recommendations.

Strengths

This research aimed to give voice to the "last guy on the line" – to know what drives him/her to do what they do in an environment that is potentially dangerous. It has also explored how Pacific Island construction workers stand in relation to the question: Who do you work for? The talanoa sessions were designed to establish their views and perspectives on how they would like to be managed in relation to health and safety within the construction industry. Ultimately, this study aimed to engage the silent minority of Pacific Peoples who have not been represented in studies relating to health and safety within the construction industry.

The uniqueness of this research relates to its focus: Pacific Island construction workers' perceptions of their own industry and OHS. It has looked at how they were managed relating to health and safety, and whether talanoa would work for them as a means of getting their voices heard. It is hoped that this research could help identify a range of safety cultures within the context of a culturally diverse workforce. This is not to say the Western knowledge system is not applicable within these cultural contexts, but the findings of this study indicate that talanoa can help develop and encourage a pluralistic view of learning, knowledge and wisdom to reflect on an individual's rich and diverse heritage (Helu-Thaman, 2010).

There have been no published (that emerged during this course of the literature search) that have looked into the working lives and lived experiences of Pacific Island workers within the construction industry in New Zealand. When researching Pacific Island construction workers, it is essential to choose a research approach that can give voice to, and capture the stories of, these individuals. The methodology used in this research was culturally appropriate and helped to acknowledge the ethics and principles of both the participants and the researcher (Masoe, 2011; Prescott, 2008; Vaioleti, 2006, 2013). As Victoria (2008, p. 14) argues, "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." Talanoa is a qualitative method that encompasses an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the subject matter. The qualitative method explores ideas, issues and seeks to answer questions. It is an inquiry in its own right which incorporates people's emotions, motivations, incidents, conflicts and prejudices (Gray, 2009). Talanoa belongs to the phenomenological family research family (Vaioleti, 2006). It is an attempt to understand the realities of people's life experiences (Gray, 2009).

A key contribution to the field of this research is the confirmation that talanoa is an appropriate research methodology to use with these participants and within this environment. Through talanoa, the researcher was able to provide a rich description of the individual realities within the research setting. This research has provided important insights into how the Pacific Island construction workers view their own industry in terms of OHS. It also contributes to the limited literature in New Zealand relating to talanoa within the construction industry.

This study was also able to engage Pacific Island construction workers and give them voice, so that their own perceptions of their industry and their lived experiences could be heard. Lastly, a comparison of the epistemologies of various approaches helps to continually challenge the nature and purposes of research on Pacific Peoples.

Limitations

Talanoa is an important concept within any Pacific Island culture. It is of great importance to have a thorough understanding of what talanoa is within the cultures of the various Pacific Peoples. There are protocols within talanoa that must be adhered to, based around the cultural context. For instance, when asking the participants to share their knowledge, life and experiences within the construction industry, a humble and respectful attitude is a must for any researcher.

Furthermore, wanting to learn about a male-dominated industry can lead to intimidation and apprehensiveness, and therefore ensuring the participants feel as relaxed and comfortable as possible by explaining the true meaning behind the request for their input is essential. The creation of interpersonal social context encourages individuals to engage with others. The cultural background of the researcher, who like many of the participants had English as a second language, established a shared cultural context which helped to engage individuals (Ellemers & Rink, 2016).

Time was one of the biggest limitations with regard to the talanoa methodology. Finding the right time for participants was difficult as they were all working long and irregular hours and had family commitments, and thus spare time was very rare.

The gender-biased nature of the sample, and the fact that the sample size is too small to be truly representative of the total population of Pacific Island construction workers in New Zealand.

The researcher had great difficulty removing herself from the research as the talanoa method itself heavily involves all parties in the conversation. The battle to not portray too much emotion when presenting the findings for this thesis was real as the researchers' cultural background heavily influenced the views of the research and the presentation of it.

