



Self-Efficacy Perceptions of Tongan Students and Their Teachers within Year 11 Business Studies

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Received: 30 July 2024 / Accepted: 20 December 2024 / Published online: 22 January 2025
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Abstract

A growing number of Pasifika students are pursuing Business Studies at Secondary school. However, indigenous knowledge and epistemologies are not prominent in Business Studies. We discuss a qualitative decolonising study that explores the concept of self-efficacy in Business Studies from a Tongan perspective. We provide insights into the perceptions of Tongan student's self-efficacy and their Business Studies teachers. Teachers' views aligned with Western notions of self-efficacy, which conflict with Tongan perceptions, precisely the collective nature of Tongan self-efficacy. Key findings from teacher interviews and Talanoa with students provided an understanding of Pasifika students in general and experiences specific to Tongan students. Three main themes are highlighted: (a) key values for Tongan students, such as relationships, family, and identity; (b) students' learning experiences across different contexts; and (c) framings of self-efficacy. This study's implications for curriculum suggest how teachers can learn from and incorporate Tongan students' values and identities, enhancing their engagement and performance in Business Studies. Extending this research to include the knowledge and understanding of Tongan families, community leaders, curriculum specialists, Business Studies educators, and researchers would create a transformational space for student engagement. Bringing together shared expert knowledge in the future would require more time for effective and meaningful Talanoa as a collective.

Keywords Business studies · Tongan students · Self-efficacy · Tongan values · Talanoa · Secondary school

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The New Zealand Curriculum (NZC) conveys essential principles that inform the school curriculum at local and national levels (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2015). These principles include high expectations, inclusion, learning to learn, coherence, and future focus. The NZC is designed for students to experience teaching and learning that is engaging, challenging, forward-looking, and inclusive and affirms the unique identity of Aotearoa New Zealand (NZ). Researchers have found, however, that this curriculum experience is true for only some learners (Spiller, 2012; Turner et al., 2015).

The first author, Ella'peta Fifita Hausia, is from Fua'amotu and Nukunuku Tongatapu, born and raised in NZ. She is passionate about Business Education for Tongan and Pasifika students and reimagines learning spaces in which students engage as a *tangata/fe'fine kakato*¹ (whole person). Jacoba Matapo has ancestral ties to Upolu Samoa and Holland. Her research specialises in Indigenous Pacific philosophy and pedagogy in Pacific early childhood education. Janet Gaffney, an American of Irish/German descent, identifies as tauivi with a commitment to the partnership of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. She cherishes the linguistic, cultural, and social knowledge and ways of being of children, their families, and teachers.

Contextualising the Business Studies Landscape

Tongan Secondary Students in Aotearoa, New Zealand

Over the last decade, researchers have shown an interest in Tongan students' educational outcomes across various disciplines within NZ. The following key studies of Tongan students within NZ secondary schools adopted qualitative approaches, including interviews and Talanoa.

Mafi (1997) explored factors affecting the educational achievement of Tongan secondary school students in NZ. Students were categorised as either achievers or underachievers. Mafi found that conducive home environments were common for both groups of students. Parental support was the deciding factor. A positive home environment was ineffective without personal motivation and parental support (Mafi, 1997). In investigating the influence of Tongan beliefs, intentions, and attitudes on secondary learning outcomes in NZ, 'Otunuku (2010) found that Tongan parents had high aspirations for their children's educational success. Parents defined success based on their schooling experiences in Tonga, often different from their children in NZ. Manu'atu (2000) provided a strengths-based approach, conceptualising the *mālie-māfana* pedagogical framework about *faiva faka-Tonga* (Tongan cultural performance). *Mālie* is described by Manu'atu (2000) as the excitement and enjoyment students experience when their cultural identity and practices are acknowledged in the learning process. Manu'atu also explained *māfana* as a warm feeling that energises *mālie*, which makes the concepts inseparable. Fonua (2018) investigated how to engage Tongan science learners to improve their educational outcomes and enhance

¹ The first time a Tongan term is used, a translation will be provided within the text. See the glossary in Appendix B for reference.

their teaching and learning experiences. Tongan students in her study described engagement as active involvement in learning, wanting to learn more, and enjoying the content. Fa'avae (2016) studied family knowledge and practices that are helpful in Tongan boys' secondary education in NZ and Tonga. Fa'avae concluded that the education of Tongan males is diverse, and each family's cultural capital is different. However, the commonality of purpose is to benefit the *kāinga* (extended family and village).

In the aforementioned studies, many Tongan students were NZ-born rather than Tongan-born, which had implications for their research. Kalavite (2010) noted a prominent theme across these studies: *anga faka-Tonga* (the Tongan way) is evolving in NZ and is shaped by environmental and social influences coupled with globalisation. Therefore, how *anga faka-Tonga* is perceived by Tongan students has implications for their respective experiences. Tongan students' lived experiences in Business Studies were the focus of this study.

Business Studies is a National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) subject within Social Sciences that counts towards university entrance at Level 3. Although some schools offer Business Studies at the junior level (Year 10), students can take Business Studies as a specialised subject in Years 11–13. The Key Competencies, Principles, and Values of the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC) underpin the teaching of Business Studies. The NZC does not specify achievement objectives for Business Studies at levels 6–8; therefore, the learning objectives were developed based on the intended outcomes of the subject (NZCETA, 2024). Teachers have designed the programme for Business Studies in their respective schools by referring to the NZC, the Teaching and Learning Guidelines for Business Studies, and the NZ Commerce and Economics Teachers Association (NZCETA) handbook. The Business Studies curriculum is changing. Schools started implementing the refreshed curriculum in 2023. This study was conducted in the context of the previous curriculum, in which students were running a small business within a school context and developing an understanding of the impacts of external factors on small businesses. No research was found on NZ Business Studies; however, a few inquiries about Enterprise Education in NZ were identified.

