Educational perspectives of Samoan board members of South Auckland secondary schools

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MEdL

2016

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A dissertation submitted to Auckland University of Technology in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Educational Leadership

2016

School of Education

Auckland University of Technology

Abstract

There are many factors as to why Pasifika learners are not achieving alongside the rest of their social groups. Some factors may relate to socioeconomics, poverty, barriers to learning, and a school environment not conducive to Pasifika ways of being. School boards govern schools and one of their objectives is to provide quality education for all students. How is quality education being measured by the community? By different ethnic groups? Do school boards have a good representation of their community to ensure that students are attending school and receiving quality learning and support?

The Ministry of Education (MoE) has targeted Maori and Pasifika as priority learners because of their lack of achievement compared to other groups. School boards are responsible for a strategic plan to ensure that their Maori and Pasifika learners are receiving quality education. It will be the Maori and Pasifika board members that have valuable insight into these cultures which can provide the beliefs and values that will create a learning environment ensuring a quality education for these students. Since the MoE have identified these priority learners they have the responsibility to ensure that schools have support systems in place to ensure that equitable teaching and learning opportunities are available for Maori and Pasifika learners. An important document that the MoE has published since 2001 to promote support systems for Pasifika learners is the Pasifika Education Plan and the main emphasis is the collaborative approach between the learner, family, community and the school towards bridging the gap between learners' identity and culture and the school environment to foster positive learning outcomes. Another objective at governance level is support for the increase of Pasifika representation at governance level so therefore, a school with a high population of Pasifika students must have this same population reflected in the board representation of the school.

A qualitative study with a culturally responsive conceptual framework and methodology was used when interviews were conducted with six Samoan board members in high schools with a large number of Pasifika students in South Auckland. Exploration of their perspectives pertaining to their role as board members and the use of the Pasifika Education Plan to inform their practice at governance level emerged during the interviews.

The findings of this study centred around issues such as role satisfaction, recruitment of a wider representation of Pasifika, support for new board members, capability and capacity of members, cultural responsive leadership and maintaining culture, language and identity of students in the schools. Samoan board members found their experiences in the role rewarding

and they supported the need for a wider representation of Pasifika at governance level in order to inform the practice and policies to be more inclusive of the Pasifika learners to ensure that opportunities are available to support positive learning outcomes. Surprisingly, the Pasifika Education Plan was absent and not used to inform strategic plans and policy of the six schools.

The exuberant passion and vision from these six Samoan board members was so energetic and powerful, it was evident that Pasifika learners' needs are being discussed and debated at governance level in these schools so that they are more likely to receive the quality education they deserve.

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Attestation of Authorship

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

Signature:

Acknowledgement

First and foremost, I give glory to God for empowering me to produce this dissertation. This study is a testament to your ever present guidance and provision. Ia viia le Atua! (To God be the Glory).

I thank my supervisor Dr Howard Youngs for his support, patience and guidance.

I am indebted to the six Samoan participants who have shared their trustee experiences with me. I have had the pleasure of sharing in your stories and experiences in the hope of providing a cultural lens in the literature of governance so that it provides an alternative perspective in the achievement of Pasifika students.

I cannot forget my critical friend Kiri Turketo who started this journey with me. Your support and feedback has been invaluable and your words of life and purpose spoken over me is timely.

The writing group ran by Fetaui Iosefo and Tessa Tupa'i provided a space where I felt accepted and knew that you and the rest of the team had the outmost love and support for me to ensure that I received honest feedback and allowed me to grow in my writing. Encouraging me to think outside my comfort zone. Fa'afetai mo le alofa.

Thank you to Isaac Thomas a colleague and a friend for your meticulous eye for detail enabling this dissertation to be grammatically correct.

I thank my family Diana Vao, Chanelle and Samantha Iosefo-Vao, Vivianne Lagiono, Sonny Iosefo for tirelessly babysitting for me. I would not have done it without you.

To my devoted and loving parents Fonoti, Muliagatele, Tausivaatele, Tanuvasa, Sagele Iosefo and Sauimalae Peaufa-Gaitau. Fa'afetai mo lo oulua talosaga molia ma lo oulua alofa mutimutivale. Fa'afetai mo le tapuaiga.

And lastly my handsome husband Issac Sioneloto-Poumale for believing in me by allowing me to do what I needed to do to complete this degree and to my two children Prisais and Lyric Gaitau-Grooby for your unconditional love.

Fa'afetai Fa'afetai tele lava.

This research was approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 27 April 2016 AUTEC Reference number 16/46.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Talofa lava, Fakaalofa lahi atu, Malo e lelei, Kia orana, Ni sa bula and Taloni.

One of my main passions as an educator is to see Pasifika students succeed. In order for these students to succeed they need to be part of an organisational culture that helps them to succeed. Boards of Trustees are governance teams who are responsible for the policy and strategic decision making in a school organisation and they, together with the teachers and school community, can influence a culturally responsive culture that may allow Pasifika students to be who they are and succeed in a New Zealand educational institute. However, the reality is that not all Pasifika students succeed and not all school cultures are culturally responsive. According to the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (2015) Annual Report there are encouraging statistics that show consistent achievement over the last 5 years. This trend may be a reflection on the quality of the governance of local school boards in addressing the needs of Pasifika students because there is recognition from the Ministry of Education (2013a) there are particular factors that may influence the learning outcomes of these students and need to be addressed.

The New Zealand school model evolved into self-managing organisations when the Tomorrow's Schools policy came into effect through the Education Act (1988), where Boards of Trustees (BoTs) were given substantial control over the governance of schools (New Zealand Government, 1989, as cited in Robinson & Ward, 2005). The new governance and management structure that was suggested by the taskforce, which was the first of its kind in New Zealand at the time, was controversial. The main recommendation from the task force report was to make schools self-managing (Wylie, 2012). Self-managing can be defined as "one for which there has been significant and consistent de-centralisation to the school level of authority to make decisions related to the allocation of resources" (Caldwell & Spink, 1988, p. 4). This meant that education authorities, which controlled all aspects of a school, were relinquished and replaced by locally elected Boards of Trustees which were given the legislative responsibility to govern and manage schools. They were responsible for finances, policy, property, employment and strengthening relationships within the community (Openshaw, 2009); however, the Principal was responsible for the day-to-day responsibilities and implementation of policy (Robinson & Ward, 2005). The rational for self-managing schools was to make them more accountable for the resources they had, as well as ensuring that they fulfilled the guidelines outlined by the national educational, as well as the national

administration, guidelines. Wylie (2012) agreed with boards and schools operating within New Zealand legislation (Education Act, 1989) without seeking approval for particular decisions. The national educational goals states that "education is the core of our nation's effort to achieve economic and social progress" (MoE, n.d, para. 3). This placed a huge responsibility on BoTs to ensure that they were working effectively to ensure the success of their school in order to contribute to the economic and social progress of New Zealand.

BoTs were presented with a challenging role of ensuring that schools were well resourced, all students were achieving and teachers were effective and competent (Openshaw, 2009). BoTs are made up of elected parent representatives, where one acts as the chair, the Principal, and with a staff and a student representative. In relation to the research of BoTs, Youngs, Cardno and Smith (2007) stated the effectiveness of a board depended on role clarification, and along with Robinson and Ward (2005) emphasised that in order for productive work to occur maintaining and strengthening relationships between trustees and Principals is important. However, there is a gap revealed in the literature of non-western concepts related to the role of BoTs. A prescribed intention of Tomorrow's Schools suggest that BoTs should be ethnically represented of the school's community. Most South Auckland secondary schools have large proportions of Pasifika learners and may have BoTs with multiple Pasifika representatives. How do they make sense of their role? How do they add value to the role? What do they perceive as important in terms of meeting the needs of Pasifika learners?

Culturally responsiveness lies within a social constructivist and transformational framework (Madhlangobe & Gordon, 2012), embracing multiple world-views with the aim of understanding the ethnically and culturally diversity in the hope of creating an inclusive environment (Johnson & Fuller, 2014, as cited in Santamaria & Santamaria, 2015) which would positively influence an organisation's practice and productivity. So cultural responsive practice would be important at governance level because the needs of all ethnic learners would be considered with their own set of beliefs and values in order to provide a strong educational support system. Specifically, for this research, having Pasifika representation at governance level in South Auckland high schools with a high Pasifika student population could provide Pasifika perspectives to inform and improve the teaching and learning needs of Pasifika learners.

The term Pasifika is used to describe people from the island nations of the Pacific living permanently in New Zealand (Macpherson, 2004, as cited in McCaffery & McFall-McCaffery,

2010). There is an acknowledgement that Pasifika is a non-homogenised term because all Pacific nations have their own distinct language, culture and identify but for this research we will use Pasifika "in the spirit of unity through diversity" (McCaffery & McFall-McCaffery, 2010, p. 87). Pasifika students are known as one of the groups of priority learners outlined in the Ministry of Education Statement of Intent (Ministry of Education, 2014) because they are regarded as "underachieving or who have comparatively low participation rates in education at all levels" (p.20).   As a result, the Ministry of Education has produced a Pasifika Education Plan (PEP) to increase engagement, participation, and achievement for all Pasifika learners (Ministry of Education, 2012).

The Ministry of Education (MoE, 2013b) provided guidelines for BoTs to promote effective governance that advanced Pasifika learner success, which aligned and supported the PEP's vision and objectives. This shows a recognition from the MoE that Pasifika research is needed to question and inform existing strategies and management practices in this area, especially to improve the educational outcomes of Maori and Pasifika students (MoE, 2012). However, there is a lack of research on the impact that these strategies and management practices have on the achievement rate of students.

One of the objectives of the PEP at the governance level is to have a fair representation of the community. For example, if the community that the school is in has a high proportion of Pasifika and ethnic families then it would be beneficial to the school community to be well represented on the BoTs so they can inform and influence strategies and management of quality teaching and learning in the school to improve the achievement of students. However, statistics show that there is a lack of representation on BoTs in schools in general which emphasises the need to increase this representation if Pasifika students are to achieve. Referring to the table (see Appendix 1) there has been a slight incline from 2009 to 2014 which shows an increase in Pasifika parent representation, however, there was a slight decrease in 2015 of 1.7% (MoE, 2016).   These statistics (see Appendix 1 for actual figures) show at least one Pasifika representative per board but may not necessary be proportionate to the number of Pasifika students in the school. If this is the case then governance teams such as BoTs in South Auckland high schools may need to reflect on how effective they are in their practice in meeting the needs of their students, especially Pasifika and whether change in the organisational culture that they espouse is needed (Kondra & Hurst, 2009). The Education Review Office (ERO) produced an information booklet on good practice with regards to internal evaluation to change practice to support students to achieve. It promoted this practice as valuable for improvement

and it allowed leaders and trustees to "recognise the importance of building evaluative capability and capacity at every level" (2015, p. 6). The implementation of this practice would enable the school organisation to meet the needs of the students with a focus on identifying and addressing the areas for improvement, meet accountability requirements and generate knowledge about what works for which students and why (ERO, 2015). It is important for leaders to understand cultural and racial inequities in order to improve student outcomes (Merchant, Garza, & Ramalho, 2013).

The Post Primary Teachers Association's Komiti Pasifika (PPTA, 2012) made a submission in response to ERO's report regarding the impact and effect of PEP 2009-2012 and it revealed some concerning statistics. Very few schools with Pasifika students were aware of the plan and using the plan to improve Pasifika achievement of these students. Out of 52 high schools in the sample, only four were aware and had implemented the plan well, with another 14 making some use of the plan. Schools using PEP well revealed that school leaders, teachers, learners and parents had established strong home and school partnerships. "They used targets and goals in the plan to determine actions to create a better learning environment for Pasifika learners. The plan gave schools a focus for discussing student achievement with their communities and informed their self-review" (p. 2). There were some schools where PEP was not applicable because they either did not have any Pasifika learners or the ones that they did have were achieving well and therefore leaders felt the plan was irrelevant. These statistics may show a lack of commitment towards improving the educational outcomes of priority learners. However, if there is no awareness of the document the question would be: how authentic is the commitment on MoE's part to ensure that priority learners' academic needs are met?