The topic under investigation was OHS, however the research became a journey of self-discovery and whether the method of talanoa was applicable to anyone that would want to venture into researching indigenous people. How, what, where and when the method of talanoa was applied to the process of this research became of great interest to the researcher, and this sometimes created a loss of focus on the topic of discussion. What started off as wanting to find out about the OHS of Pacific Island workers within the construction industry grew to include an exploration of the talanoa method itself.

Talanoa allowed for lengthy discussions of topics and sometimes led to sessions taking longer than expected. Topics could by anything and everything and this sometimes led to loss of focus.

Concerns

As the application of talanoa progressed it became apparent that there were more questions than answers. Could only people of Pacific descent research Pacific Peoples? Does culture give participants of this particular group a justification to block researchers from approaching them for data? The insider/outsider perspective outline above instigated further questions: Does culture hold individuals back as a researcher, knowing that there is a need to be of certain status, gender, or colour to be able to approach this particular group of people. What specific method does talanoa have besides the aspect of cultural sensitivity and the sharing of the same cultural background? Can it be used by other researchers of different cultures or does it only apply to particular cultures? Even within the same culture, there is no clear indication of what the procedural steps are for this specific method. There are only the notion around cultural sensitivity and the relationship

between the researcher and the participants. How to conduct talanoa as a methodology is not yet definitively clear, and various studies have used talanoa with other indigenous frameworks such as *kakala*, *si vaevae*, and so on.

Suggestions for Future Research

This research has generated more questions than answers and there is a clear need for more understanding of how talanoa can be presented without removing the essence of its findings. Interpreting the experiences of others can lead to bias as the researchers' identity directly and indirectly influenced the research process. The limitations, strength, weaknesses and concerns of this research discussed in Chapter 4 revealed the many questions that would provide more insight to this area of research. Moreover, the need for Pacific research into the industry itself on how effective the policies and procedures are within construction sites could help close the disengagement gap between management and workers. Pacific Islanders have insights into their own industry and their lived experiences have provided much to be explored in future research.

Recommendations

From the findings of both the literature review and the talanoa sessions, it is clear that increase in participation and engagement creates a positive health and safety environment to help manage OHS among precariously employed Pacific Island construction workers in New Zealand. The use of talanoa in this study has provided insights into the lived experiences of the Pacific Island construction workers, which can be summarized by the following recommendations:

- When researching groups like the Pacific Peoples, there are many factors to consider, such as the researcher's influence on both the participation and responses of interviewees. Auckland is large city made up many diverse cultures, and how well individuals adapt to other cultures is arguably dependent on their cultural sensitivity. In the context of this study, a researcher who did not share the same cultural background as the participants could potentially have missed or misinterpreted aspects of the talanoa discussions. It is the researcher's conviction that without her sharing the same cultural background as the participants, the latter would have been much less willing to take part in the research. In the unlikely

event that they did agree to participate in such circumstances, their contributions would likely have been only minimal. The importance of who is asking the questions in qualitative research is well established, but it is easy to underestimate the negative impact – and silencing of potential voices – that a poor and culturally blind choice of interviewer can have on studies of this kind. To prevent this potential loss, both generally speaking and in the specific context of the New Zealand construction industry, it is recommended that Pacific construction workers by researchers whom the workers will consider one of their own. This does mean that such researchers must have a Pacific Island background, but they will need to have a thorough understanding of Pacific cultures, their social hierarchies and decision-making processes. This same principle can be applied to other cultural groups in Auckland when conducting qualitative research.

- To further validate the above recommendation, and the appropriateness of talanoa as a research methodology for studies involving Pacific people, it is recommended that a control study be conducted whereby a researcher of similar cultural background to the participants employs a traditional Western qualitative methodology instead of talanoa. A comparison of the findings of the present study and the control study would indicate which methodology produced the richest and most insightful findings. It is the researcher's conviction that by using Talanoa the discussion would move beyond the preconceptions of the researcher regarding what influences actions, and the actual boundaries of the wider systems would be revealed. Due to the cultural nuances involved in talanoa, it is unlikely that the control study would produce the same quality of insights.

