

Pasifika Youth, Sport and the Covid-19 Pandemic
in
Aotearoa New Zealand

Pawan Kumar Marhas

A thesis submitted to Auckland University of Technology
in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Philosophy

December, 2023
School of Sport and Recreation
Auckland University of Technology

Abstract

In light of the national defence, government and medical efforts to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Aotearoa New Zealand, a significant proportion of the population were impacted by the global pandemic. Given the predominantly Pasifika composition of the athletes and students under my track & field coaching (eight seasons in Aotearoa New Zealand) and preceding the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, a genuine intention emerged to explore youth experiences amidst the pandemic. This research intent stemmed from a desire to understand and address any unique challenges faced by this demographic cohort, recognising the intersecting factors of ethnicity, and cultural identity that shape their lived realities.

Central to this endeavour was a commitment to illuminating the voices and experiences of Pasifika youth within the broader discourse of COVID-19 impacts. By foregrounding their narrations/interpretations, the research sought to elucidate the differential effects of the pandemic on health and wellbeing of Pasifika youth. This research project therefore focused primarily on the sport and active recreation experience of Pasifika youth athletes during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In aligning coaching practices and being culturally responsive with the evolving needs of youth athletes amidst a very unique time worldwide, a dual objective transpired: firstly, to facilitate their holistic recovery and development within the realm of sports and active recreation, and secondly, to advocate for system changes that will foster resilience, empowerment, and socio-cultural wellbeing among youth athletes in the post pandemic landscape.

This qualitative research study engaged eight focus groups – seven consisting of athletes & parents/legal guardians, and one, the athletes themselves. The youth participants of Pacific descent aged 13 to 19 were regularly involved in sport and active recreation in Auckland. The Talanoa approach was used to conduct eight Talanoa sessions over a year from December 2021 to December 2022.

This study provides insights and exposes challenges from the athletes, and their parents/legal guardians' perspectives. It provides suggestions on how to improve the sport and active recreation experiences of Pasifika youth in any subsequent crises or periods of lockdown.

A thematic analysis of collected Talanoa data was undertaken and resulted in three key themes: participation, disconnectedness, and wellbeing. Findings included a lack of participation in regular sport and physical activity due to COVID-19 lockdowns, the consequences of which may lead to health and wellbeing challenges. Disconnectedness from school, friends, and sport was of concern. However, both

participants and parents/legal guardians spoke of a greater connection with family. Finally, the impact of lockdowns on the Pasifika athletes and their families demonstrated the importance of nurturing the interrelationship between physical, mental and spiritual dimensions of wellbeing.

This study has identified that there were both positive and negative aspects experienced by Pasifika youth athletes and their families during COVID-19, concluding that the recognition of these, along with suggestions for enhancements may be useful in any future pandemic times.

Contents

Abstract	2
List of Figures	8
List of Tables.....	8
Ethics Approval.....	9
Attestation of Authorship.....	10
Acknowledgements	11
Dedication	12
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	13
1.1. Introduction	13
1.2. Pasifika Community in Aotearoa New Zealand.....	13
1.3. Positioning Myself within this Study	14
1.4. The Significance of the Study	15
1.5. The Purpose of the Study.....	16
1.5.1 The Research Question(s)	16
1.6. Pasifika Advisory Group	16
1.7. Chapters Overview	17
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	18
2.1 Introduction	18
2.2. Background	18
2.3. Sport and Active recreation in Aotearoa New Zealand	19
2.4. Youth Participation in Sport and Active recreation	22
2.5. Pasifika Participation in Sport and Active recreation	23
2.6. COVID-19 and the Impact on Sport and Active recreation	23
2.7. Global lockdown and Restrictions during a COVID-19 Pandemic.....	24
2.7.1. Social Media Influence.....	25
2.8. Government Restrictions in Aotearoa New Zealand	25
2.9. Youth Participation in Sport and Schooling during the Pandemic.....	28
2.9.1. Parental Influences	29
2.10. Digital Technology	30
2.11. Impact on Wellbeing.....	30
2.11.1. Emotional Wellbeing	31
2.12. Ways Forward in Post Pandemic Times	33
2.13. Pacific Worldview	33
2.14. Talanoa	35
2.15. Va Concept	36

2.16. Fonofale	37
2.17. Summary.....	39
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	40
3.1. Introduction	40
3.2. Ontological and Epistemological Perspectives.....	40
3.3. Methodology.....	41
3.4. Method.....	42
3.5. Research Guidelines and Protocols.....	44
3.6. Research Design	44
3.6.1 Ethical Approval	44
3.6.2 Procedure and Sampling.....	44
3.6.3 Participants and Recruitment	46
3.6.4 Social and Cultural Sensitivity.....	46
3.6.5 Ethical Considerations	46
3.7. Talanoa Procedure.....	48
3.7.1 Va	48
3.7.2 Kai and Koha	51
3.7.3 Self-Reflective Journal	51
3.7.4 Confidentiality and Anonymity.....	52
3.7.5 Potential Conflict of Interest.....	52
3.8. Data Analysis.....	53
3.8.1 Thematic Analysis Process	53
3.8.2. Familiarisation of Data.....	54
3.8.3. Generating Initial Codes	55
3.8.4. Searching for Themes	55
3.8.5. Review Themes.....	55
3.8.6. Define and Name Themes	56
3.8.7. Write-Up	56
CHAPTER FOUR: DISCUSSION	57
4.1. Introduction	57
4.2 Participation.....	58
4.2.1 Active recreation Before and During Lockdowns	58
4.2.2 Limited Access	60
4.2.3 Mental Health	62
4.2.4. Key Summary	64
4.3. Disconnectedness.....	64
4.3.1 School	64
4.3.2 Club Inactivity	67
4.3.3 Tournaments.....	69
4.3.4. Key Summary	70
4.4. Wellbeing.....	71
4.4.1 Physical	71
4.4.2. Spiritual.....	72
4.4.3. Mental.....	74
4.4.4. Financial	75
4.4.5. Key Summary	76
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION.....	77

5.1. Research Overview	77
5.2. Summary of Discussion	77
5.3. Contribution of Knowledge	79
5.4. Research Limitations.....	80
5.5. Future Research Directions	81
.....	83
Appendices	83
APPENDIX A.....	83
APPENDIX B	85
APPENDIX C	86
.....	87
APPENDIX D.....	87
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC).....	87
Guide for drafting a Researcher Safety Protocol	87
What emergency plans are in place? Who can help?	87
Don't forget to update your safety protocol regularly:	87
.....	88
APPENDIX E	88
.....	89
APPENDIX F	89
Participant Information Sheet	89
Date Information Sheet Produced	89
Project Title	89
What is the purpose of this research?.....	89
How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?.....	89
How do I agree to participate in this research?.....	89
What will happen in this research?	90
What are the discomforts and risks?	90
How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?.....	90
What are the benefits?	90
How will my privacy be protected?.....	90
What are the costs of participating in this research?	90
What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?.....	90
Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?	90
What do I do if I have concerns about this research?	91

<i>Whom do I contact for further information about this research?</i>	91
Researcher Contact Details:	91
Project Supervisor Contact Details:	91
.....	92
APPENDIX G	92
<i>Consent Form for Parent/ Legal Guardian</i>	92
<i>Consent Form for Adult/Youth (over 16 years)</i>	93
<i>Assent Form for Children (Under-16)</i>	94
.....	95
APPENDIX H	95
.....	96
APPENDIX I, Sport and the Covid-19 Pandemic in Aotearoa New Zealand	96
<i>Information Sheet for Under-16</i>	96
<i>What is the purpose of this research?</i>	96
<i>How do I agree to participate in this research?</i>	96
<i>What will happen in this research?</i>	96
<i>What are the benefits?</i>	96
<i>What are the costs of participating in this research?</i>	97
<i>What are the discomforts and risks?</i>	97
<i>How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?</i>	97
WHAT DO I DO IF I HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT THIS RESEARCH?	97
.....	98
APPENDIX J	98
<i>Ethics Approval</i>	98
APPENDIX K	100
References	101
Glossary	116

List of Figures

Figure 1. Themes and Sub-themes Overview

List of Tables

Table 1a. Talanoa Groups

Table 1b. Ethnicity of Talanoa Focus Group Participants

Table 2. Thematic Analysis: A Step-by-Step Guide

Table 3. Keywords Used for Literature Search

Ethics Approval

15 September 2021

Denise Atkins

Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences

Dear Denise

Re Ethics Application: **21/268 Pasifika Youth, Sport and Covid-19 Pandemic in Aotearoa New Zealand**

Thank you for providing evidence as requested, which satisfies the points raised by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee - AUTECH.

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 15 September 2024.

Standard Conditions of Approval

1. The research is to be undertaken in accordance with the [Auckland University of Technology Code of Conduct for Research](#) and as approved by AUTECH in this application.
2. A progress report is due annually on the anniversary of the approval date, using the EA2 form.
3. A final report is due at the expiration of the approval period, or, upon completion of project, using the EA3 form.
4. Any amendments to the project must be approved by AUTECH prior to being implemented. Amendments can be requested using the EA2 form.
5. Any serious or unexpected adverse events must be reported to AUTECH Secretariat as a matter of priority.
6. Any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should also be reported to the AUTECH Secretariat as a matter of priority.
7. It is your responsibility to ensure that the spelling and grammar of documents being provided to participants or external organisations is of a high standard and that all the dates on the documents are updated.
8. AUTECH grants ethical approval only. You are responsible for obtaining management approval for access for your research from any institution or organisation at which your research is being conducted and you need to meet all ethical, legal, public health, and locality obligations or requirements for the jurisdictions in which the research is being undertaken.

Please quote the application number and title on all future correspondence related to this project.

For any enquiries please contact ethics@aut.ac.nz. The forms mentioned above are available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics>

This is a computer-generated letter for which no signature is required

The AUTECH Secretariat

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: Pawanmarhas@gmail.com; Michael Naylor

Attestation of Authorship

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

Signed

Date 21/12/2023

Acknowledgements

I extend my sincere gratitude to my Supervisory Team – Dr Denise Atkins, Dr Michael Naylor, and Dr David Lakisa for your academic expertise and research guidance. Your mentorship has been instrumental in shaping the direction of this thesis.

To my Pasifika Advisory Group – Magele Sosefina Paletaoga, Rasela Tilomai Lafaele-Uili, and Rev. Pennie Togatama-Otto for your knowledge and cultural expertise. Fa'amalo and fa'afetai tele lava.

My heartfelt appreciation to the Pasifika youth research participants, and their parents/legal guardians for their invaluable contributions. Your willingness and enthusiasm to be part of this research project was pivotal in enriching the research outcome. Your honesty and cooperation are genuinely respected.

In these challenging times, marked by the global pandemic and its impact, I am humbled and extremely thankful to my family. Your unwavering support, understanding, and patience in these trying moments have been my anchor. Your belief in me, even when faced with numerous hardships, has been the driving force behind the completion of my thesis.

It is a sense of purpose that I embarked on this academic journey, knowing that I stand on the shoulders of those who have been inspirational in my academic pursuits, especially my late grandmothers – paternal and maternal.

To today's and tomorrow's generations, I share one of my favourite quotes by Dr B.R. Ambedkar, "Cultivation of mind should be the ultimate aim of human existence."

Soifua, ma ia manuia.

Dedication

I dedicate my thesis to my beloved maternal grandmother Satiya, and paternal grandmother Parkasho who have been my ethical compass, strength and inspiration.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic is a subject of enduring relevance, given its profound impact on sport and active recreation in Aotearoa New Zealand. This research study is therefore an exploration of the experience of Pasifika youth athletes during COVID-19 and seeks to build upon existing COVID-19 pandemic crisis research studies.

The Pasifika youth in Aotearoa New Zealand are renowned for their involvement in sport and active recreation, and their prominent presence in a variety of sports (Gordon et al., 2010; Nemani & Thorpe, 2023). It has been observed that COVID-19 lockdowns may have impacted Pasifika youth's participation in sport and active recreation. In light of the potential impact of COVID-19 on the world, it is imperative that a deeper understanding of the experience of Pasifika youth during the pandemic crisis be developed.

Change is inevitable given the global scale of COVID-19. Challenges and opportunities related to sport and active recreation, and the impact on Pasifika youth athletes' participation during the pandemic lockdowns will be the focus of this research project. The aim is to generate understanding of Pasifika youth's involvement in sport and physical activity during a crisis. This in turn may influence the sport and active recreation sector including schools, clubs, sport trusts and regional/national sport organisations. Importantly, insights will be discussed which may improve the sport experience of Pasifika youth both now and in future, thereby enabling a meaningful sports participation experience in any subsequent crises.

While the role of sport and its impact are significant to human development and in the social structure of society, so too are issues that are attached to its existence (Andrassy et al., 2014; Lee et al., 2013). It is crucial to identify and discuss current challenges and opportunities that Pasifika youth athletes faced in the vicinity of sport and physical activity before and during pandemic times. There is a paucity of research on Pasifika youth athletes in Aotearoa New Zealand (Hapeta, Palmer, et al., 2019; Hapeta, Stewart-Withers, et al., 2019) and even less research on the effects of a pandemic on their participation in sport and active recreation. This study hopes to address both of these areas.

1.2. Pasifika Community in Aotearoa New Zealand

In Aotearoa New Zealand the term "Pasifika" has gained recognition as a way to refer to the diverse Pacific communities in the country (Horton, 2014). Pasifika is the transliteration of Pacific and an identity for people of Pacific heritage or ancestry residing in New Zealand. The term 'Pasifika' is

formally used by many government sectors such as the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice, and Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment to identify a population of Pacific Islands diverse group culture (Ministry of Education, 2020b; Ministry of Health, 2023; Ministry of Pacific Peoples, 2020). However, it's important to recognize that this term may not capture the full complexity and diversity of the Pacific region. To address this, it's recommended to use specific terms when referring to particular ethnic or culture group, such as Samoan, Cook Island Māori, Tongan, Niuean, Fijian, Tokelauan, Tuvaluan and Kiribati among others. However, for the purpose of this study, I will use the term Pasifika when discussing my participants in general.

This study is situated in Auckland where according to recent statistics, Auckland was the fastest growing region in the country with a population increase of 47,000 people in the last year. As reported in the currently available 2018 Census, approximately 65% of the New Zealand population consisting of Pacific peoples, reside in Auckland (Statistics New Zealand, 2018). This Pacific population is mainly comprised of eight main Pacific Island ethnic groups. They are the fourth largest group population in Aotearoa New Zealand. The leading Pasifika group is Samoan 49%, Cook Island Māori 21% and Tongan 20%. After that Niuean 8%, Fijian 5%, Tokelauan, Tuvaluan and Kiribati 2% or less. Pasifika youth is the second largest growing youth in New Zealand after Indians (Auckland Council, 2023; Ministry of Pacific Peoples, 2020). Given these figures, the Pasifika youth sports community in Aotearoa New Zealand remains an under-researched area.

1.3. Positioning Myself within this Study

It is important to express one's position explicitly in a research study in order to establish the context and basis of the study. By acknowledging one's position, one can clarify their perspective, biases, and assumptions that may affect the research process and influence results. Since reflexivity is one of the major strategies for ensuring quality control in qualitative research, it is crucial to understand how it is impacted by the researcher's characteristics and experiences (Berger, 2015). Moreover, a better understanding of one's knowledge base may help to avoid mis-selection and misinterpretation of evidence or data that may adversely affect the interpretation and analysis of results (Flavell & Cunningham, 2023). Transparency and credibility can also be enhanced by clarifying their position. That is why it is imperative to articulate one's positioning so that their study can be contextualised, their stance acknowledged, and their research methodology and findings transparent.

I am an indigenous Indian male. I relocated to Aotearoa New Zealand with an aim of gaining international exposure, seeking opportunities to delve into and enhance my expertise and understanding of sports management, and youth engagement in sports & active recreation. I bring to this study a background in sport management, athletics coaching, and physical education having achieved a

Master's degree in Physical Education & Sports. My role and qualifications align with a number of research findings which support a positive correlation between physical literacy and educational achievements. This is something I am interested in and wish to pursue further, however as COVID-19 struck with restrictions on physical activity and sport, it occurred to me that this was an area that needed investigating.

Having an awareness of how social skills, collaboration, and emotional regulation are nurtured through participation in group activities and/or sports, can lead to more conducive learning environments for students. As a result, physically literate people would have become more confident in their ability to participate in a wider range of contexts and activities. Subsequently, stress and anxiety would be at an all-time low. Leveraging my background in Physical Education, I am inclined towards the cultivation of physical literacy and its pivotal role in enabling individuals to participate adeptly in physical activities across a range of situations and contexts.

Prior to arriving in Aotearoa New Zealand, I had neither prior knowledge nor exposure to Pasifika communities. I saw youth in sports from the lens of an athlete, lecturer, former Assistant Professor, and Director of Physical Education & Sports. In wishing to know and understand the area I was living in, I volunteered to coach a number of youth athletes and help their parents, and families to improve wellness and wellbeing. This helped me to understand their specific needs and concerns. Through social interactions, and family gatherings, I became more aware of the Pacific cultural values and holistic approach to life. Consequently, I modified my programme delivery and approach in order to be culturally appropriate.

Prior to achieving my academic qualifications, my enthusiasm and dedication was to the notion of 'Development through Sports'. I was positioned in the realm of social development where sport is the vehicle for fostering inclusive societal progress. I hoped to help improve lives of those who may require some guidance in sport and active recreation. However, over the past few years by positioning myself amongst healthy active enthusiasts, I feel I can contribute to their overall wellbeing and enhance the progress of Pasifika communities in this space.

1.4. The Significance of the Study

A lack of participation in regular sport and physical activity due to COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns may be linked to Pasifika youth health and wellbeing (Thorpe et al., 2023). It is imperative to grasp the consequences of pandemic-related disruptions in order to unravel their impact on Pasifika youth athletes. This understanding not only reveals the potential effects of lockdowns on engagement but also highlights disparities in accessing essential resources and support networks (Godber & Atkins,

2023). Such insights are crucial for informing targeted interventions and policies to address the challenges, if any, faced by Pasifika youth athletes during crisis situations.

When identifying sport and active recreation participation for Pasifika youth athletes a varying scope of factors, both positive and negative can be found. Focus group interviews using a Talanoa approach and a number of key individuals noted that conceptualizations of sports differed greatly to those of traditional viewpoints (Enari, 2021b; Vaioleti, 2006). Most Pasifika families are religious-orientated and therefore mostly interact in church organized gatherings and/or activities (Gordon et al., 2013b). For many, church is everything. Sport and active recreational events organised by churches represent the rich socio-cultural fabric in Pasifika communities. These events are in various forms, ranging from inter-church sports tournaments to family sports days and community fitness classes, all designed to engage individuals across different age groups and backgrounds. These activities serve as dynamic sites for the cultivation of communal bonds, the promotion of wellbeing, and the preservation of cultural identity within Pasifika communities. Through participation in sports and recreation within the context within the context of church-based events, Pasifika individuals reaffirm their sense of belonging within their communities and strengthen their bonds with their cultural heritage. The non-inclusion of sports activities and active recreational events organised by churches contribute to narrowing this knowledge gap in Aotearoa Pasifika sports and academic literature.

1.5. The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the experience of Pasifika youth athletes in sport and active recreation during the COVID-19 pandemic. A lack of active engagement in regular sport and physical activity due to Covid-19 lockdowns may be linked to health and wellbeing. Findings of this research can inform the management and organisation of Pasifika youth participation in sport moving forward – both in times of crisis and otherwise.

1.5.1 The Research Question(s)

The overall research question is “What are the experiences of Pasifika Youth athletes in sport and active recreation during the COVID-19 pandemic in Aotearoa New Zealand”.

The sub-questions are: “What challenges are related to sports & active recreation?” and “How did the COVID-19 pandemic impact on Pasifika youth athletes’ participation in sport and active recreation?”

1.6. Pasifika Advisory Group

A Pasifika Advisory Group - PAG, was formed at the outset of my study to provide guidance on cultural and ethical approaches appropriate to Pasifika youth athletes and their families. Cultural identities can be deeply personal, and individual preferences may vary. Therefore, I have aimed to

engage in respectful and open communication with participants by asking them about their preferred terminology related to culture. This has allowed me to honour their unique identities and foster understanding across cultures. The PAG consists of three South Auckland professionals of Pasifika-descent who agreed to share their cultural expertise. Each member listed below has agreed to help with the research project:

Ms Sosefina Paletaoga: Chief Executive Officer - Otara Health Charitable Trust, Auckland

Rev. Pennie Vaione Togatama-Otto: Deputy Principal – Manurewa High School, Auckland

Mrs Rasela Tilomai Uili: Head of Samoan Language – Tangaroa College, Auckland

A meeting with the Pasifika Advisory Group took place prior to data collection. Regular connections also continued throughout the project for advice and support. Having a Pasifika Advisory Group's collective expertise was critical for ensuring an authentic Pasifika process throughout the study.

1.7. Chapters Overview

The thesis contains five chapters. Chapter one, the introduction, provides an overview of the study, including my role as a non-Pasifika researcher sharing space with Pasifika youth athletes and their parents/legal guardians. It contains the purpose of my study and introduces the research questions. Chapter two offers an examination of the literature pertaining to sport and active recreation in Aotearoa New Zealand. Specifically, it focuses on Pasifika youth athletes during the COVID-19 pandemic. This chapter explores participation, as well as the landscape of sport and active recreation in Aotearoa New Zealand. In addition, a review of international and domestic level COVID-19 restriction structures are also included. The Chapter is concluded with the philosophy of Pacific worldview, the concept of a Talanoa approach, *va*, and an exploration of the Fonofale model. Chapter three explores the research framework and methodology, the methods adopted, and discusses the Talanoa approach undertaken using the Pacific Research Protocols guidelines. Data collection methods and a thematic analysis process conclude this chapter. I share the discussion of my findings in Chapter four, relating these to the literature and my inquiry questioning. The final chapter of this thesis addresses the research questions, outlines the limitations, provides personal recommendations for future study, and ends with a comprehensive conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter serves as the foundation of this research study. The literature review provides a detailed overview of the existing scholarly discourse on the subjects related to Pasifika youth's experience during the COVID-19 pandemic in Aotearoa New Zealand. It navigates through a wide range of academic works including seminal theories, empirical research studies, and critical viewpoints. This chapter will synthesise and critically analyse the body of the knowledge of Pasifika youth and physical activity in pandemic times by identifying key themes, debates, and gaps in the available literature. From an academic aspect, this chapter serves as a backdrop for this research project, illuminating the progression of ideas and pointing up areas for further exploration. It establishes a solid foundation for future research study and discussion by conducting a thorough appraisal of relevant content. In this chapter, I will provide information on the sport and active recreation scene for youth in Aotearoa New Zealand. I will explore how the COVID-19 pandemic limited sport and active recreation opportunities for Pasifika youth, whilst providing a Pacific worldview of wellbeing and the contribution it can make to society.

2.2. Background

This research project is an investigation of Pasifika youth athletes' experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. Challenges related to sport & active recreation, and the impact on Pasifika youth athletes' participation, or not, will be the focus. The aim is to generate findings that can inform practical implications related to Pasifika youth for all those involved in the sport sector. This includes schools, clubs, sport trusts and regional/national sports organisations during times of restricted participation in sport and active recreation activities.

While the role of sport and its impacts are significant to human development and in social structure of society, so too are issues that are attached with its existence (Koorts et al., 2022a; Obidovna & Sulaymonovich, 2022). To enable comparisons, if any, and to create discussion, it is crucial to identify and discuss current challenges and opportunities that Pasifika youth athletes face in the vicinity of sports and active recreation. There is a paucity of research about Pasifika youth athletes in Aotearoa New Zealand (Hapeta, Palmer, et al., 2019; Hapeta, Stewart-Withers, et al., 2019; Wilson et al., 2022), and no relevant literature focusing on Pasifika youth and their participation during a global crisis.

Pasifika youth athletes in sport and active recreation used to feature strongly in Aotearoa New Zealand sport in general (Chambers, 2013; Fitzpatrick, 2013; Grainger, 2009; Lilo et al., 2020; Nemani & Thorpe, 2023). Factors such as the athlete's family socio-economic status is one contributing issue, not only in participation of sport or organised sports activities, but also in their choice and preference of

sports/activities (Thibaut et al., 2017). For many young people including Pacific youth several other hurdles to participation range from not having time, too tired, lacking self-motivation and already burdened with other obligations (Allender et al., 2006). However, in current times, numbers have declined and young people are now a target group for regional and national sports organisations (Active-Auckland Sport & Recreation, 2023). These are a glimpse of a very wide area of issues and challenges associated with sport participation, however, this research study will focus on the relevance of sport and active recreation for Pasifika youth athletes specifically in exceptional times such as a pandemic crisis.

Sport for development and, sports management for Māori and Pasifika youth athletes in Aotearoa New Zealand is an area of concern as there is a disconnection between their indigenous worldview and scholarship (Dunbar, 2008; Hapeta, Palmer, et al., 2019). It has been argued that in order to make improvements for the indigenous communities through sport, scholarly studies must be hinged on the following concepts of perspectives, privilege, politics, protection, and people. With the proposed Talanoa approach this study undertakes, the Pasifika worldview is embraced and the indigenous worldview is therefore authentic (Lakisa et al., 2019).

As previously stated, the Pasifika youth sport community in Aotearoa New Zealand is an under-researched area. A review of collated articles on the mental health aspects of children and adolescents during the pandemic by Shweta Singh et al. (2020) found a pressing need for more developmental studies, and an evidence-based action plan to cater for psycho-social and mental health needs of underprivileged children and adolescents. Subsequently, this research can contribute to bridging the already limited knowledge gap in Pasifika sports and academic literature.

This research was informed by the Talanoa approach when collecting qualitative data. Focus groups convened including Pasifika youth athletes and their parents or legal guardians. A Pasifika-Led Advisory group was formed and met with the researcher and supervisory team with a view to providing advice and support for connecting with Pasifika families and other matters as they arise in the research study. This proved invaluable throughout the research process.

2.3. Sport and Active recreation in Aotearoa New Zealand

While the role of sport, active recreation and its impact are significant to human development (Danish et al., 2003; Di Liegro et al., 2019) and in social structure of society (Danish et al., 1993; Hermens et al., 2017), so too are issues that are attached with its existence (Houlihan & White, 2003; Humphrey, 2012; Skinner et al., 2008a) in his book emphasizes both the positive and negative effects that participation in sport can have on a child's development if programmes are not properly run, or indeed if interruptions are caused that restrict the running of programmes.

Located in the faraway corner of the globe, is a small Pacific Island nation with a population of approximately 5 million, Aotearoa New Zealand. This country is well known for its indigenous Māori culture, rugby team the ‘All Blacks’ and picturesque landscapes ([Sport in Aotearoa/New Zealand society, 2007](#)). Play, sport, and leisure activities are a regular aspect of life here. Sport and active recreation are managed by the local community, and by regional and national sporting organisations. People of all ages and ability are encouraged to select their sports and recreational activities to get involved ([Sturm & Kerr, 2022](#)).

Community Sport is also a way for non-competitive and a fun-focus participation for the general population. A multitude of not-for-profit sports clubs and non-government organisations offer a myriad of leisure, sports and physical activities within local communities ([Skinner et al., 2008b](#)). These range from picnics and movies in the park, to ‘Have-a-Go’ days, to religious or ethnic festivals, to name a few.

New Zealand’s education system, through the New Zealand Curriculum – NZC, also endorses learning through the Health and Physical Education – HPE from years 1-13 ([Ministry of Education, 2007](#); [Ovens, 2010](#)). In addition, Te Whariki the early childhood curriculum in pre-school from 12 months, also promotes play ([Ministry of Education, 2016](#)). The NZC is the guiding document for all schools and the subject of Health and Physical Education is compulsory for all students during years 1-10. At year 11, HPE becomes an optional subject. Significantly, a review of extensive research consistently highlights the critical links between physical activities and the development and functioning of children’s brains ([Bunketorp Käll et al., 2015](#); [Di Liegro et al., 2019](#)). As a result of these extensive studies, it has been established that engagement in physical activities is strongly related to overall brain health, including cognitive function. Moreover, research findings indicate that moderate-intensity activities are particularly beneficial for youth who are at higher risk of developing health problems ([Janssen & LeBlanc, 2010](#)). As a result of these insights, we are better able to understand the complex relationship between physical activity and cognitive development, particularly those who face greater challenges.

This concept of ‘play’ and regular physical activity is encouraged through primary and intermediate schools. Given the alarming statistics of childhood obesity and the subsequent development of debilitating health problems in adulthood, Māori and Pasifika people in particular became a target population ([Bramley et al., 2005](#); [Marriott & Sim, 2015](#)). This led to a ‘Healthy Active Learning’ (HAL) collaboration between the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, and Sport New Zealand in 2020. Currently in its third year of implementation, the joint HAL venture includes the revitalization of the Physical Education & Health curriculum and its role in addressing morbid obesity, and related health issues ([Fitzpatrick & Burrows, 2017](#)). The integration of this health intervention during the early and

pre-adolescent stages is aimed at cultivating a generation of youth who possess both physical fitness and overall wellbeing.

Historically, Health & Physical Education in the New Zealand curriculum is grounded in four key principles that enhance the wellness of individual, others, and society. These principles cover well-being, the promotion of health, the socio-ecological viewpoints, and the significance of fostering attitudes and values that uphold well-being (Ministry of Education, 1999). Some argue that gradually restoring the abandoned HPE in the face of technology and digitalized learning (Dyson et al., 2018), is an attempt to combat the debilitating health issues of the youth in general. In that realization, schools are partnering with numerous external organisations to deliver sport and active recreation programmes (Dyson et al., 2016).

One area where youth are able to increase their wellbeing and physical activity beyond the Health & Physical Education, is through inter-school sporting events (Donaldson & Ronan, 2006; Steptoe & Butler, 1996). Tournaments are held all year-round for a multitude of sporting codes in primary, intermediate and secondary school settings, usually at local and regional level, before progressing through to national level competitions (Sadiman, 2017). In addition, the sports club system serve to engage community interest. Sports clubs are community-based clubs that offer individuals the opportunity to participate in a variety of sports and physical activities. In addition to providing coaching facilities, and structured competitions for members of all ages and skill levels. These clubs help to promote sports and healthy lifestyle. From the school's perspective, these events are categorized under the extra-curricular activities umbrella which serves to increase active participation in physical activity and sport (Danish et al., 2003). These involvements provide a holistic educational experience that extends beyond the Health & Physical Education curriculum.

Traditionally in Aotearoa New Zealand, women played netball, basketball and hockey in the 1970s and 1980s, while men typically had rugby, football, hockey, and cricket. However, the future of sport and recreation in Aotearoa New Zealand is changing with the world, as evident in about 300 sporting options available for youth or rangatahi¹ (School Sport New Zealand, 2022). A recent address at the Sport NZ's Connections 2022 conference highlighted a multitude of sports-associated organisations and their work pre, during, and post COVID-19. A key speaker at the conference emphasised that a large number of factors are predicted to impact sport and active recreation in another 40 years, including climate change, funding viability, and changing participant priorities.

¹ Rangatahi - youth or younger generation in Te reo Māori

2.4. Youth Participation in Sport and Active recreation

In a broad context, sport and active recreation is pivotal in the lives of youth, fostering physical, mental, and social development (Obidovna & Sulaymonovich, 2022). It promotes physical wellbeing such as cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength, neuromuscular coordination, and flexibility (Danish et al., 2003). These aspects allow young people to counteract the increasingly prevalent inactive lifestyles and prevalence towards obesity (Biddle et al., 2004), thus fostering their well-being and potential long-term health.