A Tongan Notion of Self-Efficacy

Bandura (1977) is one of the most widely referenced theorists on self-efficacy since the 18th century. Self-efficacy is an individual's perception of capabilities for learning or completing domain-specific tasks (Bandura, 2001). Moreover, self-efficacy beliefs can help people foster desired outcomes and determine what they can do with their knowledge and skills (Beatson, 2019). Students with high self-efficacy credit their difficulties or failures to a lack of effort, unfavourable conditions, or incorrect strategies. In contrast, Bandura (1995) suggests that students with low self-efficacy attribute their failures or difficulties to a lack of ability.

A few NZ-based studies about self-efficacy (Ali & Narayan, 2019; Meissel et al., 2017; Otonuku & Brown, 2007) subscribe to Bandura's conceptualisations theories and measures. These researchers used mixed-method approaches, including a Likert (4–7) scale, for respondents to rate their self-efficacy beliefs. Of specific interest is

the study by ‘Otunuku and Brown (2007), who examined Tongan students’ attitudes towards subjects in NZ. They examined students’ self-efficacy and liking of subjects and analysed the relationship of those attitudes towards academic performance in mathematics, writing, and reading. A key finding was that Tongan students had high levels of self-efficacy and low academic performance. The finding was attributed to teachers encouraging students to feel good about themselves while ignoring the reality of their academic performance relative to peers from other ethnic groups (‘Otunuku & Brown, 2007).

A Tongan notion of self-efficacy can be understood as being ‘*aonga* (useful) to a person’s *fāмили, kāinga, kolo*, and *fonua* (family, extended relatives, village, and country). Latu (personal communication, 2020²) recounted that His late Majesty King Tupou I wanted his people to have an excellent education and to be ‘*aonga* to Tonga as a country, ‘*Aonga* to him as a leader, and ‘*aonga* to the church being established at the time. Schools such as Tupou College were established to produce men of a higher calibre who became teachers and pastors and replaced the missionaries. Tonga College was established to educate Tongan people to assume government jobs otherwise assigned to *pālangi* (European) administrators. The impact of Tongan education on Tonga was also a process of affirming Tongan sovereignty and full governance. In the context of Tongan education, *Ako* (education) was seen by King Tupou as an opportunity to promote qualified people for positions in church and government. Consequently, people grasped the rationale for going to school. Latu (personal communication, 2021) recalled parents saying, “‘*alu ki he ako ke ke foki mai ‘o ‘aonga ki he fonua mo e fāмили*” (get a good education so when you come back, you could benefit everybody in the village and family). When an individual is about to complete a task, the usefulness of the outcome to their family pushes them to persist despite challenges. The measure of success is intricately tied to the collective. Paongo (personal communication, 2020) explained that for Tongans, it does not matter if they have what it takes to complete a task. They will try because they believe it will benefit their *fāмили* or *kāinga*. The phrase “*Mo ‘ui ‘Aonga*”, shared by Fifita (personal communication, 2021), encompasses self-efficacy from a Tongan perspective. The word “*mo ‘ui*” includes everything in a person’s life, one’s whole being. What people do with what they possess will be ‘*aonga* to themselves and their *fāмили, kāinga, kolo*, and *fonua*. No matter how difficult, *Mo ‘ui ‘Aonga* suggests that one will do what is needed to develop, grow, and enhance their family and community.

An individual expression of efficacy is not done in isolation from the collective. Individual efficacy is about *kita* (self), which would be *sio kita* (selfish) in Tongan. *Sio kita* is when a person focuses on their interests and is perceived as selfish by others. Self-interest creates a sense of *vā tamaki* (disharmony) as the self-efficacy outcome would be *ta ‘e ‘aonga* (of no use or benefit, useless) to one’s *fāмили, kāinga* and *fonua*. Matapo and Teisina (2021) argues that the collective defines the individual, not vice versa. In Pacific societies, the notion of self is relational and is shaped and influenced by values and principles in which the self is part of the whole and vice versa (Vaai

² The authors value the cultural-historical knowledge of Tongan elders (Latu, Paongo, Fifita) as respected and valid contributions comparable to published documents. The personal communication cited in this section was documented systematically to decolonise the literature review (See Hetaraka, 2024).

& Nabobo-Baba, 2017). The Tongan notion of self-efficacy aligns with the cultural value of prioritising the collective good over individual gain (Prescott, 2009).

Decolonising Research: Methodological Considerations

Decolonising research is not so much about the selected methods but more about the context in which research problems are theorised and designed and their implication for the participants and their communities (Smith, 2021). During the study's design, the second author (Matapo) encouraged using a decolonising framework to ensure that students' cultures were privileged from a strength base (Hausia, 2024). Therefore, indigenous methodologies were purposefully adopted to encompass a relational and non-isolating approach that aligns with the participants and their communities (Kovach, 2021). Tongan methodologies were used to ensure the lived realities of Tongan students were recognised as strengths. Teaching Business Studies in an education system grounded in Western ways of knowing marginalises Pasifika peoples' knowledge, skills, and expertise. Western epistemology and ontology are founded upon Western or mainstream philosophy, which Stewart (2023) called 'White' philosophy. Western philosophy was built on the development of modern science, the beginning of the Enlightenment era in Western Europe, and underpins today's contemporary world (Stewart, 2023).