- Take a flexible approach to participation relating to OHS is also recommended. The approaches that are currently followed (formulaic, Eurocentric) are unlikely to achieve the desired outcome as individuals are less likely to participate and engage within these settings. The background of these individuals influences their overall mind-set and attitudes towards workplace cooperation. This leads to incompatible differences in goals between management and workers. Taking a flexible approach to increasing participation and engagement among these Pacific Island workers will show consideration of cultural diversity and increase acceptance.

- The acceptance of individuals' diversity within the workplace would benefit from informal social hierarchies on-site as this gives individuals freedom to participate and engage in topics such as OHS. Such informal hierarchies mirror

the village setting for Pacific peoples, and create familiar connections that encourage open sharing in talanoa sessions. As mentioned, talanoa is an informal way of communicating, where individuals can converse openly and freely about their thoughts and concerns as they would in a village under a coconut tree.

- Aligning the goals of the organisation to the goals of individuals ("who do you work for?") creates a better working environment where learning and respect can influence the priorities of decision-making. If someone strongly recognises why they work and who they work for, it establishes a positive mind-set that benefits both parties. It allows helps ensure individuals are safe on the job, which in turn helps organisations achieve their project goals and objectives.

Summary

This chapter has presented the conclusions and recommendations of this research. There is a need for a culturally appropriate method of OHS instruction and the use of talanoa can positively contribute to the OHS management of Pacific Peoples within the construction industry. In the context of this research, the views and understanding of this group of people contributes to our overall understanding of how to best manage the OHS of Pacific Peoples.

The greatest risks in the construction industry relate to the diversity of its workforce, communication issues and cultural insensitivity. How to best manage that is still a work in progress as there is a distinctive gap in perception between workers and management. To know who an individual works for at the end of the day helps humanise the situation and the environment. It gives everyone a sense of responsibility and purpose and helps to ensure the safety of everyone in the workplace.

Closing Remarks

In reflect upon this journey, the opportunities and privileges the participants of this research gave for this research have been very humbling. Their time was given and their stories shared; these are their *taoga* that researchers only treasure and not take for granted.

Thank you to the participants of this research as your willingness has made this research possible.

Fakaāue lahi mahaki, kia monuina.

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Appendix

Participant Information Sheet

(Pacific Island Construction Workers)

Date Information Sheet Produced:

February 2016

Project Title

Talanoa: A contribution to the occupational health and safety management of Pacific Island peoples in the construction industry.

An Invitation

Fakalofa lahi atu. My name is Hailey Feilo and I am a student at Auckland University of Technology (AUT). I am currently researching and collecting data for my thesis paper to complete a Master of Business course.

I would like to invite you to participate in this research project. Before you agree, it is important for you to understand why this research is being done and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Participation in this study is totally voluntary. You are under no obligation to take part and you are free to withdraw at any point.

What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of this research project is:

- To find out whether the use of *talanoa* as a methodological tool, can help to build an understanding of occupational health and safety (OHS).

- To give a voice to the last guy on the line – to know what drives him/her to do what they do in a dangerous environment like a construction site, knowing that it could be a risky move.

- To engage the silent majority that have not been engaged and represented in studies relating to health and safety within the construction industry.

This in turn will ultimately provide a better direction on how to reduce the high level of work-related construction injuries and fatalities among Pacific Island workers. In addition, the research will help to determine if *talanoa* can be used as an effective method for further research. The research is also being completed as part of a Master in Business course.

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

You have been contacted because I believe you can help with this research.

This research is based on Pacific Island peoples' views of their construction industry workplace. Therefore, your contribution as a Pacific Island individual working in the construction industry is of great importance to the research findings.

What will happen in this research?

If you do decide to take part, you will be asked to sign a consent form that gives the researcher permission to use what you say, but only in specific ways. This will be explained to you, and I will make sure that you understand, before you are asked to sign.