In the mental health domain, engaging in sport and recreational activities provides youth with effective means of stress management along with cultivating self-esteem and resilience (Choudhury et al., 2006; Koorts et al., 2022a; Olushola et al., 2013). Moreover, it serves as a platform for self-confidence and imparts valuable life skills such as teamwork, goal-setting, and time management.

The social dimension of sport is instrumental in promoting positive interactions, nurturing friendship, and instilling a sense of belonging among youth (Olushola et al., 2013; Weiss et al., 2013). Through sport and active recreation, values such as respect, cooperation, and effective decision-making are taught, not only with their peers, but also with their coaches and officials (Danish et al., 2004). As previously mentioned, various barriers to participation exist for many young individuals and adults (Koorts et al., 2022b; Pandya, 2021). Therefore, the role of sport and active recreation is indisputable. These activities contribute to molding all-rounded individuals who are equipped with essential life skills and better prepared to face challenges of life (Gano-Overway et al., 2009; Weiss et al., 2013).

A recent report from SportNZ (2021) highlighted a growing emphasis on providing opportunities for young people to engage in physical activities ranging from traditional team sports to individual pursuits and recreational endeavours. The data suggested that the rangatahi were highly satisfied in Physical Education classes and competitive sports at in-school level. However, gender diverse rangatahi and females experienced some challenges in choices of in-school physical activities. Most rangatahi want to fully engage in sports and active recreation activities however they faced a number of barriers such as family and school commitments which was stopping them from doing so.

Adolescence is a period of expression, skill demonstration, and social interaction. These are the most delicate stages of maturation; young people are at a time of rapid physical change as well as a critical period of personal, cognitive, and social development (Choudhury et al., 2006; Steinberg, 2005). They are exploring their potential, adopting various social roles and identities, accepting and rejecting habits, values, and beliefs. During these times, they also socialise and often develop a lifestyle that will influence them for the rest of their lives (Laurier et al., 2021).

2.5. Pasifika Participation in Sport and Active recreation

Among Pasifika people and youth, sport and active recreation play a significant role in promoting physical activity as well as cultural, social, and personal development. These activities not only foster friendship and supportive networks, but also promote an awareness of the Pasifika people's traditional healthy active lifestyle.

As a result of involvement in sport and recreation activities, Pasifika people have traditionally developed a strong sense of cultural identity, increasing their connection to their heritage (Enari & Keung, 2022). Physically, they are strong and agile with a natural athletic ability, and versatile, which gives them an edge in a variety of sports (Fitzpatrick, 2013; Grainger, 2009; Horton, 2014; Nemani & Thorpe, 2023). Unfortunately, Pasifika on the other hand, are also overrepresented in the press as unhealthy, lazy, dependent, and unmotivated (Statistics New Zealand, 2010).

In the sporting sector, successful Pasifika athletes become positive role models for Pasifika youth by demonstrating the possibilities of attaining excellence and attaining success (Hawkes, 2023; Lakisa et al., 2019; Lilo et al., 2020). Thus, offering a pathway to various career opportunities such as coaching, sports management, journalism, medicine physician, and various roles within the sports industry (Tipi, 2013).

The Pasifika community is a heterogeneous group from the Pacific Islands (Rossen et al., 2009). According to (Statistics New Zealand, 2018) the total population of Pacific Island ethnic groups is approximately 381,000. This is mainly comprised of eight main groups resulting in the fourth largest group population in Aotearoa New Zealand. The leading Pasifika group is Samoan 49%, Cook Island Māori 21% and Tongan 20%. After that Niuean 8%, Fijian 5%, Tokelauan, Tuvaluan and Kiribati 2% or less (Ministry for Pacific Peoples, 2020; Ministry of Pacific Peoples, 2020; Statistics New Zealand, 2018) Pasifika youth is the second largest growing youth in New Zealand after Indians (Ministry for Pacific Peoples, 2020). Given these figures, the Pasifika youth sports community in Aotearoa New Zealand remains an important area for research.

2.6. COVID-19 and the Impact on Sport and Active recreation

The COVID-19 pandemic presented the international world with an unexpected problem in late 2019 and early 2020. As the corona virus cases began to appear around the country, New Zealand and other governments quickly responded with a slew of measures aimed at slowing the virus' spread (Ministry of Health, 2020a). The effects of the virus were felt throughout New Zealand, notably in the country's largest metropolis Auckland. As a heavily populated urban region, Auckland found itself at the forefront of these emergency response initiatives. The public authorities developed a tiered system of lockdown

and restrictions (Ministry of Health, 2020b). These precautionary procedures included a range of social distancing protocols, travel restrictions, and different levels of workplace closures, which were all intended to prevent the virus spreading in the community.

2.7. Global lockdown and Restrictions during a COVID-19 Pandemic

Due to the outbreak of the coronavirus in 2019, several governments implemented lockdowns. These included school closures, restrictions on social gathering, and time spent outside. Numerous studies have provided information from their country about the restrictions and impact on people's physical activity. The 'Walking in Schools' project in Ireland involved 281 female students. They were asked to complete various questionnaires before and during the lockdown in 2019. They were then interviewed during the lockdown to supplement the findings. The investigation focused on how these restrictions affected adolescent girls' mental health and physical activity (O'Kane et al., 2021).

During the school closures and lockdown in United States of America, students tried out different forms of physical activities, but interestingly, their self-reported physical activities did not change (Genevieve et al., 2020). Meanwhile in France, Irène et al. (2020) documented a decline in motivation to engage in physical activity for children and adolescents, surprisingly coinciding with an improvement in the overall quality of life. According to Huang and Zhao (2020), there was a difference in the amount of time they spend on social media and the quality of sleep compared to the pre-pandemic times in China.

Before the pandemic, predominantly only physical education teachers or other fitness professionals such as exercise and sports coaches, talked about the importance and benefits of physical exercise. However, during the pandemic, they believed that their peer groups were discussing physical activities (Wintle, 2022). Jessica et al. (2022) suggest that these discussions could include examining the effects of the crisis on the learning experiences of disadvantaged groups, as well as the news reports about how education was produced during the crisis. Similarly, Atkins and Godber (2023) explored experiences of females in higher education during the pandemic, potentially helping professionals to pinpoint areas requiring interventions in order to bolster their wellbeing and resilience in a future time of crisis.

As communities found themselves staying within their household and working from home due to imposed COVID-19 restrictions, virtual meetings or online group chats took over in-person meetings and/or dialogues. Conversations across social media platforms were primarily focussed on how best individuals could care for physical and mental health during the time of crisis. These discussion topics indicated greater importance of health and well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic.

To better understand the effects of the pandemic on students' academic performance and needs, [Koenig and Frey \(2022\)](#) conducted a series of studies to examine the various factors that affected the education system during the crisis. These included the reduction of learning time, the sudden switch to home schooling, and the disruption of school. Despite the lack of definitive answers regarding the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on students' academic performance and needs, existing research can be used to assess the potential consequences of this issue on educational outcomes ([Trude & Jo Magne, 2022](#)).

2.7.1. Social Media Influence

In a study by [Tandon et al. \(2021\)](#), as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, an awareness was raised about the impact of using technology within the current requirements for physical activity, both for adolescents and parents. They suggest advice on how to use digital devices and recreational screens more effectively should be a priority. One suggestion they make is for equipment and facilities to be more accessible, as well as utilising social media and other digital platforms for post-pandemic recovery and beyond. According to number of studies in Australia, youth used social media for health consultation rather than traditional methods such as consulting with professionals in person ([Ewing & Cooper, 2021](#); [Lupton, 2020](#)). This type of trend influenced international organisations and various national government institutes to share information about COVID-19 and health issues via social media when the pandemic struck ([Melody et al., 2022](#)). In Australia and New Zealand these platforms were used to inform adolescents about their health and well-being, as well as dietary plans, during the COVID-19 pandemic ([Goodyear et al., 2019](#)). Similarly, parents used social media platforms to gain information about physical activities, diet plans, and various health related information, but it remains to be seen how this influenced the overall well-being of children and adolescents.

During the pandemic, the use of social media and other forms of entertainment increased ([Zhang et al., 2021](#)). According to [Ayyıldız & Şahin \(2022\)](#) this had a negative impact on the youth, resulting in sleep disorders, low mood, anxiety, and tiredness during the lockdown. Overuse of social media was found to contribute to a lack of motivation among young people to engage in physical activity ([Ingledeu & Markland, 2008](#); [Vuckovic et al., 2022](#)).

2.8. Government Restrictions in Aotearoa New Zealand

In response to the initial wave of COVID-19, the government implemented a nationwide lockdown in mid-March 2020 beginning with a strict stay-at home order, and the closing of all non-essential businesses and services ([New Zealand Government, 2020](#)). Auckland, as New Zealand's highest economic and cultural hub, experienced unique challenges in managing the pandemic closures. This is because it has the largest population of people and therefore the greatest chance of subsequent community transmission. Therefore, Auckland was subjected to tougher regulations. The authorities implemented an alert level system with Alert Level 1 being the low-risk and Alert Level 4 as the high-

risk indicator. The other regions of the country frequently moved between these indicators based on the prevalence of total numbers of new cases (Ministry of Health, 2020b). These changes resulted in varying degrees of social isolation, restrictions on public gathering, mandatory mask-wearing and vaccination pop-up centres. The implementation of lockdown and limitations in Auckland highlight the government's commitment to protecting public health while adapting to the evolving nature of the pandemic crisis (Godber & Atkins, 2021).

In Aotearoa New Zealand, people were to stay within their 'household bubbles'² which restricted any possible movement between family members initially (Godber & Atkins, 2023). Parks, council facilities, sports clubs, schools, churches and congregational facility-alike were all closed, thus discontinuing all sports and active recreational activities at the same time. With the inflow of COVID-19 updates, alternative 'bubble' movements were introduced slowly and cautiously, allowing a one-person per household supermarket visitor to execute out-of-home movements such as grocery shopping or medicine pick-ups for example. Timely 'bubble' restrictions were reviewed and changed according to alert Levels and later an alert traffic lights system of green, amber and red (New Zealand Government, 2020).

The pandemic had also forced facility closures such as gyms, pools, and other sports facilities in Aotearoa New Zealand and indeed around the world, making it difficult for young people to stay active and train properly (Theis et al., 2021). In some countries, including Aotearoa New Zealand, schools closed completely and consequently, children and youth had little or no opportunity to take part in organised sport or active recreation (Denerel et al., 2021). This could generate if not exacerbate, a variety of health problems which could lead to obesity, cardio-vascular issues and other health risks (Arantes de Araújo et al., 2021; Raimondi et al., 2022).

As part of the national vaccination campaign, the government of New Zealand actively promoted and strongly encouraged the public to receive COVID-19 vaccinations, using the slogan 'Unite Against COVID-19'. As part of its efforts to achieve high vaccination rates and combat the spread of COVID-19, the New Zealand government not only promoted vaccination but also mandated it. Consequently, employers were required to terminate or lay off workers who refused vaccination, aiming to improve public health outcomes and reduce workplace and community transmission risks (Ministry of Health, 2020a).

² A symbolic representation of the restriction of interactions between distinct household units that are not allowed to interact with other household groups.

In Aotearoa New Zealand when restrictions eased, non-vaccinated athletes over the age of 12 could not participate in organised sports as they would pose a risk to the health and safety of other athletes, staff, and spectators. Additionally, non-vaccinated athletes would also put themselves at risk of contracting COVID-19 which would negatively impact their physical activity opportunities (Denerel et al., 2021; K. E. Wilson et al., 2021). Young people were becoming less motivated and less engaged because of pandemic lockdowns (Keles et al., 2020). The imposed lockdown levels and the alert traffic light systems had consequently affected youth's motivation and interest in continuing their physical activities.

Moreover, Aotearoa New Zealand attracted international attention for its effectiveness in addressing and limiting the virus during the pandemic. Swift and decisive action, along with strong emphasis on the community cooperation and compliance, aided the country's effectiveness in preventing the spread of COVID-19 pandemic. In other words, these government actions demonstrated the value of the flexibility, adaptability, and teamwork when navigating the complex environment of a worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. On the contrary, these emergency responses sparked concerns about the balance between public health and economic stability, in addition to possible long-term effects on individuals and businesses (Ministry of Health, 2020a).

During the 'new norms' of the pandemic, youth sport participation remained uncertain as parents weighed-up the risks and benefits of their children's safety, when participating in sports activities during COVID-19 (Enari & Fa'aea, 2020; Lupton, 2020). Parents' fears included new health problems and unknown short- and long-term effects of the virus on their children's health (Arantes de Araújo et al., 2021; Post et al., 2022). Moreover, financial pressures due to job losses and ill-health of family members created a mounting burden on parents' ability to continue supporting their children in sporting and active recreation activities (Suarez-Lopez et al., 2021). This, on top of a national trend within the last decade, has shown there to be a noticeable drop in participation in sports and active recreation for all youth (Eime et al., 2019).

Various government and non-government sports organisations had attempted to reach out to youth via social media about staying safe and active during the COVID-19 pandemic (Hayes, 2022). This contributed to the excessive use of social media by youth during the pandemic (Hamilton et al., 2020). However, this use can have negative consequences in the form of sedentary behaviour, lack of sleep, anxiety and depression, and so on (Woods & Scott, 2016).

Aspects such as geographical, geopolitical, globalization, morality and compliancy add to increasing challenges in youth sports today. Policies and decisions on the future of sport are known to be influenced by varying degrees of government involvement (Bergsgard & Norberg, 2010). In addition, sport is

dependent on the government's view of the wellbeing state of the population, therefore sports policies will reflect the backing given to each sport (Edwards & Rowe, 2019). It is essential to therefore understand, how the New Zealand government's response to its citizens' COVID-19 recovery is reflected in how youth sport was supported through national, regional and local sporting organisations.

2.9. Youth Participation in Sport and Schooling during the Pandemic

During the pandemic period globally, the youth age group was heavily affected by lockdown disruptions and access restrictions to schools, leisure centres, sports fields, and facilities (Anne et al., 2022). Concerns were raised about the mental health of the adolescent population during and since the outbreak of the pandemic (Marques de Miranda et al., 2020; S. Singh et al., 2020). In addition, the over use of digital technologies that were highly adopted by young people during pandemic physical distancing have yet to be determined (Darling-Aduana et al., 2022; Orben et al., 2020; Parker et al., 2021). Worldwide, during this pandemic period, inactive and restricted times resulted in physical and mental challenges for the youth population (Allender et al., 2006; Spanier et al., 2006). Their accessibility to services was limited and they were informed mostly through family and friends' circles (Jun et al., 2021). These long-term lockdowns were predicted to bring a variety of causal effects on youth wellbeing (Laurier et al., 2021). Depressive symptoms were discovered among the youth in Hungary during the pandemic due to the lack of social interaction and physical activity during COVID-19 pandemic (Harangi-Rákos et al., 2022). As older adolescents were in a crucial phase of their learning and development journey, they experienced heightened pressure during the pandemic, necessitating increased interactions with their peers (Magson et al., 2021).

In schooling, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the switch from face-to-face instruction to online learning was better for students. In United States of America an increasing number of students were utilising the time they have available for their other activities, such as physical activities. In assessing the effects of higher attachment security on adolescent behaviour, researchers found that those who were more secure with their parents than peers had fewer symptoms of total distress (Balayar & Langlais, 2022). In some cases, parents' emotional and psychological availability to their teens may have been inadequate, resulting in a negatively affected relationship between parent and teen (Andriyani et al., 2021). To alleviate this, Hamilton et al., (2020) suggest information about the pandemic could be disseminated through mass media, stating the understanding of gender differences in COVID-19 pandemic effects on adolescent health and education, could help inform adolescent protection programmes.

During the peak of the COVID-19 outbreak, teenagers in China were thrown off their daily schedules because they were not able to take part in many of their favourite activities, such as sporting, artistic, and cultural hobbies (Hu et al., 2021). This was a similar case too in Aotearoa New Zealand. A month after the COVID-19 pandemic health crisis started, researchers in Canada found that kids and teenagers & participation in outdoor activities and physical activity had significantly decreased from the period prior to the pandemic (Canello et al., 2020). In America, family time was more sedentary during COVID-19, and according to parents there were fewer physical activities due to lockdowns than before the pandemic (Genevieve et al., 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on youth sport and active recreation in Aotearoa New Zealand (Sport New Zealand, 2023). The virus forced the cancellation or postponement of many domestic and international sporting events, including the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games (Heal et al., 2021). This caused a huge disappointment for many young athletes who had been training hard for years to compete at these prestigious events (Win et al., 2021). Another key thing to emphasise is that schools are the ideal setting for adolescents to participate in sports and physical activity, but during COVID-19 lockdown, because of the student proximity within schools, youth physical activity was drastically reduced (Malizia et al., 2021). During that time, many sports complexes and facilities were closed or had limited access, making it difficult for educational institutions to maintain strong physical and mental health support for their students (Timpka, 2020). Consequently, a new trend of delivering health and wellbeing courses online, emerged (Rumsey et al., 2021; Theurel et al., 2022).

2.9.1. Parental Influences

Different factors contribute to motivating youth to do physical activity. Some of these reasons include the availability of physical activity facilities and equipment, support from others such as family, friends, coaches and teachers, and most importantly, self-determination and enjoyment (Balayar & Langlais, 2022). There are other factors that contributed to sedentary behaviour specifically during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as school demands for online learning and the greater availability of internet access and devices such as mobile phones and laptops (Maria et al., 2022). In addition to school work there were few options for leisure and physical activities during COVID-19 lockdowns, resulting in adolescents being influenced by their parents and peers to engage in more screen-based sedentary behaviour (Ng et al., 2021).

Other research In Germany and Australia also found that some of the families used online classes or videos for their recreational activities (Fuzeki et al., 2021; Parker et al., 2021), such as specific sport skill training, fitness training, cooking/baking tutorials, e-games and more. Dwyer et al. (2020) and Fatemeh and Claus-Christian (2022) found that during a pandemic, parents could play a critical role in encouraging adolescent physical activity and reducing sedentary behaviour.

As a result of limited physical activity during lockdowns, [Jamile et al. \(2021\)](#) found that the influence of parents may be relevant when implementing programmes and policies aimed at increasing the physical activity and wellbeing of teenagers in post pandemic times, something my study is also interested in discovering.

2.10. Digital Technology

An Australian research found that youth spending time doing their educational work on screens such as laptops and smartphones, also used the screens for recreational purposes because they were unable to go outside due to pandemic restrictions ([Hamilton et al., 2020](#)). During the epidemic, children's daily electronic device usage increased significantly. However, the time they spent on non-sport activities also changed. For instance in Italy, those who were quarantined during the pandemic were more likely to spend more than three hours a week on non-sports activities, while those who were not affected by the outbreak were more likely to spend less than that amount ([Fari et al., 2021](#)). This could lead to an increase in sedentary behaviour among young people. Sedentary behaviour has been linked to a variety of health risks in young adults, including obesity, hypertension, and depression ([Spanier et al., 2006](#)).

The digital divide and other factors can lead to children missing significant learning time. Their families are also more likely to experience various stressors, such as health-care loss, job loss, childcare shortages, and the lack of paid sick leave. These factors make it difficult for them to attend to the needs of their home-schooled children during the pandemic ([Riwai-Couch et al., 2020](#)). Despite the lack of definitive answers regarding the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on children's academic performance and needs, existing research can be utilised to assess the potential consequences of this issue on educational outcomes. This includes examining the effects of the crisis on the learning experiences of disadvantaged groups, as well as the news reports about how education was produced during the crisis ([García & Weiss, 2020](#)).

2.11. Impact on Wellbeing

During the initial weeks of the global COVID-19 pandemic, physical activity helped reduce psychological discomfort ([Sfendla & Hadrya, 2020](#)). However, little is known how this activity affected the effects of stress on an individual's self-reported behaviour ([de Abreu et al., 2022](#)). Between March and July 2020, Canada-based researchers conducted a study to examine the link between stress and changes in people's physical activities ([DeYoung & Li, 2022](#)). Individuals who maintained their activity levels during the pandemic experienced a reduction in their stress levels ([Wolf et al., 2021](#)). Although research was not able to establish a direct link between these variables and the epidemic; research findings support previous research that suggests that regular physical activity can reduce stress

(Fateme & Claus-Christian, 2022; Ren et al., 2021; Wolf et al., 2021). Other research indicates that physical activity levels among adolescents were already very low prior to the pandemic (Pearson et al., 2014). A survey report analysing the repercussions of COVID-19 pandemic on adults' involvement displayed a decline in physical activity engagement rate, which was highlighted by its key findings. Furthermore, the participation among adults did not recover to its pre-COVID19 participation level. This was expected for Aotearoa New Zealand and as a result, it has become a challenge for various institutions to develop a COVID-19 recovery plan both for adults and youth to promote and engage in physical and other leisure activities to alleviate stress, anxiety, and depression caused by the pandemic (Subramanyam & Kinderknecht, 2021).

A study in the United Kingdom found that the reduction in stress levels following the pandemic was slower among those youth who remained inactive (Laura et al., 2021). Those who became less active during the pandemic also experienced a lower stress reduction. According to Ren et al. (2021), youth aged 12-17, as well as female youth, were less physically active than older youth during the pandemic. Apart from the reduction in physical activity during the COVID-19 lockdown, there were other factors that contributed to an increase in stress levels, such as self-isolation, fear of death due to the virus, closure of public facilities, and so on (Villanti et al., 2022). So, considering the cause of the increased stress amongst youth during the COVID-19 pandemic, it was no surprise that there was a decrease in physical activities. However, other factors to consider may have included the family's socio-economic situation, the availability of resources, employment and education commitments (Low & Mounts, 2022).

During COVID-19 lockdown periods, reduced physical activity and social interaction among youth can have serious future consequences such as cardiovascular disease, depression, and anxiety (John et al., 2021). Several studies, on the other hand, show that in pandemics, overuse of social media leads to less physical activity and an increase in other health issues such as mental health, sedentary behaviour, loss of sleep, and poor diet (Keles et al., 2020; Lupton, 2020; Scarmozzino & Visioli, 2020).

2.11.1. Emotional Wellbeing

Being isolated during a pandemic, individuals in Guiyang China, who lived in areas where COVID-19 cases were confirmed or suspected experienced higher levels of depression after being isolated (Chen et al., 2020). The fear of contracting COVID-19, combined with the isolation frustration leads to post-pandemic depressive symptoms (Đurđević et al., 2022). Interestingly, the link between depression and community infection was stronger in older adolescents (Nguyen et al., 2022). Being isolated during a pandemic can have detrimental effects on an individual's mental health. Levels of psychological stress during the COVID-19 pandemic can result in serious health problems like suicidal behaviour (Gracia et al., 2021). More time spent on social media and other screen-related activities can be detrimental to

young people's psychological health and can spread false information about pandemics (Anne-Linda et al., 2022; Yifan et al., 2022). During the lockdown, youth engaged in more sedentary behaviour by spending more time watching television and less time engaging in physical activity (Vandoni et al., 2021). Wen et al (2022) in China suggest the youth were also concerned about their capacity to manage their academic workload, how it would affect the upcoming school year, and their future plans as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic (Wen et al., 2022).

According to Rega et al., (2022) the older adolescent is able to better manage depressive symptoms compared to the young adolescent. Multiple studies from Germany demonstrated that young people who spent a lot of time engaging in physical activity during the pandemic experienced less depression and had better mental health (Rosel et al., 2022; Wolf et al., 2021). These researchers also found that adolescents who adhered to daily living routines had fewer depression symptoms associated with community infection.

The COVID-19 pandemic has negative effects on the mental health and well-being of college students in the United States of America as well. One study found that the prevalence of anxiety and depression among college level women was significantly higher under COVID-19 pandemic but not normal circumstances (O. W. A. Wilson et al., 2021). The data from Suarez-Lopez et al. (2021) study also showed that the reduction in physical activities was associated with an increase in perceived stress. Numerous studies have revealed signs of depression and anxiety in youth in many countries during the pandemic (Atkins & Godber, 2023; Denerel et al., 2021; Godber & Atkins, 2023; Magson et al., 2021; O'Kane et al., 2021); something this research project has also uncovered and will be explored further in the discussion chapter.

While there is little evidence on the causal relationship between sports participation and an increased risk of viral infection (Sasser et al., 2022), experts argued that decrease in physical activities will result in worsened anxiety and depressive symptoms, particularly in low socio-economic areas which are already plagued by COVID-19 morbidity and mortality (Golberstein et al., 2020). Prior to the pandemic, Biddle et al., (2019) stated that psychological health problems were already more prevalent among young adults and adolescents. Youth with special needs/disability are amongst the largest cohort experiencing numerous barriers as reported by (Shweta Singh et al., 2020). In addition, females are noted to have faced more struggles as compared to their male counterparts (Jun et al., 2021; O'Kane et al., 2021). However, some studies have found no relationship between gender and physical activity during COVID-19. Recent findings reveal that adolescent girls in COVID-19 had higher levels of psychological distress, with some reporting more severe symptoms than male youth (Jiao et al., 2020). Several studies are currently being conducted to determine why females are hit harder by the pandemic,

but these efforts have so far been insufficient to address the disparities that exist (Atkins & Godber, 2023; Bowes et al., 2021).

2.12. Ways Forward in Post Pandemic Times

In post pandemic times schools, colleges, and other sports organisations can consider new ways to promote physical activity among youth in preparation for COVID-19 pandemic recovery and beyond (O'Brien et al., 2020). Several studies have found that physical activities are the most cost-effective and scalable tool for controlling, preventing, and treating psychological disorders like depression and anxiety (Ren et al., 2021). Therefore, the disruptions to the youth's physical activities caused by COVID-19 lockdown (Ren et al., 2021; Woodford & Bussey, 2021) may be mitigated through maintaining a consistent routine and engaging in regular physical activities (Li et al., 2022; Wolf et al., 2021).

Several studies suggest it is important to maintain a healthy lifestyle and practice regular physical activity throughout the quarantine period (Dwyer et al., 2020; Goodyear, et al., 2019). It is important to note that, despite the COVID-19 pandemic challenges, there were also positive outcomes. As a result of the lockdowns, outdoor activities increased, with many people embracing walking as an exercise and relaxation (DEMIREL et al., 2021). During the same period, the pandemic accelerated the adoption of online programs, which became a catalyst for virtual learning, remote work, and digital engagement (Hergüner et al., 2021). Sport have seen a noticeable shift to virtual and digital engagement. Sports have seen a noticeable shift to virtual and digital modes of engagement, fostering innovative approaches to spectatorship and athlete participation. The changes not only demonstrated adaptability, but also hinted at a future in which technology plays a greater role in numerous aspects of life, education, and recreation (Sowier-Kasprzyk & Widawska-Stanisz, 2020).

2.13. Pacific Worldview

The Pacific worldview is a conceptual framework that encompasses the collective beliefs, values, and perceptions held by the diverse cultures and communities within the Pacific region (Taumoefolau, 2013). Based on historical, geographic, and cultural contexts unique to the Pacific, this perspective shapes how individuals and societies understand the natural world, their communities, and the world at large. Within the capacity of this research project, the scholarly examination of the Pacific worldview serves to enhance a deeper understanding of the complex relationship between the culture, environment, and human experience.

At the heart of Pacific worldview lies a complex interplay between humans and their environment. The geographical seclusion of the Pacific region, defined by expanses of ocean and a variety of island

landscapes, has shaped how Pacific cultures interact with the natural world (Johnson, 2019). A comprehensive appreciation of the interconnectedness between ecology, sustainability, stewardship, and reciprocity towards land and sea is essential from a Pasifika worldview.

Moreover, the Pacific worldview frequently emphasises a deep link to ancestral heritage and the oral conveyance of wisdom (Lakisa, 2020; Vaoleti, 2006). Through rituals, stories, songs, and visual arts, cultural wisdom is transmitted from generation to generation. It is evident from this tradition that there is an emphasis on the importance of community cohesion, as well as the fluid exchange of information between the past, present, and future (Naufahu, 2018).

Social interactions and relationships represent another essential facet of the Pacific worldview. A sense of mutual reliance that is nurtured by community unity, kinship connections, and collective obligations is fostered (Enari, 2021b). The maritime history and navigational prowess of the Pacific people's (Campbell, 1989; D'Arcy, 2017; Hilder, 1965) have additionally played a role in shaping a worldview that recognises cooperation as indispensable for survival and advancement, even across considerable distances.

Language plays a pivotal role in shaping the Pacific worldview. Indigenous languages encapsulate distinct philosophies and perspective, frequently intertwined with the environment, social frameworks, and spirituality (Vaoleti, 2006). These languages serve as reservoirs of cultural wisdom, facilitating a nuanced articulation of the intricacies inherent to the worldview (Enari, 2021a).

Spirituality and cosmology also constitute crucial elements within the framework of the Pacific worldview (Enari & Lemusuifeauaali'i, 2021). Historically, the natural environment is closely interwoven with ancient beliefs and mythologies, as well as spiritual practices (Gordon et al., 2013b). An understanding of existence that transcends the material realm is reflected in the land, the sea, and the celestial entities.

While establishing the methodological framework for my study, I found valuable support from the Pacific Research guidelines and protocols (Pacific Research & Policy Centre, 2017). Therefore, my research was significantly influenced by these guidelines. Accordingly, I ensured that the cultural practices and values of Pasifika peoples are upheld and respected. I was able to approach this study with compassion and respect, generating a greater awareness of the cultural setting and its distinct viewpoints. Guided by the Pacific Research Framework (Matapo & Enari, 2021) and my prior affiliation with Pasifika peoples has enabled an amplification of these perspectives. My familiarity and rapport with diverse Pasifika communities has thereby increased this study's credibility and contribution to the larger body of knowledge therein.

2.14. Talanoa

Adopting a Talanoa approach was instrumental in this study as it aligns with a familiar communication mode of the target research group, that is, Pasifika youth and their families. Emerging from an oral tradition, the established concept of Talanoa is well-regarded in numerous island nations spanning the Pacific, encompassing Tonga, Niue, Hawai'i, the Cook Islands, Solomon Islands, Fiji, and Samoa (Prescott, 2008). Therefore, understanding the nuances of Talanoa is crucial when exploring and engaging with Pasifika communities. Talanoa is a highly regarded form of multi-faceted and multi-layered critical discussions and free or unencumbered conversations (Vaioleti, 2006). It is a traditional form of communication and knowledge-sharing which involves open and respectful dialogues (Enari, 2020; Enari & Fa'aea, 2020; Enari & Matapo, 2020). Talanoa is often used to build relationships, resolve conflicts, and transmit cultural values and knowledge from one generation to another. While Talanoa is also commonly used in social conversations, the context may connect and lead onto critical discussions which at times lead to decision-making (Matapo & Enari, 2021; Vaioleti, 2006). The cultural and social significance of Talanoa was a fundamental part of this research project, which focused on youth from Pacific ethnicities in Aotearoa New Zealand. This is particularly relevant when examining the context from an academic standpoint.

Talanoa can differ in formality and seriousness depending on the context and purpose, and this should be carefully acknowledged and respected. According to Fa'aea & Enari (2021), Talanoa is a time-honoured tradition for fostering understanding, relationship- and consensus-building, and maintaining social cohesion. It is a flexible and adaptable form of communication that can take on different levels of frankness (Matapo & Enari, 2021). It may range from informal and relaxed dialogues among friends or family, to formal and structured discussions in professional settings. The setting and the participants involved influence the tone and signification of Talanoa. Talanoa among friends on a bus may involve light-hearted banter, while Talanoa among politicians at the office may centre around complex policy discussions. The communication style typically associated with Talanoa is characterised by active listening, empathy, and an emphasis on building rapport and making connections (Otunuku, 2011). Talanoa is therefore a recognised methodological approach that is appropriate for this study (Farrelly & Nabobo-Baba, 2014).