My assumption is that BoTs of schools with a high proportion of Pasifika students would use the PEP to inform their decision-making in regards to meeting the needs of Pasifika students. My second assumption of this research is that Pasifika board members would use their cultural lens to inform the practice of governance in the schools represented. Therefore, the areas I will explore in this research are the perspectives of Samoan trustees and the intentions of the PEP.

Consequently, the aim of this dissertation research is to find out educational perspectives of Samoan Board members of South Auckland secondary schools.

This aim is supported by the following research questions:

1. What are the perspectives of Samoan School Board members of their role?

2. How do those perspectives reflect the intentions of the Pasifika Education Plan?

The first research question allowed Samoan school board members to share their experiences in the role and discuss the reasons why they put themselves forward for nomination, the purpose of their role and whether it met their expectations. In addition, factors that affected their role such as time, capacity and capability, student achievement and maintaining Pasifika students' culture, language and identity were discussed.

The second research question tested my assumption of the Pasifika Education Plan (PEP) use in Boards of Trustees to inform the school's policy and strategic plan to support the learning of Pasifika students. It also involved a comparative analysis between the perspectives of the Samoan board members and the intentions of the Plan.

A culturally responsive framework and methodology was used in this study. Teu le va is a Samoan expression used to address social-spatial relations where the relationship is "taken care of" (Shore, 1982, p. 2, as cited in Ka'ili, 2008). It addressed the space and relationship shared between me and the participants which is considered va-tapuia (sacred space). The va-tapuia allowed the participant and I to form a relationship that is respectful and trustworthy.

Talanoa (conversations) were had between the participants and myself. Talanoa allowed free flowing conversations that maybe determined by the interests of the participants. This cultural framework allowed me to carry out my Talanoa methodology in an authentic manner. Teu le va allows good talanoa to emerge and builds a better understanding and co-operation within human relationships ('Otunuku, 2011).

The following are brief overviews of each chapter.

In Chapter 2, I present the theoretical and conceptual arguments of this dissertation. In this chapter, I introduce the reader to the concept of cultural responsiveness and unpack culturally responsive practice at a governance level. Factors such as organisational culture and power and equity are also discussed in relation to cultural responsiveness. I also discuss school governance practice and the role that Board of Trustees have which the Tomorrows' School Policy directed.

Chapter 3 explains the research approach of this dissertation. I used culturally responsive conceptual framework and methodology so there was the validity of cultural ways of knowing and ways of action, which were appropriate to my topic. This research approach provided a culturally appropriate Samoan context (Tuafuti, 2010). I discussed the conceptual framework

of Teu le va when Pasifika participants are invited into space where the relationship between those in the space will be acknowledged and respected. Talanoa (conversation) is a methodology that requires commitment and engagement to va-tapuia where free flowing conversations lead on to authentic talanoa.

In Chapter 4, I present the findings of this dissertation and the document analysis of the Pasifika Education Plan. There were three main themes that emerged from the findings the narratives of the participants will support these themes. The document analysis revealed three main intentions of the Plan and a comparative analysis was discussed using the perspectives of the Samoan board members.

Chapter 5 provides critical analysis of the findings in this dissertation. The perspectives of the Samoan board members of their role were compared to a periodic study conducted by Wylie (2007). This analysis provides commonalities between general trustee perspectives and the participants' perspectives of the role. This analysis highlights and presents new findings centred on maintaining culture, language and identity and student achievement.

The final chapter concludes the dissertation and discusses the implications, limitations and recommendations for this study.

Chapter 2: Literature review

Introduction

There are two parts to this chapter. Part one looks closely at factors that contribute to effective school governance, a descriptive look at the role of BoTs and recurring themes around this discourse. Part two discusses the significance of being culturally responsive as a medium to embrace non-western ideologies and philosophies and the affirmation of indigenous and Pasifika culture. As well as examining an organisational culture that would be conducive to being culturally responsive and highlighting how power can influence a culture that enables unequal experiences of learners. Consequently, validating the perspectives of Pasifika world-view to inform policy and strategies at governance level.

Part One – School governance

Introduction

The New Zealand (NZ) education system went through a significant reform in 1989 due to the introduction of Tomorrow's Schools policy. Youngs, et al., (2007) wrote that the purpose of the reform was to increase parental participation and to increase the accountability of schools to their communities. This response was based on a promise David Lange made as Minister of Education, which was coupled with another promise of improved learning opportunities for children (PPTA, 1988). In contrast, Novlan (1998) stated that the reform was a result of the economic instability that was occurring in NZ at the time. This involved the re-structuring of economic, social and political systems. Wylie (2007) adds that the New Public Management approach also influenced this reform, by "providing for more localised decision making within accountability frameworks that theoretically would BoTs safeguard the expenditure of public money for public purposes, and improve performance" (p. 1). This approach supported neoliberal ideology and was echoed in Openshaw's (2009) argument that the educational restructuring was controversial and stated that influential educational policy research argued against the reform as an "Antipodean version of what had already occurred in education in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia, where a mixture of privatisation, consumer choice, and cost-savings symbolised the triumph of global neoliberal ideology" (cited in Openshaw, 2010, p.5). No matter what the nature of the reform, its impact on children's learning was complex and nothing short of problematic especially in meeting the needs of indigenous Maori students (Openshaw, 2010) and students with special needs (Wylie, 2012).

Local governance

The BoTs major responsibility was improving the teaching and student achievement in their communities. There was very little evidence to state that a successful BoTs created a successful school. There were studies that showed a relationship between the practices of governance and school improvements, but could not be proved because specific evidence showing cause and effect was impossible to isolate (Ranson, Farrell, Peim, & Smith, 2005). In addition, it was important to note the complexity surrounding the nature of good governance and the importance of acknowledging that there is more than one factor that contributes to good governance.

Gunston (2006) defined governance as "all about providing future direction, ensuring the long-term sustainability of the institution and meeting the needs of various stakeholder" (p. 3). Wylie (2007) explained good governance more precisely as:

> contributing indirectly to the totality of school culture through commitment to the school and its students, using knowledge about the school community and bringing other expertise to work with the school's staff to make good decisions about the school culture, its direction, and its resourcing. (p. 20).

School governance was determined by the effectiveness of BoTs and how well they worked together. Some common features of good school governance compiled in an overview by Education Review Office (ERO, 2007) were:

1. Commitment to improving student learning and achievement
2. Use of student achievement data to make decisions and supporting professional development for staff
3. Strategic and annual planning focused on improving student achievement
4. Strong Principal leadership
5. Positive working relationship between Principal and trustees.

These features were attributes of schools showing good governance and the contributing factors were the expertise and experiences of board members within the team working collaboratively with respect as their guiding value, trustees having a shared understanding of their role and responsibilities, as well as making decisions based on evidence to improve student outcomes, because of consultations with the community and meeting the needs of diverse learners. Subsequently having had a regular evaluation of school performance (ERO, 2007). Thomas

and Martin (1996) support the need for "dialogue of accountability" which prompts reflection and review of practices as necessary to ensure the interests of the stakeholder are aligned with the school's purpose and therefore improving student achievement (as cited in Ranson et al., 2005, p. 306).

Boards of Trustees

The Ministry of Education's Information for School Boards of Trustee's booklet described the purpose of BoTs as "provid[ing] culturally responsive strategic leadership and direction to schools" (2013a). The New Zealand School Trustees Association (2013) elaborated further by identifying specific tasks such as to ensure effective delivery of the curriculum, employ and dismiss staff, establish goals, develop and review policies, monitor performance, and employ, support and manage the Principal. As well, as plan and report on student achievement (Education Standards Act, 2001).

New Zealand Council for Education Research (NZCER) conducted a national survey of the impact of the shift to school self-management in 1989 and have periodically added to the national survey (Wylie, 2007). During this time the early experiences of trustees were investigated. Trustees felt a sense of responsibility to the students first, and then the school and the parents and teachers last. They saw a positive partnership between parents and the teaching staff as being valuable. However, no matter how committed the trustees were they were limited by the funds that enabled them to support and run the school. Bulk funding was challenging not only the financial support but managing the funds and some boards needed considerable support in this area given the lack of expertise and capability. Relationships were important to trustees which is why they did not want to take on a full employer-role, which they felt could erode the partnership they had with their school's professionals (Wylie, 2012).

Ten years later, research revealed significant issues around trustee capacity and capability as well as funding, time allocation and role definition. Elected parents came with their own life experiences and backgrounds in school boards. However, there was a lack of expertise in the areas of strategic planning and analysis. It was difficult in low decile schools to find a range of suitable parents with the necessary skills set or a variety of skill.

It was suggested by Wylie (2012) that school boards needed more support from the Ministry. She was in favour of self-managing schools. However, she did think that schools being managed on their own are an ineffective way of using resources, especially during challenging situations. Wylie argued for "schools to work together under a network of education authorities

that support and challenge the schools that comprise them in ways that make more of the schools than the schools can make themselves individually" (2012, p. 243). She supports her argument by making reference to a school in Canada with a self-managing structure. The difference is that their school systems are working better because of a "lattice of connections between schools, and between schools and the district's hub, its 'central office'. The Central office has the ultimate responsibility for the quality of the schools and student learning. It has the authority that comes from employing the principals and holding them accountable. It actively develops those who lead schools and it supports them" (p. 244). This system, on reflection, could be the re-adjustment the NZ education system needs to address the shortfalls of budget restrictions, expertise, and accountability including time obligations.

There have been common themes shown by academic writers on this topic. Firstly, they have stated that the educational reform during the late 1980's was significant in NZ because of the move away from centralised systems as well as an increased accountability that communities had for the success of local schools (Robinson & Ward, 2005). Secondly, the knowledge and skills trustees brought to the board added the quality and depth that it required for its activities. Academic literature have supported issues of this manner, more evident in low-decile schools compared to high-decile partners (Wylie, 2007). As well as the need for professional development especially in the areas of legal issues, strategic planning and the analysis of student and school performance. The legislative demand on trustees to report on student achievement occurred in 2001 which can be seen as managerialism where the Ministry of Education (2007) may monitor and point the finger if achievement of students is not desirable (Robinson & Ward, 2005; Youngs, et al., 2007).

NZCER also revealed consistent themes during 2005 and 2006 research. Firstly,

> the consequences of poor board-Principal relationships, the consequences of BoTs making wrong decisions on Principal appointments, ignoring expert advice even though they had sought it, difficulties of providing timely support and advice from outside a school where boards cannot or will not carry out key aspects of their legal role. (Wylie, 2007, p.2).

Wylie (2007) pointed out three assumptions of Tomorrow's Schools policy on the expectations of BoTs; parents with relevant expertise would stand for the board; there would be a good representation on the board reflecting the backgrounds of the students, and lastly good working relationship between the board and the school staff. These assumptions will be tested in this

report to ascertain whether the expectations of Tomorrow's Schools directives had been met and if not, to find out the discourse that existed in current boards through the world-view of Pasifika participants, specifically Samoan.

Part Two: Cultural responsiveness
Introduction

Academic literature centred on cultural responsiveness is strongly situated in research methodology (Williams, 2004) and is an emerging theme in leadership principles (Santamaria & Santamaria, 2015). There are strong arguments that cultural representation or cultural responsiveness is necessary when researching philosophies of indigenous or Pasifika people (Nabobo-Baba, 2004; Smith, 2004) because the methods, and analysis used in research must be situated in the context of Pasifika world-view or simply 'ways of knowing' (Amituanai-Toloa, 2006; Anae, 2010b). There is also literature to support leadership, culture and power as influences on the degree of cultural responsiveness within an organisation (Kondra & Hurst, 2009; Lumby, 2012).