As an NZ-born Tongan, educated and trained within this education system, Western ideologies and beliefs underpinned my (first author) perspectives. Talanoa methodology freed me to engage with indigenous knowledge and ways of being and doing. Personal experiences and observations deepened my understanding of important Tongan principles and values alongside relevant Pasifika-based literature. A Tongan conceptualisation of self-efficacy could transform teaching in Business Studies education. A cultural reconceptualisation is timely, given that the NCEA Change Programme will be phased in over the next three years with new achievement standards across levels 1, 2 and 3 in place by 2026 (MoE, n.d.). These new standards align with the Curriculum Refresh and support the current Education Plan for Pacific (MoE, 2023).

A case-study approach was undertaken to understand the concept of self-efficacy within a Year 11 Business Studies context. A case was conceptualised as a Business Studies teacher and two students. Potential schools were selected using purposeful sampling (Merriam, 2009). Auckland secondary schools, which had a high number of Pasifika students and offered Business Studies in Year 11, were invited. Two schools, each with one Business Studies teacher and two Tongan students, agreed to participate.

The two teachers, Navisha (10+ years experience) and Annette³ (20+ years experience), invited all Year 11 Business Studies students who identified as Pasifika to participate. Four students of Tongan descent volunteered to participate. Sesi, Soane, and Lisa were born and raised in NZ. Mafile'o was born in Tonga and came to NZ for schooling purposes.

³ All names are pseudonyms.

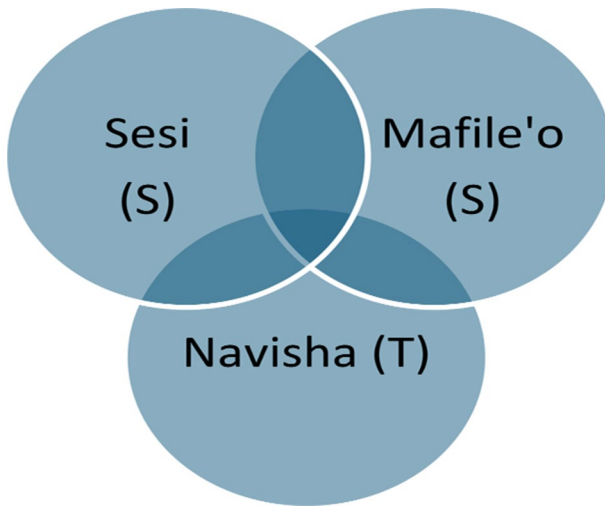


Fig. 1 Case 1 at Urban High School

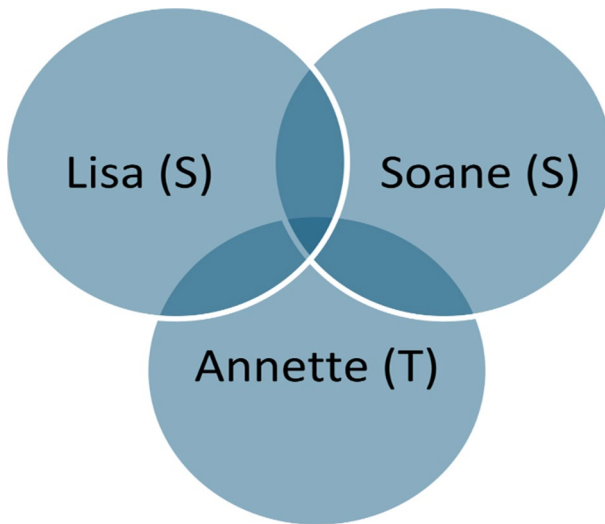


Fig. 2 Case 2 at Mountain High School

Multiple methods were used to gather data, including semi-structured interviews with teachers, Talanoa with students, and a follow-up online survey with all participants. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions during the study, we⁴ had to forgo the initial plan of conducting lesson observations. Teachers found collating documentation (i.e., lesson plans and teaching notes) in the COVID-19 context cumbersome.

⁴ I/We – 'I' refers to the first author's actions with the students and teachers, and 'we' refers to all the authors.

Talanoa Methodology

Utilising Talanoa allowed for understanding the realities, perceptions, and experiences of Business Studies teachers and their Tongan students within their respective teaching and learning contexts in two Tamaki Makaurau Auckland secondary schools. This approach describes how teachers perceive students' self-efficacy and its impact on engagement and performance within a specific timeframe (Blaikie, 2000). Furthermore, a case-study approach allowed for ongoing review, reflection, and refinement as the investigation progressed (Bouma & Carland, 2016).

Talanoa was employed as a methodology throughout the research process as it encouraged the co-construction of knowledge systems. For research to be effective and meaningful for Pasifika people, Pacific values, knowledge, and methodologies must be embedded (Kalavite, 2010). This study was open to Pasifika students. Talanoa was adopted as the students who volunteered for the study and the lead researcher are Tongan. Talanoa is understood as talk, conversations, and an exchange of thinking and ideas between individuals or groups in formal and informal settings. Implementing Talanoa allowed us to move beyond the typical Eurocentric ways of knowing and doing within conventional educational research methods. Due to the fluid and responsive nature of Talanoa, conversations reflected the students' perspectives within their social context. Talanoa, with the Tongan students, aimed to be open and receptive to their knowledge and experiences, creating a safe space for sharing and storytelling.