Talanoa is aligned with Pasifika education research guidelines and Ethical Research Principles listed by the Pacific Health Council. Respect, cultural competency, meaningful engagement and reciprocity are all core principle of Talanoa (Health Research Council New Zealand, 2014). Authors such as (Otunuku, 2011; Stewart-Withers et al., 2017) have argued that 'Talanoa' is a culturally appropriate approach for qualitative research when working with Pasifika people or Pasifika issues. The approach Talanoa takes enables the unlocking of integrity and open-honest dialogues around the psychosocial, emotional and cultural complexities of Pasifika participants. Teachers in training and those in the

education field have always been strongly encouraged to utilise and implement resources which are culturally appropriate to students of Pasifika ethnic backgrounds (Matapo & Baice, 2020). Moreover, culturally-appropriate and inclusive pedagogy continues to feature predominantly in New Zealand educational settings (Garbett et al., 2018), hence the inclusion of this method in this study. Research conducted using a Talanoa approach is therefore more likely to be culturally competent and respectful, as it cultivates a deeper understanding of the needs of a community (Vaioleti, 2006).

Gordon et al. (2013b) suggest that in Pacific communities, sport means family and it is noted that conceptualisations of sport differed greatly to those of traditional viewpoints. Pasifika families are religious-orientated and therefore mostly interact in church organised gatherings and/or activities. Therefore, using a church venue, that is a church hall or meeting room for Talanoa to investigate Pasifika youth and sport participation, may be appropriate. The family home was also a considered a venue in this study of youth athletes' experiences, as it is often a place for Talanoa.

2.15. Va Concept

The cultural origins and significance of the term 'le va' finds its roots in the fa'asamoa or the Samoan worldview where relationships are highly valued. 'Le va' can be loosely translated as 'the space' (Enari & Matapo, 2021a; Fa'aea & Enari, 2021), and the concept of 'va' is the relational space between individuals or entities (Anae, 2016; Enari & Lemusuifeauaali'i, 2021). 'Le va' is central in shaping the dynamics of relationships and interactions among individuals and groups in Pacific cultures. This is obligatory for the researcher to comprehend the concept of 'va' in this study, as during the Talanoa sessions, the three different parties are sharing the space.

To that end, the 'va' concept acknowledges that relationship exists in multiple dimensions, including a state of physical, social, cultural, and spiritual interconnectedness and interdependence. Physically, 'le va' refer to the literal space between individuals or groups, which can be based on the context of the relationship (Enari & Matapo, 2021b). Socially, 'le va' dictates appropriate behaviours and communication styles, ensuring that interactions remain respectful and considerate. Culturally, 'le va' shapes acceptable social Pasifika norms, cultural values, and interactions (Edwards & Krishnan, 2016; Surtees et al., 2021). It reflects the communal nature of the cross-cultural understanding, emphasising harmony balance, humility, and respect in cultural relationships. Furthermore, in the spiritual realm, 'le va' signifies the interconnectedness of all souls and the belief that all beings share a common existence.

For researchers, understanding the 'va' therefore is crucial when navigating interpersonal relationships amongst Pasifika peoples (Faleolo, 2021; Smith, 2004; Tupuola, 1993). Failure to respect 'le va' can lead to discomfort, offense, or strained relationships (Anae, 2016). For instance, close proximity might

be acceptable among family members but could be inappropriate with acquaintances. In ‘va feloa’i³ (Matapo & Enari, 2021), certain dialogue topics are acceptable amongst friends but considered unacceptable around elders or parents (Lilomaiava-Doktor, 2004). Similarly, in the Samoan culture also, ‘le va’ assumes a sacred or *tapu* relationship-va-tapu’ia between a brother and sister, and understanding such valuable insights highlights the importance of cultural sensitivity (Amituanai-Toloa, 2006; Anae, 2010; Lefao, 2017). Recognising that certain matters are appropriately left unexpressed, often necessitating indirectness due to ‘teu le va’ (Anae, 2016; Baice et al., 2021) or ‘respect of space’, becomes particularly relevant when multiple interrelated relationships coexist within a shared environment. In Tongan, the same concept is known as ‘tauhi va’ meaning to take care of the socio-spatial relationships (Ka’ili, 2017). This is something I was cognisant of in my study.

Understanding ‘le va’ is also essential for maintaining balanced power dynamics in a Talanoa session (Enari & Matapo, 2021a; Fa’avae et al., 2021). The researcher can encourage Talanoa participants to be mindful of their positions and roles within the group, preventing dominance or marginalisation of voices. Creating a shared space for open and honest dialogue can be reflected also in the seating arrangement. A circular or evenly spaced seating pre-empts the fostering of trust ethically by inferring equal opportunity to speak freely as well as feeling safe in sharing the participants’ multicultural perspectives. Appreciating and nurturing the ‘va’ helps in building relationships, balancing interactions and prevent misunderstandings, something I strived to achieve in Talanoa, with my participants, in this study.

2.16. Fonofale

The Fonofale Model is a Pacific mental health and wellness framework developed by Fuimaono Karl Pulotu-Endemann in 2001 (Agnew et al., 2004). It was created within the context of the nurses’ Cultural Safety Movement (DeSouza, 2008; Papps & Ramsden, 1996; Tiatia-Seath, 2008), specifically the initiative known as ‘Reclaiming and Finding the Way Home’. The term ‘Fonofale’ itself is constructed from the Samoan words “fono” meaning to meet, and “fale”, meaning house, although it is adaptable and relevant to various Pacific cultures.

At its core, the Fonofale Model consists of three crucial components:

1. Foundation/floor: This represents the *aiga*, or family, serving as the base of the model. The foundation encompasses both nuclear and extended family structures and highlights the significance of family history and genealogy as connections to the ancestors and Pacific gods.

³ Va feloa’i – mutual respect or relational space in Samoan

2. Pou/Pillars: The four *pou*, or pillars, support the structure, symbolising physical, spiritual, mental, and other dimensions including aspects like sexuality, gender, age, and socio-economic status. These pillars are interactive and connect the family to the diverse cultures of the Pacific.
3. Roof: The thatched roof represents culture, which is dynamic and ever evolving. It encompasses cultural values and beliefs that provide shelter and protection to the *aiga*/family. Different *kainga*/matavuvale/*aiga*/families may express their culture in various ways, including traditional Pacific practices or more Western-influenced expressions. Traditionally, the roof may need repair and replacement over time hence a comparison to cultural changes that may take place throughout a lifetime.

The Fonofale Model is pertinent to this study since it was developed by a Pacific/Samoan theorist as a wellbeing framework, particularly for Pacific people (Agnew et al., 2004). This makes it a suitable lens for viewing the wellbeing of Pasifika youth athletes in my study.

It is not a static construct; it is embedded within a circle of time, environment, and context, signifying holism, and continuity. The Fonofale Model is a valuable tool for understanding and appreciating the experiences of Pasifika youth and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic. The model for Pasifika by-Pasifika (Gunther et al., 2009; Hindley et al., 2020; Suaalii-Sauni et al., 2009) provides a holistic lens through which the narrative of Pasifika participants could be understood. In other words, *Fonofale* is comparable to other indigenous health and wellness frameworks, such as the *Fa'afaletui* model (Rimoni, 2023; Tamasese et al., 2010), the Cook Islands *Tivaevae* model (Futter-Puati & Maua-Hodges, 2019), and Durie's *Te Whare Tapawha* (Durie, 1994). It emphasises the intersectionality of wellbeing dimensions, and the importance of cultural identity and context in understanding mental health and wellness of Pasifika peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand. As one of the themes from my data is wellbeing, consideration of this model will be discussed further in the Discussion Chapter.

The model champions the connections of the four *pou*/pillars, recognising that changes or challenges in one dimension can affect the others. This is particularly relevant in considering how the pandemic's effects on physical health, for example, might ripple through emotional, spiritual, and other-pillar aspects of family members. Through the Fonofale Model lens, I can explore the coping mechanisms and resilience strategies employed by Pasifika youth and their nuclear and extended *aiga*/families during COVID-19 pandemic time. This includes examining how cultural and family support contributed to their ability to adapt and navigate associated challenges.

Furthermore, considering the COVID-19 experiences through the Fonofale Model Framework can inform future policy and intervention strategies that acknowledge the multidimensional nature of Pasifika well-being. It can help identify areas where targeted support and effective interventions are

needed to strengthen the overall health and resilience of Pasifika communities, particularly in future times of crisis.

2.17. Summary

This chapter provides an overview of sport and active recreation in Aotearoa New Zealand emphasising the cultural and societal significance including patterns and trends of Pasifika youth participation. It sets the scene for the challenges and opportunities for Pasifika youth participation in sport and active recreation during the COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, the global impact of lockdown measures and subsequent changes in participation patterns, health and wellness concerns, and societal influences, was explored both in the Aotearoa New Zealand context and worldwide. These topics collectively contribute to understanding the dynamics of Pasifika youth participation in sport and active recreation in Aotearoa New Zealand, during pandemic times.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the methodology used in my study. Guided by a research question, “What is the experience of Pasifika youth athletes in sport and active recreation during the COVID-19 pandemic in Aotearoa New Zealand?”, this chapter will explain the application of a qualitative methodology using focus groups and undertaking a Talanoa approach.

Included is a description of method and processes used to obtain ethical approval, research participants, data collection and analysis, social and cultural sensitivity, and ethical considerations.

3.2. Ontological and Epistemological Perspectives

Ontological and epistemological are key underlying assumptions in research procedures (Ahmed, 2008; Kara, 2017; Morgan & Smircich, 1980). Ontology is the philosophy of what things we assume exist or the reality of the essence of being; epistemology is concerned with how we know and comprehend this existence (O’Leary, 2017; Tolich & Davidson, 2011).

Ontologically, (Goodyear et al., 2019) I am using relativism because my study explores the participants’ actual experiences as part of the research process rather than just using the participants for research. Every participant revealed their unique experience, and the research is built on their thoughts and experiences. An ongoing ontological dispute is whether reality exists independently of human awareness and experience, or if reality exists inside our consciousness and only via experiences (Crotty, 1998). A relativist ontology maintains that reality is a limited subjective experience and nothing exists outside of thoughts (Dyson et al., 2016). According to the relativists, reality is inseparable from one’s subjective perception of it (Lincoln & Guba, 2016) implying that as many diverse realities exist as there are people. Within a framework of a relativist ontology, the objective is to construe the subjective experiences of reality and multiple truths they encompass (Singh, 2019), hence this study will enable the voice of Pasifika to be heard.

The epistemological position I am applying in this study is an interpretivist approach. I intend to understand the participants perspective as they express and recount their numerous realities (Tolich & Davidson, 2011). Interpretivism is a research philosophy that weaves knowledge and meaning through a social construct (Mack, 2010; O’Leary, 2017) and these paradigms are principally used in qualitative research. According to Lather, what we believe reflects our ideas about the world we live in and how we would like to live in it (Lather, 1986). Notably, Willis (2007) defines interpretivists as anti-foundationalist, individuals who believe that there is no single correct path toward knowledge.

Individuals are diverse and complex, and various people perceive and comprehend the same objective in different ways. Aligning with the paradigm of interpretivism, the objective of this research was to bring to light a comprehensive understanding of the research participants' lives, and to develop a compassionate insight into the motivations driving their behaviours with respect to their physical activity during pandemic times. Thereupon, I utilised the Talanoa approach to facilitate conversations among Pasifika youth and their parents/legal guardians.

Given the considerations of the ontological and epistemological stances I have elucidated, my research philosophy aligns with constructivist theory. At its core, constructivism asserts that reality is not objective or a fixed entity, but rather a complex, multifaceted construction shaped by individual perceptions, experiences, and interpretations. In other words, using this constructivist way of understanding the world and conducting research (Crotty, 2020; Lincoln et al., 2011) will enable deeper understanding of the research question. In adopting a constructivist viewpoint, my role was that of a co-creator of knowledge alongside the Pasifika youth and their parents/legal guardians. The familiar Pasifika Talanoa approach was therefore the ideal approach used to explore and understand the diverse perspectives of Pasifika youth athletes and their parents/legal guardians during the COVID-19 pandemic. While the modes of Talanoa may vary based on resources and circumstances, the fundamental purpose of engaging in Talanoa remains the same, that is discovering novel methods to engage in Talanoa with family and friends via social media platforms or video calls as opposed to traditional face-to-face dialogues (Enari, 2020; Enari & Fa'aea, 2020; Enari & Matapo, 2020; Mila-Schaaf, 2010). Furthermore, constructivism fosters a deep appreciation for context and culture, recognising that individuals' interpretations are heavily influenced by their cultural and social backgrounds. I have subsequently sought to understand the meaning-making processes Pasifika youth athletes use within their unique contexts by checking in with my Pasifika Advisory Group.

3.3. Methodology

I opted for a qualitative research methodology with a Talanoa approach as the foundational framework for my study. Qualitative research is a strategy for systematic collection, organisation and interpretation of textual information (Malterud, 2001; Petty et al., 2012). Employing a qualitative methodology allows for an understanding of human behaviour (Crotty, 1998; Górlén et al., 2013; Neergaard et al., 2009). In qualitative research, there are two main approaches – deductive and inductive (Azungah, 2018). In a deductive research approach, the aim is to test theory by examining data for patterns and relationships between variables to ultimately verify the theory. An inductive approach on the other hand, is the reverse. It commences with a specific or particular observation or instance, which has the potential to give rise to patterns that may ultimately form broader concepts.

In this study an inductive approach was adopted. In doing so, I presumed Pasifika youth had made choices regarding their participation in sports and active recreation during the pandemic, potentially influenced by their need to support their families through employment. Consequently, I employed a cross-sectional mono-method data collection to explore the interactions among the research participants during the pandemic, focusing on the concept of talanoāga/interactions. By adopting the Talanoa approach, I was able to uncover cultural nuances and complexities of Pasifika youth athletes' perspectives, and behaviours during the COVID-19 pandemic in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The use of qualitative methodology is appropriate for this research because it enabled a deeper understanding of some existing themes among different Pasifika participants' feelings and perceptions (Lambert & Lambert, 2012). Also, by examining the Pasifika youths' narratives through Talanoa, I was able to clarify some underlying themes, structures, and meanings in their cultural context. While qualitative research helps researchers in investigating participants' perceptions, attitudes, impediments, and worries, it also explores difficulties (Sandelowski, 2000) such as reactivity, and overidentifying with research participants (Schonfeld & Mazzola, 2012). As previously alluded to, in adopting the Talanoa approach as a familiar and natural mode of dialogue among Pasifika research participants, concerns regarding reactivity were alleviated. My goal also was to mitigate overidentification of the research participants through the use of a reflexive journal. I triangulated advice from the Pasifika Advisory Group, own reflections from my reflexive journal and relevant literature.

3.4. Method

Focus Group

Qualitative methods can generate a comprehensive description of processes, mechanisms, or settings (Sieber & Tolich, 2012). I examined specific processes related to the implementation of national and/or regional lockdown measures and this is covered in a subsequent section on Government Restrictions in this chapter. These processes encompass the closure of schools, clubs, sports and recreational spaces. I am particularly interested in understanding how these measures had affected the sports routines and active recreation of Pasifika youth during the COVID-19 pandemic. My focus on settings included an exploration of the lived experiences of Pasifika youth athletes and their parents/legal guardians while adhering to extended lockdowns, illustrating the conditions of 'stay-at-home bubbles'⁴ during the pandemic. Of the two major classifications of qualitative research methods that is population or documents (Toloie-Eshlaghy et al., 2011), I chose the population-based classification, whereby people are the objects from where we get our data. I utilised the Talanoa approach within my focus group, which effectively captured participants' viewpoints and experiences in substantial depth.

⁴ A symbolic representation of the restriction of interactions between distinct social units that are not allowed to interact with other groups physically.

Talanoa Approach

Understanding the nuances of Talanoa is crucial when engaging with Pasifika communities. Talanoa is a highly regarded form of multi-faceted and multi-layered critical discussions and free or unencumbered conversations (Otunuku, 2011; Vaioleti, 2006). It is a traditional form of communication and knowledge-sharing which involves open and respectful dialogues (Enari, 2020; Enari & Fa'aea, 2020; Enari & Matapo, 2020; Mila-Schaaf, 2010). Talanoa holds significant cultural and social importance, particularly in the context of the Pacific diaspora, so is thus an appropriate approach for my study.

In the context of Talanoa, my role as a researcher involves utilising my understanding of cultural competencies. I have adapted the ability to demonstrate cultural sensitivity and openness as a key component in applying effective communication skills. This involves being aware of my own biases, listening with empathy, and having a culturally responsive mindset in order to build meaningful relationships with Pasifika youth athletes and their parents/legal guardians.

Moreover, Talanoa is consistent with Pasifika Education Research Guidelines and Ethical Research Principles as outlined by the Pacific Health Council May 2014. Respect, cultural competency, meaningful engagement and reciprocity are all core principles of Talanoa (Health Research Council New Zealand, 2014)

Researchers have argued that 'Talanoa' is a culturally-appropriate approach for qualitative research when working with Pasifika people or Pasifika issues (Otunuku, 2011; Stewart-Withers et al., 2017). This approach facilitates the unlocking of integrity and open-honest dialogues around psychosocial, emotional and cultural complexities of Pasifika participants (Tiatia-Seath, 2018). Teachers in training and those in the field have always been strongly encouraged to utilise and implement resources which are culturally-appropriate to students of Pasifika ethnic backgrounds (Ministry of Education, 2020a, 2020b). Moreover, culturally-appropriate and inclusive pedagogy continues to feature predominantly in New Zealand educational settings (Allen et al., 2009; Garbett et al., 2018). Research conducted using a Talanoa approach is therefore more likely to be culturally competent and respectful as it cultivates a deeper understanding of the community's needs (Tupuola, 1993; Vaioleti, 2006). Talanoa, is therefore a recognised methodological approach that is appropriate for this study (Farrelly & Nabobo-Baba, 2014).

3.5. Research Guidelines and Protocols

As a non-Pasifika researcher, I needed to be familiar with the principles of a Pacific worldview. I was mindful that Talanoa serves as a powerful conduit for knowledge exchange, cultural heritage transmission, and the sharing of experiential wisdom. I was fully aware of the significance of this traditional form of communication, as it enables participants to convey valuable insights and associated culturally rich information. Respecting the role of Talanoa in this way may lead to rapport and authentic connections with the Pasifika athletes and their parents/legal guardians. Leaving shoes at the front door, understanding seating allocation, and how to sit, were some of examples of respectful protocols. With guidance provided by this project's Pasifika Advisory Group, I remembered to be mindful of these.

Given this cultural awareness, I placed great emphasis on the principles of respect and reciprocity during Talanoa. I recognised the significance of adhering to the cultural protocols and approaching Talanoa with humility, acknowledging the expertise and wisdom that Pasifika participants bring to the conversation.

3.6. Research Design

This qualitative research project employed a distinct Pasifika-way with the primary objective of obtaining authentic details of Pasifika youth participants' lived experiences. Using the Talanoa approach allows for genuine collection of qualitative data through family orientated in-depth Talanoa. The participants were youth athletes, aged 13 to 19 years, and parents/legal guardians of Pasifika background. Participants had been involved in sport or active recreation during the period immediately before New Zealand's first Covid-19 lockdown in March 2020.

3.6.1 Ethical Approval

The study has been approved by Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 15 September 2021 AUTEC No: 21/268 (**Appendix J**). Key elements of my approach to engage in ethically sound research were careful implementation of separate and straightforward Assent Forms and Information Sheets for the youth athletes/participants.

3.6.2 Procedure and Sampling

The Otago Health Trust, a charitable organisation dedicated to providing health-related services such as education, social, and community services, offered assistance by circulating the participant invitation for this research project.

From my initial communication with Otago Health Trust (**Appendix-B**), approval was gained to place advertisements on their website, social media and their physical premises. Participants who expressed their interest in being part of the research project then contacted me directly. These expressions of

interest needed to from those who met the eligibility criteria, then further consideration was given to the targeted participant numbers using the Pacific Peoples population demographic in Aotearoa New Zealand. This was an attempt to capture voices deemed representative of Pacific nations diaspora (**Appendix-E**). Accordingly, selected participants were sent the Information Sheet and consent and/or assent form(s). I did not need further communication with the Otago Health Trust as participant numbers were sufficient and I had received an overwhelming participant response.

The goal was to have up to six youth-athlete family Talanoa groups in this research study. I conducted one Talanoa per family (i.e. athletes together with their parents/legal guardians). The seventh Talanoa was for youth athletes only. Each Talanoa was facilitated face-to-face at a venue selected by the participants. Venues were either the participant's home, a local school, church hall or at an AUT meeting facility. Most Pasifika families are religious-orientated and therefore mostly interact in church organised gatherings and/or activities ([Gordon et al., 2013a](#)). Therefore, using a church venue (i.e. church hall or meeting room) for a Pasifika youth and sport participation Talanoa was an appropriate inclusion.

A provision was also noted in the Ethical Approval application (**Appendix EA1**). This stated that, should a COVID-19 lockdown restriction occur during the data collection period, options for online Talanoa mode such as zoom meeting, could be the participant's family preference during a Level 3 lockdown restriction in the Auckland region.

For the Talanoa with each family, a text or phone call reminder was made a week ahead of time. Each Talanoa session started with a prayer, then a sharing of food ([Dai et al., 2021](#)) during which Talanoa takes place. We then discussed participant experiences of sport and active recreation participation during the COVID-19 pandemic times. Each Talanoa was guided by indicative questions (**Appendix C**) and some semi-structured focus group questions. Adapting the open-talking style created a relaxing atmosphere where all participants contributed freely and honestly.

The Talanoa content was predominantly guided by the participant and his/her parents/legal guardians with allowable 'detours'. However, I attempted to prompt minimally to allow 'natural' Talanoa flow. This was regulated by participants themselves which led to rich data that I may not have had previous knowledge or understanding of.

With the permission of the participants, varied forms of digital tools such as cell phone audio, laptop audio recording, or digital voice recorder were used to capture the Talanoa conversations. Every Talanoa was in the participant's language of preference which was English. Arrangements for an interpreter was not required as noted in the Ethical Application.

In addition, for cultural and social safety as per AUT's Ethics Committee's recommendations for researcher security and wellbeing, Elisapeta Leitu, was selected as the immediate contact person, should I need it.

3.6.3 Participants and Recruitment

This research project was initiated during the challenging backdrop of a pandemic in Aotearoa New Zealand. As noted, the Otago Health Trust sent an initial invitational email on my behalf (**Appendix B**). Upon receiving a response from interested participants, selection was then based on the following criteria:

A. For athlete

i) Pasifika descent and, ii) between 13 – 19 years old and, iii) regularly participated in sports and active recreation leading up to the COVID-19 lockdowns.

B. For Parents/legal guardians

i) Parents/legal guardians of athlete and, ii) Agreed to being participants of the research.

While participants were considered on this basis, focus group numbers per Pacific ethnicity was guided by the latest Ministry of Health Pasifika community population percentage (**Appendix E**). Additionally, prior to confirming their participation I offered each participant ample time and opportunity to ask any further questions to clarify the project or any areas of uncertainties. Convenient times were then scheduled at the participants' preferred venue/location for the Talanoa sessions.

In the interest of inclusivity and equal representation, I endeavoured to include as much of the cross-section of age, gender, sexual orientation, and Pacific ethnic representation as possible.

3.6.4 Social and Cultural Sensitivity

In addition to my methodological choices, my social and cultural awareness illuminates the way to an ethical, respectful, and reciprocal rapport with the Pasifika research participants. I learned about Pacific values such as collectiveness, respect and service from voluntary community involvements in the South Auckland area over the past seven years. Pasifika-family engagements and my indigenous Indian family background and upbringing share a lot of commonalities with Pacific world-views.

3.6.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations for the current study relate to the suitability and rigour of research questions, any issues relating to research on Pasifika youth athletes, and ensuring Te Tiriti o Waitangi is honoured. The ethical codes inherent in my study are: do no harm; all participation needs to be voluntary; preserve the anonymity or confidentiality of participants; avoid deceit and lastly, analyse and report data faithfully (Davidson, 2003).

3.6.5a. Do No Harm

The research participants did not refer to or infer any negative impacts from the research project. Given their age, the adolescents were fully aware of what the study included. The ethics application I completed cited potential concerns linked with the relationship between mental issues in youth and their body image. I also had organised a counselling service (with parental consent) if needed. However, it appeared that all of the participants were at ease discussing such concerns, even if they were not addressed publicly. Participants had the option of withdrawing at any time throughout the Talanoa, however, this did not occur.

3.6.5b. Voluntary Participation

All research participants were informed that participation was entirely voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time without explanation. Participants were informed that they could refuse to answer any question, and would still be treated with dignity regardless.

3.6.5c. Informed Assent and Consent

All participants were given the Participant Information Sheet (**Appendix F**) as this provided detailed information about the research study. They were also encouraged to ask questions about the research. Participants were required to complete and sign applicable assent/consent forms (**Appendices G**) before becoming part of the study. For Under 16 athlete participants, parental or legal guardians' consent were taken prior to their Talanoa.

3.6.5d. Treaty of Waitangi

Regarding Te Tiriti o Waitangi considerations in my research, I needed to be mindful of its principles of partnership, protection, and participation. During the research study, it was essential to recognise these principles and their relevance to Pasifika youth athletes' sports and active recreation experience during a global COVID-19 pandemic. This includes acknowledging indigenous perspectives and aspirations in this study. Additionally, I needed to consider Te Tiriti's implications for social justice and equity in sports and active recreation for Pasifika youth.

3.6.5e. Rigour

This research project was carried out with utmost probity. Throughout my research, I maintained rigour by constantly revisiting my approved ethics application. I adhered to professional and ethical standards. I regularly updated my supervisory team and Pasifika Advisory Group in a timely manner. The absence of deceit in this study emphasises the honesty, validity and integrity of this research. Research integrity and ethical behaviour underpinned each stage of this study, establishing its credibility.

3.7. Talanoa Procedure

All seven Talanoa sessions were recorded using digital voice recording devices. After the initial meet, greet, and handing over a cake, the participants, their parents and I shared a cup of tea/coffee. As part of establishing rapport, each session usually started with a prayer. When I sensed that the athlete and their parents/legal guardians were relaxed and seemed ready, I sought permission to start. I reintroduced myself and the purpose of my visit, which included the research objectives and thanked them for their consent and assent to participate. I also provided a hard copy of the research information sheet for all participants to glance over. In addition, I reminded participants about their voluntary participation and their rights to withdraw any time.

Despite the fact that I had prepared the guided questions for the Talanoa, the actual flow of the Talanoa was influenced by the interest and experience of the participants. The Talanoa discussions were always lively and characterized by active participation from all participants. Due to the availability of the athletes and their parents/legal guardians, about half of the sessions with athletes & parents/legal guardians, occurred before the athletes-only Talanoa, and the remainder after. Unfortunately, one of the athletes & parents/legal guardians Talanoa was delayed due to the passing of a close family member at the time. Also, the implementation of the Ministry of Health's lockdown levels, and the traffic light system enforced by the Government delayed some Talanoa.

The athletes-only Talanoa was hosted at the Student Centre at AUT South Campus in Manukau, South Auckland. The venue location was central to all athletes as well as an open opportunity for athletes and their parents/legal guardians to visit, and explore the campus in a non-threatening atmosphere. I received assistance from a couple of family members who helped me in setting up some vegetarian dishes and I had the barbecue going. Ahead of the athletes-only Talanoa, I combined the dietary survey results submitted by athletes. I utilised my knowledge and previous experience in athlete diet to formulate a menu for the day. The participants were also given information about onsite parking and a general overview of what AUT offers at its South Campus in Manukau. Both athletes and their parents/legal guardians expressed their appreciation for it was a chance to view the AUT South Campus infrastructure, and study options that are available in their local area. Additionally, dialogues around academic courses and prospects of taking up further studies were amidst the meet and greeting, prior to the Talanoa. Once the athletes-only Talanoa started, one of my research supervisors, Dr. Denise Atkins, took the parents/legal guardians aside, and led them on a campus tour.

3.7.1 *Va*

In consideration of the 'va' as a socio-cultural concept that is embedded in Pacific Island customs and way of life, I wanted to provide the Pasifika-authentic space for athlete agency (Nieminen et al., 2022; Vaughn, 2020). My understanding of the 'va' or 'le va', translated as 'the space between' or 'the

relational space' between individuals, and communities, and their environment prompted a decision to have two categories for the Talanoa Focus Group set-ups:

- Athlete and Parents/Legal guardians Talanoa where the inclusion of parents and legal guardians in one focus group were adeptly structured to include both, fostering a holistic understanding of the athlete's journey.
- Athletes only Talanoa which composed solely of the Pasifika youth athletes to provide a peer relational-space for their narratives to flourish.

Due to the 'va' between Pasifika youth athletes and their parents/legal guardians, the dual focus group strategy was set up to capture any differing perspectives which the Pasifika youth athletes may not easily mention in the presence of their parents. Subsequently, at the Talanoa with athletes-only, they were more responsive and were a bit more vocal than during their athlete & parents/legal guardians Talanoa. The details of the research participants are set out in Table 1a below:

Table 1a. Talanoa Groups

Talanoa Focus Group (TFG)	Number of Athlete(s)	Name of Athletes	Number of Parent(s)/Legal guardian(s) (P/LG)
TFG 1 Athlete and their P/LG	2	Siana & Tausala	1
TFG 2 Athlete and their P/LG	1	Rima	1
TFG 3 Athlete and their P/LG	1	Luka	2
TFG Athletes only	9	Siana, Tausala, Sikuka, Fiti, Misipati, Mere, Luka, Toni, and Junior	0
TFG 4 Athlete and their P/LG	1	Sina	2
TFG 5 Athlete and their P/LG	3	Sikuka, Fiti and Misipati	2
TFG 6 Athlete and their P/LG	1	Mere	2
TFG 7 Athlete and their P/LG	1	Toni	2
TFG 8 Athlete and their P/LG	1	Junior	2

Table 1b. Ethnicity of Talanoa Focus Group Participants

TFG	Participant	Gender	Age	Samoan	Cook Islander	Tongan	Niuean	Fijian	Tokelauan	Tuvaluan	Kiribati
TFG1	Siana	F	15		√		√		√		
	Tausala	F	13		√		√		√		
	Parent B	F					√				
TFG2	Rima	F	15	√		√					
	Parent B	F		√							
TFG3	Luka	M	16					√			
	Parent A	M						√			
	Parent B	F						√			
TFG4	Sina	F	13	√							
	Parent A	M		√							
	Parent B	F		√							
TFG5	Sikuka	M	18	√							
	Fiti	F	17	√							
	Misipati	M	15	√							
	Parent A	M		√							
	Parent B	F		√							
TFG6	Mere	F	16					√			
	Parent A	M						√			
	Parent B	F						√			
TFG7	Toni	M	16					√			
	Parent A	M						√			
	Parent B	F						√			
TFG8	Junior	M	14	√	√	√				√	
	Parent A	M			√	√					
	Parent B	F		√						√	

The actual Talanoa discussion transpired over a duration of 60 to 90 minutes. Although a specific timeframe for the Talanoa session was not prescribed, I endeavoured to conclude each Talanoa within 60 to 90 minutes.

3.7.2 Kai and Koha

When I was arranging the Talanoa for each athlete participant and their family, a homemade cake was prepared by my aiga/family for me to take. This was part of the Pasifika cultural understanding that when we visit another home, we did not turn up ‘empty-handed’. While taking a cake to share, and a prearranged gift voucher were not an expectation, I felt it was my moral responsibility in respect of the participants’ voluntary time, and their hospitable approach, for unknown outsider like me, to enter into their space.

3.7.3 Self-Reflective Journal

I kept a reflective journal as an integral personal record-keeping tool. This provided me with a space for introspection, self-improvement, methodological refinement, and critical thinking (Ortlipp, 2008). It served as a dynamic repository for my evolving perspective, and promoting self-awareness and self-reflection about own biases, assumption and preconceptions (Smith, 1999).