Social constructivist and transformational frameworks can be used to make sense of this cultural perspective (Madhlangobe & Gordon, 2012). Freire (1980) describes social constructivist framework as effective learning unfolding in the direction of culturally appropriate teaching (as cited in Madhlangobe & Gordon, 2012, p. 178). Transformational leadership encourages "continuous inquiry of how an organisation functions and the use of new organisational frames enabling the organisation to meet the needs of its members" (Burns, 1979, as cited in Madhlangobe & Gordon, 2012, p. 178). These frameworks exposed the need for leaders to understand racial and cultural inequities (Santamaria & Santamaria, 2015) in order to raise the expectations of student performance (Merchant et al., 2013).

Dr Kavaliku (2007) was a member of the Tongan parliament for many years and as well as a respected title-holder in his village who shared this comment in his address to Pacific leaders highlighting opposing ideals (western versus Tongan perspective):

> I remember my wife, a strong supporter of women's rights and poverty alleviation, came home from one of the international conferences and I asked her how it went. Her reply was, "Why do Western women with western ideas feel that they have the right to push everybody to follow the right path-their way? (2007, p. 12).

This comment reflects the power and equity issues that may be experienced by Pasifika when confronted with perspectives that are conflicting to their own way of thinking, a way of

knowing and way of being. Linda Smith (1999), a Maori academic, expresses the struggle that exists for indigenous and Pasifika people's unique way of viewing the world but there seems to be a shift in over proving the authenticity of, and control over, our own forms of knowledge.

Culturally responsive practice

Culturally responsiveness is defined as "a set of congruent behaviours, attitudes, and policies that comes together in a system, agency, or among professionals, and enables them to work effectively in cross-cultural situations" (Aquilar, 2011, p. 14). The degree in which an organisation is culturally responsive will influence their practice, organisational culture and power and equity.

Pasifika academics describe culturally responsive as Pasifika-attuned research (Airini, 2010), incorporating indigenous knowledge and principles (Hynds et al., 2015), using Pasifika research methodologies (Anae, 2010a, b) acknowledging the importance of language and culture (McCaffery & McFall-McCaffery, 2010). Culturally responsive leadership "has been derived from the concept of culturally responsive teaching, [and] involves those leadership philosophies, practices, policies that create inclusive schooling environments for students and families from ethnically and culturally diverse backgrounds" (Johnson & Fuller, 2014, as cited in Santamaria & Santamaria, 2015. p. 4). There was an emphasis on engaging or embracing the various cultures existing in an organisation as a way of relating and validating their contribution to the culture of the organisation.

The main objective for culturally responsive practice in the context of schools with a large proportion of Pasifika students is teaching and learning with a focus on improving student achievement outcomes. Anae (2010b) stated that Pacific research in New Zealand had been ineffective in ensuring that real change empowered one of New Zealand's marginalised population, namely Pasifika. That is why Anae (2010b) is a strong advocate of building Pacific researcher capability and capacity to aid in understanding the differences in meeting the needs of Pacific students to achieve the optimal educational outcome. Anae also supports Pasifika leaders' perspectives, being moulded by their language, culture, and identity that informs and improves the needs of Pasifika learners to achieve success in their education (Airini, 2010). An example of this philosophy in practice is the invitation of Pasifika trustees to a workshop to create guidelines on how boards should implement the PEP and provide insight on how to engage with Pasifika students and families with the motive of supporting Pasifika success in schools (MoE, 2013b). The perspectives of these Pasifika trustees provided 'new knowledge' in order to inform practice at governance level.

Nevertheless, there is an important aspect of challenging the status quo of existing perspectives in the context of effective governance. If BoTs of South Auckland high schools are to inform strategic planning and policy that maintains and sustains Pasifika achievement then, it is imperative they understand the different Pasifika cultures and customs of their students within the school. A pedagogical example is given by Erickson (2001) stating "students of different ethnicities, gender, social class, and religion have learning styles that are influenced by their cultural contexts and may have difficulty understanding teachers who do not use symbols that appeal to their senses" (as cited in Madhlangobe & Gordon, 2012, p. 179). Therefore, critical changes to pedagogy would meet the needs of these students leading to successful learning outcomes. These significant changes made at the governance level would ensure school policies supported and maintained these pedagogical goals. However, it is even more important that Pasifika board members be represented at governance level to provide perspectives that align with Pasifika principles that can be incorporated into the school community. Challenges arise for students of different ethnicities when they are not given the best possible learning culture in their schools.

There is a small body of New Zealand research investigating cultural responsive leadership in high schools to improve the academic success of indigenous Maori students (Hynds et al., 2015) and they found Bishop's (2012, as cited in Hynds et al., 2015) three main impediments were "symptomatic of a larger leadership failure to incorporate kaupapa Maori values and principles authentically into the school community and then align these to organisational activities" (Hynds et al., 2015, p. 21). Furthermore, the recommendation was not to focus on individual leaders or classroom practice but on how mainstream schooling systems and cultures saw Maori students as deficits and not as deserving students. This recent research may suggest that in general if New Zealand school systems have this deficit world-view about Indigenous students then Pasifika students who are not indigenous may be seen as even more undeserving. So the question is what type of organisational culture would support Indigenous and Pasifika students to succeed? And how will this type of organisational culture be maintained?

Culturally responsive practice and organisational culture
The beliefs and values an organisation espouses need to support the attitudes and behaviours as well as the policies and strategic plan that work together to provide an inclusive schooling culture that promotes positive learning outcomes for all students. Schools have a responsibility to reflect on whether their organisational culture supports and sustains academic achievements for all their students.

Organisational culture is a pattern of basic assumptions shared among members of a group. Much of the research on leadership in organisations has been conducted in a western context, but globalization drives a need to better understand what happens when citizens of one culture try to lead those of another. What do they need to understand? What adjustments do they have to make? (Bolman & Deal, 2013).

In order for an organisational culture to be maintained and effective, the organisation's values, beliefs and norms need to be shared amongst employees (Kondra & Hurst, 2009). Erez and Gati (2004) explains this cultural disposition as cultural nesting where they acknowledge that there are many levels in an organisation culture and changes to one cultural level will impact on another cultural level (as cited in Kondra & Hurst, 2009). On the other hand the degree to this is widely shared amongst the organisation or not can be seen as problematic (Connolly, James & Beales, 2011) as this undermines the perceived culture. This could be illustrated by a board member involved in disciplinary action using his/her own experiences and not necessarily on the values and beliefs or the disciplinary policy of the school to make decisions on the necessary action of discipline. As a result, this action could be disputed by the parents or the community based on not following policy stipulations.

Lunenberg (2011) described common characteristics found in an organisational culture such as observed behavioural regularities, norms, dominant values, philosophy, rules and climate. In contrast, Deal and Kennedy (1984) simply stated that organisational culture is "the way we do things around here" (as cited in Connolly et al., 2011, p. 430). Whereas, Bates (2006) links culture to social justice, "different and unequal experience of learners and consequently strongly related to a goal of educational leadership, contributing to social justice" (Bates, 2006, as cited in Lumby, 2012, p. 577). The culture that enables different and unequal experience of learners may be influenced by educational institutes governed by policy and political powers of the current government, which determines how these institutes should perform. These restrictions may place huge constraints on the quality and improvement of learner outcomes (Lumby, 2012), therefore, contribute to the marginalisation of learners and the social justice within an organisation.

Culturally responsive practice and power and equity
We cannot ignore the presence of power and the influence it has on the type of culture that enables unequal experiences of learners. Schools could be seen as emanating a desirable or single culture that supports the interest of all learners, but in reality most learners succeed and others are disadvantaged (Lumby, 2012).

Power can be hidden though structures and processes that influence thought so that a person could only be seeing one option and no other solution because 'they see it as natural and unchangeable" (Lumby, 2012). Lukes (2002) "describes this power as covert power" (as cited in Lumby, 2012, p. 580). So schools could be seen as exercising covert power when the interests and values of one group are dominant over another group. In other words, organisational culture can affect people's way of thinking because they see the interests and values of a particular group as natural and unchangeable, therefore ignoring their own value system, creating inequalities in education.

Lumby (2012) argues that leadership must engage with and relate to the multiple cultures within their organisation and I believe that this action will foster an organisational culture that validates people and opens up possibilities of success as well as supporting social justice. In addition, maybe having an increase in Pasifika representation at governance level would provide more possibilities of success and social justice in the New Zealand western education system.

Conclusion

Board of Trustees are responsible for policy and strategic planning of schools to provide an organisational culture that provides the best learning opportunities for students in order for them to succeed. Culturally responsive practice allows non-western world-views to be embraced and to be incorporated in the organisational culture in order to understand and support students' needs. Being more culturally responsive at governance level means having more trustees of different ethnicities represented so their world-views could be used to inform policy and strategic planning but most importantly to imbed the values and beliefs of different ethnicities which must be shared amongst all staff of the school in order to influence the culture of an organisation (Kondra & Hurst, 2009). The perspectives of Samoan participants currently on BoTs in South Auckland schools would reveal and explore a world-view that is absent in academic literature. As culturally responsive practice is weaved within the research it was important that my research methodology aligned with this theme.

Chapter 3: Methodology and Methods

Introduction

This small-scale study utilised qualitative research approaches. The aim of this research is to find out the perceptions about education held by Samoan School Board members of South Auckland secondary schools

This aim is supported by the following research questions:

1. What are the perspectives of Samoan School Board members of their role?
2. How do those perspectives reflect the intentions of the Pasifika Education Plan?

This study included a focus on cultural responsiveness. This meant I also had to be culturally reflexive as the researcher. From a Samoan world-view based on principles of fa'aaloalo (respect) and fa'amaualalo (humility) it is important my own cultural identity and journey is declared. Amituanai-Toloa (2006) emphasises that "what and how one does research, specifically for Samoans… is normally reinforced by the way one 'tu, savali ma tautala' – that is, the way one holds oneself, walks and talks" (p. 203). How I tu, savali ma tautala is strongly influenced by my Samoan world-view.

I was born to Fonoti, Muliagatele, Tausivaatele, Tanuvasa, Sagele Iosefo and Sauimalae Peaufa-Iosefo. My father is full Samoan and was born in Moamoa but lived in many villages in Upolu because my grandfather Iosefo Ati was a catechist for the Catholic church in Samoa. His role was to support the parish priest in the various villages he worked in. The mobility of the Iosefo family explains the different birthplaces of my father's siblings and why my grandmother is buried in a village that we do not reside in. To this day, the family house is in Lalovaea in Apia. However, my mother is a half caste; half Samoan and half Niuean. She was born and raised in Vaimoso for most of her teenage life. Her family then immigrated to New Zealand for work and a better life style. She had a more privileged life than my father. She was raised in the Ekalesia Faapotopotoga Kerisiano Samoa (Congregational Christian Church Samoa) church in Newton until she met my father and prior to their marriage she converted to Catholicism. My siblings and I were born in Auckland, lived in central Auckland for seven years, and then moved out to South Auckland where my parents still live today. We were raised within a Samoan cultural belief and value system, and church and education were dominant entities in our lives that influenced the way that I viewed the world. My passion as an educator is to promote a discourse of success in whatever form or shape for my students,

knowing that they are valued, loved and significant, and that success is generated in a belief in God. This is an insight into my world and hopefully gives context to my understanding of Samoan cultural protocols and worldviews. As well as placement of myself in the continuum of the diaspora of Pasifika in Auckland (Anae, 2010a).

Culturally responsive framework and methodology

The literature on Pasifika research (Amituanai-Toloa, 2009; Anae, 2010b; Nakhid, 2007; Tuagalu, 2008) discusses the need for a Pasifika way of thinking or a way of doing to be discussed using a Pasifika methodology especially when researching a Pasifika concept or using Pasifika participants. Grande (2008) argues if "western frames were used in this type of research it would cause disfigurement and or trans-figurement because of the presence of intellectual colonialism, which, for educators and researchers, hinder a commitment to social justice and ethical interactions" (as cited in Amituanai-Toloa, 2009, p. 46). So when considering Pasifika perspectives, it was necessary that the conceptual framework and methodology were culturally responsive so there was the validity of cultural ways of knowing and ways of acting.