The Talanoa with the students was initially planned to be in person (Fa'avae, 2016). Given the Covid-19 restrictions, the Talanoa was conducted face-to-face via Zoom. Consequently, the distance or space between the researcher and participants was reconceptualised as the digital *vā* (Enari & Matapo, 2020). The digital space or E-Talanoa (Faleolo, 2020) gives flexibility and convenience. The Talanoa need not impede the student's commitment and responsibilities (Bouma & Carland, 2016). Building a respectful relationship with each student in the digital *vā* was essential. Values such as *faka'apa'apa* (respect), *fetoka'i'aki* (mutual respect and consideration), *fe'ofa'aki* (mutual love and kindness) and *loto fakatōkilalo* (humility) were central to the way that the researcher facilitated and engaged in Talanoa with students via Zoom. Many groups within the Tongan community also use Zoom to connect, Talanoa, and carry out their usual formal and informal activities. Talanoa within the digital *vā* is an extension of what already exists in that space, not a replacement (Enari & Matapo, 2020).

A guide with key points was used to facilitate the Talanoa and avoid a rigid position (Vaioteleti, 2006). However, the practice of Talanoa proved challenging for the first author (Hausia) as a novice researcher. The video functions were not working during the respective E-Talanoa with Mafile'o and Sesi, so the interactions continued using only audio. Fundamental Tongan principles such as *poto'ianza* (cultural competency) were not evident in how I (Hausia) facilitated the Talanoa. Neither the students nor I had engaged in Talanoa within a research dynamic. Some moments during the conversation were awkward and perhaps not as *mālie* (good/enjoyable) or *māfana* (feeling of warmth) as hoped. I (Hausia) was not *poto* (skilful) at navigating Talanoa with a Tongan lens. Such experiences when applying Talanoa as a research method are rarely written about (Fa'avae et al., 2016). Before the Talanoa with Soane

and Lisa, the guide was amended to ensure the discussion with these students was conducted using a Tongan lens. This proved successful as the Talanoa with Soane and Lisa were indeed *mālie*. Both students were *māfana* when they shared their values and learning experiences in Business Studies. Furthermore, Soane and Lisa were the only students who shared personal perspectives and understandings in our Talanoa.

For non-Pacific participants, semi-structured interviews were conducted via Zoom, allowing teachers to unpack their perceptions safely and securely (Galletta, 2013). These video-recorded interviews provided insights into the teachers' perspectives and to make sense of their experiences and stories (Al Balushi, 2016). Zoom was convenient and flexible for both teachers, as the day and time of the interviews were scheduled around their respective schedules within Covid-impacted contexts. Each teacher engaged in one semi-structured interview for up to an hour, followed by an individual Talanoa with two students from their respective Business Studies classes. The individual Talanoa with students lasted up to an hour on average. The more *māfana* and *mālie* the Talanoa was, the longer the conversation.

An online survey with two open-ended questions was created for the participants to complete 24 h after the semi-structured interview or Talanoa. The first question was, "After our Talanoa yesterday, do you have any additional ideas or thoughts about the skills needed in Business Studies?" The second question was, "How has your understanding of Business Studies changed, and what you bring to the subject?" These questions provided an opportunity to express any new ideas or thoughts that may have arisen for the teachers and students following our conversations.

Thematic Analysis

The audio recordings of the semi-structured interviews and Talanoa were transcribed for analysis. A thematic analysis approach was employed to review the transcripts. The examination of the Tongan students' transcripts was underpinned by key Talanoa principles of *māfana* and *mālie* (Manu'atu, 2000; Vaioleti, 2006). Although engaging in Talanoa was challenging, we were committed to ensuring students' understanding and lived experiences were acknowledged and represented through the analysis.

The analysis process included three phases: category construction, sorting categories and data, and naming the categories (Merriam, 2009). The co-authors are experienced researchers with unique perspectives who contributed to the analysis by challenging interpretations and inviting justification during each phase. Two forms of coding were used to identify themes: open coding and axial/analytical coding. Categories and analytical coding were derived from the first author's Tongan interpretation and reflection on meaning.

The first stage of the analysis involved multiple readings through the transcript and survey responses and recording relevant notes, comments, observations, or queries in the margins. For the students' transcripts, I (Hausia) noted what they felt *māfana* to share and the ideas they repeated throughout our Talanoa. The second stage involved grouping the marginal notes and creating a spreadsheet with the open codes from the previous stage. Similar concepts were grouped and assigned to a provisional category. These two stages were repeated with each transcript and added to

Table 1 The three dominant categories and descriptions from analysis of teacher and student data

Teachers		Students	
Category	Description	Category	Description
Teacher understanding of Pasifika students	Different ways teachers understood and described Pasifika students from their Business Studies class(es).	Family involvement	The value of family members' involvement in a student's education, whether in Business Studies or school in general.
Teacher understanding of Self-efficacy	Teacher's thoughts about the concept of self-efficacy concerning the Business Studies subject.	Student's learning experiences	Insights into the learning experiences students had within their Business Studies course.
Ways to enhance students' engagement and achievement	Different strategies teachers shared that could help enhance Pasifika students' engagement and achievement in Business Studies	Student's thoughts about Business Studies	What students thought about Business Studies, including why they chose the subject and how they are doing.

the spreadsheet. From this process, a master list was generated to show the concepts and patterns derived from the data sets.

The final stage of the analysis involved sorting and naming the categories. Transcripts were split into three columns for the teacher interviews, student Talanoa, and survey responses. The data units were colour-coded and then organised into tables by category. Each participant's key categories and codes were arranged side by side in each table. Data units were coded by letter and number to identify the corresponding line from each participant's transcript. This coding process provided an audit trail for the analysis. For teachers and students, seven categories were identified (see Appendix A). The three dominant categories for each are represented in Table 1.