I used my journal to track the development and adaptation of my research methodology. It allowed me to reassess the effectiveness of the method and adjust it as necessary. In the initial Talanoa session, I gained a profound insight into the significance of religion in shaping the interpretation of events. Specifically, I came to understand that my presence at that moment was seen as more than mere coincidence; it was perceived as a result of divine foresight, orchestrated by a Higher Power. For me, this perspective highlighted the pivotal role of religious belief in influencing how occurrences are understood and have attributed meaning.

My journal also provided a platform to record shifts in conceptual frameworks, ideas, and insights. Between the first two Talanoa, I came to realise the role of kinship networks which shaped family dynamics, and subsequently the Pasifika community support systems. I appreciated that employment status of parents/legal guardians played a role in the Pasifika youth experience of sports and active recreation during pandemic restrictions. Some insights led my thinking to identifying potential areas for policy and interventions that can support and enhance community well-being (Dodgson, 2019).

This documentation helped trace the development of my thinking and the evolution of my research questions. The second Talanoa session afforded me fresh perspectives on certain aspects. Notably, I came to realise that the number of children in a family influenced the level of enjoyment and interaction within their social circles. While parents with multiple children experienced varying degrees of stress, ranging from moderate to high, those with a single child had fewer concerns, focusing their attention on providing the best for their sole offspring. It was also evident that a single-child household often grappled with feelings of boredom and isolation.

At times, I used my reflective journal to cross-check my research's ethical considerations for any dilemmas, and adjusted decisions made throughout the process. After the third Talanoa, I reflected:

“I am getting the hang of how the Talanoa flows. I recalled my Pacific Specialist Supervisor – Dr David Lakisa’s advice – *be prepared to feel the flow of the Talanoa: listen more and have less distractions*. Did I ask too many questions? Did I strike a balance between curiosity, clarifying responses, and respectful engagement?”

This transparency ensured adherence to the ethical standards and principles followed.

I also wrote:

“I found myself drawn to the ethos of being uniquely Pasifika, especially their connections to ‘homeland’ as sometimes expressed in ‘back home’. What is the ‘island way’? In contemplating, Pasifika families residing outside their homeland, I observed a profound connection to the cultural heritage despite geographical distance. Families maintain strong ties to their cultural values, embodying resilience and adaptability. Their strong commitment to preserving traditions amidst a diasporic existence, experience is both inspiring and acknowledging their experiences and perspectives with sensitivity and utmost respect. As an ‘outside researcher’, this prompts me to navigate the complexities of cultural identity and belonging from their perspectives, and their perspectives only.”

From this ongoing process of reflexivity ([Etherington, 2004](#)), I made self-improvements based on Pacific worldview and insights gained from each Talanoa. Additionally, I picked up an understanding of tone and non-verbal cues during the Talanoa. According to [Combs and Freedman \(2002\)](#), the process of deconstructive listening commences with an approach to ‘not-knowing’ or being oblivious. This perspective appears to be particularly beneficial for a researcher who is not from the Pasifika community yet is exploring novel insights within the realm of Pasifika youth during a global pandemic.

3.7.4 Confidentiality and Anonymity

In this research study, no personal identifiers, such as names or address of Pasifika youth athletes and their parents/legal guardians have been disclosed. Strict measures were implemented to ensure the anonymity of all participants, to safeguard their privacy. Utmost care was taken to uphold confidentiality throughout the research process. As per the Ethics Approval application, all collated data post-analysis are stored safely securely on AUT premises.

3.7.5 Potential Conflict of Interest

This research study was carried out with complete transparency and adherence to approved ethical application guidelines. No conflict of interests were identified in this research. This reaffirms the research’s dedication to unbiased inquiry and upholding ethical standards.

3.8. Data Analysis

I used a thematic analysis process to understand the content of the data collected for this research. With thematic analysis there is no need for the prior selection of variables (Cavaye, 1996). This method allows me to systematically analyse all the data collected through Talanoa and extract meaningful themes that reflect the participants' experiences, perspectives, or attitudes. The iterative nature of thematic analysis allowed for a comprehensive exploration of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Through repeated operations, I refined and developed themes, examined relationships between data items, and identified connections among the categories used to summarize the data. This iterative process helped to ensure a thorough analysis of the substance of the collected data. Additionally, the thematic analysis informed the discussion section of my research, enabling me to address the aim and objectives of my research project. By analysing the data and identifying key themes, I created meaningful conclusions, provided interpretations, and discussed the implications of my findings in relation to my research goals. See Chapter 4 for discussion on this.

The outline of stages was helpful in the thematic analysis which ensured rigour and efficiency, following 6-stage process guideline has been used according to Braun and Clark (Terry et al., 2017).

In this thesis, I used thematic analysis as described by Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 79) as “a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data.” (Guest et al., 2011) align with (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and suggest thematic analysis is a qualitative method for generating codes from raw data. (Otunuku, 2011) highlights the importance of thematic analysis in systematically organizing and analysing data to identify relationships and summarize the substance of the data. This approach aligns with my intention to use the data to inform the discussion section of my research project, thereby addressing my research aim and objectives (Guest et al., 2011)

3.8.1 Thematic Analysis Process

The analytic process for this study was driven by Braun and Clarke (2006) six phases of thematic analysis as shown in **Table 2** to identify and describe patterns or themes within the data.

Table 2. Thematic Analysis: A Step-by-Step Guide

Phase 1	Read topic related research papers, search for keywords such as Pandemic Lockdown, Pasifika, Pasifika Youth, Pandemic, COVID-19, Sports, Active Recreation, Pasifika Community, Youth Sports Participation, Tournaments, Digital Platforms and information technology, etc. and familiarize self with in context of global, national, and Pasifika.
Phase 2	Producing codes that are relevant to the research question such as ‘Participation’, ‘Disconnectedness’, ‘Wellbeing’, ‘Digital Platform’, and ‘Lockdown’. Also search databases for journal articles using these codes.

Phase 3	In the third phase, start grouping the same themes, ideas, and trends to answer the research question.
Phase 4	Evaluate the themes
Phase 5	Defining the themes and naming themes based on the literature.
Phase 6	Write up

3.8.2. Familiarisation of Data

Braun and Clarke emphasize the importance of familiarizing oneself with the depth of the topic through concentrated and thorough reading of the materials (Braun et al., 2016). By engaging in active reading and re-reading, researchers can gain a better understanding of the precise meanings, patterns, and data present in the literature. Identifying the relevant literature and conducting a thorough study of it was indeed a crucial step in the research process. It allowed me to understand the overall scope of the data and became familiar with the existing knowledge in the field.

Databases like Business Source Complete (EBSCOhost), Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, offered extensive collections of research articles covering various disciplines, including sport and active recreation related research. I sought and retrieved peer reviewed research articles based on my research questions and keywords, ensuring my review of literature was sound. Additionally, exploring the reference lists of the articles led me to the discovery of additional relevant sources.

Studying the literature contributed significantly to the establishment of a robust analytical framework. It also helped me to become conversant with the existing research, theories, methodologies, and knowledge gaps, thereby guiding the shaping of my research inquiries and subsequent analytical phases.

Overall, my approach to utilising online library databases and investing time in reading and studying the literature was a systematic and effective way to identify relevant articles and subsequently gained a comprehensive understanding of COVID-19 related material and the field of sport and active recreation. The groundwork established by this process enabled me to move forward with my research and data analysis.

The table below displays the key terms used to identify relevant articles from online library databases:

Table 3. Keywords Used for Literature Search

Pasifika Community	Pasifika Youth and Restrictions
COVID-19 and Sports	Pandemic Challenges
Panic buying	COVID-19 and Education
Community Sports	Health and Wellbeing
Leisure and Recreation	Online Learning

Food Industry	Sports Industry
Virtual Sport System	Government's Lockdown restrictions
New Zealand COVID-19 Response	Schools / Clubs during COVID-19
Pacific Worldview	Fonofale
'Va'	Talanoa
Ministry of Education	Ministry of Pacific Peoples
NZ Statistics	Sports tournaments

The research articles were screened by reading the title and abstract of research articles based on the criteria for example (a) The research article does not talk about the Pasifika Youth (b) I applied the publication date range in the AUT library database from December 2010 to July 2020 (c) I ticked the column in the database filter for 'Only Peer Reviewed' research articles. Collectively, these processes culminated in the creation of high-quality published research articles pertaining to my research subject. By applying the method as mentioned above, nearly 400 articles were selected from different databases.

3.8.3. Generating Initial Codes

The audio recorded Talanoa were transcribed through Otter.ai software. This online platform auto-transcribes the audio recordings taken by the digital voice recorder. I proofread every transcribed Talanoa by running through the recordings, and manually corrected words and a few small phrases which were unrecognisable. I used the NVivo software to store my project data. NVivo enabled me to store files and create codes and sub-codes for my data. I was able to descriptively code based on the content of the transcriptions. These codes were applied methodically to significant data features over the whole data set, gathering raw data text that was appropriate to each code.

3.8.4. Searching for Themes

Utilising the NVivo software programme, the codes underwent an automated transformation into prospective themes, amalgamating all pertinent data. The terms that appeared often in each Talanoa transcript were collected and clustered before a general term was chosen the possible key theme. When analysing possible themes, associated words were initially identified as sub-themes. Following the guidance and discussions with my Primary Supervisor Dr. Denise Atkins, three overarching themes were decided on.

3.8.5. Review Themes

In the phase of theme development, an analysis triangulation was implemented. This included a collaborative effort between myself and my supervisors, who collectively reviewed and suggested some reshuffle. Subsequently, I cross-checked the themes and sub-themes, re-reading their references and checking the percentage coverage, looking for occurrences, similarities and differences.

3.8.6. *Define and Name Themes*

I continuously conducted cross-checks and analyses to augment the intricacies of each theme. This involved refining explicit guidelines, and titles for individual sub themes. Once the prevailing themes were established and refined, a collaborative session was held between the supervisory team and I, to finalise the themes and sub-themes.

3.8.7. *Write-Up*

The emphasis at this stage shifts from theme identification to detailed rendering. Within this stage, the thematic components are elaborated and explained methodically through an exhaustive process of synthesising and fleshing them out into the thesis structure. This process involves a thorough articulation of each theme's idiosyncrasies drawing upon the empirical facts, scholarly literature, and critical analysis to justify and strengthen their relevance within the research framework.

CHAPTER FOUR: DISCUSSION

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I summarise my interpretation of the discussion resulting from the Talanoa with athletes and their parents/legal guardians. The focus is on identifying and analysing the common themes which evolved from the Talanoa discussions among the participants in relation to my research questions and ontological stance. The Talanoa transcripts enabled me to consider relativism because my study explores the participants' actual experiences as part of the research process rather than just using the participants for research. These transcripts were used as a primary source to extract evidence and provide support for the emerging themes. The themes encompass pertinent areas that have influenced and impacted on the active participation of Pasifika youth during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Three key themes and a number of sub themes emerged from these discussions. Figure 1 below depicts hierarchy of themes and sub themes.

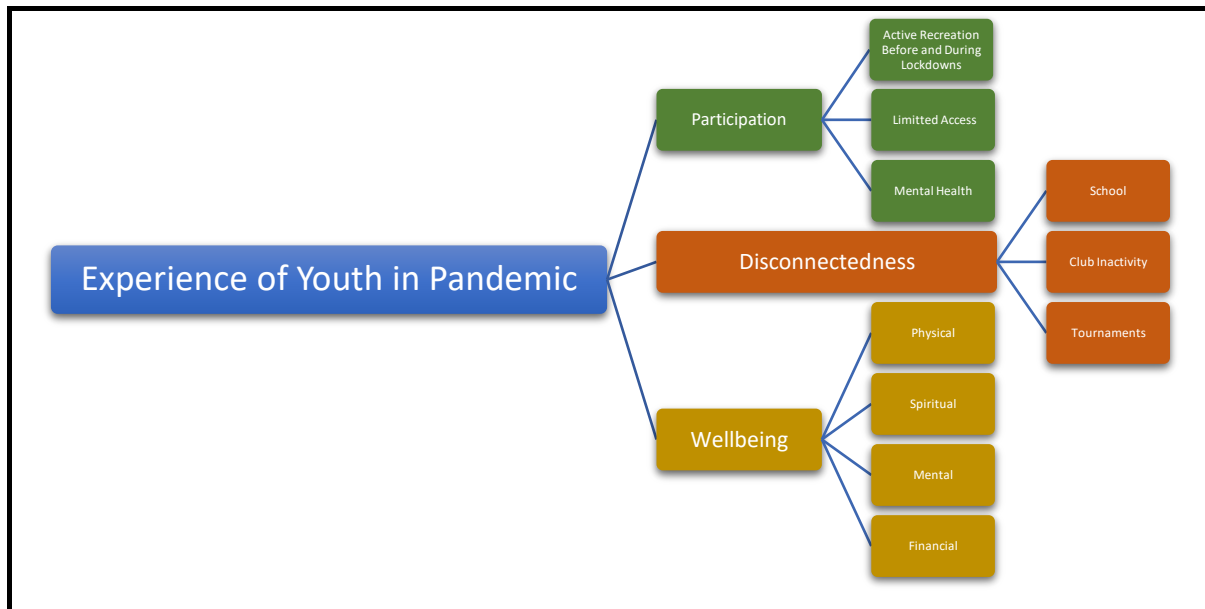


Figure 1 Themes and Sub-themes Overview

To make the best use of the collated data in my NVivo project, I analysed as many important details such as common sayings and key words which described the research participants' experiences, viewpoints, or attitudes from the Talanoa, as feasible. To safeguard the participants' identity, all athletes and their parents/legal guardians were assigned a cultural pseudonym. Any other people referenced by the Talanoa participants will also be recognised using a pseudonym. Due to the nature of the Talanoa approach, which involved branching out and discussing multiple topics simultaneously, some sub-questions led to discussion on additional topics.

Effort and utmost care has been taken to validate the data by incorporating references to body language, such as instances of hand gestures, head nodding or shaking, shrugging shoulders, teary moments, and laughter, all of which took place in my Talanoa. These may be visible in the quotes used in this chapter. These references help authenticate the data and maintain its credibility despite the limitations of translating nonverbal cues into written text.

The first key theme is Participation, which is divided into three sub-themes: active recreation before/during lockdown, limited access, and mental health. Disconnectedness is the second theme, which includes five sub-themes: family, church, school, club, tournaments. Thirdly, Wellbeing is addressed in three sub-themes: physical, spiritual, and financial.

4.2 Participation

Within this overarching theme of ‘Participation’, the data patterns were divided into the three most common sub-themes, with each emblematic of distinct nuances specific to Pasifika youth athletes and their parents/legal guardians.

Firstly, I address the issue of participation both before and during lockdowns. The restricted or limited access to sports and active recreation facilities, is the second sub theme. Lastly, I explore the decline in active recreation because of pandemic-related restrictions, and the subsequent emergence of mental health issues.

Throughout this theme I examined each sub-theme in detail, offering my understanding of how factors had influenced and shaped the level of participation and the circumstances upon which participation or lack of participation occurred for Pasifika youth during the pandemic times.

4.2.1 Active recreation Before and During Lockdowns

The lockdown measures that were implemented during the pandemic resulted in reduced organised sports tournaments, and active recreation levels amongst youth. Schools and clubs are typically important settings for youth participation in organised sports and physical activity (Degarege et al., 2021; Meiring et al., 2021). However, these venues ie. school sports fields, parks, pools and leisure centres were closed or had limited access, thus created challenges for young people to engage in regular sports and physical activity. One young person shared her level of activity during their athlete & parents/legal guardian Talanoa:

“So, basketball training twice a week, netball training in two mornings, yeah...one fitness and court session.” – Fiti Talanoa 5

Fiti’s sibling Misipati also contributed some information about is activity in the same Talanoa:

“Hockey training in the mornings, a rugby game on Saturday, and a hockey game on Monday. It was pretty busy.”

These comments demonstrate the high level of activity between school and club sports prior to the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown and therefore it was not surprising that there were adjustments needed when they could no longer train.

Siana who is a competitive swimmer who trained under structured programming had to adjust,

“My top one was ocean swimming, and then running. Instead, we did a lot of yoga, sometimes we went for bike rides and then we just passed the rugby ball around in the backyard.” - Siana, Talanoa 1

“Just anxious about the unknown [paused, shrugged shoulders]..didn't know what it was. There was no sports on... [shrugged shoulders and hand gestures indicated frustrations]” - Fiti, Talanoa 5

This quote demonstrates the frustration that was experienced by one young person; however, these sentiments were also expressed by a number in the athletes only group Talanoa.

Another parent participant shared a typical routine for his son pre-lockdown:

“Before lockdown, he was very active. He had athletics trainings twice a week from 6pm to 7:30pm. And then he is at his soccer trainings with a club from 6pm to 7:30pm on Mondays and Wednesdays; athletics was on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but Friday he would sometimes go training by himself to the extra coaching classes. Sundays he would have a game. So basically, he would be active for sports six days a week and one day rest on Saturday.” - Luka's Parent A, Talanoa 3

Pasifika youth are indeed known for their active lifestyles, physical literacy, and competitive nature (Lakisa et al., 2014). Literature tells us that Pasifika youth tend to develop physical literacy from an early age (Fitzpatrick, 2013; Grainger, 2009; Horton, 2014; Nemani & Thorpe, 2023). They engage in various physical activities, such as playing games, dancing, and contributing to everyday house chores which helps them to develop fundamental movement skills, body and spatial awareness. These engagements enrich their physical literacy foundations which makes them more inclined towards sports and physical activities as they grow older (Gordon et al., 2010). Almost in every Talanoa, the participants commented on values, skills, friendship, and teamwork. Taken together, these results suggest that sport and active recreation provide an avenue for Pasifika youth to develop these values and skills as mentioned by (Choudhury et al., 2006; Olushola et al., 2013). In team sports they learn to work together, communicate effectively, and support one another. For example, Toni's Parent summed up why participation is important for him.

“Well, pre COVID it is always like, when you look back at it, it's a team thing. It's team sport or team athletics. One on one is very hard to participate or take interest. Because you're missing that element of team. A bunch of guys who do fun workouts, just a duo or father-and-son wasn't interesting at all.” - Parent A, Talanoa 7

Sport has always been a significant part of Pasifika culture, fostering a sense of community, camaraderie, and friendly competition (Gordon et al., 2013b; Tima, 2013).

“I missed out on my basketball finals, so ended up coming second. Yeah, it was hard to take but we still got our promotion, relegation game.” – Fiti, Talanoa 5

This reduction in sport and active recreation, coupled with the youth’s social isolation experience during lockdown, posed significant physical and emotional challenges for them. As a result of isolation, Pasifika communal family life and strong family ties were disrupted.

Some examples from various Talanoa discussion on activities the families participated in were:

“I enjoy playing tag, rugby and basketball,” - Siana, Talanoa 1

“I really like swimming and playing sports...I did rugby, tag, swimming and dance.” -Tausala, Talanoa 1

“Normally, even in the house, we do our cleaning of the house every day.” - Luka’s Parent B, Talanoa 3

“I like to watch movies, and baking too sometimes...I do my chores, do my piano, and then training.” – Sina, Talanoa 4

This evidence also supports the literature which implies that Pacific Island peoples’ lifestyles traditionally encompass outdoor activities and are predominantly physically active, thereby playing sports and physical activity an integral part of their makeup. Sina sums it up by saying:

“Just to be honest, I like training. I like training with the team because I like training with others. And that makes me feel more comfortable. Because when I’m by myself, I get scared of people looking at me.” – Sina, Talanoa 4

The importance of team sports where athletes learn to work together, communicate effectively and support one another cannot be understated (Choudhury et al., 2006; Danish et al., 2004; Olushola et al., 2013; Weiss et al., 2013). The COVID-19 pandemic did affect participation in physical activity and sport as evidenced in the quotes in this sub theme. Of concern is that if youth cannot experience this during their formative years, then this could have an impact as they continue into adulthood.

4.2.2 Limited Access

The COVID-19 pandemic presented numerous challenges for youth sports and participation in physical activity throughout Aotearoa New Zealand (Sport New Zealand, 2023). The government’s response during the pandemic and its focus on the safety of the population influenced how youth sports and active recreation were supported by national, regional, and local sporting organisations (Ministry of Health, 2020b; New Zealand Government, 2020)

Restrictions brought about by the pandemic had significantly impacted the regular sports and active recreation of Pasifika youth and their engagement. During the various lockdown levels, the government implemented strict guidelines for the nation (Lally, 2021; New Zealand Government, 2020). Due to these restrictions, there were several compounding effects on the participation and engagement of Pasifika youth in sport and active recreation.

The research participants shared a number of examples in their Talanoa:

“Yeah, we were playing rugby at that time, and then half-way through the season, we stopped because of the lockdown.” – Tausala, Talanoa 1

“So last year, we went into lockdown, there was nothing.” – Siana, Talanoa 1

“...like everything is cut, you cannot go to anything, you’ve got to stay in your homes. You can’t go out there’s no sports, there’s nothing; the only place you can go to was the supermarket.” – Tausala and Siana’s Parent B, Talanoa 1

Various studies from around the world including [Genevieve et al. \(2020\)](#); [Huang and Zhao \(2020\)](#); [Irène et al. \(2020\)](#) wrote of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions in their countries which was similar to the lockdown conditions experienced in Aotearoa New Zealand. As stated in the literature review chapter, the local lockdown measures restricted people’s movement and access to many services and venues which was similar to [Skinner et al. \(2008a\)](#)’s findings in both Australia and the United Kingdom. Clearly, evidence from all Talanoa indicate that these lockdown measures also affected Pasifika youth athletes’ access to sport and active recreation facilities and as a result could have an impact on them losing fitness, not keeping up with their training, losing interest and confidence in their physical ability and skills:

“Like what I’ve seen in Mere during the pandemic, she’s lost a bit of interest in athletics, competition-wise, not even just competition-wise but with training in itself, fitness, self-confidence; because before COVID, it was a four-day event...to go and do group training and all that.

And in the group training, if one kid is lacking behind the other ten kids will push you and motivate you to come to that level. And that’s why we found really hard and really difficult with Mere is, she lost all that interest.

Once you lose that interest, and it was for three, four weeks, then you can bounce back, but it went for a good three months. Since then, she started losing interest.” – Mere’s Parent A, Talanoa 6

Moreover, Pasifika academics state that Pacific people are an ‘in-person’ community with strong family ties, and as a result they value in-person interactions highly ([Enari, 2020](#); [Enari & Fa’aea, 2020](#); [Enari & Matapo, 2020](#); [Lakisa, 2020](#)). For example, a parent participant went on to express her gratitude for the presence of sporting events that occurred prior to the pandemic:

“I appreciated sports, organised sports a lot more because you appreciate something when you miss it...there was nothing, so I appreciate it more.” – Tausala and Siana’s Parent B, Talanoa 1

Pasifika youth and their parents/legal guardians’ social group gatherings involving sport were hugely impacted by COVID-19 lockdown measures, and this was reiterated by statements the parents placed on having activities for their children, as articulated above, and in the quotes below.

“We have a backyard and every afternoon we ensured that we would spend an hour and a half training with both our kids and us. We would train and ensured that their fitness level and their health is not compromised, so we could have our fitness and maintain their fitness level..” – Luka’s Parent A, Talanoa 3

“We went for family walks; we did our training outside the house – the weight training sessions. We did our circuit, circuit training. Yeah, we just stayed active because I think that was really important around our mental wellbeing...” – Misipati’s Parent A, Talanoa 5

These Talanoa quotes also indicate that despite there being in a lockdown, Pasifika youth athletes could dedicate more time to family interactions, self-directed sport specific, and skill training.

4.2.3 Mental Health

Significant evidence reports on the correlation between participation in physical activity and improved mental health. (Salmon, 2001). During physical activity, endorphins are released, reducing anxiety, depression, and stress symptoms (Salmon, 2001). As mentioned previously, taking part also in sport and active recreation fosters social connections, a sense of belonging and support, which are essential in maintaining good mental health (Harangi-Rákos et al., 2022; Jun et al., 2021). Young people often relied on their family and friends for support and guidance during the pandemic (Mahoney et al., 2021). My Talanoa findings show that the overall mental wellbeing of Pasifika youth athletes were impacted. Specifically, one youth athlete who was at representative level in football, was under pressure to keep up their fitness level and this created some anxiety for him. He said:

“Prepping for a competition by myself, virtual coaching and searching online was a big worry. I know the competition level was high but my backyard training may not put me in a good position.” – Luka, Talanoa 3

Not being able to attend school and partake in school extra-curricular sport did have an impact on some youth athletes. As one participant noted in his athlete & parents/legal guardians’ Talanoa:

“For certain classes like PE, for example, it was kind of frustrating because usually you’re more engaged with everyone doing different activities. For subjects like Maths, Sciences and English, it didn’t really frustrate me that much because I was just focusing on what I need to do in terms of my own academic success in those subjects. As opposed to PE I consider more of a fun subject, which is making you become more physical. And that often requires you to engage with different students within your class...for PE it was a little bit frustrating.....we were just asked to find a way to just become more physical, they just sent us a timetable...they didn’t really try to develop an actual program for us...it was more self-directed.” – Toni, Talanoa 7

In Auckland, school lessons were conducted online for three months, however, Sikuka commented that there was little instruction about the physical activity programmes offered by his school, during the lockdowns. He said:

“They just, um, used Star League like a service, yeah one of the managers at our school, he just sends out workouts like thirty-minute workouts and we could do in the morning or afternoon. Yeah, that was pretty much it.” – Sikuka, Talanoa 5

Misipati conferred:

“Yep, but it was pretty much like what we already knew.” – Misipati Talanoa 5

The youth athletes stated in the athletes Talanoa that their physical activity programmes were average or below average, given their current level of fitness and performance. Overall, the Pasifika youth athletes in this research study were anxious and agitated about maintaining their fitness levels for their target competitions. The programmes eventually given by schools or sports clubs did not fulfil their performance criteria.

Interestingly in the youth only Talanoa, a number of the students stated that they did not get any physical activity programmes from their clubs, other than what was offered at their school.

“No, no we did not get any contact from clubs or regional service providers.” – Fiti, Misipati, Sikuka, Talanoa 5

This demonstrates that there was a missed opportunity for both schools and clubs to engage young people so they could keep connected during the lockdown times. Connecting to team members and sports clubs is vital to social connections, holistic education, and healthy lifestyle and is similar to what [Danish et al. \(2003\) study reported](#).

In another Talanoa, the participants shared that their family physical activities contributed to creating a caring environment for their mental wellbeing. Specifically, Fiti and Misipati’s parent stated:

“Before lockdown, they were probably training like at least three or four times a week for our own training and our personal training at home...but during lockdown, we trained every day, five times a week. On Saturday and Sunday, we take a break. We also did a lot of biking as well around Highbrook and around Otara. We just carried on doing it ourselves like trying to do at least three trainings a week, and that was just for our own personal wellbeing.” – Sikuka, Fiti and Misipati’s Parent A, Talanoa 5

Fiti and Misipati’s Parent A proceeded to describe what he and his family of five engaged in for personal wellbeing.

“Family walks, we went for family walks. We went for umm, we did our training outside the house – the weights, the weights sessions. We did our circuit, circuit training. Yeah, we just stayed active because I think that was really important around our mental wellbeing, otherwise, yeah, we’d go crazy.” – Sikuka, Fiti and Misipati’s Parent A, Talanoa 5

Inconsistent with one study on pre-Covid physical activity engagement by Pasifika peoples ([Irène et al., 2020](#)), I found in my Talanoa that Pasifika youth athletes and their parents/legal guardians’ were aware of mental wellness and being physically active. This resulted in them to altering their physical activities according to lockdown restrictions to meet their mental wellbeing needs.

“We changed to suit the situation. Put it this way, we weren’t going to be distressed or very depressed because couldn’t do what we were doing before. So, we changed to suit the lockdown and stayed positive.” – Toni’s Parent A, Talanoa 7

“We just carried on doing it ourselves like trying to do at least three trainings a week, and that was just for our own personal wellbeing.” – Fiti and Misipati’s Parent A, Talanoa 5

I find it most striking that [Harangi-Rákos et al. \(2022\)](#) and [Magson et al. \(2021\)](#) reported depressive symptoms among youth during COVID-19. However, my Talanoa findings revealed that familial relationships played a crucial role in enhancing the mental wellness of Pasifika youth athletes. This aligns with earlier literature by ([Balayar & Langlais, 2022](#); [Enari & Keung, 2022](#))

4.2.4. Key Summary

Pasifika families living together during the pandemic maintained close-knit households ([Enari, 2020](#)). As a result of their cultural values which emphasise the importance of family and community bonds, Pasifika youth strived to maintain their fitness and optimism by participating in family-driven and self-directed training routines, collective active recreation activities, as well as embracing genuine family time. Limited access to sports and active recreation facilities affected the Pasifika youth athletes during the lockdown. This limitation also resulted in some concerns for their mental health such as increased anxiety, decreased in motivation and a major sense of lifestyle disruption.

4.3. Disconnectedness

Within the second overarching theme of ‘Disconnectedness’, there are three sub-themes: school, club and tournaments. Throughout this theme, each sub-theme was examined including factors that affected the Pasifika youth athletes’ sense of disconnectedness in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

With the disruption to Pasifika youth athletes participation in sport and active recreation during the COVID-19 pandemic in Aotearoa New Zealand, they experienced a loss of routine. As a result, the Pasifika youth athletes’ inability to be physically present in these social settings ie school, club, and tournaments, their physical fitness was disrupted, skill acquisition progress was slowed, motivation and interests changed, and perspectives adjusted.

Disruption occurred in numerous settings – the home, school and even at the recreational level, hence Pasifika youth athletes’ disconnectedness. Consequently, pandemic lockdowns impacted Pasifika youths’ sense of connection with key people in their schools, sports clubs and at tournaments.

This second theme draws on three sub-themes: school, club, and tournaments.

4.3.1 School

The COVID-19 pandemic brought forth a myriad of school-related challenges particularly for Pasifika youth athletes where they had to adjust to academic disruptions ([Ioane et al., 2021](#)). The transition to online learning presented numerous challenges for Pasifika youth. The experience of learning from the other side of a digital screen was different from being physically present and interacting with the teacher,

coach or instructor. In Pasifika families it was parents who had to support their children through these times as evident in the following:

“I remember with Mere, it was harsh on them obviously, even though it was locked down, she had online studies, right? I remember the first week, she came out of her room crying. This online was all new to them. She didn’t know how to cope with online school and stuff like that...”
– Mere’s Parent B, Talanoa 6

One Pasifika athlete shared:

“Nah...how are we gonna get our leaning done, and our training, and all that stuff?” – Luka, Talanoa 3

Based on the above Talanoāga⁵, it was evident that some Pasifika youth athletes were overwhelmed with the concept of distance learning or online learning. Initially, some struggled to cope with the new move while others expressed feelings of uncertainty.

As with anything new, people’s reactions vary. So, with an understanding of the ‘va’ concept as explained in the literature (Anae, 2016), it is likely that from the Pasifika youth athletes’ cultural viewpoint, face-to-face class learning makes them accountable when sharing any physical space. Also, in considering the ‘va’ literature, an in-person rapport already exists between the teacher and student however, interestingly during the pandemic with online learning the screens became a barrier to that physicality element. This is therefore likely to deter Pasifika youth to not attend compulsory online teaching and learning. This discussion was evident from one Pasifika youth athlete’s experience taken from the Athlete & Parent/Legal Guardians Talanoa 1:

“School was like a pretty rocky start because I think a lot of girls like me [with her fingers gesturing the implication of ‘I quote’], they took learning-from-home for granted a lot. We wouldn’t show up to anything. Now we’re getting used to it. It’s like – oh my gosh, we’re going to Year 11 next year, and we don’t know anything because we didn’t go to classes. Yeah, nah....[laughed aloud, covering her face with her hands]” – Siana, Talanoa 1

It may also be implied from this Talanoa, that with the absence of schools’ resources and physical organisation such as bell times, classroom systems, and school atmosphere, online classes became optional instead. Indeed, with students not physically in front of the teachers, students have the ability to decide whether they join or not from their home bubbles. Of note, by not attending their online classes, Pasifika youth could well be spending that time on other activities, as alluded to by Balayar and Langlais (2022) findings. This too was evident in my study as attested below.