Consideration for the complexity of Pasifika as a term was necessary because it is not a homogenised term but represents a diversity of cultural practices and customs (McFall-McCaffery, 2010). Even within this diversity, there are layers of cultural complexity between Pasifika nations and within a Pasifika nation (Anae, 2010a). For example, a Samoan way of thinking differs from a Tongan way of thinking. These cognition systems are influenced by the customs and practices of each ethnicity as well as their experiences and involvement within their community. Therefore, I considered the following culturally responsive framework and methodology in order to validate and recognise the contribution of the Samoan participants in this research; Teu le va and Talanoa.

Teu le Va

Teu le va is a Samoan expression to address socio-spatial relations where the relationship is 'taken care of' (Shore, 1982, as cited in, Ka'ili, 2008). Va signifies space and relationship and when Pasifika participants are invited into space where the relationship between those in the space will be acknowledged, respected and 'taken care of'. This reference to space is not considered empty or void but is space that is shared between those present in order to form authentic relationships. Albert Wendt (1996) further described the va in the following quote:

Important to the Samoan view of reality is the concept of va or wa in Maori and Japanese. Va is the space between, the betweenness, no empty space, not space that separates but space that relates, that holds separate entities and things together in the Unity-that-is-All, the space that is context, giving meaning to things. (as cited in Tuagalu, 2008, p. 109).

Amituanai-Toloa (2006), defines a space that is sacred, va-tapuia. Va meaning space and tapuia meaning made sacred. She further explains that "va-tapuia is a Samoan expression founded on the concept of 'sacred space' in the 'feagaiga' (covenant relationship) of brother and sister" (p. 202). In this research, I have used va-tapuia in the context of the social construct of the relationship between researcher and others involved in the research process; namely participants and supervisor. As a Samoan researcher, I have the cultural responsibility to ensure that I adhere to the sacredness of the va-tapuia, and how I walk, how I talk, how I dress, how I am, is to support and ensure that the sacred space is nurtured and respected with those whom I will form relationships with (Amituanai-Toloa, 2006). To disregard, the va-tapuia would be detrimental to my research. An example of this would be Mead's (1928) research in American Samoa where the female participants intentionally gave her data that was inaccurate and unreliable because she had been culturally insensitive (as cited in Vaioleti, 2006).

This culturally responsive framework would also challenge me as the researcher to ensure that I considered "ontological, philosophical, ethical and methodological issues and how I could teu le va-tapuia with all parties involved in the research process" (Anae, 2010a, p. 225). Anae (2010a) further explains this as having allowed "Pasifika researchers the opportunity to reflect and consider what they are researching, why they are doing the research, for whom they are doing the research, and what they will do with the results" (p. 225). Consideration of these factors would ensure va-tapuia within the relationships formed throughout this research.

I believe this conceptual framework, Teu le va, will allow me, a Pasifika researcher, to provide an authentic umbrella in order for good talanoa (conversation) to emerge as well as a means of nurturing relationships so that talanoa will involve critical ideas to be moulded and re-shaped until there is formation of understanding which can be used to establish new knowledge.

Talanoa
The definition of talanoa in my ethics application was simply 'conversation'. However, that simplistic, one-word meaning did not begin to embrace the depth involved in the social conversation. Halapua (2002) states that the meaning of talanoa is "derived from two different

yet related meanings in the languages of Austronesian-speaking people: tala meaning talking or telling stores and noa meaning zero or without concealment" (p. 1). Yin (1996) emphasises the openness of the conversation (as cited in Wolfgramm-Foliaki, 2016) which is likened to focus group interviews. Subsequently, Vaioleti (2006) elaborates on the potentiality and holistic nature of Talanoa:

> It allows people to engage in social conversation which may lead to critical discussions or knowledge creation that allows rich contextual and inter-related information to surface as co-constructed stories…In a good talanoa encounter, *noa* creates the space and conditions. *Tala* holistically intermingles researchers' and participants' emotions, knowing and experiences. This synergy leads to an energising and uplifting of the spirits, and to a positive state of connectedness and enlightenment. (2006, p. 24).

The above quote can be likened to how an authentic and open conversation could be had between participants engaged in and committed to va-tapuia. If space is valued as sacred, the relationship formed in that space would be sacred and the emerging conversation may lead to the holistic aspect of talanoa that Vaioleti (2006) has explained which makes talanoa a suitable methodology and method for this research.

Methods
Part 1: Talanoa (Interviews)
I mentioned earlier about how important the Teu le va principle was acted out before the interview began. I also believe that the connection that the participants had towards the aims of the research created an urgency or a strong readiness to contribute because they believed that the research topic was important. Va-tapuia had been established prior to the interviews and when in contact with the participants emphasised the importance of the topic which then cemented or strengthened the va because now there was face to face contact.

Va feloai (relationship greeting) was an important part of the process because it allowed the interviewer and participant to embrace one another and to acknowledge the va-tapuia that had been established earlier in emails and telephone talanoa. Furthermore, it lead on to va-mafana (relationship small talk). Va-mafana is a space where we entered into everyday conversation and then a period of silence would indicate to me to enter into the next stage of talanoa. I acknowledge their time and outlined the purpose of the study and informed them that the

Fesili taua (key questions) were constructed from the research that Wylie (2007) conducted based on her findings. They were:

1. How long have you served on BoTs and why did you put your name forward?
2. Explain what you have gained from your experiences as a trustee
3. Explain your role as trustee
4. Explain the working relationship between the BoTs and the Principal
5. How much time did you spend on your role as a BoTs member? Do you think this was too much?
6. How have you contributed to Pasifika students achieving? Describe the use of data in making decisions in this area
7. Describe how boards assist Pasifika students to maintain their culture, language, and identity
8. Describe how the PEP is used to inform decisions at a governance level

The reasoning behind this approach was to ascertain whether Samoan trustee's perspectives aligned with the findings of Wylie's research, as well as having a comparative baseline to ground the participant's perspectives. Subsequently, dissecting their understanding of the PEP and the values and principles it promoted.

The majority of the interview locations were based at the participants' work places so this formalised the Talanoa in which time dictated the length of the conversation, however, there were no hindrances to the quality of talanoa because we also finished within the time frame. Other locations were at cafes, though, due to inappropriate noise levels we re-positioned ourselves.

Prior to data Collection
Before I explain how I collected my data, it is important to acknowledge how I, the outsider researcher, Teu le va before an interview started. It is important to note that being culturally responsive is to understand the value of food in the Samoan custom. The gift of hospitality is necessary as a way of reciprocating their sacrifice of time away from their families, and acknowledging their willingness to take part in the research. It could also act as an 'exchange of gifts', for the time they have allocated for the research I would ensure that I would provide food and drink (if appropriate) to reciprocate the favour. So it was important to ensure that I had prepared food and/or drink in advance.

Before talanoa could begin, Samoan cultural and ethical protocols had to be observed, since this was the first physical contact between Samoan people. This protocol was seen as 'taking care' of the va and fostering the va-tapuia between the participants and the researcher by

showing fa'aaloalo (respect) and fa'amaualalo (humility). Lotu (prayer) would be said first and then I would introduce myself in my capacity as a researcher, and outline the aims and the objectives of the research. I would be sure to thank them for making time for the meeting to take place because without their willing contribution there would not be a research to be had.

Participants

I selected eight South Auckland high schools because they had large student Pasifika populations and it was assumed that BoTs were representative of the community in which the school are situated. It was important to inform the Principals of the schools about the aims and objectives of the research since they were the chief executives of their school boards. A letter was sent to the Principals requesting their support to send an advertisement to BoTs members who are of Samoan ethnicity and were subject to the following criteria: served on the board for more than one year and have a good command of English. Participants were to email, text or ring me on the numbers provided in the advertisement. Once contact was made I sent through the participant's information sheet (refer to Appendix 2) that made them aware of who I was and my background and in-depth information about the purpose of the research and the expectation being imposed on the participants which would assist them to make a decision on their availability and willingness to contribute to the research. A consent form (refer to Appendix 3) was also sent for them to confirm that they met the criteria and indicate whether they required a copy of the research summary. I received six consenting participants, five were female and one was male. Their age ranged from thirty-five to seventy-five years old and their length of service to the BoTs was between three to six years. At their discretion, meeting places were agreed on and I conducted individual talanoa sessions with them all.

The recruitment process did not go as expected. I only had two participants email me directly as a result of the principal itemising my advertisement at their schedule board meeting. I had to resort to 'snowball' recruitment. "Snowball recruitment is a strategy whereby participants are encouraged to tell other potential participants, hopefully bringing in other possible participants" (Sadler, Lee, Lim, Fullerton, 2010, as cited in Fasavalu, 2015, p. 28). I also contacted professionals in the education field and family to spread the word or advocate on my behalf to attract more participants to contact me directly.

Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis is a common systematic approach towards analysing qualitative data by categorising data into respective themes. Thematic analysis is defined as:

a systematic approach to the analysis of qualitative data that involves identifying themes or patterns of cultural meaning: coding and classifying data, usually textual, according to themes; and interpreting the resulting thematic structures by seeking commonalities, relationships, overarching patterns, theoretical constructs, or explanatory principles. (Lapadat, 2010, p. 2).

Thematic analysis would be useful for this research because there is a commitment to analysing participants' viewpoints in their cultural context and "involves the search for and identification of common threads that extend across an entire interview or set of interviews" (DeSantis & Noel Ugarriza, 2000, as cited in Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013, p. 404). For this research it was important to investigate commonalities from a cultural perspective on the role of Boards of Trustees in South Auckland high schools. In addition, analysis used also incorporated va-tapuai principles of valuing relationships by trying not to misconstrue or analyse perspectives outside of the relevant cultural context.

Coding

I read the raw data meaningful sentences and paragraphs were highlighted and coded in the margins of the transcript. A code highlights the essence or captures the meaning of each highlighted section. I used Microsoft Word to complete this initial process. Highlighted sections were then separated from all transcripts and were grouped together in categories according to similar codes for each question. Then themes were re-categorised according to relationships that linked key ones together. I re-read transcripts to moderate sentences and paragraphs against the codes to ensure that the interpretation was contextually appropriate. Once this was done, three main themes were derived. The flexibility in the systematic process of the inductive theme analysis is its strength; however, positivist researchers could argue the possibility of unintentional replication. Nevertheless, from an interpretivist viewpoint it allows interpretation to be contextually grounded which was appropriate for this research (Lapadat, 2010).

Ethics

This research was conducted in an ethical manner and measured against the guidelines stipulated by the Auckland University of Technology ethics committee.

Informed and voluntary consent

Participants information sheet and a consent form was sent to prospective participants once they expressed interest about the research. If they agreed to participate in the research then

they were to sign the consent form and return it either in the envelope provided or by email or could be given when we meet for the interview.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

Participants would not be identified in the research in relation to their opinions but there would be an acknowledgement of the participants. The participants were asked to not share any information about the meeting or what is said in the meeting and this would be included in the participant invitation acceptance letter. Participants' names or schools would not be used as a method of protecting the identity of participants. However, pseudonyms and codes would be used in the research. Furthermore only the researcher and the supervisor had access to the data after the findings had been produced and storage of data would be secure. Processes were put into place to ensure confidentiality although anonymity cannot be guaranteed because of the nature of research.

Social and culture sensitivity

I am a Samoan researcher and have selected only Samoan participants as a focus. I endeavoured to use Teu le va as my framework to emphasise the importance of valuing the space that had been created to converse and to have dialogue, as well as personalising shared respect for individuals who will partake in the sharing of knowledge and experiences. With the use of Talanoa as my methodology. I integrated Teu le va and talanoa as familiar frameworks to the Samoan social and cultural context.