Talanoa, with cultural experts and a literature review of Tongan scholars, shaped an understanding of Tongan ways of thinking. This experience enabled the lead author to analyse the data from a Tongan perspective. Many of our experiences and lifestyles as Tongans are mainly influenced and determined by our family members, community, and cultural and social norms.

Findings and Discussion

In this section, we will provide evidence of the findings using selected quotes from teachers and students. The students' perceptions are prioritised as they confirm and disconfirm the teachers' reflections within the context of the two cases. Three key findings were derived from the first phase of the analysis, guided by Vaoletti's (2006) Talanoa principles of *mālie* and *māfana* and purposefully privileging student voice when interpreting the categories from teachers and students. These include (a) When teachers recognised and understood students' values (i.e. relationships, family, and cultural identity), they could connect at a deep level; (b) Students highlighted nuances of learning experiences with similar tasks in Business Studies across these contexts (i.e. individual, group, classroom, and home); and (c) Teachers used outcomes as a frame to describe their students' self-efficacy.

When Teachers Recognised and Understood Students' Values (i.e. Relationships Family And Cultural Identity) They Could Connect at a Deep Level

The following subsections discuss the findings, and information from the cases regarding these values will be described.

Value of Relationships

Students in the study identified the importance of relationships between teachers and students and how these relationships can alter the decisions made by teachers in their practice. Soane from Mountain High School shared a view of teachers in general, not specific to his teacher. He recalled witnessing a teacher focus on behavioural issues rather than considering that the student may have encountered challenges before entering the classroom.

I feel like they could improve... not just going straight to the point but changing direction and seeing where they (the student) came from up to now. When the teachers understand what students are going through, they can relate to the students because maybe they also went through something similar... There is a connection between a teacher and a student (Soane, Talanoa, 14/10/20).

Soane suggests that teachers could take the time to understand or invite students to share what they are going through. This could shift a teacher's interpretation of a student's action or behaviour as referred to by Soane. The following quotes come from a teacher and student at Urban High School, where Sesi was taught by Navisha. Sesi shared insights with clarity into her teacher's way of maintaining relationships with students.

If she knows that students are not engaged with the learning, she will give it some time and then explain it again. She comes and checks on everyone (Sesi, Talanoa, 5/8/20).

Sesi described Navisha's decision-making when students are disengaged during the lesson and how they are supported, which mirrors her teacher's perception below.

I start getting to know them, building relationships, and knowing the child needs a different learning style. I know if that person can concentrate for the first 20 min and then switch off, or perhaps they come in today and throw something. I know that something happened, and I must leave that person alone as far as the person is settled. I do not bother that person, or the situation worsens (Navisha, Interview, 16/7/20).

Navisha explained her efforts to get to know her students by showing interest in the students' lives outside of school or making connections with families. She provided an example of how she navigates the *vā* between her and her students and provides the necessary support that Soane and Sesi alluded to in our Talanoa. Navisha's practice is

an example of a Tongan understanding of relationships known as *tauhi vā* (maintain relationships). She tends to the *vā* (relational space) whenever and whatever that may entail for students in the classroom. Tongan principles such as *poto 'ianga*, *fetauhi 'aki* (mutual care), *'ofa* (love), and *loto fakatōkilalo* (humility) can help teachers tend to the *vā* (space) between them and their students (Fa'avae et al., 2016). When teachers and students *tauhi vā*, the relationship can be positive, meaningful, and *vā lelei* (harmonious), allowing for effective learning.

Value of Family

Students also acknowledged how family influenced their values and educational journeys and how pivotal they were in their drive to succeed. The following quotes are from students and teachers at both schools and provide descriptions of family sacrifices and a parent's guidance regarding subject choices.

I just saw that my parents were very hard workers... They are doing their best to help their children live, find their future, and do whatever they can to benefit their lives. This is what I grew up watching my whole life. I am grateful because they wake up early in the morning to go to work, come back, and still make food for us... it is time that I repay them. So that is why I study hard and want to give them the life they never lived when they were young... because back in the islands, it was such a struggle (Soane, Talanoa, 14/10/20).

Soane reflected on the sacrifices made by his parents to ensure the betterment of their family. His comments about his parents growing up have imprinted a sense of gratitude and desire to work hard in school to give back to his parents. On the other hand, Mafile'o highlighted her mother's aspirations for her when it came to subject selections.

Um, you know how islander parents are? They expect a lot from the children, and how they are always like, it is always best to take business or accounting... Yeah, even though the child is not passionate about it... But I guess business is good to take. It would benefit you in the future as well. Because I was taking accounting, Mum said to take business because it would help... She chose my classes. I was supposed to take Accounting, Business, and Economics, but you only have two options (Mafile'o, Talanoa, 5/8/20).

Mafile'o described Pasifika parents as having many expectations for their children and described her mother's desire for her to pursue commerce subjects. Mafile'o alluded to students taking subjects because their parents suggest they do, even if they are not passionate about it. However, she also states that taking Business Studies is good for her future, showing her mother's perception of commerce subjects and the potentiality of these for Mafile'o. These reflections by Soane and Mafile'o provide an understanding for teachers to consider how students' lived experiences influence their drive, motivation, and choices in school. Many Pasifika families, including Ton-

gans who migrated to NZ, were driven by the priority of finding better opportunities for their families, primarily through education (Teisina, 2021).