“We did family challenges. We just did. Yeah we did. We had to do 7k-walks like every week.”
– Junior’s Parent B, Talanoa 8

⁵ Talanoāga – noun form of Talanoa; translates to discussions or dialogues.

“It was just challenging everyone, all our members and our family to just go for walk...we have sporting background,..yeah my wife and I have been involved in sports for a long time. So, we just came up with an idea to try and keep our family active, whether it be, we combined being in the kitchen...” – Junior’s Parent A, Talanoa 8.

“Kitchen challenge of food cooking, baking, yeah..I think if they adopt the idea like, I mean, during that period, we found that our kids can cook.” – Junior’s Parent B, Talanoa 8

In some of my Talanoa, the online-learning switch was viewed as a positive thing. The parents in one family had an opportunity to sit and listen-in during the delivery of online teaching.

“Actually, when there was lock down, I sat with him to see what was going on with the teacher and student, as to what was being taught and I got a chance to see what the learning was at school. So, for me, it turned out to be good.” – Toni’s Parent B, Talanoa 7

But to be honest, the online piece was very good. So, you could actually see, and it was good and beneficial for us so that we were seeing what the teacher was teaching, how they’re interacting...” – Toni’s Parent A, Talanoa 7

The parents of Toni saw the opportunity for online learning as being positive and as a result of the Ministry of Education stipulations, almost all schools in Aotearoa New Zealand rose to the COVID-19 challenges by continuing compulsory teaching and learning online. However, some subject areas were privileged, with the emphasis on numeracy and literacy receiving substantial attention during the transition to distance learning or remote learning (Mutch, 2021). It has been argued that educators and policymakers prioritised Mathematics, Reading and Writing to ensure continuity of ‘core’ subjects (Flack et al., 2020). On the contrary, Physical Education and school sports, which relied heavily on physical interaction and equipment, faced significant disruptions (Howley, 2022). This was not surprising as collaborative or practical activities and in-person team activities were challenging to replicate in a virtual environment. I had found mixed experiences from my Talanoa, and as the studies by Galuvao (2022); Mutch (2021) demonstrated, the shift to online Physical Education classes and virtual sports training were not as effective as they would in person or face-to-face sessions.

Additionally, youth athletes require access to suitable spaces (Freeman et al., 2022; Galuvao, 2022).

“Here, you are just alone by yourself learning, and it’s just kind of mentally okay [rolled eyes], it helps. But physically, you just did it, and you need to have a bit of space to train as well. So, this is obviously [referring to training] in the house because we need the internet...yes, I feel that online learning or online training sessions are not that effective.” – Luka’s Parent B, Talanoa 3

“...he just sends out workouts like thirty-minute workouts that we could do in the morning or afternoon. Yeah, that was pretty much it.” – Sikuka, Talanoa 5

In support of Sikuka, Misipati added:

“Yep, but it was pretty much like what we already knew, yeah.”

One athlete shared about the change in her level of motivation to participate in online fitness classes as a consequence of unsuitable spaces:

“The lockdown went on for so long. So, I just got lazy; lazy because every day, we’d be going somewhere....we were in lockdown so couldn’t go anywhere. So, I just didn’t want to do anything.” – Mere, Talanoa 6

This impact, as demonstrated above on motivational and interest levels, are similar to study documented by Irène et al. (2020) study in France.

The practical activities in school Physical Education and sport plays a vital role in social and emotional development. Mere’s parent made the following comment:

“I could see the stress level on Mere because they were all outdoor games. She does stuff, always training here and there. And staying inside the house in your own room and doing online studies and not interacting physically, with students, teachers and your coach, and your training buddies. It was a lot of stress on her as well as some days, she would take a taxi [a long time]to come out of the room [giggled] you know, change your setup – go into the living room, or someplace, sit outside and study just to break the routine.” – Mere’s Parent A, Talanoa 6

This quote by a parent was typical of many of the Pasifika youths’ parents when they discussed the changes in their home environment as a result of school learning being disrupted.

“The schools kind of just give our kids what you need to do but there wasn’t really that engagement. And I think our kids were missing that interaction. They were missing their engagement with the actual peers, their friends, they were missing the face-to-face contact. But at the same time, I just thought that it was probably what was the most challenging part for our kids was their social interaction, catching up with friends face-to-face.” – Fiti, Sikuka & Misipati’s Parent A, Talanoa 5

“Mentally the kids were disturbed but that’s parents too. Well for me, being a mother, I think I was completely distorted with their routine. Yeah, everything changed you know, you become lethargic, more complacent, you know I quit my routines, getting up in the morning this and that, getting my exercises done. Everything was so slow.” – Toni’s Parent B, Talanoa 7

4.3.2 Club Inactivity

The COVID-19 pandemic brought about exceptional challenges for sports clubs in Aotearoa New Zealand, reshaping the landscape of sports and recreational activities considerably

(Sport New Zealand, 2020). The suspension of regular trainings emerged as a critical issue for most participants in sport. The associated measures of a national lockdown and later social distancing protocols dictated the cessation of in-person training sessions, disrupting the structured routines that a club and its members rely upon for skill development, fitness maintenance, and team cohesion (Sport New Zealand, 2020; Sport New Zealand, 2021). Mere’s parent shared her distress at losing the connection to their sports club.

“I felt restricted alright. Isolated, you know, cut out from the whole world, and you’re doing your own thing. And every time you used to do things in a group, a big group. [paused for some time, and teary-eyed, voice-choked a little before continuing]. You know, you feel a bit lonely, yeah and you had a lot of stress, you know, that stuff came into play as well, yeah..” – Mere’s Parent A Talanoa 6

Another parent added:

“But one or two preparations...just to still keep her fitness up in case. Yeah, when we come back at least she will be still fit to play.” – Sina’s Parent B, Talanoa 4

“And when the kids are training, parents don’t just go there watching them. We are doing our best as well, either walking or jogging. Now missing out and all of that...it’s two things at the same time, the kids are training, you’re training them there. The club that we belong to, they encourage family participation, parents do the same. Don’t just come and watch the kids but be part of training too. I remember I was quite active, because you run behind them on the track.” – Mere’s Parent B, Talanoa 6

Interestingly, it was the parents who showed frustration during the lockdown times. As Mere’s parent above shared, it was as much their time for engaging in physical activity as it was for their athlete children who were training in pre pandemic times.

As previously mentioned in the previous theme, the absence of regular training sessions therefore posed a notable hurdle for Pasifika youth athletes who were striving to retain their competitive edge. That said, even when restrictions allowed for a resumption of activities (socially distanced and outside), sports clubs faced the challenge of restricted group trainings. [Wright et al. \(2022\)](#) and [Meiring et al. \(2021\)](#) concurred that this was evident in other countries too. In Aotearoa New Zealand it appeared that the clubs with predominantly team sports were more affected than the clubs that deliver individualised sports. The limitations on group sizes affected not only the quality of training but also a sense of camaraderie and teamwork that are integral to team-sports club dynamics ([SportNZ, 2021, 2023](#)). Importantly in my study, the absence of self-directed schedules and training resources for club members compounded the problem. Mere stated she had to rely on resources from online sources in her training.

“Yeah, we used to watch a few YouTube martial art videos, and that’s why I started doing kicks and punching...the proper techniques.” – Mere, Talanoa 6

In most clubs and according to [Galuvao, \(2022\)](#) and [Othman, \(2021\)](#)’s research, the lack of initial member assistance left many athletes without clear guidance on how to stay physically and mentally prepared during the disruptions. The Pasifika youth athletes from my Talanoa, clearly indicated this:

“We were getting all locked-down.... when we started training outside it was kind of hard to get used to, because I kept injuring myself.” – Siana, Talanoa 1

“My thinking is fine, as if we pay club fees for let’s say for soccer, right! And this is obviously regional providers wherever they are. So, football for instance, they would send you links to club, and club will distribute, these things are not coming through. Why is it not coming

through? [shrugged shoulders and gestured with open hands] We have no idea!” – Luka’s Parent B, Talanoa 3

On a regional and national scale, the assistance for clubs was equally not helpful. Many Pasifika parents/legal guardians are often engaged in clubs as volunteers (Grover, 2015), so they utilised prior knowledge and online searches for ideas to keep their children engaged in physical activities.

“We were online training. Some of them and Luka would do it with his coach, then if I have to train, I will search for them things like on Facebook or TikTok, certain programs were there. So, I tried to train him or when to take him outside to train. So, I would use those techniques to use on the field. Because I didn’t think they will have enough progress even with the clubs to search for programmes that are available.” – Luka’s Parent A, Talanoa 3

This demonstrates that despite the disruption to their sport at club level, because of their volunteer involvement in the sport, Pasifika families could find a positive way to assist their athlete children to progress with their skills and training.

As evident from my Talanoa, the COVID-19 situation forced the Pasifika youth athletes and their parents/legal guardians to adapt and innovate in their efforts to maintain physical fitness and to stay motivated for the return to sport, post-COVID.

4.3.3 Tournaments

The abrupt COVID-19 lockdown measures and subsequent restrictions, enacted in response to the pandemic’s initial wave, led to the immediate suspension and, in many cases, the cancellation of scheduled sports tournaments (Ministry of Health, 2020b; Sport New Zealand, 2021).

The sudden halt disrupted meticulously planned schedules, leaving athletes or players, coaches, organisers, and spectators grappling with uncertainties regarding the resumption of events (Meiring et al., 2021; Othman, 2021). This disruption was discussed in Talanoa.

“Mere was like a full-time athlete, so she was participating in netball, and whatever other sports she could get into at school. She was always representing the school in different sports. Sports was a very big part of her life.” – Mere’s Parent B, Talanoa 6

“Yeah, [nodded head] she was very active. And then she has competitions [sighs, gesturing with hands, drawing a circular shape in air]....whole day of competitions.” – Mere’s Parent B, Talanoa 6

Subsequently, as the pandemic unfolded, a range of restrictions were imposed in Aotearoa New Zealand, including limitations on gathering sizes, travel constraints, and social distancing measures (Ministry of Health, 2020b). This meant athletes, and in particular, for the Pasifika youth athletes in my study, their training preparations for tournaments were disrupted. Mere’s parent sums it up by saying:

“She went to trainings five days a week at that time, because she was really into it, so when competitions come, Mere was pretty much five days, three days a week training every day after school. And then on Saturdays, she used to have training. I remember what an hour and a half or two that used to go up to Totara Park for those trainings. Yeah, all that input.” – Mere’s Parent B, Talanoa 6

As noted in my Talanoa, Pasifika youth athletes who qualified and were looking forward to regional and national tournaments, faced despair. This was clearly communicated by one parent:

“I just felt like the lives they could still go on without competitive sport or without sport. So, when it came back to ‘you can return to the pool’ or ‘you can return to the sport’, those parents or families just choose, you know, we can live our lives without competitive swimming, we can live our lives without rugby, we’re just not going to return. So, they didn’t come back. And that’s fair; that’s fine. That’s your choice....they realised, maybe sport is not everything. It’s not really needed, so they never came back.” – Tausala & Siana’s Parent B, Talanoa 1

This emotional response emanated from the parents expressing the dedicated efforts of their children who were driven by the aspiration to achieve their personal best performance and excel in their sport. It is evident from my Talanoa, some Pasifika youth athletes and their parents/legal guardians had to adjust to the changed perspectives as a result of COVID-19 disruptions.

In my study, some Pasifika youth athletes lost interest in their pursued sports, while some quit altogether, during the COVID-19 pandemic. This would have been disappointing for them as for some, as (Thorpe et al., 2023) assert, their ultimate goal included high sporting achievements, securing scholarships for schools, and increasing their chances for sports academies within and beyond Aotearoa New Zealand

4.3.4. Key Summary

The COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdowns had a profound impact on the interdependence and synergy of Pasifika youth athletes, leading to a significant sense of disconnection with school, sports clubs, and tournaments. The pandemic-induced interruptions to Pasifika communities’ customary sporting activities and active recreational gatherings could therefore have affected their sense of cultural continuity and bonding (Horton, 2014).

Despite these disruptions, Pasifika youth athletes and their parents/legal guardians adapted by developing coping strategies and making positive use of the challenges by training together with family members. This varied from online resources, to parents accompanying their athlete children to the track or local field/park, demonstrating a familial resilience to pandemic lockdowns.

4.4. Wellbeing

The third key theme of Wellbeing encompasses a unique exploration across four interdependent sub-themes of physical, spiritual, mental, and financial. These will be considered pou or pillars that help frame the discussion on wellbeing. Throughout this thematic discussion, we recognise their importance while acknowledging their influence on the Pasifika youth athletes' wellbeing. Therefore, through the application of the Fonofale Model in this discussion section, along with consideration of the pou/pillars, we can gain deeper insights into common experiences of Pasifika youth athletes and their parents/legal guardians.

4.4.1 Physical

According to the Fonofale framework as discussed in Chapter 3, the significance of physical wellbeing is integral to one's quality of life. It influences various aspects of daily living, including energy levels, keeping active, eating healthy, and nourishing the body. Literature reiterates that (Chambers, 2013; Hawkes, 2018; Nemani & Thorpe, 2023). Their everyday routine involve fitness, training, and participating in a variety of sport and active recreation activities (Grainger, 2009; Nemani & Thorpe, 2023). In my Talanoa, there were expressions which indicated that the Pasifika families priority for physical wellbeing was evident. Parents stated the following:

“So, we had to focus on everything like work, kids, and parents at the same time. And our normal life was their training, their activities; they were mainly involved outdoors. But even everyone is under one roof. So definitely the priority was to keep everyone around us safe. And at the same time, have a healthy environment.” - Luka's Parent B, Talanoa 3

“He was quite active. He was participating in all seasonal sports, like rugby, and in the summer, and I think he's added to be part of the training sessions as well for athletics.” – Junior's Parent A, Talanoa 8

“We have one of my other nephews who set up a circuit training, so him and his friends will come over, the boys will jump in as well. And they just do a boxing training round. Yeah, and that's what they do.” – Junior's Parent B, Talanoa 8

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, like everywhere in Aotearoa New Zealand, the Pasifika youth athletes' engagement in all sports and active recreational activities was restricted, and this consequently impacted on the body's capacity to perform physical activity and training, both efficiently and effectively, as evident from these Talanoa:

“She did running up and down the driveway, and then just passing-wise [with reference to rugby ball skills], that was really limited.” – Sina's Parent B, Talanoa 4

“And I think another reason why we try to keep up with her fitness during lockdown was so she wouldn't lose interest as well....there are some kids like I've got a nephew that year sort of just lost interest because he didn't do any fitness, so he wasn't as focused.” – Sina's Parent B, Talanoa 4

“The lockdown went on for so long. So, I just got lazy; lazy because every day, we’d be going somewhere...we were in lockdown so couldn’t go anywhere. So, I just didn’t want to do anything.” – Mere, Talanoa 6

“A lot of people in South Auckland didn’t have even a pool to practice in. So, there’s no practice swimming whatsoever. And when you go back into the pool, it’s really hard to get back into it.”
– Siana and Tausala’s Parent B

Interestingly, this lack of physical fitness could have an impact on both short- and longer-term wellbeing.

Nutritional and dietary patterns were adversely affected by the absence of physical activity routines.

“I was getting very unhealthy in the sense of cooking and eating whatever’s there was not good....put on a lot of weight by staying home.... So, all I had to do was just make sure she’s eating, and I checked on her...” - Mere’s Parent B, Talanoa 6

A pivotal aspect of holistic health is the relationship between weight, regular physical activity and overall wellness.

4.4.2. Spiritual

The Pasifika youth athletes in my study were heavily affiliated with various religious denominations. Church is a central pillar for most Pasifika peoples, particularly Christianity (Forman, 1992; Gordon et al., 2013b; Teganahau, 2023). The church serves as a spiritual anchor for Pasifika youth athletes and their parents/legal guardians, offering a place of worship, prayer and the development of faith (Hamer, 2005).

The church, as a spiritual mentor, helped Pasifika youth and their parents/legal guardians to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic challenges. This is evident from most of the Talanoa:

“A little bit delicate because I was thinking, I always had faith in the medical system level. I think it [referring to COVID-19 vaccinations] will eventually work. After several trials, there was fear that it might not work so I was praying.” – Tony, Talanoa 7

“For us, we’re quite big in our church, it’s not called wellbeing, that’s what work calls it, work call it wellbeing. Church calls it working on your spiritual self. Yeah, because we just had a big church conference, we always have a lot of church conferences and church went on even through Zoom.” – Siana and Tausala’s Parent B, Talanoa 1

“We used to pray seven days, and then to pray as a group, as a family, and then I used to teach them different things about religion.” – Mere’s Parent A, Talanoa 6

As evident above, Church can be seen as another arm of the extended family, as it creates a sense of community and belonging for Pasifika in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The ‘stay-home save lives’ messages by the New Zealand Government (Ministry of Health, 2020a, 2020b; New Zealand Government, 2020) disrupted the fostering of social cohesion for Pasifika youth and their families. They usually attend youth outreach programs, bible study, and church events, fostering a sense of family-community, guidance and spiritual nourishment. However, virtual alternatives were created to enable the continuation of these connections as evident from these Talanoa:

“We had a lot more family meetings. Yeah, there was a lot more family sit-downs. There was a lot more family time and a lot of the family time it was watching church videos, talking about church, going to church together [hand-gestured for inverted commas] ‘from the couch’...” Siana and Tausala’s Parent B in Talanoa 1 continues, *“There was a lot of not only wellbeing [or spiritual self] but it was a lot of helping to transition to normalise your life, as you would say, just to normalise time management and daily routine, and stuff like that.”*

As Luka’s parents in Talanoa 3 also shared:

“Yeah, there’s a lot of church programs and mentors playing a role for the youth to keep them mentally stable.” – Luka’s Parent B

“He [church mentor] comes and talks to them. They have their youth group programs in place by the churches that helps him and the youth.” – Luka’s Parent A

While online church services were offered, it did not have the same effect as being physically present.

“I think church was okay because it’s always on and everyone was always virtually connected during the services. And they always had the Sunday one. But I think for me, maybe not physically seeing my family because my parents lived with my sister. And so, I think not being able to see them, I was missing them very much. I’d just call my mum, and that’s how we would communicate – by phone.” Sina’s Parent B, Talanoa 4

There is something tangible about the atmosphere of a physical church that facilitates direct interpersonal connections, which engages emotional connections and deeper spiritual experiences. Accordingly, the physical presence or in-person interconnectedness of Pasifika is quintessential.

In these Talanoa there is evidence and alignment with literature, as Enari (2020) and Enari & Fa’aea (2020) in their studies also found that religion and faith were a big part of Pasifika family life. Of note, the organisation of weddings and funerals under bubble restrictions were unique faith-testing moments for Pasifika who often have high turnouts to these occasions. The church offers moral and ethical education, instilling values of compassion, empathy, resilience and service in Pasifika youth (Tima, 2013). On the other hand, support and welfare services to Pasifika families in need, such as food banks, counselling, and assistance in navigating government agencies were also provided by many churches.

“The church put online seminars on the church website. There’s a lot of material on, you know, look to Jesus for help, how to ask for help, spiritually ask for help. Be obedient, you will be blessed.” – Siana and Tausala’s Parent B, Talanoa 1

“They [community] can probably reach out to the local churches. That’s how they target, like getting that information out because everyone goes to church.” Sina’s Parent B, Talanoa 4

“Those people come into churches. And yeah, we’ve got youth leaders as well who come out and talk to a church because that’s where you get the most.” – Sina’s Parent A, Talanoa 4

These quotes direct from my Talanoa demonstrated that families appreciated the services provided and helped to alleviate socio-economic challenges faced by some families. This in turn, reinforced the church’s role as a pillar of support during pandemic times. Recognising the significance of the spiritual wellbeing in the lives of Pasifika youth athletes and their parents/legal guardians is crucial in understanding the interwoven complexities between religion, culture, and family life for Pasifika peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand.

4.4.3. Mental

Through the lens of the Fonofale Model, other factors such as family support and backing, surrounding the sporting environment also influence Pasifika youth athletes’ mental wellbeing.

Consistent with the Fonofale Model, Pasifika parents were clearly already aware of the intricacies between physical, spiritual, mental, and other aspects of Pacific way-of-life depicted in the Fonofale pou/pillars. This is evident in the following:

“We consider ourselves Fijian because of our way of life, how we were brought up. It is more like an island-way. We mean, our way of interaction or communication. There’s a lot of respect, empathy, compassion that is upheld by the Fijians and chiefly systems. This is for any elders, for any chiefs, for any teachers who are higher [drawing a line with both hands raised above his head] than us. With parents or teachers, we also consider them quite highly respected, so we don’t tend to answer them back or question them of the authority, unless and until there is a real big conflict – that’s the way of our living.....there’s a bit of integration but mostly, we follow that island culture.” – Luka’s Parent A, Talanoa 3

“During lockdown, we trained every day, five times a week. On Saturday and Sunday, we take a break. We also did a lot of biking as well around Highbrook and around Otara. We just carried on doing it ourselves like trying to do three trainings a week, and that was just for our own personal wellbeing. We went for family walks; we did our training outside the house – the weight training sessions. We did our circuit, circuit training. Yeah, we just stayed active because I think that was really important around our mental wellbeing, otherwise, yeah, we’d go crazy.” – Sikuka, Fiti, and Misipati’s Parent A, Talanoa 5

Interestingly, when asked if s/he felt pressured, the Pasifika youth athlete responded positively that s/he was following the parents plans willingly:

“Happily participating, happily participated every day, five times a week.” – Misipati, Talanoa 5

As stated previously, the compounding efforts and critical guiding role that parents play in their families will cultivate the strength of the interconnectedness of the wellbeing pou/pillars.

4.4.4. Financial

Another common topic that emerged from the Talanoa sessions was financial wellbeing which involves the Pasifika parents/legal guardians' general perspectives related to money matters during the COVID-19 pandemic. The parents/legal guardians conveyed a substantial sense of relief stemming from the savings accrued, due to remaining at home.

“Well, let’s start with financial issues for our families. I’d say yes and no both. Yes, we felt things were getting a little higher with shopping and stuff, however, we did save a lot of money not really a lot of work. We did a bit of saving because we were working from home. We didn’t have to travel to work so that was a big saver for us. Otherwise, we’d be spending about \$600 each [referring to both parents vehicles] a month or \$700 a month for just transportation, back and forth from work.” – Luka’s Parent A, Talanoa 3.

Luka’s Parent B also added:

“You know, a lot of families who have a lot of kids who want to take part in sports, but due to club fees, tournaments and turning around other costs involved, they would not be so keen to go there.”

One positive of the pandemic for Luka’s family was that they saved some money through not participating in various sports codes, practices, and tournaments during lockdowns. Usually, they frequently had to take time off from their employment for travel supporting their children in sport and activities, whether within the greater Auckland area or beyond. Moreover, the expenses related to accommodation and the accompanying tournament fees can accumulate significantly, particularly in the context of their children’s involvement in school and club sports.

From another Talanoa, a sense of financial relief is evident:

“It’s also not easy to not return to that competitive sport where you’re paying, you know [paused for a while] that amount of money for a competitive sport and you go through a lockdown and you realize some things are not really necessary.” – Siana and Tausala’s Parent B, Talanoa 1

As a result of experiencing lockdowns during the pandemic, the parents/legal guardians in a number of my Talanoa raised concerns about the necessity of engaging in additional facilities outside of those offered by the schools or clubs. They pondered whether the substantial daily time commitment to various activities was inducing unwarranted financial stress.

“We used to do a lot [when we were living] overseas, we had different places to go. I guess they’ve started it here, you know Dominion Road. They’ve got a park there and they need more parks like that where families can go to; water sprinkling and all the kids are running around and it’s the first time in ages since I’ve been there. Yeah we need something like that so that the community can go out and enjoy that. Otherwise, they all go to one place. Yeah, to get the community included more, especially using the taxpayers’ money.” – Sina’s Parent B, Talanoa 4

Evaluating time as an equivalent to money, my Talanoa findings recognised that the sports culture might potentially become a financial burden, especially when considering families with multiple children.

Additionally, some parents expressed concern about the possibility of reallocating these savings to more athlete-focused development opportunities for their Pasifika youth athletes as opposed to directing Pasifika youth athletes to local, regional, and national sporting organisations.

4.4.5. Key Summary

The physical, spiritual, mental and financial dimensions that impact on wellbeing are exasperated in pandemic times. Recognising their interrelatedness is essential in promoting a comprehensive approach to Pasifika wellness. However, if the dimensions are considered in isolation, for example the financial constraints, then this could impact on the holistic nature of wellbeing.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

5.1. Research Overview

The aim of this study was to gain a better insight of the Pasifika youth athletes' experiences in sport and active recreation during the COVID-19 pandemic in Aotearoa New Zealand.

It is important to gain an understanding of these lived experiences in order to improve the sport and active recreation experience of Pasifika youth, both during a pandemic crisis as well as during normal times. Lessons drawn can also inform post COVID-19 pandemic recovery actions to ensure that Pasifika youth athletes' effective participation in their chose codes continue.

5.2. Summary of Discussion

This research has identified three overarching themes – Participation, Disconnectedness, and Wellbeing which best described the Pasifika youth athletes' experience during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This study has identified that with mandatory COVID-19 pandemic restrictions nationwide, the Pasifika youth athletes' participation in sport and active recreation was subsequently halted. This was mainly due to tournament cancellations as a result of venue and facility closures. This study has also shown that Pasifika youth athletes' weekly routines revolved heavily around sports specific-skill training and coaching sessions before and during the pandemic lockdowns. During these lockdown periods, priority was given to maintaining the Pasifika youth athletes' fitness levels in their household-bubble to facilitate their competitive edge and aid participation effort whole-heartedly in anticipated post-lockdown tournaments. Interestingly without the support of the athletes' families, in some cases this would not have been possible. This insight is clearly aligned with some literature about Pacific peoples' natural dynamism and athleticism, as well as the importance of a focus on family and with wider family connectedness ([Chambers, 2013](#); [Grainger, 2009](#)).

This research project has also found that generally, actively participating in physical activities assisted Pasifika youth athletes' mental wellbeing which also align with numerous literature. To that end, my Talanoa evidence demonstrated that familial bonds enabled Pasifika youth athletes' mental health to be strengthened which supports recent literature by ([Balayar & Langlais, 2022](#); [Enari & Keung, 2022](#)).

The second major finding was Disconnectedness with which the Pasifika youth athletes experienced a reduction in sport and active recreation activities, coupled with social isolation experience during the lockdowns, posed a significant physical and emotional challenges for them. As a result of isolation, their Pasifika communal family life and strong in-person family contacts were disrupted.

The most obvious realisation to emerge from this study is the fast and automatic response of the School. Schools quickly provided online support both academically and emotionally, with some expectation for students to continue doing physical activity remotely. In contrast, clubs and tournament organising bodies – local, regional, and national had a delayed response in providing resources and support for their members.

One of the more significant findings to emerge from this research study was Wellbeing of the Pasifika youth athletes during these unprecedented times. Pasifika youth athletes' wellbeing through the lens of the Fonofale Model was strengthened by the pou/pillars of physical, mental, spiritual, and financial interconnectedness, as supported by their parents/legal guardians. Evidently, parents spoke more in athlete-and-parent/legal guardians Talanoa than the athletes due to inherent respect in their 'va' (Amituanai-Toloo, 2006; Enari & Matapo, 2021a). This enriched the discussion as it evolved that they were an integral part of my research question and sub-questions.

“What are experiences of Pasifika Youth athletes in sport and active recreation during the COVID-19 pandemic in Aotearoa New Zealand?”

“What challenges are related to sports & active recreation?” and

“How did the COVID-19 pandemic impact on Pasifika youth athletes' participation in sport and active recreation?”

This study adds to the growing body of research that emphasise church and its paramountcy in the lives of Pasifika families (Gordon et al., 2013b; Taule'ale'ausumai, 2021; Teganahau, 2023; Tima, 2013). Within the climate of uncertainties during the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, the church contributed significantly to spiritual nurturing via virtual services and youth outreach programmes.

This study also shed light on the Pasifika concept of family as a foundation of their unity. Moreover, the role of Pasifika parents was exemplified in their efforts to keep their family physically, mentally, and spiritually nourished, and financially stable in challenging times. Not surprisingly, Pasifika parents kept their youth athletes accountable throughout the COVID-19 pandemic restriction by garnering their prior knowledge of physical, mental, and particularly spiritual practices. Where knowledge of youth sport and active recreation was beyond their own, parents/legal guardians consulted relevant online platforms to assist in their efforts to also help their youth athletes in maintaining routines. Notably, the relevance of Pasifika youth athletes and their parents/legal guardians' testimonies is clearly supported by the Fonofale Model of associated literature (Agnew et al., 2004; Gunther et al., 2009; Suaalii-Sauni et al., 2009).

In light of Talanoa evidence, the Pasifika parents/legal guardians highlighted an awareness of the cost of engaging in sport and recreation for their athletes. They recorded sports-related savings from the mandatory COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns. Thus, the study raises important questions regarding the costs that Pasifika parents/legal guardians incur to enable their children to participate in a myriad of sport and active recreation activities.

Taken together, these results suggest that Pasifika youth athletes experienced sport-and-active-recreation related challenges to some extent. Their participation was substantially impacted during the COVID-19 pandemic their lifestyles were disrupted, and their wellbeing was compromised.

5.3. Contribution of Knowledge

In spite of its limitations, the study certainly adds to our understanding of the valuable insights of the Pasifika youth athletes and how the COVID-19 pandemic impacted on their sport and active recreation experience going forward.

A cornerstone of the study is the invaluable contribution of the research participants of Pacific descent. It is their involvement that enriches the academic landscape and brings attention to the significance of diverse perspectives within sport and recreation activities. An additional benefit comes from providing a platform for the voice of young athletes from the Pasifika community in Aotearoa New Zealand. As a result of the unique environment, the Pasifika youth athletes and their parents/legal guardians were able to share their experiences, taking into account their distinct backgrounds and coping strategies. Moreover, this research amplifies the importance of nurturing connections specifically with Pasifika youth athletes and their families, especially as initiatives continue to be proposed for enhancing support during and after times of national turmoil.

This study will contribute to exposing the experiences of the Pasifika youth athletes' sport and active recreation activities in a pandemic crisis. For stakeholders in the Sport and Recreation industry, this study provides crucial insight into the nuances of developing and implementing sports and physical activity programmes for Pasifika youth and not just in pandemic times. Furthermore, it will could also be a beacon for considering tentative alternatives for engaging youth athletes' moving forward.

The results from this study will be a vital addition to the rapidly expanding field of using a Talanoa approach as a research methodology in academic scholarship (Enari, 2021b; Fa 'avae et al., 2022; Hindley et al., 2020; Ioane, 2017; Lakisa et al., 2019; Matapo & Enari, 2021; Stewart-Withers et al., 2017; Vaioleti, 2006).

5.4. Research Limitations

It is important to recognise that being limited to sport-and-active-recreation focused Pasifika youth athletes means the study lacks representation of Pasifika youth outside of this category. Notably, there were no Expressions-of-Interest received from Pasifika special and para-athletes, which also means they were not represented in this research study.