Minimisation of risk

The participants were engaged in individual talanoa sessions which were approximately 60 to 90 minutes long. They were invited to share their experiences as trustees and they decided on the content they wanted to reveal with the researcher. The participants had the opportunity to refuse comment on any questions however they were all involved and shared above and beyond about their experiences. Having a culturally responsive methodology allowed va-tapuia to be established between the researcher and the participant which minimised the risk of discomfort or embarrassment so that participants knew that their contribution was accepted and respected which brought validation of knowledge.

Avoidance of conflict of interest

Individual talanoa sessions occurred between the participant and the researcher so conflict of interest was managed well by the researcher being transparent with the expectations of the research and the use of information data. All participants were committed to sharing their experiences and they felt comfortable and safe in doing so.

Part 2: Document Analysis

Documents provide an insight into what an organisation espouses as beliefs and values that are used as a basis for decision making (Fitzgerald, 2012). As part of this research, I wanted the opportunity to evaluate and critique the Pasifika Education Plan 2013-2017 (PEP) and to examine the underlying beliefs and values promoted. The framework that the PEP was founded on was also scrutinised. This analysis was important because the MoE advocates that one of PEP's main objective is to improve educational outcomes for Pasifika learners by building a bridge between the educational and home/cultural environments. However, I questioned the materials and the structure of this bridge. Is the idea of the bridge centred on the cultural language and identity of the learner? Is the bridge reinforced by support systems that will enable the learner to succeed? These were just a few questions that allowed me to use a critical lens when reading the document. Scott (1990) refers to documents as not being objective because there is a purpose of their production and a specific targeted audience (as cited in Fitzgerald, 2012). This highlights the need to examine the validity and credibility of all documents.

The advantage of the document analysis of the PEP was data collection. It involved collecting qualitative and quantitative data that would supplement the individual interview data and furthermore be used to do a comparative analysis. It was vital that during the document analysis process a critical stance was taken since the document was seen as subjective. Fitzgerald (2012) points out useful questions that assisted in maintaining a critical lens.

The initial phase of analysis involved using a template (see Appendix four) that looked at the ontology and epistemology of the document. For example, type of document, physical appearance, date it was produced, the author, target audience, key themes, why was the document written and what evidence was there to support this, as well as what questions were left unanswered by the document (Fitzgerald, 2012). The qualitative data collected during document analysis were centred on repeated themes or words which provided an interpretation that augments a theoretical argument (Fitzgerald, 2012). The approach I used was interpretive which provided an opportunity to look for meaning in the data. Therefore, content and textual analyses were performed in order to find meaning. Content analysis (Robson, 1993) involved counting the number of times a word(s) or text(s) or image(s) was repeated that is why it is considered a form of qualitative data. Textual analysis (Jaworski & Coupland, 1999) assists in finding meaning from the qualitative figures of the word(s) or text(s) or image(s). Once this was done, a coding system was employed to categorise emerging themes or ideas. Since only

one document was being analysed the revisiting of themes and reading for meaning were not ambiguous or time consuming. This aided the document analysis process to be less chaotic and theoretical arguments could be made much sooner. Consequently, the limitations to my use of this analysis are that I only had one document so it was important to keep an open mind and critical view and not to be easily swayed by the presentation and technical use of words. It was always important to check my bias by reading critiques on the PEP and to reflect on my arguments and perspectives.

Conclusion

A culturally responsive approach was fitting because my participants had world-views that were not western and so to acknowledge and appreciate their cultural lens an appropriate methodology was needed therefore placed an immense influence on the quality of data collected. Participants' confidence and trust in the researcher allowed authentic conversations to occur. Teu le va is an important Samoan principle when forming va-tapuia between a researcher and its participants and because of the establishment of this principle 'truthful knowledge' was shared within the va. This leads on to the next chapter where this 'truthful knowledge' of participant's role as Board of Trustees will be presented.

Chapter 4: Findings

Introduction

This chapter is divided into two parts, which follow on from the methodology. Part one is the document analysis on the PEP and part two is the findings from the Talanoa sessions with the research participants. The PEP is a Ministry of Education document giving guidelines on how best to support the teaching and learning of Pasifika learners so if the Ministry of Education is stating that Boards of Trustees are to be culturally responsive then the PEP should be featured in the board rooms of New Zealand schools who have Pasifika learners. There was an assumption that the participants may not be knowledgeable about the PEP and the findings in part two confirm this.

Part 1: Document analysis

Content analysis

I obtained a copy of the coloured PEP brochure from my place of employment last year. Before I performed the content analysis on the government document, I noted down the physical appearance, presentation, the images used and whether the paper was glossy or not. I then proceeded to record how many times particular words or phrases were repeated and how many images were included.

Table 1: Documentary analysis

Context analysis		Total
1.	Pasifika learners	51
2.	Raise achievement/improving education outcomes	11
3.	Parents	22
4.	Families	25
5.	Communities	27
6.	Work together	4
7.	We	7
8.	PEP wheel diagram	1
9.	Pasifika identities banner	2
10.	Pasifika values banner	2
11.	Pictures of Pasifika people/learners	24
12.	Pasifika culture/language/identity	27
13.	PEP	21
14.	Urgency/pace	3
15.	Increase/improve	33
16.	Implementation	6
17.	Strengthen	5
18.	Photos	24
19.	Graphs	6
20.	Tables	5
21.	Logos of MoE and education partner agency	9

The words I chose were connected to the MoE statement of intent as well as the PEP aims. Words such as "Pasifika culture", "language", "values and identity", as well as "collaboration and raising the level of achievement". I also, looked at the size of different images and diagrams, as well the logos of government and education partner agencies. The data collected was recorded in a table format so that it emphasised the total number of repeated words, phrases and images (see Table 1, p. 26). I was interested in finding out whether the framework of the document was culturally responsive to Pasifika learners. This was important because government documents may be used to inform policy as well as informing strategic plans in educational institutions. Therefore, it is important that the PEP is structured around being culturally responsive in order for Pasifika learners to engage and therefore achieve in education (Bell et al., 2016).

Once the data was collated, I proceeded to use the template as an initial finding for the ontology and epistemology of the document (see Appendix four).

Initial key findings were as follows:

1. The government document is a MoE initiative but the authors are not included, though there are ten endorsement signatures from MoE departments such as Hon Hekia Parata and Steven Joyce.
2. The targeted audience was Pasifika learners, their parents, families and communities, as well as educational communities especially those who have contact with Pasifika learners.
3. There was a strong emphasis on partnership between the MoE, education partner agencies and Pasifika communities working together to raise achievement for all Pasifika learners.
4. Links were made between Pasifika success and culture, language and identity. The document supports Pasifika as a non-homogenised term and acknowledges that there are differences between Pasifika populations such as fa'asamoa, faka-Tonga, faka-Niue, faka-Tokelau, akano'anaga Kuki Airani, vaka-Viti.
5. The urgency and demand for Pasifika learners to achieve and the accountability that education partner agencies and the NZ education system have to ensure that success is achieved.

The PEP intends to improve the educational outcomes and maximise the contribution of education for Pasifika learners through engaging in partnership with all stakeholders by

connecting the learners' school lives with their home/cultural environment with the assumption that learning institutes with Pasifika learners would access and implement the plan with the intention of improving the learning outcomes of these learners. The findings revealed from the talanoa exposes a power and equitable issue because the reality is that only few schools have used or even are aware of the plan which confirms that the assumption is not shared and therefore what is espoused to the community is indeed not true. I will use this quantitative data and the content analysis to assist in the textual analysis that commenced next.
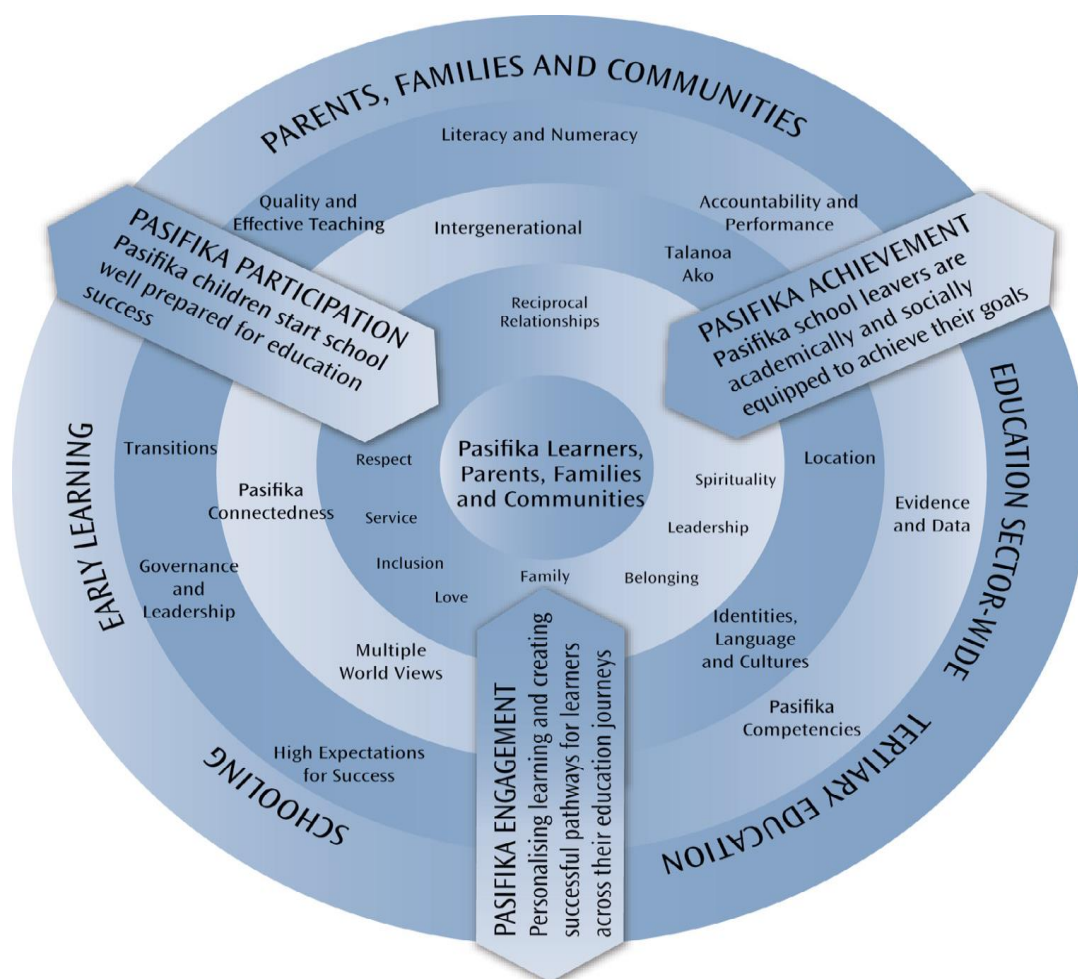
Figure 1: Compass diagram on the PEP

Textual analysis

The content analysis revealed strong themes around collaboration, increasing capacity of the learner by maintaining and supporting Pasifika learners' world-views while learning in a western world-view.

There is a strong indication that learners are the primary focus of the PEP. In saying this, there is an inclusion of educators, BoTs and community groups or members who teach/manage are involved with Pasifika learners as well as Pasifika families and communities. However, the emphasis was va-tapuia (sacred space) between the Pasifika learners', their families and the communities with the objective to increase or improve the capacity of learners in order to succeed academically. Va-tapuia is respecting or validating the importance of the learners Pasifika culture, language and identity as well as the role that families and communities play in enabling Pasifika learners to increase their capacity.