The teachers from both cases had mixed opinions about how families could be involved in their child's education and were focused on learning and assessment as opposed to the intrinsic values mentioned by Soane and Mafile'o. Navisha found it valuable and a priority within their school to involve whānau and the community.

The whānau must be involved in their learning as well. We are trying to do that as a business learning environment... to involve the whānau community in their child's learning. I am trying to bring the whānau into their (students) learning opportunities... to bring the parents in for the selling or to be part of the production so they see their child doing well... It will be in that they become part of it, and students feel encouraged from home. (Navisha, Interview, 16/7/20).

Navisha's perception recognises the value of family for students and the need for families to be involved in their children's learning. She suggests that families are invited to engage in students' learning activities by attending the market days or assisting their children when making their products. Navisha emphasises how these opportunities could allow students to be encouraged by their family's involvement. In contrast, Annette from Mountain High School stressed the challenges teachers faced with parents taking the initiative to involve themselves in a way teachers perceived as taking over their children's learning. When looking through a Tongan lens, families involving themselves demonstrate 'ofa and māfana for their child. Understanding these Tongan ideas can assist teachers with how to connect with families and explain the limitations of their involvement in a way that they still *tauhi vā*, which a school can demonstrate *fetokoni 'aki* (mutual support) and *poto 'ianga*.

Value of Cultural Identity

Cultural identity was highlighted as being valuable to students in the study. Soane touches on how his peers perceive *pālangi* people as smart, and if any of them wanted to be smart, they should think and act like a *pālangi*.

Some friends say you should be like a *pālangi*, smart and everything. And I am like, no. I do not want to be a *pālangi*. I want to be Tongan because I know there are smart Tongans out there... I did not see it as... we should be like the *pālangis* as they are the smart ones... We can do the work (Soane, Talanoa, 14/10/20).

However, Soane clarifies that he does not want to be a *pālangi* but a Tongan because they are smart and capable, too. Soane's bold stance about his Tongan identity shows the tensions students may grapple with regarding perceptions of who is considered 'smart' in the classroom.

Understanding the role of identity can support teachers in building and maintaining effective relationships with students. Attending to a student's culture enables teachers to recognise the complexities of identity and how ownership of one's identity pro-

motes confidence (Tānaki, 2015). Business Studies is taught in an education system dominated by Western knowledge systems. The juxtaposition of Tongan students in a Western-curriculum context can lead to deficit theorising, as students' knowledge and ways of knowing may not be recognised as learning. A way to compensate for the bias induced by using the Western knowledge system is through teacher-heightened awareness of students' identities, as Pasifika youth navigate multiple spaces that do not align with or uplift their cultural identity. Appreciating students' cultural identities and what they bring to the classroom could enhance and empower their learning experiences in Business Studies.

Students Highlighted Nuances of Learning Experiences in Business Studies Across Individual Group Classroom and Home Contexts

The second finding highlighted nuances in students' learning experiences within different learning environments. During the Talanoa with students, four primary learning contexts for Business Studies were identified: individual, group, classroom, and home. Based on the Talanoa, group tasks raised tensions for students in their groups and culturally. This paper will focus on the group context because this theme signalled out of the four; this was the most *mālie* for students during the Talanoa and needs reconciliation with a collective Tongan view. A student at Urban High School reflected on the challenges students grapple with when running a business as a group within the course's project.

Yeah, especially if you are the CEO, leader, or manager, you must put in more... But then you are in a group, which is difficult because some people do not want to do the work. They will work fast or have a sook (be a baby) about it... then they will take it out on the group if they are having a bad day.. I am just trying to keep my cool and ensure everyone is in a suitable headspace and not bothering anyone with work (Mafile'o, Talanoa, 5/8/20).

Mafile'o emphasises the challenges students face while working in a group and the weight of their roles and responsibilities when serving as the CEO. She shares moments when students are disengaged and unwilling to complete the work and how individual students' experiences throughout the day could affect each member and the collective group's learning or opportunity to develop their capabilities. Nevertheless, the way forward for Mafile'o is to remain calm and ensure everyone's minds are clear rather than push students to complete their work. She suggests how teachers could better support group work.

I think she could come and talk to our group. Yeah, try and straighten them up a bit... because it's not just me, but like the other managers, I know they are also struggling with their group. They're trying to balance being nice and ensuring they put in the work. Like you know, being a bit bossy as well. Yeah, checking on the managers. but then she said we have to talk to her if there is a problem (Mafile'o, Talanoa, 5/8/20).

Mafile’o expressed frustration with managing and maintaining relationships with peers and being placed in the position of raising the issue with the teacher. She prefers the teacher to address the behaviours of disengaged students.

From a Tongan worldview, *tauhi vā* could be applied to help Tongan students understand their role and *fatongia* (duty/responsibility/obligation) in the business group. The Tongan meaning behind *fatongia* carries much weight because it represents a sense of duty or obligation to serve others. In this case, students could view their contributions to their group as their *fatongia* as they journey towards achieving shared goals. The teacher’s *fatongia* is also pertinent as they tend to the *vā* between students like Mafile’o and her peers. Simply telling students to see you if there is a problem puts students in a difficult position because they do not want to come across as a “nark” in front of their peers, which would lead to *vā tamaki/kovi* (disharmony) between students. Exercising *tauhi vā* in the classroom can help teachers bridge the gap between them and their Tongan students and the *vā* between students. The concept of *tauhi vā* provides teachers with an opportunity to reframe and refocus on how they enhance the engagement and performance of their Tongan students. These Tongan students were simultaneously navigating multiple spaces with complex challenges, different knowledge systems and ways of doing things.