The sample size was only seven Pasifika youth athletes and their parents/legal guardians which is a relatively small number and is therefore not representative of the Pasifika people population in Aotearoa New Zealand. However, for the purpose of this study using a Talanoa approach, the size was sufficient.

The timing was also a limitation as the COVID-19 restriction levels and traffic light-systems (as mentioned previously), caused delay in some Talanoa. Due to the associated ‘bubble’ restrictions, scheduling and re-scheduling for athletes and their parents/legal Talanoa spanned almost a 12-month period. The first few Talanoa involved the use of face-masks for everyone, so it was not possible to emulate the traditional Talanoa free of face-masks. The COVID-19 pandemic restrictions added a layer of distancing given the mandatory safety protocols which was not the typical free-nature of Talanoa. Additionally, a level of tenseness could have affected the atmosphere for the earlier Talanoa, as the researcher was in their household bubble at that time.

Researching the limited literature on Pasifika youth athletes’ during a crisis has proved to be a journey of self-discovery. Since academic literature was scarce, this research journey prompted a greater introspection and exploration of uncharted grounds. Engaging with the realities of Pasifika youth athletes in the midst of a pandemic crisis unravelled layers of understanding, empathy, and cultural sensitivity that had not previously been explored. Therefore navigating the gaps in existing literature became an opportunity for personal growth and discovery. It involved embracing humility, active listening, and a willingness to learn from experiences different from one’s own. These invaluable insights enriched both the research process and my personal understanding.

During the Talanoa sessions, I found myself sometimes withdrawing mentally, consciously maintaining alignment with the philosophy of ‘va’. I used these moments to internally adjust and adapt, ensuring my understanding and synchronicity with the ‘va concept’ throughout. This may or may not be a limitation.

The ‘va concept’ played a huge role in the athletes’ level of contribution during athlete and parents/legal guardians Talanoa whereby athletes took a passive role. Due to my non-Pasifika background, as a researcher through the Talanoa approach, it became clear that I asked more questions than answers. There were times where I asked questions to clarify my understanding and in doing so, I may seem to

have misunderstood the 'va' where the Talanoa is driven freely by the Pasifika research participants. Also, their mutual understanding of their 'va' with an 'academic' could have prompted a sense of care and respect in the Talanoa.

The different cultural background between the researcher and the research participants may have compromised a level of openness, thereby impacting the depth or breadth of the sharing of experiences during such crisis as COVID-19. In other words, this may have discouraged the Pasifika youth athletes or their parents/legal guardians from disclosing specific information about some of their experiences since they may have felt guilty or humiliated about such events. To that end, such recounts may lower their community standing in the academic space.

It is unfortunate that the study did not capture all the non-verbal communication ie. Body language and gestures during all Talanoa. These gestures were lost in the auto-translation of the software used, however, some non-verbal actions included in the study were restricted only to the ones I made notes of during Talanoa, some of these which can be found in the Discussion chapter.

5.5. Future Research Directions

I make the following comments, which have evolved from my study and could be of consideration to the Sport and Recreation industry, or for any academics conducting future research on Pacific peoples during the pandemic times.

- The study could be repeated using a wider sample size and including the general Pasifika youth population rather than just focused on sport and active recreation. This would be a fruitful area for further work so experiences of the general Pasifika youth could be included. Further work needs to be done to establish whether experiences are similar.
- An outcome of this study found that, as physical fitness was an important factor in maintaining Pasifika youth athletes' physical wellbeing, their wellness could be boosted with more targeted physical activities supplied by schools, and delivered by qualified staff. A future strategy in engaging young Pasifika in sports and active recreation for post-pandemic recovery could be achieved by direct funding to the schools.
- A realignment of sport and active recreation funding may be necessary in light of some Pasifika parental concerns about maximising athletes' sport-focused development opportunities and specific sports-code coaching. Rethinking the additional financial burden of sports club memberships and

associated fees might be an area for future research, especially since the Pasifika families identified a financial saving during the pandemic.

- The Fonofale Model and ‘va’ concept was immensely beneficial for understanding Talanoa from a Pacific viewpoint, as well as in developing strategies to move forward following the pandemic. This means looking at things, supplied an all-inclusive foundation that highlighted the interwovenness of numerous aspects of the Pacific way of thinking. This approach enabled Talanoa conversations to be in accordance with Pacific worldview, providing precious knowledge for plotting ahead in any post-pandemic environment.
- Future research could also be conducted using indigenous methodologies with culturally appropriate approaches especially when research participants are of indigenous descent.
- Researchers could integrate community service prior to or alongside their research study to ensure the efficacy of their work. This is because, service is deeply ingrained in Pasifika culture and recognition of this by the participants could strengthen the researcher/participant relationship. By participating in service activities, researchers gain a deeper understanding of the research participants’ attitudes and experiences, enhancing the authenticity and credibility of their study.
- Lockdown bubble restrictions caused low energy levels and had a negative impact on mental health as stress, and anxiety were highly noted. Therefore, a key policy priority at the onset of any pandemic could be to plan for the long-term care of Pasifika youth athletes with more provision of holistic education, healthy lifestyle, and familial social connections during and post pandemic times.

In conclusion, my research question “What are the experiences of Pasifika Youth athletes in sport and active recreation during the COVID-19 pandemic in Aotearoa New Zealand?” has identified that there were both positive and negative aspects experienced by Pasifika youth athletes and this study has provided recognition of these, along with suggestions for being cognisant of this in any future pandemic times.

Appendices

APPENDIX A

PASIFIKA-LED ADVISORY GROUP

Purpose: This advisory group will provide guidance around cultural and ethical approach, appropriate to Pasifika youth athletes and their families.

Members: The group consists of three to three professionals of Pasifika-descent who have agreed to share their cultural expertise. Each member has been invited through an Expression of Interest.

- **Ms Sosefina Paletaoga:** Chief Executive Officer - Otara Health Charitable Trust, Auckland
Sosefina is the Chief Executive of the Ōtara Health Charitable Trust. She has a long - term commitment to continue her community service to South Auckland, in particularly Ōtara where she grew up and attended local schools.

For 20years, Sosefina has worked in the education sector, in which teaching our youth and serving our community has been her passion and motivation.

As a graduate of The University of Auckland, Sosefina successfully created a teaching career within the New Zealand secondary school education system. Sosefina is committed to best community practice, advocating and shaping the best outcomes for Māori and Pacific peoples overcoming barrier, to accessing quality housing, social and health service.

- **Rev. Pennie Vaione Togatama-Otto:** Deputy Principal – Manurewa High School, Auckland
Reverend Otto is an ordained Presbyterian Minister. In 2019, Pennie was inducted to serve as the Parish Minister for Niue Takanini PIPC where she currently provides pastoral and spiritual guidance for a small congregation.
Reverend Otto is also one of the Deputy Principals of Manurewa High School, providing a Niuean / Pasifika lens to the kaupapa of the school and the direction in which the school is heading. She is completing her doctoral thesis in Education initially through Te Puna Waananga and now through the School of Critical Studies in Research on Niuean academics. Reverend Otto is humbled by Pawan's motivation as she feels that he has much to offer in his topic and for future research.
- **Mrs Rasela Tilomai Uili:** Head of Gagana Samoa – Tangaroa College, Auckland
Rasela Tilomai Uili was born and raised in Samoa. She has a love of mathematics from a very young age and always dreamed of being the first member of her family to enter University which she fulfilled. Rasela migrated to Aotearoa New Zealand in 1980 to further higher study. Awarded B.A in Mathematics and Economics; BSC in Mathematics; Post-Graduate Diploma in Secondary Teaching; Master of Professional Studies in Mathematics from the University of Auckland. She is a registered secondary teacher, teaching Mathematics at Tangaroa College for over 22 years and is also the Head of Gagana Samoa. Rasela is happily married to Viliamu Uili, a Mathematics and Technology graduate and have two boys - William and Raphael.

Eligibility: Each member has predominantly worked or currently involved in working with the Pasifika community in their field of work. Members of this group are well-known within own ethnic Pasifika community ie. church minister, local government councillor, qualified teachers and youth/social workers or health professionals.

Selection: An initial pre-invitational email for Expression of Interest to candidates in the Research Advisory Group is sent 6 weeks prior to submission of PGR1. If no replies, a text message and follow-up phone calls will occur two weeks post invitational email.

Following confirmation of selected members, a meet-and-greet meeting is arranged for this Pasifika-led Advisory Group members, primary researcher and supervisors.

Roles: This Pasifika-led Advisory Group will direct, guide and advise me of culturally and appropriate aspects surrounding questioning and cultural interpretations of subject(s) responses in the talanoa approach – at any point in time.

Rules/Governance or actual management of the work programme: The management of the group is according to terms and conditions set out by Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC).

Privacy: All members of this Pasifika-led Advisory Group shall observe the Privacy Act 2020 and respect confidentiality of shared discussions and information of the research or researcher.

Forms of Communications: The Pasifika-led Advisory Group is informed by email a week before the date of conducting any Talanoa data collection. Communications will predominantly be via online or offline, suitable to the demand and circumstances at the time.

Commitments: 4-5 hours per month time commitment is requirement for group.

Cost and Recourses: Being a member of this Pasifika-led Advisory Group is a voluntary role. Appreciation of their role in this research will be recognised through a koha and acknowledgements in the research write-up.

Suspension/Termination: Breaching terms and conditions set out by AUTEC could result in suspension or termination from being a member of this Pasifika-led Advisory Group.

Timetable:

Expression of Interest	October 2020
Selection	November 2020
Introductory Meeting	March 2021
Submission of PGR1 and EA1	February - July 2021
Timeframe of Commitment	January 2021 – Dec 2023

APPENDIX B

Project Advertisement

Subject: Research Project for youth to share your experience of Sport & Active recreation during the Covid19 pandemic

Talofa Lava. Kia Orana. Malō e Lelei. Fakaalofa Lahi Atu. Ni Sa Bula. Taloha Ni.

My name is Pawan K. Marhas. I am of Indian descent with a Samoan wife living and working in South Auckland. I am fortunate to have many multicultural and ethnic-diverse links through relatives and friends. I have been involved for the last five years with Pasifika youth and families predominantly around sports, health and wellbeing. I am conducting a research as part of my Master of Philosophy degree at the Auckland University of Technology (AUT). I am looking for Pasifika Youth participants (13-19yrs old) and their parents/legal guardians who would be keen to share their experiences around sport and active recreation during the Covid-19 pandemic last year. I will be holding talanoa to find out about this experience. If you wish to be involved please contact me.

The study has been approved by Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEK 21/268, 15 September 2021).

Contact me:

Name: Pawan Kumar Marhas

Email: pawanmarhas@gmail.com

Mobile: 027 539 2299

I will send you additional information along with a consent form to complete. Remember both youth and parents of youth will be part of this project.

Note* The talanoa venue will be decided by the participants along with the talanoa date. This could be conducted either at the participants' home, local school, church hall or AUT meeting facilities. Should a lockdown occur during the data collection period, the talanoa mode will be recorded in a virtual audio meeting ie Zoom, Microsoft Teams or Skype. Participants must participate in both talanoa. Families with only one parent/guardian are still able to participate.

Malō aupito. Meitaki ma'ata. Vinaka vaka levu. Fakaue. Fa'afetai Lava

APPENDIX C

Talanoa Questions Sample

There will be a number of semi-structured questions that may guide the discussion in the Talanoa. Some examples of these could be:

- What was your reaction when the country went into full lockdown?
- What is your experience of undertaking sport during the pandemic?
- What sports or recreation activities were you engaged in before and during Covid-19?
- How would you rate your participation level on a scale of 1 – 10 (10 is very active everyday)? Why/why not?
- How did you maintain wellbeing and wellness during the pandemic period?

The data collection has been informed by guiding ethical and conceptual themes outlined by the Pasifika Health Research Guidelines ([Health Research Council New Zealand, 2014](#))

APPENDIX D

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTECH)

Guide for drafting a Researcher Safety Protocol

DEFINITION & PURPOSE:

This is a guide to drafting a Researcher Safety Protocol and needs to be adapted for each research project.

Researchers need to assure their own safety as well as that of their participants and research assistants. The main purpose of a researcher safety protocol is to assess the level and likelihood of risk and to provide appropriate arrangements to minimise and manage those risks.

Situations in which researcher safety is likely to be at risk may include times when:

- ❖ *researchers are visiting the homes of others;*
- ❖ *researchers are undertaking sensitive research in a manner that puts them at personal risk;*
- ❖ *researchers are undertaking research in hazardous conditions;*
- ❖ *researchers are undertaking their research in a social or cultural setting with which they have minimal familiarity;*
- ❖ *researchers are involving people who pose a higher risk than would normally be the case (e.g. people with a known propensity for violence);*
- ❖ *the study impinges on the vested interests of powerful persons;*
- ❖ *the study is subject to the exercise of coercion or domination (e.g. where the research is about social conflict or where participants may face political threat, discrimination or stigma);*
- ❖ *there is an increased exposure to everyday risks (e.g. accidents, illness).*

Researchers may find it useful to read this research about levels of violence towards researchers in the field ([QUALITI \(NCRM\) COMMISSIONED INQUIRY INTO THE RISK TO WELL-BEING OF RESEARCHERS IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH](#) by Bloor, M., Fincham, B., and Sampson, H.)

The following questions may be used to help write a protocol that is relevant to the context of the research.

Project title and brief description: Pasifika Youth, Sport and the Covid-19 Pandemic in Aotearoa New Zealand

Applicant: Denise Atkins

Primary Researcher: Pawan Kumar Marhas

What emergency plans are in place? Who can help?

The Primary Researcher Pawan will send a text message to his wife to confirm his arrival at the address/location. When Pawan leaves the property address/location, he will send a text message to his wife to confirm his departure.

In an unlikely event that his wife does not receive the arrival/departure text messages within ten minutes, his wife will send a coded-message. A phone call will follow after minutes of the coded-message.

In a highly unlikely event of a no-response from the Primary Researcher (Pawan), his wife will immediately contact the Police.

Don't forget to update your safety protocol regularly:

Date for next review:

APPENDIX E

Pasifika Population Statistics Table

Pasifika population statistics table may guide for athletes and families selection according to their percentage in total Pasifika population in Aotearoa New Zealand. Some examples of these could be:

Name of Ethnicity	Population %	Number Of Focus Group
Samoan	49	Up to 4
Cook Islander	21	Up to 2
Tongan	20	Up to 2
Niuean	8	Maybe 1
Fijian	5	Maybe 1
Tokelauan, Tuvaluan and Kiribati	Less than 2	Maybe 1

*The percentage collection has been informed by Ministry of Health Statistics ([Health Research Council New Zealand, 2014](#))

APPENDIX F

Participant Information Sheet

Date Information Sheet Produced

15 September 2021

Project Title

Pasifika Youth, Sport and the Covid-19 Pandemic in Aotearoa New Zealand

An Invitation

Talofa Lava. Kia Orana. Malō e Lelei. Fakaalofa Lahi Atu. Ni Sa Bula. Taloha Ni.

My name is Pawan K. Marhas. I am of Indian descent with a Samoan wife living and working in South Auckland. I have been involved for the last five years with Pasifika youth and families predominantly around sports, health and wellbeing. I am conducting research as part of my Master of Philosophy degree at the Auckland University of Technology (AUT). I am looking for Pasifika Youth participants (13-19yrs old) and their parents/legal guardians who would be keen to share their experiences around sport and active recreation during the Covid-19 pandemic last year. I will be holding talanoa to find out about this experience. I am inviting you to participate in a research project that I am leading, titled "Pasifika Youth, Sport and the Covid-19 Pandemic in Aotearoa New Zealand".

I am inviting you (youth and parents/legal guardians) to talanoa to talk about your experience of Pasifika youth in sports and active recreation during Covid-19.

Participation in this research will involve being part of talanoa at a venue of your choice (or other suitable venues as appropriate) for about 1.5 hours - 2 hours. Your involvement in this project is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from the research at any time.

Your consent to participate in this study would be greatly appreciated. This research topic is very close to my heart as I find great inspiration from those I met and continue to meet during my research journey, such as yourself.

What is the purpose of this research?

This research will explore the experience of Pasifika youth (13 – 19 year olds) in sports and active recreation during Covid-19. Findings of this research can inform management and organisation of Pasifika youth participation in sports moving forward – both in times of crisis and otherwise.

The intention is to let you (my participants) to be the tellers of your stories and for me to understand those stories. In doing so I hope I can bring forth meaningful understandings for others as well.

The findings of this research may be used for academic publications and presentations. The data can be used for further studies.

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

You are being invited because you responded to an invitation from the Otago Health Trust advertisement about my project. You met the criteria of my research, and you are of Pasifika decent. There will be 7 youth athletes and their parents/legal guardians in my research project.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

You will need to complete the consent form to participate in this research. By completing this consent form, you are giving consent and permission for both audios recorded online and offline Talanoa. Participants will be selected on a first-come first-served basis.

Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You are able to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible.

What will happen in this research?

All talanoa will start with a prayer, share food and share stories, talking about your experience of sports and active recreation participation in Covid-19 during 2020. The Talanoa process will be conducted in a culturally appropriate manner at the venue choice of the participant(s). We will have two Talanoa per family (i.e. athletes only, parents/legal guardians and athletes together). Participants must participate in both talanoa. Families with only one parent/guardian are still able to participate. All Talanoa will be face-to-face in an open talking-approach which will hopefully create a relaxing atmosphere where all participants can contribute freely and honestly. The Talanoa content should predominantly be that of the participant and his/her family with allowable 'detours' however, minimum prompts will be communicated by the researcher to gauge the Talanoa flow. The outcomes determined from the research will contribute to acknowledge any needs or recommendations truly befitting of Pasifika youth athletes' experience during the pandemic. A preliminary findings report will be provided for academic purposes, and it is anticipated that one conference/symposium output and journal output will arise from this research thesis.

Note* The talanoa venue will be decided by the participants along with the talanoa date. This could be conducted either at the participants' home, local school, church hall or AUT meeting facilities. Should a lockdown occur during the data collection period, the talanoa mode will be recorded in a virtual audio meeting ie Zoom, Microsoft Teams or Skype.

What are the discomforts and risks?

No discomforts and risks are expected. However, if you feel uncomfortable in sharing your journey or associated experience during the talanoa process then we will take a break. Again, you may choose to omit any shared information at any point of the talanoa. You are free also to withdraw at any time.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

You will be given details of local community support services. I will highlight this at the beginning of the Talanoa. Should you wish to discontinue, feel free to withdraw at any time.

Not likely but possible – should the participants experience distress, the researcher will encourage adult participants to contact AUT 'Counselling and Mental Health' - 09 921 9292 or 'Lifeline' - 0800 543 354 and for youth athletes to refer to 'Need to Talk' – text or call 1737 anytime, 'Lifeline' - 0800 543 354 or (09) 5222 999 'Samaritans' - 0800 72 66 66 (as listed on the NZ Ministry of Health Manatū Hauora website).

What are the benefits?

Findings from this research will provide insights on how to improve the sport and active recreation experience of Pasifika youth in the future and help safeguard sport participation experience in any subsequent crises. The study will not only improve the primary researcher's skills and scholarly understanding, but it will also provide him with another qualification.

How will my privacy be protected?

Participants' names will not be removed from Consent forms however, any other written information about the participants will have their names replaced with a number to identify them. The data be stored securely in an encrypted folder on AUT network drive. Any electronic information (ie computer-generated results) will also have names removed and replaced with a subject number and to be stored on a computer that requires a password to enter it.

No identifying data will be used in the write-up of the results. Your privacy and the privacy of all participants will be fully protected.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

There are no monetary costs involved in participating in this research, however your time is a huge contribution in itself.

The youth athlete participants will engage in two sessions of approximately 1.5 hours - 2 hours per talanoa. The parents/legal guardians will engage in one session of approximately 1.5 - 2 hours. The total time taken with focus groups will be approximately 16 hours due to the nature of talanoa, the time per session is approximate.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

Two weeks

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

Yes, you will each be given a short lay term summary of the research findings. You will also be invited to a gathering to celebrate the completion of the research study

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. Denise Atkins, denise.atkins@aut.ac.nz, Phone (09) 921-9999 ext. 7616

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEK, ethics@aut.ac.nz (+649) 921 9999 ext. 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Pawan Kumar Marhas, Email: Pawanmarhas@gmail.com, Mobile: 027 539 2299

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Dr. Denise Atkins, denise.atkins@aut.ac.nz, Phone (09) 921-9999 ext. 7616

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on **15 September 2021** AUTEK Reference number **21/268**

APPENDIX G

Consent Form for Parent/ Legal Guardian

Project title: Pasifika Youth, Sport and the Covid-19 Pandemic in Aotearoa New Zealand

Project Supervisor: Dr Denise Atkins

Researcher: Pawan Kumar Marhas

- I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 15 September 2021
- 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 taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw my child/children and/or myself from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.
- I understand that if I withdraw my child/children and/or myself from the study then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to my child/children and/or myself removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of our data may not be possible.
- I agree to my child/children taking part in this research.
- I understand that my child is able to refuse to give assent to take part in this research.
- I wish to receive a summary of the research findings **(please tick one):**
 - Yes
 - No

Child/children’s Name/s :

Parent/Guardian’s signature :

Parent/Guardian’s Name :

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

.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 15 September 2021 AUTEK Reference number 21/268

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

Consent Form for Adult/Youth (over 16 years)

Project title: Pasifika Youth, Sport and the Covid-19 Pandemic in Aotearoa New Zealand

Project Supervisor: Dr Denise Atkins

Researcher: Pawan Kumar Marhas

- I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 15 September 2021
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- I understand that identity of my fellow participants and our discussions in the Talanoa process is confidential to the group and I agree to keep this information confidential.
- I understand that notes will be taken during the Talanoa and that it will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.
- I understand that if I withdraw from the study then, while it may not be possible to destroy all records of the Talanoa of which I was part, I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of my data may not be possible.
- I agree to take part in this research.
- I agree for my child to take part in this research (**please tick one if applicable**): Yes
 No
- I wish to receive a summary of the research findings (**please tick one**): Yes
 No

Participant’s Signature :

.....

Participant’s Name :

Participant’s Contact Details (if appropriate) :

.....

Date :

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 15 September 2021 AUTEK Reference number 21/268

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

Assent Form for Children (Under-16)

(parent/caregivers please read to children)

This form will be kept for a period of 6 years

Talofa Lava. Kia Orana. Malō e Lelei. Fakaalofa Lahi Atu. Ni Sa Bula. Taloha Ni.

Project title: Pasifika Youth, Sport and the Covid-19 Pandemic in Aotearoa New Zealand

Project Supervisor: Dr Denise Atkins

Researcher: Pawan Kumar Marhas

- I have read and understood the sheet telling me what will happen in this study and why it is important.
- I have been able to ask questions and to have them answered.
- I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- I understand that I can stop being part of this study whenever I want and that it is perfectly ok for me to do this.
- If I stop being part of the study, I understand that then I will be offered the choice between having any information that that other people can know is about me removed or letting the researcher keep using it. I also understand that sometimes, if the results of the research have been written, some information about me may not be able to be removed.
- I agree to take part in this research.

Participant's signature :

Participant's Name :

Participant Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 15 September 2021
AUTEC Reference number 21/268

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

APPENDIX H

PGR1 Reviews and Research Design Consultation with Pasifika

The purpose of this advisory group will provide guidance around cultural and ethical approaches, appropriate to Pasifika youth athletes and their families. The group consists of three professionals of Pasifika-descent who have agreed to share their cultural expertise. Each member listed below has agreed to help with the research project:

At Introductory meeting dated 13th March 2021 at Na Na Thai Restaurant, 4/308 Te Irirangi Drive, Flat Bush, Auckland 2013

- **Ms Sosefina Paletaoga:** Chief Executive Officer - Otago Health Charitable Trust, Auckland
- **Mrs Rasela Tilomai Uili:** Head of Gagana Samoa – Tangaroa College, Auckland

At Introductory meeting dated 27th March 2020 at Manurewa High School

- **Rev. Pennie Vaione Togatama-Otto:** Deputy Principal – Manurewa High School, Auckland

At Introductory meeting dated 12th October 2020 at AUT South Campus

By Email dated 28th January 2021 and by review form

- **Dr. Sierra Keung:** South Campus Project Leader – AUT

At Introductory meeting dated 12th October 2020 at ZOOM

Peer review feedback on PGR1 By Email dated 28th January 2021

- **Dr. David Lakisa:** Managing Director- Talanoa Consultancy

A further meeting of the advisory group will be undertaken before the talanoa gets underway

PGR1 Submitted and approved by AUT on 29 April 2021 (see below)

APPENDIX I

Information Sheet for Under-16

(parent/Legal guardian please read with child)

Talofa Lava. Kia Orana. Malō e Lelei. Fakaalofa Lahi Atu. Ni Sa Bula. Taloha Ni.

Hello – my name is Pawan Kumar Marhas

I am finding out about “The experiences of Pasifika youth athletes in sports and active recreation during the Covid-19 pandemic in Aotearoa-New Zealand” – you might like to find out about this as well.

Sports and active recreation experiences is your personal recollection about how you feel, it might be something you do or see.

What is the purpose of this research?

This research will explore the experience of Pasifika youth (13 – 19 year olds) in sports and active recreation during Covid-19. Findings of this research can inform management and organisation of Pasifika youth participation in sports moving forward – both in times of crisis and otherwise.

The intention is to let you (my participants) to be the tellers of your stories and for me to understand those stories. In doing so I hope I can bring forth meaningful understandings for others as well.

The findings of this research may be used for academic publications and presentations. The data can be used for further studies.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

You will need to complete the consent form to participate in this research. By completing this consent form, you are giving consent and permission for both audio recorded online and offline Talanoa. Participants will be selected on a first-come first-served basis.

Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You are able to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible.

What will happen in this research?

We will have talanoa to find out about your experiences. All talanoa will start with a prayer, share food and share stories, talking about your experience of sports and active recreation participation in Covid-19 during 2020. The Talanoa process will be conducted in a culturally appropriate manner at the venue choice of the participant(s). We will have two Talanoa per family (i.e. athletes only, parents/legal guardians and athletes together). Participants must participate in both talanoa. Families with only one parent/guardian are still able to participate. All Talanoa will be face-to-face in an open talking-approach which will hopefully create a relaxing atmosphere where all participants can contribute freely and honestly. The Talanoa content should predominantly be that of the participant and his/her family with allowable ‘detours’ however, minimum prompts will be communicated by the researcher to gauge the Talanoa flow.

The outcomes determined from the research will contribute to acknowledge any needs or recommendations truly befitting of Pasi fika youth athletes’ experience during the pandemic. A preliminary findings report will be provided for academic purposes and it is anticipated that one conference/symposium output and journal output will arise from this research thesis.

Note* The talanoa venue will be decided by the participants along with the talanoa date. This could be conducted either at the participants’ home, local school, church hall or AUT meeting facilities. Should a lockdown occur during the data collection period, the talanoa mode will be recorded in a virtual audio meeting ie Zoom, Microsoft Teams or Skype.

What are the benefits?

Findings from this research will provide insights on how to improve the sport and active recreation experience of Pasifika youth in the future and help safeguard sport participation experience in any subsequent crises. The study will not only improve the primary researcher’s skills and scholarly understanding, but it will also provide him with another qualification.

How will my privacy be protected?

Participants' names will not be removed from Consent forms however, any other written information about the participants will have their names replaced with a number to identify them. The data be stored securely in an encrypted folder on AUT network drive. Any electronic

information (ie computer-generated results) will also have names removed and replaced with a subject number and to be stored on a computer that requires a password to enter it.

No identifying data will be used in the write-up of the results. Your privacy and the privacy of all participants will be fully protected.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

There are no monetary costs involved in participating in this research. however your time is a huge contribution in itself.

The youth athlete participants will engage in two sessions of approximately 1.5 hours - 2 hours per talanoa. The parents/legal guardians will engage in one session of approximately 1.5 - 2 hours. The total time taken with focus groups will be approximately 16 hours due to the nature of talanoa, the time per session is approximate.

What are the discomforts and risks?

No discomforts and risks are expected. However, if you feel uncomfortable in sharing your journey or associated experience during the talanoa process then we will take a break. Again, you may choose to omit any shared information at any point of the talanoa. You are free also to withdraw at any time.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

You will be given details of local community support services. I will highlight this at the beginning of the Talanoa. Should you wish to discontinue, feel free to withdraw at any time.

Not likely but possible – should the participants experience distress, the researcher will encourage adult participants to contact AUT counselling and for youth athletes to refer to 'Need to Talk' – text or call 1737 anytime, 'Lifeline' - 0800 543 354 or (09) 5222 999 'Samaritans' - 0800 72 66 66 (as listed on the NZ Ministry of Health Manatū Hauora website).



I hope we can do this together. It will be great to meet you and you will know who I am because of my photograph. I will also wear a badge with my name on.

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.

Researcher Contact Details: Pawan Kumar Marhas, pawanmarhas@gmail.com, (+64) 275392299

Project Supervisor Contact Details: Dr. Denise Atkins, denise.atkins@aut.ac.nz, (+64) 21456509

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTECH, ethics@aut.ac.nz, (+649) 921 9999 ext. 6038.

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on **15 September 2021** AUTECH Reference number **21/268**

APPENDIX J

Ethics Approval

15 September 2021

Denise Atkins

Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences

Dear Denise

Re Ethics Application: **21/268 Pasifika Youth, Sport and Covid-19 Pandemic in Aotearoa New Zealand**

Thank you for providing evidence as requested, which satisfies the points raised by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee - AUTEK.

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 15 September 2024.

Standard Conditions of Approval

1. The research is to be undertaken in accordance with the [Auckland University of Technology Code of Conduct for Research](#) and as approved by AUTEK in this application.
2. A progress report is due annually on the anniversary of the approval date, using the EA2 form.
3. A final report is due at the expiration of the approval period, or, upon completion of project, using the EA3 form.
4. Any amendments to the project must be approved by AUTEK prior to being implemented. Amendments can be requested using the EA2 form.
5. Any serious or unexpected adverse events must be reported to AUTEK Secretariat as a matter of priority.
6. Any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should also be reported to the AUTEK Secretariat as a matter of priority.
7. It is your responsibility to ensure that the spelling and grammar of documents being provided to participants or external organisations is of a high standard and that all the dates on the documents are updated.
8. AUTEK grants ethical approval only. You are responsible for obtaining management approval for access for your research from any institution or organisation at which your research is being conducted and you need to meet all ethical, legal, public health, and locality obligations or requirements for the jurisdictions in which the research is being undertaken.

Please quote the application number and title on all future correspondence related to this project.

For any enquiries please contact ethics@aut.ac.nz. The forms mentioned above are available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics>

This is a computer-generated letter for which no signature is required

The AUTEK Secretariat

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: Pawanmarhas@gmail.com; Michael Naylor

APPENDIX K

Research Project Pasifika Youth, Sport and the COVID-19 Pandemic in Aotearoa New Zealand

Talofa Lava. Kia Orana. Malō e Lelei. Fakaalofa Lahi Atu. Ni Sa Bula. Taloha Ni.

My name is Pawan K. Marhas. I am of Indian descent with a Samoan wife living and working in South Auckland. I am fortunate to have many multicultural and ethnic-diverse links through relatives and friends. I have been involved for the last five years with Pasifika youth and families predominantly around sports, health and wellbeing.

I am conducting a research as part of my Master of Philosophy degree at the Auckland University of Technology (AUT). **I am looking for Pasifika Youth participants (13-19yrs old) and their parents/legal guardians who would be keen to share their experiences around sport and active recreation during the Covid-19 pandemic.** I will be holding talanoa to find out about this experience. If you wish to be involved please contact me.

The study has been approved by Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee AUTEK No:21/268
Interested? I will send you additional information along with a consent form to complete.