You can still withdraw at any time without it affecting any benefits that you are entitled to in any way at your work. You do not have to give a reason. All information including your name and your company, will be kept completely anonymous and confidential.

This interview is based on the *talanoa* method of how the Island people traditionally converse. This enables us to respect and learn from each other.

There are no right or wrong answers – I am just interested in your experiences and what you really think.

With your permission, interviews (*talanoas*) will be recorded (your name will be taken out of any recording) and if I have any other questions, I will contact you later.

Interviews (*talanoa*) will be conducted in a private space where you feel comfortable to speak openly.

I will be conducting these interviews in a one-on-one situation but you are more than welcome to bring someone with you for support if you wish.

What are the discomforts and risks and how will these be alleviated?

There may be a risk of embarrassment and/or discomfort for any participants. You, the participant, can withdraw from the research at any time and any recorded information will be securely destroyed.

If you feel embarrassed or uncomfortable at all, you can tell me and I will make whatever changes are needed; for example, passing over a particular question or changing the location of the interview (*talanoa*). You can also withdraw at any time. If you do this, then any information recorded up to that point will be destroyed.

What are the benefits?

Whilst there may be no immediate benefits following your participation in this project, the intention is that these findings will combine with understanding built from other studies to give voice to Pacific Island peoples on how companies and other players in OHS systems can do better. The overall aim is to improve OHS so that you and I can go home from work safe and to determine whether *talanoa* can help as a research method.

How will my privacy be protected?

All the information that I collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be identified in any reports or publications.

I will be the only person who will have access to the data. During the data analysis stages, only my primary supervisor (Associate Professor Dr. Felicity Lamm) and my second supervisor (Dr. Dave Moore) will have access to the data.

The research data gathered will only be used for my thesis, conference papers and journal articles.

All data will be stored in a secure location and will be destroyed after a period of six years.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

There are no costs associated with participating in this research, apart from the time given to the interview.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You will be invited to participate in this research two weeks prior to scheduling a face-to-face interview (*talanoa*).

How do I agree to participate in this research?

If you agree to participate in this research project, you will need to sign a consent form prior to the face-to-face interview (*talanoa*).

I will give you the consent form.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

You will be provided with a copy of the interview transcript for reviewing and editing, no more than three weeks after the completion of the interview (*talanoa)*.

A summary of the findings will be provided to you. The identities of participants and project site locations will remain confidential.

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

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, *Dr. Felicity Lamm, felicity.lamm@aut.ac.nz, phone 921 9999 or Dr. Dave Moore, dave.moore@aut.ac.nz, phone 921 9999 ext. 6935.* Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEC, Kate O'Connor, *ethics@aut.ac.nz*, 921 9999 ext 6038.

Participant Information Sheet

(Key Stakeholder)

Date Information Sheet Produced:

February 2016

Project Title

Talanoa: A contribution to the occupational health and safety management of Pacific Island peoples in the construction industry?

An Invitation

*Fakalofa lahi atu. M*y name is Hailey Feilo and I am a student at Auckland University of Technology (AUT). I am currently researching and collecting data for my thesis paper to complete a Master of Business course.

I would like to invite you to participate in this research project. Before you agree, it is important for you to understand why this research is being done and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Participation in this study is totally voluntary. You are under no obligation to take part and you are free to withdraw at any point.

What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of this research project is:

- To find out whether the use of *talanoa* as a methodological tool can help to build an understanding of occupational health and safety (OHS).

- To give voice to the last guy on the line – to know what drives him/her to do what they do in a dangerous environment like a construction site, knowing that it could be a risky move.

- To engage the silent majority that have not been engaged and represented in studies relating to health and safety within the construction industry.

This in turn will ultimately provide a better direction on how to reduce the high level of work-related construction injuries and fatalities among Pacific Island workers. In addition, the research will help to determine if *talanoa* can be used as an effective method for further research. The research is also being completed as part of a Master in Business course.

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

You have been contacted because I believe you can help with this research as a key stakeholder to health and safety within the construction industry.