The following subsections discuss a two-part finding related to the perceptions of Tongan students and their teachers about students’ skills, knowledge and self-efficacy, centring on assessment outcomes. The Tongan notion of self-efficacy was explored as the students are all of Tongan descent.

Firstly, the Tongan Students Held Diverse Beliefs And Judgments About Their Skills and Knowledge In Business Studies, Primarily Based on Assessed Outcomes

Students’ perceptions about their capabilities in Business Studies are reflected in Talanoa excerpts. The students, confident in their capabilities, know the *ngāue* (task/work) they must do to achieve their desired outcome, passing the assessment with at least a Merit grade.

I would say (I am) confident enough because I have to put in the work to study (Sesi, Talanoa, 5/8/20).

Sesi states that her confidence comes from her efforts to study. However, Soane described what he struggled with when learning about business.

So, every time she talks about it, I am too shy to ask because I am scared I might get it wrong (Soane, Talanoa, 14/10/20).

Soane’s self-reflection captures how the fear of being wrong stops him from asking for help in class. Although he refers to inquiring or clarifying during the lesson, he focuses on being right or wrong.

Using a Tongan lens during the Talanoa and the data analysis showed a disconnect between the Western and Tongan understanding of efficacy. From a Tongan perspective, self-efficacy is grounded in the collective. The collective knowledge exists

within the individual before completing a task. From a Western perspective, self-efficacy is about an individual's judgement of their capabilities for completing a specific task (Beatson, 2019). The different conceptualisations of self-efficacy revealed the teacher's fundamental role in facilitating students' self-efficacy; however, this is beyond the scope of this manuscript. If the outcome of Tongan self-efficacy is *'aonga*, then students who are not confident in their capabilities can depend on *fāmili*. Their *fāmili* can be the source of self-efficacy. The students can recognise their family's strengths, knowledge, power, faith, and beliefs. As aforementioned, family is *mahu'inga* (of value/importance) to Tongan students and central to Tongan society. Teachers of Tongan students, who may not be highly efficacious, could approach them using the Tongan notion of self-efficacy, which could be more effective in enhancing their engagement and performance. For example, recognising a student's skill, interest, or prior knowledge and building on these to prompt their thinking to show the student that they can learn and develop what is needed for the task at hand. This style of teaching requires a good relationship between the teacher and students.

Secondly, Teachers Used Outcomes as a Frame to Describe Their Students' Self-Efficacy

The teachers had different understandings of self-efficacy. The term seemed new for Navisha, but Annette immediately jumped in and shared her thoughts. A salient statement of each of the teachers' understanding of self-efficacy follows.

I do not know whether it is Pasifika or low socio-economic status; I do not know which button it is. Those students have low self-efficacy in terms of their academic achievement (Annette, interview, 23/9/20).

Annette described Pasifika students' self-efficacy as being low concerning their academic attainment. She mentions that the source of self-efficacy could be cultural or economic.

They feel confident in their capability. That is why they initially chose Business. Because they have a view of what business is about, and when they are confident they can do this, they have accepted it. (Navisha, interview, 16/7/20).

Navisha explained that Pasifika students have an idea of what business is about, are confident about their skills and abilities and therefore choose to take Business Studies as a subject.

Not like fly, I will say, but they can achieve it. Capable of achieving all the standards. Yeah, I am not saying that they will do extremely well. But at least they can get all the standards, too (Annette, interview, 23/9/20).

Annette believes that Pasifika students are capable of achieving their assessment tasks. However, not all students will achieve high grades.

According to Navisha and Annette, their Pasifika students have low levels of self-efficacy but are highly efficacious about Business Studies in general. Interestingly, 'Otunuku and Brown (2007) suggested that Pasifika and Tongan students are highly efficacious about subjects because teachers may use a 'feel good' approach despite students' achievement. From my teaching experience in Business Studies, I see that students are highly efficacious in the practical aspects of 'running a business' as opposed to the theory and written aspects that count the most when graded. The teachers' views of self-efficacy show tensions between the Western concept of self-efficacy and the Tongan notion of self-efficacy. Through a Tongan lens, the students can employ specific skills, knowledge, faith, strengths, power, and beliefs when completing the work needed for their assessments. However, what students possess must be recognised and understood by their teachers in Business Studies and across the school. For example, some Pasifika students were unhappy when Mountain High School prohibited them from choosing food-related product ideas for an assessment that required business groups to run a small business within a school context, often a Market Day. The decision was focused on the fear that the family would take the initiative to be more involved rather than the significance of food as a collective practice in which people have shared responsibilities—this limited students' access to authentic and relevant experiences in their learning. Furthermore, Pasifika students lost the opportunity to affirm and celebrate their collective skills and strengths while learning how to run a small business.

The conceptualisation of self-efficacy from a Tongan perspective included ideas that when Tongan students enter the classroom or learning space, they already possess knowledge, skills, and strengths. These aspects would be known to teachers in Tonga because families or villages were known for skills, qualities, and attributes. Furthermore, '*aonga*' was understood as both the source and outcome of self-efficacy. The willingness to try something new, knowing that the result would be helpful for one's family, extended family, and village. The drive to complete a task, persevering despite the difficulties or challenges, is derived from the belief that the outcome will be helpful for one's family. The concept of '*aonga*' suggests that one will do what is needed to develop, grow, and enhance one's life, which for Tongans includes the collective family. Teachers of Tongan students in Business Studies could incorporate this concept into their practice.