The document also contained a large number of colour images of Pasifika people across different age groups. It is interesting that the images chosen include more than one person. Three photos of mother and child, three photos of a male figure and toddler, seven photos of primary aged groups of children, six photos showing teaching and learning and four photos of graduating students. This may imply building the capacity and capability of Pasifika learners involves a collaboration of people within the community.

Because of the textual analysis, three main themes were revealed, as shown in Table 2, as the intentions of the PEP.

Table 2: Intentions of the PEP

	Intentions of the PEP
1.	Acknowledging and valuing the relationship between the Pasifika learner, their families and their communities.
2.	To increase the capacity of the Pasifika learner in order to succeed in education.
3.	Maintaining the Pasifika culture, language and identity of the learner in a learning environment to support and sustain success in education.

It is important to continue to critique whether the PEP is based on a culturally responsive framework because Amituanai-Toloa (2009), argues that:

> ways of doing things and ways of acting are majorly premised on the underlying beliefs and assumptions of Western research paradigms which do not reflect the values and beliefs of research participants such as Pasifika people and are, therefore, incompatible. (as cited in Carjuzah and Fenmore-Smith (2010), p. 46).

The PEP document appears to reflect the values and beliefs of Pasifika people in theory but what is not explicitly stated in the plan is how Boards of Trustees can implement such a plan in order to maximise the effect on strategic planning and policy focused on meeting student needs. Implementation of this plan could be quite complex and would need to be part of the schools strategic plan and policy to be measurable.

Additionally we could question whether the PEP is a symbolic artefact that had been produced as a result of managerialism in order for an organisation or government to be perceived as culturally responsive. The PEP document could be viewed as symbolic power (Bolman & Deal, 2013) held by the dominant group (MoE) because they could be seen as expertise of the information provided. From a critical lens power imbalances are evident because the experts hold the power and the group that are in need of this document are seen as insubordinate. In light of what the participants revealed the PEP document is not featured at governance level in South Auckland high schools with a high population of Pasifika students so it could be argued that these school boards are lacking in culturally responsive practice however participants expressed so strongly during the talanoa that having Pasifika representation at governance level was necessary because Pasifika Board of Trustee members had the capability and capacity to help in understanding the differences in meeting the learning needs of Pasifika students (Anae, 2010b).

Part 2: Talanoa
The raw data were collated under common themes and three main themes emerged through which related to role, personal aspects which are bounded in the role and participants' perceptions of the expectations of their role as a trustee. A discussion of findings for themes as well as sub-themes will be based on analysis of the raw data with the purpose of analysis in the next chapter. As a researcher, I am bound ethically to protect the privacy of the participants so pseudonyms will be used.

Role aspects
This category looked at factors that related to the role of Boards of Trustee member. Participants revealed initial reasons for standing for this position, aspects of the role they gained experience in as well as their perception of the role.

Role nomination
Every participant made themselves available to be nominated because they all had the desire to see Pasifika students achieve. They viewed these students as their own children and therefore desired the best for them. However, most participants discussed the need for trustees,

especially Pasifika trustees, to intentionally recruit potential Pasifika trustees. It was important to address the myths about being a trustee as well as empowering Pasifika to make themselves available for this important role.

The participants were all passionately motivated because even though there was a good representation of Pasifika at the governance level they saw their nomination maintaining and supporting this representation. Sala asked an outgoing parent representative to nominate her since she did not have a child at the school. It was important for all of them to be a voice not only for Samoan parents but for all members of the Pasifika community.

Sita saw her role as an extension of her commitment to her community. She had seen over time the desire and dedication parents had for their children to do well in school and had seen them at times they had become disheartened because of the challenges they faced. Sita also had an interest in education and therefore her motivation was fuelled by her desire to assist the children in her community to succeed. She commented "you have the responsibility to go in and see if you can close the gap and make sure that those other children in your community have a good chance of successful life outcomes".

Tina wanted to have a say in the quality of the education her children were having. She felt that the decision making she was involved at governance level was motivated by her desire for good outcomes for all students including her own children. This was evident in most of the responses to question one that focussed on why they put their names forward for the role.

A realisation from all participants was the need for potential Pasifika trustee candidates to have skills and knowledge and most importantly to have passion for the school. In order to attract these candidates, Mika and Tina strongly suggested intentionally recruiting as many candidates as possible. There was an understanding that the community needed to be consulted so that potential candidates would make themselves available and the recruitment process would not be left to chance, instead be purposeful in its approach. Mika said "I think it's important that more of our people be involved in that. I've actively sought Samoan parents to put their names forward in the elections just gone." Tina informally spoke to people in the community, empowering them to think about being nominated for a trustee role and then suggesting they put their name forward. She explained:

> What we were hoping for, because our Pasifika Samoan reps, there's myself and a male Samoan, so what we're hoping for is a combination with other Pasifika. That's to really encourage our communities that we need to be together as one with the main focus of

our students' academic achievement. So that's a real focus for us, to try and get more people on board from other Pasifika backgrounds.

Tina continued to describe how she approached people in the community:

> we had speaker evenings; we used the Samoan unit, they asked for their parents to come forward when they had an academic evening. So I popped along – hi, Board of Trustees. We actually had a service academy evening as well so I asked the teachers if I can pop along and the Health and Science Academy also had an evening so I popped along and did the same thing.

Role clarification

In general, all participants had great experiences and recommend all parents and community members to consider taking up the role of a trustee. Through their experiences they also discovered their own strengths as well as their limitations in areas which were out of their control.

When they first started as trustees there was no initial training. They started on the back foot not knowing what was expected of them. As they continued they were made aware of training available on the New Zealand School Trustee Association (2013) webpage as well as courses offered. However, as they persisted in the role they become more aware of the expectations placed upon the role and a few discovered that despite their expectations, the role was not what they seemed.

Knowing the difference between governance and management

One of the key aspects of their role was understanding the difference between governance and management. Knowing when to spend time discussing issues that were related to governance and leaving management issues to the Principal. Once this issue was clarified they could focus on aspects of their role which focussed on meeting the needs of the school community. The mechanics of the role and the strengths and limitations they discovered about themselves within the role they had.

Mika discussed the revelation involved in governing a school and the details involved, such as knowing the direction of the school and ensuring that strategic planning assists the school to do well. Sita pointed out "I've learnt the difference between management and governance and I've really learnt things like the importance of succession planning, because since I've been on the board we've probably gone through four Principals." Whereas Ana said "you kind of think oh no, that's a management thing. I mean we could be discussing an issue for like a good five or six minutes and then people kind of, click, no management…"

Sala's expectation of the trustee role was actually more management than governance and she needed clarification on this issue. Despite the explanations given, there were aspects of her role that she felt needed less of her time as a trustee for example "there's a lot of leave forms, a lot of school trips". As a result, Sala made recommendations to the board chair towards maximising the time trustees had at board meetings to focus on strategic matters and less on administration.

Meeting the needs of the school community

It was important for trustees to engage with the community to find out their expectations and concerns about the school. It was also important that they knew their community and their needs so they were aware of the impact of their decisions on the community. Sala became more aware of how much time and effort teachers gave to their students selflessly and how much they actually did for them. This highlighted the importance of the right people are being employed who have the needs of the students and school as their focus. In contrast, some participants felt that their boards needed to improve in this area.

Strengths and limitations of the role

Tina learnt a lot about herself and became more patient, resilient, responsible and accountable for the decisions that she made in the meetings. She had to ask questions about the representation of data so she was fully informed when making decisions. Sita had become more aware of the accountability that she had in her role to challenge data and had the confidence to hold Heads of Department accountable for their results. Sala's life became enriched through her experiences as a trustee because her school is filled with amazing students and staff, and the realisation of the amount of work that teachers do to enable students to succeed.

Ana had become stronger because some of her experiences have been difficult. She discussed a moment where she felt betrayed by other Pasifika members because they did not stand together on an issue. Therefore she questioned their loyalty or even the motives of their membership. Ana strongly felt that a proposal brought before the board, supported by the students, teachers, parents and even the community, met the needs of the students and was beneficial to their overall growth as learners. She strongly supported the proposal and expected the rest of the Pasifika members to do the same but they did not. This hurt Ana deeply because she thought that they should support the community; "If they are not supporting the needs of the students and community, then what are they there for? This is what the parents want…give it to them. For me, it was a simple issue, but it really showed up where people stand and it hurt. It hurt for them not to be standing on the side of the parents and… I just feel sometimes some

of the actions are quite rude…". This was evident in most of the responses to question two that focussed on their experiences in their role of trustee.

Sina had expressed her experiences in terms of the success of the students. She felt that her role assisted in creating opportunities for students to be successful and therefore saw this as a strength. Limitations of their role were narrowed down to things out of their control. For example, funding and decreasing roll. Sala expressed frustration about not being able to set up an academy because the Ministry of Education has not signed off on the paperwork. The politics involved were described as interesting but it is important for trustees to understand the role that Ministry of Education has and how it can influence progress in a school, particular projects that end up not being supported by the Ministry of Education or the length of the application process involved. Sala said "when it comes to property and because we've got a business academy they would love to see up and running but there's so very little that we can do without Ministry finally giving the final say".

Purpose of role

The participants' perspectives on their role was influenced by their experiences in their role, as well as the minimal training they received. The main theme that revealed itself about the participants' perspective on the purpose of the trustee role was having good governance which met all the needs of the students. Tina said her role was to "govern responsibly the affairs of the school and to ensure the students' needs academically [and] spiritually are met on all levels". Mika described his role "as a trustee would be to help the board travel the distance in the right direction for the school, following the mission statement, reflecting the character of the school, keeping the discipline of the school in terms of the management, staff and the students".

Sina saw her role as an ambassador for the school in the community. As she engaged with the community she promoted and affirmed the achievement of the school; "I do go around say to other communities and to parents that send their children out of Auckland, that the school has done so much for the students and we've got students who have graduated with Engineering, lots of things that I can sing praises…"

Tina also highlighted the accountability of the role towards all stakeholders and how much responsibility the role had. She described the responsibility as a "heavy weight that was carried". Moreover, Sita said, "you have the responsibility to go in and see if you can close the gap and make sure that those children in your community have a good chance of successful

life outcomes". This statement sums up the importance that each participant held in regard to their role, as well as the level of accountability they had towards the students, staff and the community.

Personal aspects bounded within the role

As the Samoan trustees progressed in their role, personal aspects become apparent such as the expertise that trustees brought to the role and how this expertise is not enough to be effective. Moreover, the advantage of having a good working relationship with the Principal and the time dedicated to ensuring that they were capable and able to execute their role.

Trustee Expertise not enough

The range of expertise had been debatable because was viewed in the sense of acquired knowledge and qualities and values. All six participants agreed that it is important to have a particular knowledge and skillset, however, the emphasis from the trustees was on the degree of heart or dedication or passion one has for the role. Additionally, Sita explained the need for experts to contribute or to "say something" instead of being silent and the need to be seen as unbiased and neutral. The Principal was seen as the expert in strategic planning and there was a need for the Principal to formulate a template for the board to contribute to. "The fourth Principal had strength in strategic management which provided a framework for members to contribute".

Sina, Ana, and Tina stated that having expertise was good but it was not enough to make an impact, they had to have the right attitude and characteristics so that the needs of the students were met. For example, having a professional on board, for example a lawyer, could be seen as a great asset to the board in terms of expertise, however, if the lawyer does not contribute to decision-making or voice the expectations of the parents on certain discussion topics they could be seen as incompetent and other trustees would question his motives for trustee wanting to be on the board.

Working relationship between Principal and trustees

Participants generally enjoyed a positive working relationship with the Principal. BoTs Mika and Tina identified good communication skills as a reason for this Mika explained communication in terms of discussion agendas in a meeting ensuring that clarification of correspondence and agenda items were sufficient. Tina explained that communication lines and access to Principal were excellent so it was easier to maintain a working relationship. BoTs participants pointed out how the Principal showed a willingness to ensure that this relationship was sustained. Sala highlighted that the Principal genuinely cared for the students which gave

the board confidence that the school was being managed with the students as the focus which matched with the board's expectation, hence why the working relationship between them were good.