Remember both youth and parents/legal guardians of youth will be part of this project.

Name: Pawan K. Marhas

Email: pawanmarhas@gmail.com

Mobile: 027 539 2299



References

- Agnew, F., Pulotu-Endemann, F. K., Robinson, G., Suaalii-Sauni, T., Warren, H., Wheeler, A., & Schmidt-Sopoaga, H. (2004). Pacific models of mental health service delivery in New Zealand ("PMMHSD") project. *Auckland: Health Research Council of New Zealand*.
- Ahmed, A. (2008). Ontological, Epistemological and Methodological Assumptions: Qualitative versus Quantitative. *Online Submission*.
- Aktive-Auckland Sport & Recreation. (2023). *Aktive Strategic Plan to 2024*. Aktive. Retrieved 13/05/2023 from <https://www.schoolsportnz.org.nz/Education/School-Sport-NZ-Census-Reports>
- Allen, P., Taleni, L. i. e. T., & Robertson, J. (2009). 'In Order to Teach You, I Must Know You.' The Pasifika Initiative: A Professional Development Project for Teachers. *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies*, 44(2), 47-62.
- Allender, S., Cowburn, G., & Foster, C. (2006). Understanding participation in sport and physical activity among children and adults: a review of qualitative studies. *Health education research*, 21(6), 826-835.
- Amituanai-Toloa, M. (2006). O Le'va Tapuia' (UA Tapuia LE VA) O Se Ala So'otaga I Su'esu'ega Ma Mafutaga Fa'aletagata Ma Le Si'osi'omaga: O le aganu'u enaena ma mea e ao ona tatau ona fai. *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples*, 3(1), 182-199.
- Anae, M. (2010). Teu le va: Toward a native anthropology. *Pacific Studies*, 33, 19-19.
- Anae, M. (2016). Teu le va: Samoan relational ethics. *Knowledge Cultures*, 4(03), 117-130.
- Andrassy, E. J., Svensson, P., Bruening, J., Huml, M. R., & Chung, M. (2014). The Role of Organizational Capacity in Student-Athlete Development. *Journal of Intercollegiate Sport*, 7(2), 218-244.
<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=s3h&AN=100785013&site=ehost-live&scope=site>
- Andriyani, F. D., Biddle, S. J. H., & De Cocker, K. (2021). Adolescents' physical activity and sedentary behaviour in Indonesia during the COVID-19 pandemic: a qualitative study of mothers' perspectives. *BMC Public Health*, 21(1), 1-14.
<https://ezproxy.aut.ac.nz/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&site=eds-live&db=edb&AN=153075861>
- Anne, K., Karolijn, D., Hedy van, O., Lorynn, T., Brita de Jong-van, K., Anne van, E., Lotte, H., & Koen, J. (2022). Perceived stress, family impact, and changes in physical and social daily life activities of children with chronic somatic conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic [article]. *BMC Public Health*, 22(1), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-022-13544-8>
- Anne-Linda, C., Emiliano, A., & Laura, M. (2022). The impact of screen time and green time on mental health in children and adolescents during the COVID-19 pandemic [article]. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*, 7(100204-).
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chbr.2022.100204>
- Arantes de Araújo, L., Frederico Veloso, C., de Campos Souza, M., Coelho de Azevedo, J. M., & Tarro, G. (2021). The potential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on child growth and development: a systematic review. *Jornal de Pediatria*, 97(4), 369-377.
<https://ezproxy.aut.ac.nz/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&site=eds-live&db=edb&AN=151461576>
- Atkins, D., & Godber, K. (2023). Female Higher Education Students' Lived Experiences during the COVID-19 Pandemic: The Case Study Viewed through a Phenomenological Lens. *COVID*, 3(9), 1244-1258.
- Auckland Council. (2023). *Tāmaki Makaurau Moananui-ā-Kiwa- Pacific Auckland*. Auckland Council. <https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/plans-projects-policies-reports-bylaws/our-plans-strategies/auckland-plan/about-the-auckland-plan/Pages/pacific-auckland.aspx#:~:text=The%202018%20Census%20recorded%20a,than%20was%20recorde d%20in%202013.>
- Azungah, T. (2018). Qualitative research: deductive and inductive approaches to data analysis. *Qualitative research journal*, 18(4), 383-400.

- Baice, T., Lealaialoto, B., Meiklejohn-Whiu, S., Fonua, S. M., Allen, J. M., Matapo, J., Iosefo, F., & Fa'avae, D. (2021). Responding to the call: Talanoa, va-vā, early career network and enabling academic pathways at a university in New Zealand. *Higher Education Research & Development, 40*(1), 75-89.
- Balayar, B. B., & Langlais, M. R. (2022). Parental Support, Learning Performance, and Socioemotional Development of Children and Teenagers During the COVID-19 Pandemic [Article]. *Family Journal, 30*(2), 174-183. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10664807211052496>
- Berger, R. (2015). Now I see it, now I don't: Researcher's position and reflexivity in qualitative research. *Qualitative research, 15*(2), 219-234.
- Bergsgard, N. A., & Norberg, J. R. (2010). Sports policy and politics—the Scandinavian way. *Sport in Society, 13*(4), 567-582.
- Biddle, S. J., Gorely, T., & Stensel, D. J. (2004). Health-enhancing physical activity and sedentary behaviour in children and adolescents. *Journal of Sports Sciences, 22*(8), 679-701.
- Bowes, A., Lomax, L., & Piasecki, J. (2021). A losing battle? Women's sport pre-and post-COVID-19. *European Sport Management Quarterly, 21*(3), 443-461.
- Bramley, D., Hebert, P., Tuzzio, L., & Chassin, M. (2005). Disparities in indigenous health: a cross-country comparison between New Zealand and the United States. *American Journal of Public Health, 95*(5), 844-850.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology, 3*(2), 77-101.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019). Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative research in sport, exercise and health, 11*(4), 589-597.
- Braun, V., Clarke, V., & Weate, P. (2016). Using thematic analysis in sport and exercise research. *Routledge handbook of qualitative research in sport and exercise, 1*, 191-205.
- Bunketorp Käll, L., Malmgren, H., Olsson, E., Lindén, T., & Nilsson, M. (2015). Effects of a curricular physical activity intervention on children's school performance, wellness, and brain development. *Journal of school health, 85*(10), 704-713.
- Campbell, I. C. (1989). *A history of the Pacific Islands*. Univ of California Press.
- Cancello, R., Soranna, D., Zambra, G., Zambon, A., & Invitti, C. (2020). Determinants of the Lifestyle Changes during COVID-19 Pandemic in the Residents of Northern Italy. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 17*(17), 6287. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17176287>
- Cavaye, A. L. (1996). Case study research: a multi-faceted research approach for IS. *Information systems journal, 6*(3), 227-242.
- Chambers, G. K. (2013). Genetics and the origins of the Polynesians. *Encyclopedia of Life Sciences*.
- Chen, F., Zheng, D., Liu, J., Gong, Y., Guan, Z., & Lou, D. (2020). Depression and anxiety among adolescents during COVID-19: A cross-sectional study. *Brain, Behavior, and Immunity, 88*, 36-38. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bbi.2020.05.061>
- Choudhury, S., Blakemore, S.-J., & Charman, T. (2006). Social cognitive development during adolescence. *Social cognitive and affective neuroscience, 1*(3), 165.
- Combs, G., & Freedman, J. (2002). Relationships, not boundaries. *Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics, 23*, 203-217.
- Crotty, M. (2020). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Routledge.
- Crotty, M. J. (1998). The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process. *The foundations of social research, 1*-256.
- D'Arcy, P. (2017). *Peoples of the Pacific: the history of Oceania to 1870*. Routledge.
- Dai, J., Sang, X., Menhas, R., Xu, X., Khurshid, S., Mahmood, S., Weng, Y., Huang, J., Cai, Y., Shahzad, B., Iqbal, W., Gul, M., Saqib, Z. A., & Alam, M. N. (2021). The Influence of COVID-19 Pandemic on Physical Health–Psychological Health, Physical Activity, and Overall Well-Being: The Mediating Role of Emotional Regulation. *Frontiers in Psychology, 12*, 1-14. <https://ezproxy.aut.ac.nz/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&site=eds-live&db=edb&AN=151949735>

- Danish, S., Forneris, T., Hodge, K., & Heke, I. (2004). Enhancing youth development through sport. *World leisure journal*, 46(3), 38-49.
- Danish, S. J., Petitpas, A. J., & Hale, B. D. (1993). Life development intervention for athletes: Life skills through sports. *The counseling psychologist*, 21(3), 352-385.
- Danish, S. J., Taylor, T. E., & Fazio, R. J. (2003). Enhancing adolescent development through sports and leisure. *Blackwell handbook of adolescence*, 92-108.
- Darling-Aduana, J., Woodyard, H. T., Sass, T. R., & Barry, S. S. (2022). Learning-Mode Choice, Student Engagement, and Achievement Growth during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Working Paper No. 260-0122. *National Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research (CALDER)*.
- Davidson, C. (2003). *Social science research in New Zealand: Many paths to understanding*. Pearson Education New Zealand.
- de Abreu, J. M., de Souza, R. A., Viana-Meireles, L. G., Landeira-Fernandez, J., & Filgueiras, A. (2022). Effects of physical activity and exercise on well-being in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. *PLoS ONE*, 17(1), e0260465. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0260465>
- Degarege, G., Espiner, S. R., Stewart, E., & Espiner, N. T. (2021). *The COVID-19 pandemic and outdoor recreation: Exploring COVID-19 induced changes in outdoor recreation engagement and behaviour in New Zealand*. Lincoln University| Te Whare Wānaka o Aoraki. LEaP.
- DEMİREL, M., Alper, K., BUDAK, D., BOZOĞLU, M. S., & Yusuf, E. (2021). Effect of Covid-19 pandemic on recreational awareness and quality of life. *Turkish Journal of Sport and Exercise*, 23(2), 197-207.
- Denerel, N., Köyağasıoğlu, O., Şenışık, S., Çiğdem, S., & Tunç, S. (2021). Effects of Long-Duration Home Isolation Linked to the COVID-19 Pandemic on Mental Health of Adolescent Athletes. *Pediatric Exercise Science*, 33(4), 170-176. <https://ezproxy.aut.ac.nz/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&site=eds-live&db=s3h&AN=153340158>
- DeSouza, R. (2008). Wellness for all: The possibilities of cultural safety and cultural competence in New Zealand. *Journal of Research in Nursing*, 13(2), 125-135.
- DeYoung, W., & Li, K. (2022). Association of perceived stress with changes in physical activity and sitting time before and during COVID-19 pandemic among college students. *JOURNAL OF AMERICAN COLLEGE HEALTH*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2022.2082847>
- Di Liegro, C. M., Schiera, G., Proia, P., & Di Liegro, I. (2019). Physical activity and brain health. *Genes*, 10(9), 720.
- Dodgson, J. E. (2019). Reflexivity in qualitative research. *Journal of Human Lactation*, 35(2), 220-222.
- Donaldson, S. J., & Ronan, K. R. (2006). The effects of sports participation on young adolescents' emotional well-being. *Adolescence*, 41(162).
- Dunbar, C. (2008). Critical race theory and indigenous methodologies. *Handbook of critical and indigenous methodologies*, 85-99.
- Đurđević, S., Conde Ghigliazza, I., Dukanac, V., & Đurđević, A. (2022). Anxiety and depressive symptomatology among children and adolescents exposed to the COVID-19 pandemic: A systematic review [article]. *Vojnosanitetski Pregled*, 79(4), 389-399. <https://doi.org/10.2298/VSP210521092D>
- Durie, M. (1994). Te whare tapa whā. *Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand*.
- Dwyer, M. J., Pasini, M., De Dominicis, S., & Righi, E. (2020). Physical activity: Benefits and challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports*, 30(7), 1291-1294. <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=s3h&AN=143798186&site=ehost-live&scope=site>
- Dyson, B., Cowan, J., Gordon, B., Powell, D., & Shulruf, B. (2018). Physical education in Aotearoa New Zealand primary schools. *European Physical Education Review*, 24(4), 467-486. <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=s3h&AN=132113645&site=ehost-live&scope=site>
- Dyson, B., Gordon, B., Cowan, J., & McKenzie, A. (2016). External providers and their impact on primary physical education in Aotearoa/New Zealand. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Health, Sport*

- & *Physical Education*, 7(1), 3-19.
<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=s3h&AN=115471837&site=ehost-live&scope=site>
- Edwards, F., & Krishnan, P. (2016). Thinkpiece: making a case for nurturing Pasifika students through the arts in New Zealand: now would be a good time. *Teachers and Curriculum*, 16(1).
- Edwards, M. B., & Rowe, K. (2019). Managing sport for health: An introduction to the special issue [Article]. *Sport Management Review*, 22(1), 1-4. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2018.12.006>
- Eime, R., Harvey, J., & Charity, M. (2019). Sport drop-out during adolescence: is it real, or an artefact of sampling behaviour? *International journal of sport policy and politics*, 11(4), 715-726.
- Enari, D. (2020). Pasifika Collective Well-Being During the COVID-19 Crisis: Samoans and Tongans in Brisbane. *Journal of Indigenous Social Development*, 9(3), 110-126.
- Enari, D. (2021a). Indigenous language sustainability during COVID-19. *Journal of Indigenous Social Development*, 10(1).
- Enari, D. (2021b). Methodology marriage : merging Western and Pacific research design. *Pacific dynamics*.
<https://ezproxy.aut.ac.nz/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&site=eds-live&db=edsinz&AN=edsinz.999084941702837>
- Enari, D., & Fa'aea, A. M. (2020). E tumau le fa'avae ae fesuia'i faiga: Pasifika Resilience During COVID-19 [Article]. *Oceania*, 90(S1), 75-80. <https://doi.org/10.1002/occea.5269>
- Enari, D., & Keung, S. (2022). CULTURAL PRIDE. *MAI*, 78.
- Enari, D., & Lemusuifeauaali'i, E. (2021). DUA TANI:(Re) evolving identities of Pacific Islanders. *Te Kaharoa*, 14(1).
- Enari, D., & Matapo, J. (2020). Pasifika education innovation during the COVID-19 pandemic [Article]. *MAI Journal*, 9(4), 7-11. <https://doi.org/10.20507/MAIJournal.2020.9.4.2>
- Enari, D., & Matapo, J. (2021a). Negotiating the relational vā in the University. *Journal of Global Indigeneity*, 5(1), 1-19.
- Enari, D., & Matapo, J. (2021b). Negotiating the relational vā in the University: A transnational Pasifika standpoint during the Covid-19 pandemic. *Journal of Global Indigeneity*, 5(1), 1-19.
- Etherington, K. (2004). *Becoming a reflexive researcher: Using our selves in research*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Ewing, L. A., & Cooper, H. B. (2021). Technology-enabled remote learning during COVID-19: perspectives of Australian teachers, students and parents. *Technology Pedagogy and Education*, 30(1), 41-57. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1475939x.2020.1868562>
- Fa 'avae, D. T. M., Faleolo, R., Hepi Havea, E., Enari, D., Wright, T., & Chand, A. (2022). e-talanoa as an online research method: extending vā-relations across spaces. *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples*, 18(3), 391-401.
- Fa'aea, A. M., & Enari, D. (2021). The pathway to leadership is through service: Exploring the Samoan tautua lifecycle.
- Fa'avae, D. T. M., Hemi, K. V., & Aporosa, S. (2021). Grounding our collective Talanoa: Enabling open conversations.
- Faleolo, R. (2021). " Talanoa moe va": Pacific Knowledge-Sharing and Changing Sociocultural Spaces during COVID-19. *Waikato Journal of Education*, 26, 125-134.
- Fari, G., Di Paolo, S., Ungaro, D., Luperto, G., Fari, E., & Latino, F. (2021). The Impact of COVID-19 on Sport and Daily Activities in an Italian Cohort of Football School Children. *International Journal of Athletic Therapy & Training*, 26(5), 274-278.
<https://ezproxy.aut.ac.nz/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&site=eds-live&db=s3h&AN=152246764>
- Farrelly, T., & Nabobo-Baba, U. (2014). Talanoa as empathic apprenticeship [Article]. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, 55(3), 319-330. <https://doi.org/10.1111/apv.12060>
- Fatemeh, K., & Claus-Christian, C. (2022). On the Parental Influence on Children's Physical Activities and Mental Health During the COVID-19 Pandemic [article]. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.675529>
- Fitzpatrick, K. (2013). Brown bodies, racialisation and physical education. *Sport, Education and Society*, 18(2), 135-153.

- Fitzpatrick, K., & Burrows, L. (2017). Critical health education in Aotearoa New Zealand. *Sport, Education & Society*, 22(5), 552-568.
<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=s3h&AN=123589600&site=ehost-live&scope=site>
- Flack, C. B., Walker, L., Bickerstaff, A., Earle, H., & Margetts, C. (2020). Educator perspectives on the impact of COVID-19 on teaching and learning in Australia and New Zealand. *Pivot Professional Learning*.
- Flavell, M., & Cunningham, E. (2023). Engaging in research with Pacific communities as a non-Pacific researcher: reflecting on lessons learnt. *Kōtuitui: New Zealand Journal of Social Sciences Online*, 18(2), 153-170.
- Forman, C. W. (1992). recent Developments in pacific Island Christianity. *Mission Studies*, 9(1), 24-39.
- Freeman, C., Ergler, C., Kearns, R., & Smith, M. (2022). COVID-19 in New Zealand and the Pacific: Implications for children and families. *Children's Geographies*, 20(4), 459-468.
- Futter-Puati, D., & Maua-Hodges, T. (2019). Stitching tivaevae: a Cook Islands research method. *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples*, 15(2), 140-149.
- Fuzeki, E., Schroeder, J., Groneberg, D. A., & Banzer, W. (2021). Online Exercise Classes during the COVID-19 Related Lockdown in Germany: Use and Attitudes. *Sustainability*, 13(14), 7677.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/su13147677>
- Galuvao, A. (2022). COVID-19 PANDEMIC ADDS TO THE DILEMMA OF PACIFIC STUDENTS IN SOUTH AUCKLAND. *TESOLANZ Journal*, 30.
- Gano-Overway, L. A., Newton, M., Magyar, T. M., Fry, M. D., Kim, M.-S., & Guivernau, M. R. (2009). Influence of caring youth sport contexts on efficacy-related beliefs and social behaviors. *Developmental psychology*, 45(2), 329.
- Garbett, D., Ovens, A., & Thomas, L. (2018). Biculturalism 101: A Self-Study Exploring Culturally Responsive Practice [Article]. *Studying Teacher Education*, 14(3), 308-319.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17425964.2018.1541251>
- García, E., & Weiss, E. (2020). COVID-19 and Student Performance, Equity, and US Education Policy: Lessons from Pre-Pandemic Research to Inform Relief, Recovery, and Rebuilding. *Economic Policy Institute*.
- Genevieve, F. D., Bridgette, D., & Shirlene, D. W. (2020). Early effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on physical activity and sedentary behavior in children living in the U.S [article]. *BMC Public Health*, 20(1), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-020-09429-3>
- Godber, K., & Atkins, D. (2021). COVID-19 Impacts on Teaching and Learning: A Collaborative Autoethnography by Two Higher Education Lecturers. *Frontiers in Education*, 6.
<https://doi.org/10.3389/educ.2021.647524>
- Godber, K. A., & Atkins, D. R. (2023). Sport and Recreation Undergraduate Students' Perspectives on Disruption of Lifestyle, Active Lives, Learning, and Livelihood during Pandemic Times. *COVID*, 3(9), 1356-1379.
- Golberstein, E., Wen, H., & Miller, B. F. (2020). Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and mental health for children and adolescents. *JAMA pediatrics*, 174(9), 819-820.
- Goodyear, V. A., Armour, K. M., & Wood, H. (2019). Young people and their engagement with health-related social media: new perspectives. *Sport, Education & Society*, 24(7), 673-688.
<https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=s3h&AN=137773353&site=ehost-live&scope=site>
- Gordon, B., Sauni, P., & Tuagalu, C. (2013a). Sport means 'family and church': sport in New Zealand Pasifika communities. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Health, Sport & Physical Education*, 4(1), 49-63. <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=s3h&AN=87317330&site=ehost-live&scope=site>
- Gordon, B., Sauni, P., & Tuagalu, C. (2013b). Sport means 'family and church': Sport in New Zealand Pasifika communities. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Health, Sport and Physical Education*, 4(1), 49-63.
- Gordon, B., Sauni, P., Tuagalu, C., & Hodis, F. (2010). Sport and recreation in New Zealand Pasifika communities. *Victoria University*.

- Gorlén, T. F., Gorlén, T., & Neergaard, M. A. (2013). Death in nursing homes: a Danish qualitative study. *International journal of palliative nursing*, 19(5), 236-242.
- Gracia, R., Pamias, M., Mortier, P., Alonso, J., Pérez, V., & Palao, D. (2021). Is the COVID-19 pandemic a risk factor for suicide attempts in adolescent girls? *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 292, 139-141. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2021.05.044>
- Grainger, A. (2009). Rugby Island style: Paradise, pacific people, and the racialisation of athletic performance. *Junctures: The Journal for Thematic Dialogue*(12).
- Grover, K. A. (2015). *A validation of the family involvement questionnaire-high school version*. Minnesota State University, Mankato.
- Guest, G., MacQueen, K. M., & Namey, E. E. (2011). *Applied thematic analysis*. sage publications.
- Gunther, S., Emery, S., Lasike, V., Marsh, J., Pauta, M., Peini, S., & Timu-Parata, C. (2009). Mental health and well-being: A Pacific nursing perspective. *Whitireia Nursing Journal*(16), 35-37.
- Hamer, D. H. (2005). *The God gene: How faith is hardwired into our genes*. Anchor.
- Hamilton, J. L., Nesi, J., & Choukas-Bradley, S. (2020). Teens and social media during the COVID-19 pandemic: Staying socially connected while physically distant.
- Hapeta, J., Palmer, F., Kuroda, Y., & Hermansson, G. (2019). A Kaupapa Māori, culturally progressive, narrative review of literature on sport, ethnicity and inclusion [Article]. *Kotuitui: New Zealand Journal of Social Sciences*, 14(2), 209-229. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1177083X.2019.1600558>
- Hapeta, J., Stewart-Withers, R., & Palmer, F. (2019). Sport for Social Change With Aotearoa New Zealand Youth: Navigating the Theory--Practice Nexus Through Indigenous Principles. *Journal of Sport Management*, 33(5), 481-491. <https://ezproxy.aut.ac.nz/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=s3h&AN=140436274&site=eds-live>
- Harangi-Rákos, M., Pfau, C., Bácsné Bába, É., Bács, B. A., & Kőmíves, P. M. (2022). Lockdowns and Physical Activities: Sports in the Time of COVID. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(4), 2175.
- Hawkes, G. L. (2018). Indigenous masculinity in sport: The power and pitfalls of rugby league for Australia's Pacific Island diaspora. *Leisure Studies*, 37(3), 318-330.
- Hawkes, G. L. (2023). Football, faith and family for the Australian Pacific Island diaspora: the role of the vā ('space between') in rugby league. *Sport in Society*, 26(9), 1530-1548.
- Hayes, M. (2022). Social media and inspiring physical activity during COVID-19 and beyond. *Managing Sport & Leisure*, 27(1/2), 8-15. <https://ezproxy.aut.ac.nz/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&site=eds-live&db=s3h&AN=155633978>
- Heal, B., Sailofsky, D., Warner, M., Darnell, S., & Robinson, J. (2021). CHANGE THE GAME RESEARCH-A study focused on youth sport access, engagement, and equity factors in the wake of the pandemic.
- Health Research Council New Zealand. (2014, May 2014,). *Pasifika Health Research Guidelines*. Health Research Council of New Zealand. <https://www.hrc.govt.nz/resources/pacific-health-research-guidelines-2014>
- Hergüner, G., Yaman, Ç., Çaglak Sari, S., Yaman, M. S., & Dönmez, A. (2021). The effect of online learning attitudes of sports sciences students on their learning readiness to learn online in the era of the new coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19). *Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology-TOJET*, 20(1), 68-77.
- Hermens, N., Super, S., Verkooijen, K. T., & Koelen, M. A. (2017). A systematic review of life skill development through sports programs serving socially vulnerable youth. *Research quarterly for exercise and sport*, 88(4), 408-424.
- Hilder, B. (1965). Kau Moala the Tongan Navigator. *The Journal of Navigation*, 18(2), 246-249.
- Hindley, P., November, N., Sturm, S., & Wolfgramm-Foliaki, E. (2020). Rolling out the mat: A talanoa on talanoa as a higher education research methodology. In *Theory and Method in Higher Education Research* (Vol. 6, pp. 99-113). Emerald Publishing Limited.
- Horton, P. (2014). Pacific Islanders in professional rugby football: Bodies, minds and cultural continuities. *Asia Pacific Journal of Sport and Social Science*, 3(3), 222-235.

- Houlihan, B., & White, A. (2003). *The politics of sports development: Development of sport or development through sport?* Routledge.
- Howley, D. (2022). Experiences of teaching and learning in K-12 physical education during COVID-19: an international comparative case study. *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, 27(6), 608-625.
- Hu, D., Zhang, H., Sun, Y., & Li, Y. (2021). The effects of the measures against COVID-19 pandemic on physical activity among school-aged children and adolescents (6–17 years) in 2020: A protocol for systematic review. *PLoS ONE*, 16(7), 1-8.
<https://ezproxy.aut.ac.nz/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&site=eds-live&db=edb&AN=151642813>
- Huang, Y., & Zhao, N. (2020). Generalized anxiety disorder, depressive symptoms and sleep quality during COVID-19 outbreak in China: a web-based cross-sectional survey [Article]. *Psychiatry Research*, 288. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2020.112954>
- Humphrey, J. H. (2012). *Child development through sports*. Routledge.
- Ingledew, D. K., & Markland, D. (2008). The role of motives in exercise participation. *Psychology & Health*, 23(7), 807-828.
<https://ezproxy.aut.ac.nz/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&site=eds-live&db=s3h&AN=34084700>
- Ioane, J. (2017). Talanoa with Pasifika youth and their families. *New Zealand Journal of Psychology*, 46(3).
- Ioane, J., Percival, T., Laban, W., & Lambie, I. (2021). All of community by all-of-government: reaching Pacific people in Aotearoa New Zealand during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Irène, M., Sabine, H., Youssef El, O., Xavier, B., Anne, V., & Pascale, D. (2020). How to deal with COVID-19 epidemic-related lockdown physical inactivity and sedentary increase in youth? Adaptation of Anses' benchmarks [article]. *Archives of Public Health*, 78(1), 1-6.
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s13690-020-00432-z>
- Jamile, M., Nina, J., Anna, S., & Georgina, W. (2021). The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic and Societal Infection Control Measures on Children and Adolescents' Mental Health: A Scoping Review [article]. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 12. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsy.2021.711791>
- Janssen, I., & LeBlanc, A. G. (2010). Systematic review of the health benefits of physical activity and fitness in school-aged children and youth. *International journal of behavioral nutrition and physical activity*, 7(1), 1-16.
- Jessica, M. N., John Marc, G., Michael, H., & Natalie, K. (2022). Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Student Learning and Opportunity Gaps Across the 2020–2021 School Year: A National Survey of Teachers [article]. *Frontiers in Education*, 7.
<https://doi.org/10.3389/educ.2022.921497>
- Jiao, W. Y., Wang, L. N., Liu, J., Fang, S. F., Jiao, F. Y., Pettoello-Mantovani, M., & Somekh, E. (2020). Behavioral and Emotional Disorders in Children during the COVID-19 Epidemic. *JOURNAL OF PEDIATRICS*, 221, 264-+. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpeds.2020.03.013>
- John, M., Bronagh, M., & Mary Rose, S. (2021). Physical Activity, Mental Health and Wellbeing of Irish Adolescents During Covid-19 Restrictions. A Re-Issue of the Physical Activity and Wellbeing Study (PAWS) [article]. *Physical Activity and Health*, 5(1).
<https://doi.org/10.5334/paah.127>
- Johnson, T. (2019). PROTECTING THE PACIFIC. *NZ Rugby World*(201), 28-28.
<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=s3h&AN=137786864&site=ehost-live&scope=site>
- Jun, W., Alec, A., Anurima, B., Christabel, C., Erica, W., Kevin, S., Michael, J., & Yunhee, K. (2021). Gender differences in psychosocial status of adolescents during COVID-19: a six-country cross-sectional survey in Asia Pacific [article]. *BMC Public Health*, 21(1), 1-18.
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-021-12098-5>
- Kara, H. (2017). *Research and evaluation for busy students and practitioners: A time-saving guide*. Policy Press.
- Keles, B., McCrae, N., & Grealish, A. (2020). A systematic review: the influence of social media on depression, anxiety and psychological distress in adolescents [Review]. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 25(1), 79-93. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02673843.2019.1590851>

- Ka'ili, T. O. (2017). *Marking indigeneity: The Tongan art of sociospatial relations*. University of Arizona Press.
- Kara, C., & Frey, A. (2022). The Impact of COVID-19-Related School Closures on Student Achievement-A Meta-Analysis. *EDUCATIONAL MEASUREMENT-ISSUES AND PRACTICE*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/emip.12495>
- Koorts, H., Salmon, P. M., Swain, C. T., Cassar, S., Strickland, D., & Salmon, J. (2022a). A systems thinking approach to understanding youth active recreation. *International journal of behavioral nutrition and physical activity*, *19*(1), 1-19.
- Koorts, H., Salmon, P. M., Swain, C. T. V., Cassar, S., Strickland, D., & Salmon, J. (2022b). A systems thinking approach to understanding youth active recreation. *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition & Physical Activity*, *19*(1), 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12966-022-01292-2>
- Lakisa, D., Adair, D., & Taylor, T. (2014). Pasifika diaspora and the changing face of Australian Rugby League. *The Contemporary Pacific*, 347-367.
- Lakisa, D. R. (2020). *Managing Pasifika Diaspora in Australian Rugby League*
- Lakisa, D. R., Teaiwa, K., Adair, D., & Taylor, T. (2019). Empowering Voices from the Past: The Playing Experiences of Retired Pasifika Rugby League Athletes in Australia. *International Journal of the History of Sport*, *36*(12), 1096-1114. <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=s3h&AN=140469759&site=ehost-live&scope=site>
- Lally, M. (2021). The costs and benefits of COVID-19 lockdowns in New Zealand. *MedRxiv*, 2021.2007.2015.21260606.
- Lambert, V. A., & Lambert, C. E. (2012). Qualitative descriptive research: An acceptable design. *Pacific Rim International Journal of Nursing Research*, *16*(4), 255-256.
- Lather, P. (1986). Research as praxis. *Harvard educational review*, *56*(3), 257-278.
- Laura, J. W., Sarah, E. W., & Jet, J. C. S. V. v. Z. (2021). Physical Activity Protects Against the Negative Impact of Coronavirus Fear on Adolescent Mental Health and Well-Being During the COVID-19 Pandemic [article]. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *12*. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.580511>
- Laurier, C., Pascuzzo, K., & Beaulieu, G. (2021). Uncovering the personal and environmental factors associated with youth mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic: The pursuit of sports and physical activity as a protective factor. *Traumatology*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/trm0000342>
- Lee, S. P., Cornwell, T. B., & Babiak, K. (2013). Developing an Instrument to Measure the Social Impact of Sport: Social Capital, Collective Identities, Health Literacy, Well-Being and Human Capital. *Journal of Sport Management*, *27*(1), 24-42. <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=s3h&AN=85918238&site=ehost-live&scope=site>
- Lefao, M. T. (2017). *Fa'aSamoa: An Afro-Oceanic Understanding of Epistemology through Folktales and Oral History* Temple University. Libraries].
- Li, M., Wang, Q., & Shen, J. (2022). The Impact of Physical Activity on Mental Health during COVID-19 Pandemic in China: A Systematic Review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *19*(11). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19116584>
- Lilo, L. S. u., Tautolo, E.-S., & Smith, M. (2020). Health literacy, culture and Pacific peoples in Aotearoa, New Zealand: A review. *Pacific Health*, *3*.
- Lilomaiva-Doktor, S. (2004). *Fa 'a-Samoa and population movement from the inside out: The case of Salelologa, Savai 'i* [Honolulu]:[University of Hawaii at Manoa],[August 2004]].
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (2016). *The constructivist credo*. Routledge.
- Lincoln, Y. S., Lynham, S. A., & Guba, E. G. (2011). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences, revisited. *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*, *4*(2), 97-128.
- Low, N., & Mounts, N. S. (2022). Economic stress, parenting, and adolescents' adjustment during the COVID-19 pandemic. *FAMILY RELATIONS*, *71*(1), 90-107. <https://doi.org/10.1111/fare.12623>
- Lupton, D. (2020). 'Better understanding about what's going on': young Australians' use of digital technologies for health and fitness [Article]. *Sport, Education and Society*, *25*(1), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2018.1555661>