Conclusion

The uniqueness of this study demonstrates the interplay between individual and collective efficacy within the context of Business Studies. The importance of Tongan students' values and cultural identity and how these can be recognised and utilised in Business Studies are revealed. The Business Studies curriculum is grounded in Western ideologies. Indigenous knowledge or epistemologies are not prioritised, further marginalising the knowledge and skills Tongan students bring to their learning. The micro-politics of the classroom is shaped by context. The two cases from this study show the complexity Tongan students face when navigating differing epistemologies and ontologies for learning beyond binary constructs of success. The dissonance

between the Western and Tongan notions of self-efficacy is palatable. The Western concept of self-efficacy focuses on an individual's judgement about their capabilities when executing a task. Conversely, the Tongan notion of self-efficacy is grounded by several factors. Tongan self-efficacy is about the skills, strengths, knowledge, and beliefs an individual possesses yet recognises that these are grounded in the collective. Although individuals might express their efficacy, it is never done in isolation from the collective. From a Tongan perspective, the collective defines the individual, not vice versa (Matapo & Teisina, 2021). Therefore, the Tongan notion of self-efficacy aligns with how Tongans value contributing to the collective good rather than individual gain (Prescott, 2009).

Teachers have a vital role to play in their students' educational experiences. A teacher's frame of self-efficacy is pivotal in their students' self-efficacy, as evidenced by the teacher interviews. Tongan students' engagement and performance in Business Studies can be enhanced by teachers acknowledging their strengths and potential to succeed, founded upon their cultural identity, values, and principles. Teachers can transform their practice by identifying and understanding Tongan concepts such as *tauhi* vā and the Tongan notion of self-efficacy, *mo 'ui 'aonga*. Teachers can purposefully learn about their Tongan students' values to transform their pedagogy. Teachers need access to resources and cultural expertise to provide insight and guidance to support the transformation of their practice. Additionally, practical and relevant strategies can give teachers ways to transform their teaching methods and enhance the engagement and performance of their Tongan students. The use and application of *Tapasā* (MoE, 2018) by Business Studies teachers could be an area of research in the future.

Indigenous knowledge systems allow students to function outside the capitalist lens and to think about business differently. Students could see themselves differently when learning in the context of Business Studies and beyond. Therefore, extending this research to include the knowledge and understanding of Tongan parents, experts within the Tongan community, and faculty or curriculum leaders would be helpful. Researchers need time for deeper conversations and relationships with students, families, teachers, and curriculum leaders. Growing Indigenous scholarship reimagines how we think about economies and business, and teachers in Business Studies can open the vā for their students to reimagine business concepts and ideas in other ways. Collaboration in developing a framework for teachers of Tongan students in Business Studies takes time. The framework could include ways of facilitating the Tongan notion of self-efficacy in Business Studies, using key Tongan concepts as a lens and tool for effective pedagogy. A collective effort from students, families, teachers, and school leaders could create this framework for the good of all involved and learners who choose to take Business Studies in the future.

Appendix A

Seven categories and descriptions from analysis of teacher and student data.

Category for Teachers	Description	Category for Students	Description
Teacher understanding of Pasifika students	Different ways teachers understood and described Pasifika students from their Business Studies class(es).	Family involvement	The value of family members' involvement in a student's education, whether in Business Studies or school in general.
Teacher understanding of Self-efficacy	Teacher's thoughts about the concept of self-efficacy concerning the Business Studies subject.	Student's learning experiences	Insights into the learning experiences students had within their Business Studies course.
Ways to enhance students' engagement and achievement	Different strategies teachers shared that could help enhance Pasifika students' engagement and achievement in Business Studies	Student's thoughts about Business Studies	What students thought about Business Studies, including why they chose the subject and how they are doing.
Students learning experiences	Descriptions provided by teachers of their student's learning experiences in Business Studies	Self-efficacy	Students' descriptions related to the concept of self-efficacy.
External factors	Teachers shared information that was external to the teaching and learning of Business Studies.	Challenges faced by students	Information students shared about the challenges they face in Business Studies.
Business Studies	Explanations provided by teachers related to the context of Business Studies.	Ways teachers can help students	Students shared ways teachers could help them when faced with challenges in Business Studies.
Self-efficacy	Different ways the teachers described their understanding of self-efficacy.	Students perspectives	Insights into students' thoughts and ideas about various topics during the Talanoa.

Appendix B

Glossary

Tongan Word	Meaning in English
Ako	education
Fāмили	family
Faka'apa'apa	showing respect, courteous
Fe'ofa'aki	mutual love and kindness
Fetauhi'aki	mutual care
Fetoka'i'aki	mutual respect and consideration
Fetokoni'aki	mutual support
Fonua	country; land
Kāinga	extended relatives
Kita	self
Kolo	village
Loto fakatōkilalo	humility
Mahu'inga	of value or importance
Mālie	good/enjoyable
Māfana	a feeling of warmth
Mo'ui	life

Tongan Word	Meaning in English
Mo'ui 'aonga	a life that is holistic and useful
Ngāue	task or work
'Ofa	love
Pālangi	European
Poto	skilful
Poto'i'anga	cultural competency
Sio kita	Selfish/self-centred
Tauhi vā	maintain/tend to relationships
Ta'e'aonga	of no use or benefit/useless
Vā	relational space
Vā lelei	harmonious
Vā tamaki	disharmony
'Aonga	useful/beneficial

Funding Open Access funding enabled and organized by CAUL and its Member Institutions. No funding was received to assist with the preparation of this manuscript.

Declarations

Conflict of Interest The authors have no financial or non-financial interests to disclose. On behalf of the authors, there is no conflict of interest.

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