This research is based on Pacific Island peoples' views of their construction industry workplace.

Your contribution as a key stakeholder can help to provide an insight as to how Pacific Island construction workers operate within construction sites.

What will happen in this research?

If you do decide to take part, you will be asked to sign a consent form that gives the researcher permission to use what you say, but only in specific ways. This will be explained to you, and I will make sure that you understand, before you are asked to sign.

You can still withdraw at any time and you do not have to give a reason. All information, including your name and your company, will be kept completely confidential.

This interview is based on the interview (*talanoa*) method of how the Island people traditionally converse. This enables us to respect and learn from each other.

There are no right or wrong answers – I am just interested in your experiences and what you really think.

Interviews (*talanoa*) will be conducted in a private space where you feel comfortable to speak openly.

I will be conducting these interviews in a one-on-one situation but you are more than welcome to bring someone along for support if you wish.

What are the discomforts and risks and how will these be alleviated?

There may be a risk of embarrassment and/or discomfort for any participants. You, the participant, can withdraw from the research at any time and any recorded information will be securely destroyed.

If you feel embarrassed or uncomfortable at all, you can tell me and we will make whatever changes are needed; for example, passing over a particular question or changing the location of the interview (*talanoa*). You can also withdraw at any time. If you do this then any information recorded up to that point will be destroyed.

What are the benefits?

The intention is that these findings will combine with understanding built from other studies and give voice to Pacific Island peoples on how companies and other players in our OHS systems could do better. The overall aim is to improve OHS so that you and I can go home from work safe and to determine whether *talanoa* can help as a research method.

How will my privacy be protected?

All the information that is collected during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be identified in any reports or publications.

I will be the only person who will have access to the data. During the data analysis stage, only my primary supervisor (Associate Professor Dr. Felicity Lamm) and my second supervisor (Dr. Dave Moore) will have access to the data.

The research data gathered will only be used for my thesis, conference papers and journal articles.

All data will be stored in a secure location and will be destroyed after a period of six years.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

There are no costs associated with participating in this research apart from your time given to the interview (*talanoa*).

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You will be invited to participate in this research two weeks prior to scheduling a face-to-face interview (*talanoa*).

How do I agree to participate in this research?

If you agree to participate in this research project, you will need to sign a consent form prior to the face-to-face interview (*talanoa*).

I will give you the consent form.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

You will be provided with a copy of the interview transcript no more than three weeks after the completion of the interview (*talanoa*), for reviewing and editing.

A summary of the findings will be provided to you. The identities of participants and the project site locations will remain confidential.

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

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, *Dr. Felicity Lamm, felicity.lamm@aut.ac.nz, phone 921 9999 or Dr. Dave Moore, dave.moore@aut.ac.nz, phone 921 9999 ext. 6935.* Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEC, Kate O'Connor, *ethics@aut.ac.nz*, 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?
Researcher Contact Details: Hailey Feilo, phone: 021 2695103, *haileyvaiola@hotmail.com*
Project Supervisor Contact Details: Dr. Felicity Lamm, phone: 921 9999*, felicity.lamm@aut.ac.nz*

Consent Form

(Pacific Island Construction Workers)

Project Title:	**Talanoa: A contribution to the occupational health and safety management of Pacific Island peoples in the construction industry**
Project Supervisor:	**Associate Professor Dr. Felicity Lamm and Dr. Dave Moore**
Researcher:	**Hailey Feilo**

○   I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated _____/_____/2016.

○   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):

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Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 8 October 2015, AUTEC Reference number 15/340.

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

Consent Form

Project Title: **Talanoa: A contribution to the occupational health and safety management of Pacific Island peoples in the construction industry?**

Project Supervisor: **Associate Professor Dr. Felicity Lamm and Dr. Dave Moore**

Researcher: **Hailey Feilo**

○ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated _____/_____/2016.

○ 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):

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Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 8th October 2015, AUTEC Reference number 15/340.

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