- Mack, L. (2010). The philosophical underpinnings of educational research. In: Polyglossia.
- Magson, N. R., Freeman, J. Y. A., Rapee, R. M., Richardson, C. E., Oar, E. L., & Fardouly, J. (2021). Risk and Protective Factors for Prospective Changes in Adolescent Mental Health during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Journal of Youth & Adolescence*, 50(1), 44-57.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-020-01332-9>
- Mahoney, A. E., Elders, A., Li, I., David, C., Haskelberg, H., Guiney, H., & Millard, M. (2021). A tale of two countries: Increased uptake of digital mental health services during the COVID-19 pandemic in Australia and New Zealand. *Internet Interventions*, 25, 100439.
- Malizia, V., Ferrante, G., Fasola, S., Montalbano, L., Cilluffo, G., & La Grutta, S. (2021). New Technologies for Promoting Physical Activity in Healthy Children and in Children with Chronic Respiratory Diseases: A Narrative Review. *Sustainability*, 13(21), Article 11661.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/su132111661>
- Malterud, K. (2001). Qualitative research: standards, challenges, and guidelines. *The lancet*, 358(9280), 483-488.
- Maria, E., Birgitta, K., Jonas, S., Charlotta, H., Petra von Heideken, W., Micael, D., & Daniel, L. (2022). Changes in Physical Activity and Sedentary Behavior before and during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Swedish Population Study [article]. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(2558), 2558-2558. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19052558>
- Marques de Miranda, D., da Silva Athanasio, B., Sena Oliveira, A. C., & Simoes-e-Silva, A. C. (2020). How is COVID-19 pandemic impacting mental health of children and adolescents? [Review]. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 51, Article 101845.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijdr.2020.101845>
- Marriott, L., & Sim, D. (2015). Indicators of inequality for Maori and Pacific people. *Journal of New Zealand Studies*(20), 24-50.
- Matapo, J., & Baice, T. (2020). The art of wayfinding Pasifika success. *MAI Journal*, 9(1), 26-37.
- Matapo, J., & Enari, D. (2021). Re-imagining the dialogic spaces of talanoa through Samoan onto-epistemology [Article]. *Waikato Journal of Education* (2382-0373), 26, 79-88.
<https://doi.org/10.15663/wje.v26i1.770>
- Meiring, R. M., Gusso, S., McCullough, E., & Bradnam, L. (2021). The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic movement restrictions on self-reported physical activity and health in New Zealand: A cross-sectional survey. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(4), 1719.
- Melody, T., Tiffany, B. A., Patrina, H. Y. C., Skinner, S. R., Melissa, K., Kirsten, M., & Karen, M. S. (2022). Adolescents' self-efficacy and digital health literacy: a cross-sectional mixed methods study [article]. *BMC Public Health*, 22(1), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-022-13599-7>
- Mila-Schaaf, K. (2010). *Polycultural capital and the Pasifika second generation: negotiating identities in diasporic spaces: a thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology at Massey University, Albany, New Zealand* Massey University].
- Ministry for Pacific Peoples. (2020). *Pacific Aotearoa Status Report A snapshot 2020* M. f. P. Peoples.
<https://www.mpp.govt.nz/assets/Reports/Pacific-Peoples-in-Aotearoa-Report.pdf>
- Ministry of Education. (1999). *Health and Physical Education in the NZ Curriculum* Wellington: Learning Media Limited Retrieved from file:///Users/apple/Downloads/hpe_statement.pdf
- Ministry of Education. (2007). Health and physical education. <https://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/The-New-Zealand-Curriculum/Health-and-physical-education>
- Ministry of Education. (2016). *EARLY LEARNING CURRICULUM- WHAT'S IMPORTANT AND WHAT WORKS*. Wellington Education Review office Retrieved from
<https://ero.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2021-05/ERO-Early-Learning-Curriculum-WEB.pdf>
- Ministry of Education, N. (2020a). *The Statement of National Education and Learning Priorities (NELP) and the Tertiary Education Strategy (TES)*. Ministry of Education.,
<https://www.education.govt.nz/our-work/overall-strategies-and-policies/the-statement-of-national-education-and-learning-priorities-nelp-and-the-tertiary-education-strategy-tes/#sh-Cultural%20Responsive%20Pasifika>
- Ministry of Education, N. (2020b). *Supporting Pacific Success – Action Plan for Pacific Education 2020–2030*. Ministry of Education, NZ. <https://www.education.govt.nz/news/supporting->

[pacific-success-action-plan-for-pacific-education-2020-2030/#sh-Pasifika%20Education%20Plan](https://www.health.govt.nz/pacific-success-action-plan-for-pacific-education-2020-2030/#sh-Pasifika%20Education%20Plan)

- Ministry of Health. (2020a). *COVID-19 updates*. New Zealand Government of Retrieved 13/05/2023 from <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/feature/covid-19-updates>
- Ministry of Health. (2020b). *History of the COVID-19 Alert System*. New Zealand Government. <https://covid19.govt.nz/about-our-covid-19-response/history-of-the-covid-19-alert-system/>
- Ministry of Health. (2023). *Ministry of Health* Ministry of Health. <https://www.health.govt.nz/search/results/Pasifika>
- Ministry of Pacific Peoples. (2020). *Pacific Aotearoa Status Report A snapshot*. M. o. P. Peoples. <https://www.mpp.govt.nz/assets/Reports/Pac>
- Morgan, G., & Smircich, L. (1980). The case for qualitative research. *Academy of management review*, 5(4), 491-500.
- Mutch, C. (2021). COVID-19 and the exacerbation of educational inequalities in New Zealand.
- Naufahu, M. (2018). A pasifika research methodology: Talaloto [Article]. *Waikato Journal of Education*, 23(1), 15-24. <https://doi.org/10.15663/wje.v23i1.635>
- Neergaard, M. A., Olesen, F., Andersen, R. S., & Sondergaard, J. (2009). Qualitative description—the poor cousin of health research? *BMC medical research methodology*, 9(1), 1-5.
- Nemani, M. J., & Thorpe, H. (2023). “My Thighs Can Squash You”: Young Māori and Pasifika Wāhine Celebration of Strong Brown Bodies. *Youth*, 3(3), 971-990.
- New Zealand Government. (2020). Unite against COVID-19. <https://covid19.govt.nz/about-our-covid-19-response/history-of-the-covid-19-protection-framework-traffic-lights/>
- Ng, K., Cosma, A., Svacina, K., Boniel-Nissim, M., & Badura, P. (2021). Czech adolescents’ remote school and health experiences during the spring 2020 COVID-19 lockdown. *Preventive Medicine Reports*, 22, 101386.
- Nguyen, H. T. M., Nguyen, H. V., Zouini, B., Senhaji, M., Bador, K., Meszaros, Z. S., Stevanovic, D., & Kerekes, N. (2022). The COVID-19 Pandemic and Adolescents' Psychological Distress: A Multinational Cross-Sectional Study. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(14). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19148261>
- Nieminen, J. H., Tai, J., Boud, D., & Henderson, M. (2022). Student agency in feedback: beyond the individual. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 47(1), 95-108.
- O’Kane, S. M., Lahart, I. M., Gallagher, A. M., Carlin, A., Faulkner, M., Jago, R., & Murphy, M. H. (2021). Changes in Physical Activity, Sleep, Mental Health, and Social Media Use During COVID-19 Lockdown Among Adolescent Girls: A Mixed-Methods Study. *Journal of Physical Activity & Health*, 18(6), 677-685. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jpah.2020-0649>
- O’Leary, Z. (2017). *The essential guide to doing your research project* (3rd edition. ed.). SAGE.
- O’Brien, W., Adamakis, M., O’Brien, N., Onofre, M., Martins, J., Dania, A., Makopoulou, K., Herold, F., Ng, K., & Costa, J. (2020). Implications for European Physical Education Teacher Education during the COVID-19 pandemic: a cross-institutional SWOT analysis. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 43(4), 503-522.
- Obidovna, D. Z., & Sulaymonovich, D. S. (2022). Physical activity and its impact on human health and longevity. *Достижения науки и образования*(2 (82)), 120-126.
- Olushola, J. O., Jones, D. F., Dixon, M. A., & Green, B. C. (2013). More than basketball: Determining the sport components that lead to long-term benefits for African-American girls. *Sport Management Review*, 16(2), 211-225.
- Orben, A., Tomova, L., & Blakemore, S.-J. (2020). The effects of social deprivation on adolescent development and mental health. *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health*, 4(8), 634-640. [https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S2352-4642\(20\)30186-3](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S2352-4642(20)30186-3)
- Ortlipp, M. (2008). Keeping and using reflective journals in the qualitative research process. *The qualitative report*, 13(4), 695-705.
- Othman, R. (2021). Managing student and faculty expectations and the unexpected during the COVID-19 lockdown: role transformation. *Accounting Research Journal*, 34(2), 217-228.
- Otunuku, M. a. (2011). How can talanoa be used effectively an an indigenous research methodology with Tongan people? *Pacific-Asian Education*, 23(2), 43-52.
- Ovens, A. (2010). The New Zealand Curriculum: emergent insights and complex renderings. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Health, Sport & Physical Education*, 1(1), 27-32.

- <https://ezproxy.aut.ac.nz/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&site=eds-live&db=s3h&AN=57811607>
- Pacific Research & Policy Centre, a. P. M. D. (2017). *Pacific Research Guidelines and Protocols*. Massey University, New Zealand.
https://www.massey.ac.nz/documents/1055/PRPC_Pacific_Research_Guidelines_2017.pdf
- Pandya, N. K. (2021). Disparities in youth sports and barriers to participation. *Current reviews in musculoskeletal medicine*, 1-6.
- Papps, E., & Ramsden, I. (1996). Cultural safety in nursing: The New Zealand experience. *International journal for quality in health care*, 8(5), 491-497.
- Parker, K., Uddin, R., Ridgers, N. D., Brown, H., Veitch, J., Salmon, J., Timperio, A., Sahlqvist, S., Cassar, S., Toffoletti, K., Maddison, R., & Arundell, L. (2021). The Use of Digital Platforms for Adults' and Adolescents' Physical Activity During the COVID-19 Pandemic (Our Life at Home): Survey Study. *JOURNAL OF MEDICAL INTERNET RESEARCH*, 23(2), e23389.
<https://doi.org/10.2196/23389>
- Pearson, N., Braithwaite, R. E., Biddle, S. J. H., van Sluijs, E. M. F., & Atkin, A. J. (2014). Associations between sedentary behaviour and physical activity in children and adolescents: a meta-analysis. *Obesity Reviews*, 15(8), 666-675. <https://doi.org/10.1111/obr.12188>
- Petty, N. J., Thomson, O. P., & Stew, G. (2012). Ready for a paradigm shift? Part 1: Introducing the philosophy of qualitative research. *Manual therapy*, 17(4), 267-274.
- Post, E. G., Rivera, M. J., Doss, D., & Eberman, L. E. (2022). Parent decision-making regarding youth sport participation during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Community Health*, 47(4), 687-696. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10900-022-01078-4>
- Prescott, S. M. (2008). Using talanoa in Pacific business research in New Zealand: Experiences with Tongan entrepreneurs. *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples*, 4(1), 127-148.
- Raimondi, S., Cammarata, G., Testa, G., Bellerba, F., Galli, F., Gnagnarella, P., Iannuzzo, M. L., Ricci, D., Sartorio, A., Sasso, C., Pravettoni, G., & Gandini, S. (2022). The Impact of Sport Activity Shut down during the COVID-19 Pandemic on Children, Adolescents, and Young Adults: Was It Worthwhile? *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(13), 7908. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19137908>
- Ren, H., He, X., Bian, X., Shang, X., & Liu, J. (2021). The Protective Roles of Exercise and Maintenance of Daily Living Routines for Chinese Adolescents During the COVID-19 Quarantine Period. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 68(1), 35-42.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2020.09.026>
- Rimoni, F. (2023). Fa'afaletui Framework. In *Varieties of Qualitative Research Methods: Selected Contextual Perspectives* (pp. 173-176). Springer.
- Riwai-Couch, M., Bull, A., & Nicholls, J. (2020). Puna korero: Learning from the Parents of Maori and Pasifika Students. *set: Research Information for Teachers*(1), 58-65.
<https://ezproxy.aut.ac.nz/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&site=eds-live&db=eric&AN=EJ1261894>
<https://doi.org/10.18296/set.0162>
- Rosel, I., Bauer, L. L., Seiffer, B., Deinhart, C., Atrott, B., Sudeck, G., Hautzinger, M., & Wolf, S. (2022). The effect of exercise and affect regulation skills on mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic: A cross-sectional survey. *Psychiatry Research*, 312, 114559.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2022.114559>
- Rossen, F., Lucassen, M., Denny, S., & Robinson, E. (2009). Youth '07 The health and wellbeing of secondary school students in New Zealand: Results for young people attracted to the same sex or both sexes.
- Rumsey, M., Townsend, L., Maguire, J., Hrlec, M., & Thiessen, J. (2021). Digital Remote Provide remote training and resources for mental health and wellbeing and mental health resilience for frontline healthcare staff across the Western Pacific Region.
- Sadiman, R. (2017). *Children's experiences of sport : a case study: a thesis submitted to Auckland University of Technology in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Sport and Exercise (MSPEx), 2017* [Thesis, Auckland University of Technology].
<http://hdl.handle.net/10292/10932>

- Salmon, P. (2001). Effects of physical exercise on anxiety, depression, and sensitivity to stress: a unifying theory. *Clinical psychology review*, 21(1), 33-61.
- Sandelowski, M. (2000). Whatever happened to qualitative description? *Research in nursing & health*, 23(4), 334-340.
- Sasser, P., McGuine, T. A., Haraldsdottir, K., Biese, K. M., Goodavish, L., Stevens, B., & Watson, A. M. (2022). Reported COVID-19 Incidence in Wisconsin High School Athletes in Fall 2020. *Journal of Athletic Training (Allen Press)*, 57(1), 59-64. <https://ezproxy.aut.ac.nz/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&site=eds-live&db=s3h&AN=154739405>
- Scarmozzino, F., & Visioli, F. (2020). Covid-19 and the subsequent lockdown modified dietary habits of almost half the population in an Italian sample [Article]. *Foods*, 9(5), Article foods9050675. <https://doi.org/10.3390/foods9050675>
- Schonfeld, I. S., & Mazzola, J. J. (2012). Strengths and Limitations of Qualitative Approaches to Research in Occupational Health Psychology1. In *Research methods in occupational health psychology* (pp. 268-289). Routledge.
- School Sport New Zealand. (2022). *School Sport NZ Census Reports*. NZSSSC. <https://www.schoolsportnz.org.nz/Education/School-Sport-NZ-Census-Reports>
- Sfendla, A., & Hadrya, F. (2020). Factors Associated with Psychological Distress and Physical Activity During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Health Security*, 18(6), 444-453. <https://doi.org/10.1089/hs.2020.0062>
- Sieber, J. E., & Tolich, M. B. (2012). *Planning ethically responsible research* (Vol. 31). Sage Publications.
- Singh, D. (2019). Understanding philosophical underpinnings of research with respect to various paradigms: Perspective of a research scholar. ANVESH-2019 Doctoral Research Conference in Management,
- Singh, S., Roy, D., Sinha, K., Parveen, S., Sharma, G., & Joshi, G. (2020). Impact of COVID-19 and lockdown on mental health of children and adolescents: A narrative review with recommendations. *Psychiatry Research*, 293, 113429. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2020.113429>
- Singh, S., Roy, D., Sinha, K., Parveen, S., Sharma, G., & Joshi, G. (2020). Impact of COVID-19 and lockdown on mental health of children and adolescents: A narrative review with recommendations [Review]. *Psychiatry Research*, 293, Article 113429. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2020.113429>
- Skinner, J., Zakus, D. H., & Cowell, J. (2008a). Development through Sport: Building Social Capital in Disadvantaged Communities. *Sport Management Review (Sport Management Association of Australia & New Zealand)*, 11(3), 253-275. <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=s3h&AN=60308978&site=ehost-live&scope=site>
- Skinner, J., Zakus, D. H., & Cowell, J. (2008b). Development through Sport: Building Social Capital in Disadvantaged Communities [Article]. *Sport Management Review*, 11(3), 253-275. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1441-3523\(08\)70112-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1441-3523(08)70112-8)
- Smith, B. A. (1999). Ethical and methodologic benefits of using a reflexive journal in hermeneutic-phenomenologic research. *Image: The journal of nursing scholarship*, 31(4), 359-363.
- Smith, L. T. (2004). Building research capability in the Pacific, for the Pacific and by Pacific peoples. *Researching the Pacific and indigenous peoples: Issues and perspectives*, 4-16.
- Sowier-Kasprzyk, I., & Widawska-Stanis, A. (2020). Changes in attitudes of consumers of sports and recreational services in the context of Covid-19. *Journal of Physical Education and Sport*, 20(5), 2939-2944.
- Spanier, P. A., Marshall, S. J., & Faulkner, G. E. (2006). Tackling the obesity pandemic - A call for sedentary behaviour research. *Canadian Journal of Public Health-Revue Canadienne De Sante Publique*, 97(3), 255-257. <https://doi.org/10.1007/bf03405599>
- Sport New Zealand. (2020). *Active NZ COVID-19 surveys 2020*. Sport New Zealand. <https://sportnz.org.nz/research-and-insights/overview/active-nz-covid-19-surveys-2020/>
- Sport in Aotearoa/New Zealand society*. (2007). (Second edition. ed.). Cengage Learning.

- Sport New Zealand. (2021). *Active NZ 2017–2021: Effects of the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic on adult participation in Aotearoa*. Sport NZ. Retrieved 13/05/2023 from <https://sportnz.org.nz/media/4775/effects-of-the-first-year-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-on-adult-participation-final.pdf>
- Sport New Zealand. (2023). *Advice, guidance and resources*. Sports New Zealand. <https://sportnz.org.nz/covid-19-response/overview/>
- SportNZ. (2021). Voice of Rangatahi 2021. <https://sportnz.org.nz/resources/voice-of-rangatahi-2021/>
- SportNZ. (2023). Resources. <https://sportnz.org.nz/resources/?topicname=active%20recreation&resourcetype=case%20study&searchterm=¤tpageid=2320?topicname=&rolename=&resourcetype=case%20study&searchterm=¤tpageid=2320>
- Statistics New Zealand. (2010). Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs.(2010). *Health and Pacific peoples in New Zealand*, 31.
- Statistics New Zealand. (2018). *Pacific Peoples ethnic group*. Statistics New Zealand. <https://www.stats.govt.nz/tools/2018-census-ethnic-group-summaries/pacific-peoples>
- Steinberg, L. (2005). Cognitive and affective development in adolescence. *Trends in cognitive sciences*, 9(2), 69-74.
- Steptoe, A., & Butler, N. (1996). Sports participation and emotional wellbeing in adolescents. *The lancet*, 347(9018), 1789-1792.
- Stewart-Withers, R., Sewabu, K., & Richardson, S. (2017). Talanoa: A contemporary qualitative methodology for sport management. *Sport Management Review (Elsevier Science)*, 20(1), 55-68. <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=s3h&AN=121784409&site=ehost-live&scope=site>
- Sturm, D., & Kerr, R. (2022). *Sport in Aotearoa New Zealand : Contested Terrain*. Taylor & Francis Group. <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/aut/detail.action?docID=6809985>
- Suaalii-Sauni, T., Wheeler, A., Saafi, E., Robinson, G., Agnew, F., Warren, H., Erick, M., & Hingano, T. (2009). Exploration of Pacific perspectives of Pacific models of mental health service delivery in New Zealand. *Pacific health dialog*, 15(1), 18-27.
- Suarez-Lopez, J. R., Cairns, M. R., Sripada, K., Quiros-Alcala, L., Mielke, H. W., Eskenazi, B., Etzel, R. A., & Kordas, K. (2021). COVID-19 and children's health in the United States: Consideration of physical and social environments during the pandemic. *Environmental Research*, 197, 111160. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envres.2021.111160>
- Subramanyam, V., & Kinderknecht, J. (2021). Lessons Learned from COVID-19: The Youth Sports World Going Forward. *Pediatric Annals*, 50(11), e470-e473.
- Surtees, N., Taleni, L. i. e. T., Ismail, R., Rarere-Briggs, B., & Stark, R. (2021). Sailiga tomai ma malamalama'aga fa'a-Pasifika—Seeking Pasifika Knowledge to Support Student Learning: Reflections on Cultural Values Following an Educational Journey to Samoa. *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies*, 56(2), 269-283.
- Tamasese, T. K., Parsons, T. L., Sullivan, G., & Waldegrave, C. (2010). A qualitative study into Pacific perspectives on cultural obligations and volunteering. *Wellington: Pacific Section and the Family Centre Social Policy Research Unit*.
- Tandon, P. S., Zhou, C., Johnson, A. M., Gonzalez, E. S., & Kroshus, E. (2021). Association of Children's Physical Activity and Screen Time With Mental Health During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *JAMA network open*, 4(10), e2127892. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2021.27892>
- Taule'ale'ausumai, F. (2021). Pasifika Churches Trapped in the Missionary Era: A Case in Samoa. *Theologies from the Pacific*, 139-151.
- Taumoe'olau, M. (2013). 7 Respect, Solidarity, and Resilience in Pacific Worldviews. *Pacific identities and well-being: cross-cultural perspectives*, 115.
- Teganahau, T. (2023). *Exploration of the Vā between the New Zealand health system, Pasifika family and the Church: A qualitative study*
- Terry, G., Hayfield, N., Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2017). Thematic analysis. *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research in psychology*, 2, 17-37.

- Theis, N., Campbell, N., De Leeuw, J., Owen, M., & Schenke, K. C. (2021). The effects of COVID-19 restrictions on physical activity and mental health of children and young adults with physical and/or intellectual disabilities. *Disability and Health Journal*, 14(3), 101064. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dhjo.2021.101064>
- Theurel, A., Witt, A., & Shankland, R. (2022). Promoting University Students' Mental Health through an Online Multicomponent Intervention during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(16), 10442.
- Thibaut, E., Eakins, J., Vos, S., & Scheerder, J. (2017). Time and money expenditure in sports participation: The role of income in consuming the most practiced sports activities in Flanders. *Sport Management Review*, 20(5), 455-467.
- Thorpe, H., O'Leary, G., Ahmad, N., & Nemani, M. J. (2023). "If You Didn't Exercise during Lockdown, What Were You Even Doing?": Young Women, Sport, and Fitness in Pandemic Times. *Youth (2673-995X)*, 3(3), 847-868. <https://doi.org/10.3390/youth3030055>
- Tiatia-Seath, J. (2018). The importance of Pacific cultural competency in healthcare. *Pacific health dialog*, 21(1), 8-9.
- Tiatia-Seath, S. (2008). *Pacific cultural competencies: A literature review*. New Zealand Ministry of Health.
- Tima, M. T. i. T. (2013). *Youth participation : does it have a place in the Samoan traditional church? Exploring youth perceptions of the EFKS in South Auckland : a thesis submitted to in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Social Sciences-Youth Development, Auckland University of Technology, 2013* [Thesis, AUT University]. <http://hdl.handle.net/10292/7721>
- Timpka, T. (2020). Sports Health During the SARS-Cov-2 Pandemic. *Sports Medicine*, 50(8), 1413-1416. <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=s3h&AN=144708619&site=ehost-live&scope=site>
- Tipi, F. a. (2013). *When the sun goes down. What helps or hinders Pasifika professional rugby players to successfully transition to another career pathway when they retire from professional rugby* ResearchSpace@ Auckland].
- Tolich, M., & Davidson, C. (2011). An introduction to research methods: Getting started. In: Auckland, New Zealand: Pearson.
- Toloie-Eshlaghy, A., Chitsaz, S., Karimian, L., & Charkhchi, R. (2011). A classification of qualitative research methods. *Research Journal of International Studies*, 20(20), 106-123.
- Trude, H., & Jo Magne, I. (2022). Remote Education/Homeschooling During the COVID-19 Pandemic, School Attendance Problems, and School Return—Teachers' Experiences and Reflections [article]. *Frontiers in Education*, 7. <https://doi.org/10.3389/educ.2022.895983>
- Tupuola, A. M. (1993). Raising research consciousness the Fa'a Samoa way. *New Zealand Annual Review of Education*, 3, 175-189.
- Vaiioleti, T. M. (2006). Talanoa research methodology: A developing position on Pacific research. *Waikato Journal of Education*, 12.
- Vandoni, M., Codella, R., Pippi, R., Carnevale Pellino, V., Lovecchio, N., Marin, L., Silvestri, D., Gatti, A., Magenes, V. C., Regalbuto, C., Fabiano, V., Zuccotti, G., & Calcaterra, V. (2021). Combatting Sedentary Behaviors by Delivering Remote Physical Exercise in Children and Adolescents with Obesity in the COVID-19 Era: A Narrative Review. *Nutrients*, 13(12), 4459. <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu13124459>
- Vaughn, M. (2020). What is student agency and why is it needed now more than ever? *Theory Into Practice*, 59(2), 109-118.
- Villanti, A. C., LePine, S. E., Peasley-Miklus, C., West, J. C., Roemhildt, M., Williams, R., & Copeland, W. E. (2022). COVID-related distress, mental health, and substance use in adolescents and young adults. *Child & Adolescent Mental Health*, 27(2), 138-145. <https://doi.org/10.1111/camh.12550>
- Vuckovic, V., Krejac, K., & Kajtna, T. (2022). Exercise Motives of College Students after the COVID-19 Lockdown. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(12), 6977. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19126977>

- Weiss, M. R., Stuntz, C. P., Bhalla, J. A., Bolter, N. D., & Price, M. S. (2013). 'More than a game': Impact of The First Tee life skills programme on positive youth development: Project introduction and Year 1 findings. *Qualitative research in sport, exercise and health*, 5(2), 214-244.
- Wen, F., Meng, Y., Liu, K., Xia, J., Li, H., Qi, H., Meng, K., & Zhang, L. (2022). Depression among schoolchildren and adolescents aged 9-17 years during the outbreak of COVID-19 in Beijing: a cross-sectional online survey. *PSYCHOLOGY HEALTH & MEDICINE*.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13548506.2022.2058029>
- Willis, J. (2007). History and foundations of interpretivist research. *Foundations of qualitative research: Interpretive and critical approaches*, 95-146.
- Wilson, K. E., Corbett, A., Van Horn, A., Guevara Beltran, D., Ayers, J. D., Alcock, J., & Aktipis, A. (2021). Associations Between Change Over Time in Pandemic-Related Stress and Change in Physical Activity. *Journal of Physical Activity & Health*, 18(11), 1419-1426.
<https://ezproxy.aut.ac.nz/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&site=eds-live&db=s3h&AN=153459385>
- Wilson, O. W., Whatman, C., Walters, S., Keung, S., Enari, D., Rogers, A., Millar, S.-K., Ferkins, L., Hinckson, E., & Hapeta, J. (2022). The value of sport: Wellbeing benefits of sport participation during adolescence. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(14), 8579.
- Wilson, O. W. A., Holland, K. E., Elliott, L. D., Duffey, M., & Bopp, M. (2021). The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on US College Students' Physical Activity and Mental Health. *Journal of Physical Activity & Health*, 18(3), 272-278.
<https://ezproxy.aut.ac.nz/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&site=eds-live&db=s3h&AN=149084550>
- Win, G., Merrill, J., Rawlings, K., Mitchell, J., & Sacheck, J. (2021). Impact Of The Covid-19 Pandemic On Youth Physical Activity And Well-being: Findings From The Coaches Study...2021 ACSM Annual Meeting & World Congresses [Virtual], June 1 -5, 2021. *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*, 53, 242-242.
<https://doi.org/10.1249/01.mss.0000761864.70544.4c>
- Wintle, J. (2022). Physical education and physical activity promotion: lifestyle sports as meaningful experiences. *Education Sciences*, 12(3), 181.
- Wolf, S., Seiffer, B., Zeibig, J.-M., Welkerling, J., Brokmeier, L., Atrott, B., Ehring, T., & Schuch, F. B. (2021). Is Physical Activity Associated with Less Depression and Anxiety During the COVID-19 Pandemic? A Rapid Systematic Review. *Sports Medicine*, 51(8), 1771-1783.
<https://ezproxy.aut.ac.nz/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&site=eds-live&db=s3h&AN=151566886>
- Woodford, L., & Bussey, L. (2021). Exploring the Perceived Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic Social Distancing Measures on Athlete Wellbeing: A Qualitative Study Utilising Photo-Elicitation. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 1-16.
<https://ezproxy.aut.ac.nz/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&site=eds-live&db=edb&AN=151385288>
- Woods, H. C., & Scott, H. (2016). #Sleepyteens: Social media use in adolescence is associated with poor sleep quality, anxiety, depression and low self-esteem [Article]. *Journal of Adolescence*, 51, 41-49-49. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2016.05.008>
- Wright, R. K., Kobayashi, K., & Fletcher, T. (2022). COVID-19 and Sport Stadia. *Routledge Handbook of Sport and COVID-19*, 173.
- Yifan, Z., Zhe, H., Song, W., Xiaoqian, L., Mengyao, H., & Xiaofei, W. (2022). The relationship between internet addiction and aggressive behavior among adolescents during the COVID-19 pandemic: Anxiety as a mediator [article]. *Acta Psychologica*, 227(103612-).
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2022.103612>
- Zhang, S., Liu, M., Li, Y., & Chung, J. E. (2021). Teens' Social Media Engagement during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Time Series Examination of Posting and Emotion on Reddit. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(19), 10079.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph181910079>

Glossary

aiga – family in Samoan or Tokelauan

famili – family in Tongan

Fonofale – a Wellness Framework, also known as a Model of Health, which encompasses cultural values of Fiji, Tonga, Niue, Cook Islands, Tokelau, and Samoa

household bubbles – a symbolic representation of the restriction of interactions between distinct household units that are not allowed to interact face-to-face with other household groups.

kai – food in Te reo Māori

kainga – family in Niuean

kōha – gift in Te reo Māori

le vā – the ‘relational space’

matavuvale – family in Fijian

pou – pillars or posts

rangatahi – youth or younger generation in Te Reo Māori.

talanoa – to converse (verb) or have a conversation (noun), to discuss (verb) or have a discussion or a dialogue

talanoāga – noun form of Talanoa; translates to discussions or dialogues (Samoan)

tauhi vā – taking care of the sociospatial relationships (Tongan)

teu le vā – to reconcile, to look after, or to uphold a mutual understanding of the relational-space or domains of all social relationships/contexts (Samoan)

va fealoa’i – mutual respect or relational-space (Samoan)