Ana based her answer on the value of trust established between the board and Principal maintained a relationship. Sita linked the leadership skills of the Principal to this aspect which contributed to the working relationship. She emphasised the importance of their role as trustees by ensuring accountability was met by the them, as well as ensuring that the quality of decision making was sustained by the provision of quality or accurate data. This ensured that trustees were seen as capable and responsible. However, two participants revealed that there had been occasions where there had been strain or conflict in the relationship because of opposing views about how decisions were made, as well as competency levels of a Principal. Some of these issues were resolved, others were not, in which case the trustees continued in their role but had ongoing concerns regarding decisions around student support and the views of parents and/or BoTs members.

Time allocation
There is an average of an hour and a half actively spent on trustee duties a week. Nevertheless, more time was needed for matters such as when Principal roles are advertised and applicants are interviewed, new staff appointments are made and when disciplinary matters arose. Sina wanted to be more involved in her role in terms of her availability and was fortunate to have a supportive employer that released her during the year to ensure that she partook in her role as trustee. What was interesting to find was the commitment that they showed towards reading correspondence sent to them and wanting to be thorough so that they could actively participate and even ask hard questions. This was important because trustees placed such an importance on their role. Sala, Ana and Tina commented that the availability of the correspondence sent determined their preparation for the board meeting.

There was also an aspect of support and timing. Tina, Ana and Sala felt that they had the time to be involved in a BoTs because their respective situations with family and work could accommodate the extra time to meet the expectations of the role. Tina pointed out "every parent is busy, but I'm just in a really good space personally". Sina mentioned that many parents who are professionals have been interested in a trustee role but do not have the time to dedicate to the role in a way that would be beneficial to the school. This was evident in most of the responses to question three that focussed on their perception of the role.

Perceptions of the expectations of Boards of Trustees

The trustees took their role very seriously and all felt "accountable to the community" they served. They all had goals of improving the learning outcomes of Pasifika in their schools, and parallel to this maintaining their culture, language and identity. There was an understanding that it was important to collaborate with the school community in order to maintain these goals.

Improving student academic achievement

Ana is not satisfied with the achievement of the students in her school. She expresses this lack of satisfaction with direct questioning of Heads of Department when they do their annual presentation to the board. She shared "I mean I do hear [other trustees] asking questions, but ask the hard questions, ask the hard ones that will either make [Head of Departments] change or get the hell out of there". Her questions focused on whether the students have progressed academically over time and how they will obtain higher grades and sustain academic performance. She was very concerned about the school not meeting the needs of students who were not academic and the board not being willing to look at alternatives for these groups of students.

Mika contributed towards student achievement by approving events that enhanced student learning. He mentioned that these events, which are mainly education out of the classroom, are regular occurrences that he sees as valid and having met the needs of the students and provided successful outcomes. Sita discussed how systems had been re-structured at the governance and management level in order for the school to function well. She says:

> There's definitely been a shift [in student achievement]. Things at the board level was starting to be organised all aligned but it's got to start coming down [to middle management] …so it's not coming as quickly as I would like but that's where the focus is now…

The school has a very competent Principal who is new and together with the board has looked at ways to improve student outcomes. There has been a shift in obtaining positive gains in the academic arena; however, there is more work to be done. Sita elaborated on a technological initiative that the board has implemented to support student learning; "at governance level we pushed for technology professional development, how do we embed technology pedagogically to support our students and that's been really good."

Tina believed that Pasifika students are improving; nonetheless, more focus on this area was needed. One way of supporting these students and the rest of the Pasifika population in the school is by having Pasifika mentoring. "Every teacher is responsible for eight to nine students

in the school. They work closely with them. At the moment I know that we are on the line, so we are progressing well in regards to level 1 and level 2."

Sala was always passionate about Pasifika student achieving but she felt that her experiences on the board have helped her to realise the enormity of work that teachers do and the reality of the low literacy and numeracy levels that students enter high school with which are responsible for the gaps needed to addressed by the teacher and the student. Sala felt the commitment of parents and students needed to improve and to work co-operatively with the school to find solutions to these important academic issues.

All participants have acknowledged the importance of having regular updates of academic results that will allow them to be informed as well as keeping middle management accountable for their results and performance with the goal of obtaining positive student outcomes. Ana sums this up as "there has to be monitoring because you've got to monitor these kids. As deans you need to check the credits against each kid and see how they're doing". Furthermore, to make available the necessary resources and support that are required in order for teachers to meet the board's performance goals.

Pasifika students maintaining culture, identity and language
Sina, Sita, Sala, Mika, Ana and Tina felt that it is important for Pasifika students to know their culture, identity and language. Their schools participate in the ASB Polyfestival held annually in Auckland during March, which encourages students to sing in a Pasifika language and dance culturally, with the aim of exposing students to different cultures in the hope of strengthening the identity of the student. Moreover, in some cases, students learn about a culture other than their own. Mika discussed the importance of providing opportunities for students to learn about their culture because it is an extension of who they are and it allows students to feel comfortable and have the confidence to be who they are and to feel valued and respected as Pasifika students. He expresses "…you could never extend the kids to any extent without doing Malaga and Samoan language day because those take the kids beyond the classroom and really into the culture". Therefore, more Pasifika students would converse using Pasifika languages with their peers as well as teachers incorporating Pasifika protocols in school events that occur during the year. He further elaborates:

> There is a very strong presence of Pasifika…It is reflected in the make up or the breakdown of the population, not only in the presence in that sense but also what is done whether its's masses or assemblies or polyfest[ival] or events… there is a very

strong presence in the use of language and the use of culture and to learn, together with their peers.

In addition, Sina talks about the importance of having a presence of Pasifika teachers because it is a testament to the school valuing Pasifika culture will lead to students feeling valued. However, Sita, Tina and Ana felt that their schools could improve in this area. Ana believed that the board she sits on needs to be more culturally responsive towards the students, parents and community. "There needs to be a better connection between Parent Teachers Association, staff and the board so that parents can be more informed and therefore be more involved in the school". Sita believed that the diaspora of Pasifika students needed to be understood because Pasifika is not a homogenised term and furthermore, Pasifika students have different experiences because of this diaspora. Therefore, it is important for board members to acknowledge this when making decisions. Nonetheless, Tina recognised that some teachers struggled in classroom management and have been involved in disciplinary meetings where the use of culturally inappropriate methods were used when dealing with students.

Trustee engagement with the school community

All participants have discussed the good relationship between the boards and their respective schools. The indicator for this is the high percentage of community participation in school events such as report evening, NCEA evenings, cultural events and special character services. Tina, Sina and Mika expressed the importance of making connections with the community by being present at school events and creating new relationships and maintaining existing relationships with staff, parents, caregivers and the wider community. Sina shared:

> .…with Polyfest we split ourselves into which areas as parents we can go and help. That was really good because that got us in front of a lot of parents and talking with them and engaging with them. There's been a lot of events at the school like athletics day and various fundraisers and so forth and that's what I like to encourage our board to do, is to actually get in there.

In contrast, Sita and Ana see this aspect of governance as lacking. Sita understands the importance of creating an environment that will allow parents to feel safe enough to connect with the board and staff as well as feeling valued and respected. This principle aligned with Pasifika values and beliefs and so is a necessary factor to consider when finding solutions. She suggested hosting events at the beginning of the year to connect with the school community in a non-confrontational way and endeavour to break down barriers in order for parents to strengthen their connection with the school, which may improve their attendance of all school events. It was important to note that a cultural evening held at one of the schools and over a

thousand parents attended so it is important to investigate why parents would attend these types of events and not others.

Ana also raised similar issues to Sita in terms of breaking down barriers. She found that parents' participation in school events was encouraging, yet she questioned the language used at these meetings arguing the need for information to be translated into Pasifika languages in order for meaning and clarity of information. She found that these meetings were not maximised enough in order for parents to understand the necessary knowledge so that they could make informed decisions about their child's academic performance, and to feel valued and respected, which are important factors in supporting their children's academic performance. This was evident in most of their responses to question six that focussed on contributing to student achievement with links to the use of data when making decisions.

Did the Pacific Education Plan feature at governance level in South Auckland schools?

One of the assumptions of this research was that boards of schools with large Pasifika student populations would have in some way implemented the Pasifika Education Plan as a strategy to increase the achievement of these students. This assumption was tested in this research. The MoE has identified Pasifika as priority learners and have produced the plan for institutes to inform their practices. Therefore, it was important for the researcher to find out if the Pasifika Education Plan featured as a tool or strategy goal to improve student achievement at the governance level of high schools in South Auckland. As well as investigating the Samoan participants' viewpoint on the significance of the Education Plan.

All participants have acknowledged that the PEP had not featured or not mentioned in any of the board meetings especially in the area of improving student achievement. From an interpretation perspective the PEP could be viewed as not having any value as a document and so therefore not being used at governance level or there could be an underlying assumption that Pasifika students will never be able to achieve academically so the focus would rather be on improving the outcomes for the majority students who are achieving (Connelly et al., 2011). Most participants were aware of the document but outside of their role as trustees. Mika mentioned "I remember twice [PEP] was mentioned. It was explained at professional development a long time ago. In terms of implementing it and actively pursuing it as a goal I honestly can't say that we do". Sita states, "when we have done our strategic planning we've

certainly tried to have some goals and aims aligned to these, but off the strategic plan, I don't know whether it's really lived out…" A similar response was had from Sina:

> I've got to be truthful…the hard work of raising student achievement of students goes to the teachers. The board really, I do not know how many know or understand about the PEP. I mean I've been teaching for 30 years now and that plan, they put it out, but not a lot of teachers know about it until we come to a PTA meeting or a Pasifika union meeting.

Ana commented, "[PEP] should be out of respect for the kids and for the parents. It should be all plastered on that bloody wall. I wish it were…sometimes it has just kind of quickly mentioned and then thrown in the back like it's an afterthought. It's like no; we can do this on our own". Ana's staunch stance on the use of PEP at governance level is evident of the value that she places on this document as providing opportunities for Boards of Trustees to discuss the PEP plan in depth and to look at the possibility of implementing it into the strategic plan of the school in appropriate manner. Culturally responsive practice at governance level is first recognising that Pasifika students are deserving of a quality education and then incorporating beliefs and values that support these students in their identity as they meet their academic expectations and the PEP can inform this practice. But in reality the PEP is not present in most school boards in New Zealand (PPTA, 2012) so participants have revealed that culturally responsiveness must be cultivated from within governance team and this is why having Pasifika representation is necessary so Pasifika beliefs and values are communicated and upheld by the Pasifika board members and the community until it is shared amongst all employees as the norm (Kondra & Hurst, 2009). A statement from Tina describes the normality that could occur: "That's definitely something that I've been pushing forward from a…holistic perspective that if the children obviously feel Pasifika comfortable, then they will learn in the Pasifika style".

This research did not look intently into why the PEP was not featured, but one of the participants did offer an explanation; "I think it's because it gets sent to the Principal… and then it's just shelved". This explanation could be aligned within critical theory as an equity issue where there is a power imbalance. The Principal deciding not to implement the PEP could be seen as exercising covert power (Lukes, 2002, as cited in Lumby, 2012) where the interests of one group is dominant over another and therefore maintaining a school culture that produces unequal experiences of learners. The power issue is not that the Principal chose to put the PEP on the shelf; the power issue is not producing a Pasifika safe culture that supports learning knowing that Pasifika students are underachieving in the school. This scenario maybe more

evident in schools where there is a consistent lack of academic performance for a particular group of students for example Pasifika.

Conclusion

The findings reveal the complexity and importance of a trustee role and the need for culturally responsive practice to be the norm in the schools represented and in the wider community. The honest and passionate answers have allowed the researcher to connect with the narratives of the board members and as a result va-tapuia is strengthened in the relationship, and the space shared between researcher and participants is rich in dialogue, humour, honesty, as well as tears. The next chapter will discuss the findings of talanoa and the PEP document.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This chapter will provide a critical analysis of the findings that pertain to the literature and present new findings based on the perspectives of the Samoan Board of Trustee members. It is important to note that this discussion is not a generalisation of all Pasifika communities, but based on the findings of six Samoan trustee participants that may contribute to the discourse around local school governance.

Perspectives of Samoan school board members of their role

Board members are responsible for the governance of schools to ensure that the strategic plan and policies of the schools meet the needs of the students, staff and community. The participants felt responsible and wanted to be a voice for the community they served. They all had their own discourse about education from their previous experiences and used this knowledge as well as their Pasifika world-view to ensure that Pasifika students had a better learning environment and opportunities.

As discussed in chapter two, Wylie (2007) has periodically conducted surveys on the effects of self-managing schools in relation to governance. It was important to ascertain whether general trustee perceptions of the role aligned with perceptions of Samoan trustees, and whether the issues related to role found in the survey are still relevant in the current boards in South Auckland high schools.

The findings of Samoan trustees' perspectives of their role aligned with some of findings from Wylie's (2007) periodical study on governance in New Zealand schools (refer to Appendix five). Nevertheless, trustee perspectives also revealed issues around cultural responsiveness concerning maintaining culture, language and identity and student achievement. Some of the commonalities found were that two trustees felt the need to put their name forward for nomination because of the desire to contribute to their own community and one other wanted to influence the quality of education her children were receiving. Through their experiences in the role most participants felt that they became more familiar with the different dimensions involved in school boards, others felt that they contributed towards making good decisions for the school and others made good friendships in addition to understanding how a school operates. Because of their experiences most participants have indicated that their main role involved focusing on the strategic direction of the school and being accountable to the parents and the community. One discussed the importance of knowing the staff and their aspirations for the school. All have had very good working relationships with the Principals on their boards

and participants mentioned the genuine commitment the Principals had shown through their dealing with them. Access to the Principals were open and communicative. However, other findings were relational and personal with the awareness of the "weight" or responsibility of the role and how this fuelled the participants' passion for Pasifika students to succeed.

All trustee participants found the role very rewarding and some participants' lives have been 'enriched' because of their participation. Academic achievement for Pasifika students was a common motivation for all the participants to be involved in local governance in South Auckland schools. Being a trustee allowed them to be a voice for the Pasifika students and teachers, and the community they served. This innate sense of responsibility implied that they would know the needs of the community and would advocate for policy and systems to allow these needs to be met. Additionally, there was a sense of responsibility and accountability to the community the trustees represented and they had the desire to be familiar with their role in order to be competent and effective. One trustee described this desire as being an ambassador for the school and another an extension of her commitment to the community.

Wylie's (2007) research also revealed that there were significant issues around trustee capacity and capability. Wylie's findings revealed that all boards had a good range of members who were considered professionals and were experts in their field, which allowed them to work collaboratively together so that they could share the knowledge they had as a team. However, it was evident that there were still issues with the lack of expertise in areas such as strategic planning. The Principals were commonly the ones who had this particular skill set, nevertheless participants learnt as they went along.

It was interesting also to find that all the school boards that the six participants served on were low decile schools, they had a good range of expertise on their boards; however, this research cannot prove this is a general occurrence for all level 1 decile schools but it does show an increase in the capacity and capability of parents involved in governance in South Auckland schools.

The research suggested a need for schools to encourage Pasifika parents to be involved in boards. Pasifika trustees felt a responsibility or a desire to promote the role in the community and to address any myths about the role (Airini, 2010). This position was initiated by the Pasifika trustees themselves and not from the board chair or the board in general. It also seemed that the Pasifika representation on the board was Samoan and there needed to be more exposure of role to the rest of the Pasifika parents, for example Tongan parents, empowering them to put

their names forward for nomination. Having more ethnic representation would more likely create an organisational culture that would begin to be culturally responsive and lessen the power imbalances that may exist in the culture of the school.

The assumptions of Tomorrow's School Policy on the expectation of BoTs were tested (Wylie, 2007) and it was found that there was good representation of the community in terms of the background of its students and that the board did work very well with the Principal. There was also relevant expertise of parents on some boards that made valuable contributions. However, some participants questioned the "silent" trustees that did not voice an opinion or even said anything in the meetings. One trustee shared "you have [trustees] who are empathetic and have a passion and may not be Pasifika, but can contribute to the school and [have] knowledge and expertise; that's more important." It was important for trustees to have knowledge and skills but equally important was the need for the trustee to be passionate in the role and to advocate for Pasifika students.

Role definition was another significant issue that also emerged from the findings. Two participants had just finished one term and they felt that an induction day would have been valuable so they could initially learn more about the schools; the charters, mission statements and vision. This could include informally meeting trustees to make connections and more importantly to Teu le va with trustees before the first board meeting in order feel more comfortable in the role. The authoritarian capital (Kondra & Hurst, 2009) of the role would increase if the person that holds the role understands the expectations of the role; how well they perform could be measured by how culturally responsive the person is to the culture of the school.

Significant findings were based around teachers and boards being more culturally responsive and how participants contributed to students maintaining language, culture and identity as well as having positive learning outcomes because they believed this action supported the academic learning of these students. Five out of six participants agreed with Airini's (2010) argument about Pasifika leader's perspectives having the capacity to inform and meet the needs of Pasifika learners. This epitomises the role of Pasifika trustees in the context of local governance in South Auckland high schools. Participants were active in their role identifying the racial and injustice that prevailed and provided an alternative discourse which was more culturally responsive and validated the culture, language and identity of the students they

served (Santamaria & Santamaria, 2015) because they held the capability and capacity as Pasifika which made them valuable trustee members of their boards.

Half the participants saw the value of having a strong presence of Pasifika staff in the school that they believed supported and validated students' identity. This philosophy aligns with Kondra and Hurst's (2009) viewpoint on organisational culture. They argued that if a school culture fosters the use of Pasifika language, celebrates culture and promotes the importance of identity then over time this philosophy may become embedded in the beliefs and values of the school. This only becomes normal practice when the beliefs and values are shared amongst all stakeholders for example, board, teachers, staff, students and community. Participants knew that achieving this type of school culture is complex but over time few have acquired this type of organisational culture and others realise the importance of acquiring this culture that could influence the policy and strategic planning of boards.

The Samoan perspectives shared by participants, have revealed the importance of establishing and strengthening relationships with the board, teachers, parents and the community and acknowledging the va-tapuia as the central core of maintaining good working relationships (Vaioleti, 2006). Half the participants clearly acknowledged that connecting with the parents and the community was central to establishing and strengthening the va-tapuia and therefore providing opportunities for the school to discuss the learners' progress in the school.

Another important aspect of va-tapuia was instilling a sense of integrity and empowerment into the board role where the participants recognised cultural inequities and discrimination (Grande, 2008, as cited in Amituanai-Toloa, 2009)   as behavioural norms. These behavioural norms have been challenged to expose the injustice in order to inform practice and to become more culturally responsive as a leadership team at governance level in South Auckland high schools.

How do those perspectives reflect the intentions of the Pasifika Education Plan?

Earlier on in chapter four, a document analysis was performed using the Pasifika Education Plan document and three intentions were decided on. I then identified Samoan perspectives that aligned with these intentions and listed them in the table below (see Table 4, 5 and 6). A discussion will follow each of the tables with respect to the perspectives of the Samoan board members.

Table 4: Samoan board member's perspectives reflecting the first intention of the PEP

Intentions of the PEP	Samoan perspectives
1. Acknowledging and valuing the relationship between the Pasifika learner, their families and their communities.	Having strong parental support allows activities such as Samoan language days to occur which are relevant and necessary for the students.
	My focus is to approach the Pasifika community so that they could be informed about the important of being represented on the board and to encourage different Pasifika ethnicities to put their names forward for the board elections.
	We have currently improved the governance practice of the school and will now focus on middle management and looking at improvements in the systems that exist.
	I see my role as advocating for the school in the community especially to families that send their children to schools outside of South Auckland.
	My attendance to school activities and performances was important because it provided an opportunity to meet the community.
	Since we were the parent representatives on the board it was important to be present and assist in school activities so that we could connect with the community not only as board representives but as people of the school community. I wanted all our board members to have the same vision as mine.

There is clear correlation between the intentions of the PEP and the Samoan board members' educational perspectives. This is despite the fact that none of the boards' deliberately set out to implement the plan. Board members saw their role as important and as a result they consistently looked for opportunities to engage with the parents and community in order to connect and form relationships because they believed that this practice would inform their role as trustees and hopefully made decisions that are reflections of the community they represent.

Consequently, a need expressed by the board members that despite there being a good representation of Pasifika on their boards, the six boards had only Samoan representation. The participants felt that other ethnic groups such as Tongan, Cook Island and so forth needed to have a voice also. The PEP recognises that different Pasifika populations had to be represented at governance level to recognise the fa'asamoa, faka-Tonga, faka-Niue, faka-Tokelau, akano'anaga Kuki Airani, vaka-Viti (MoE, 2012) in recognition of the cultural backgrounds of

students represented at the school and therefore the beliefs and values that needed to be shared amongst board members as well as the wider school community.

All participants stressed the importance of having Pasifika board members at governance level being active in the role. Some participants criticised some Pasifika board members not actively "living out" their role. Their expectation of the role was that they needed to debate, provide Pasifika perspectives, question, provide culturally responsive solutions in order to be seen as responsible and accountable to the parents and community they represent, and they saw some Pasifika board members as not fulfilling these duties.

Acknowledging and valuing the relationship between the Pasifika learner, their families and their communities at governance level was important because these created opportunities for engagement and participation of all stakeholders so that the learner would feel valued and appreciated. An article in the New Zealand Education Gazette (MoE, 2014a) is a fine example of how a school realises the need to improve the success of their Pasifika students and uses models from other schools as well as the PEP to look at support systems that are necessary to support this outcome. One key feature that was relevant was the need to engage with parents and the community in order to work in partnership with the school to improve the outcomes of the students highlights the vital role that parents and community play in this partnership. The role that school boards have is to ensure that their strategic plan incorporates and maintains this necessary partnership in order to identify covert power that exists in their school processes and rectify this by being more culturally responsive to the students in their school.

Table 5: Samoan board member's perspectives reflecting the second intention of the PEP

2. To increase the capacity of the Pasifika learner in order to succeed in education.	Students taking part in Malaga and Samoan language days immerse themselves into the culture and advances their ability to understand from a Samoan world-view.
	We have an initiative in our school called Pasifika mentoring where every teacher is responsible for monitoring approximately eight students in the school. We are making great progress with our students achievement rates at Level 1 and 2 NCEA.
	Monitoring is necessary so that students progress can be checked especially their credits to ensure they are doing well.
	You have the responsibility to go in and see if you can close the gap and make sure that those children in your community have a good chance of successful life outcomes.

	Achievement data will be collected for all our Pasifika students and so we will have a good picture of their progress as well as any areas that need improvement.

It was evident that the achievement of Pasifika students was the focus for the Samoan board members. Their understanding of the different Pasifika cultures and customs of their students needed to ensure that strategic planning around student achievement was focused on appropriate pedagogy, and assessment, and pastoral, and guidance (Erickson, 2001, as cited in Madhlangobe & Gordon, 2012). One participant discussed the malaga (trip) to the Pacific Islands as providing opportunity for students to be immersed in the culture so that the integration of theory and practice are brought together; "No classroom would be able to extend the students as a malaga would". Another spoke about the implementation of technology to support the learning of students. These intentional implementation strategies supported at the governance level in recognition of methods that best work for their students in order to achieve well.

Most participants discussed factors that increased the capacity and capability of Pasifika learners. These factors involved quality data, monitoring and the accountability of middle management. Analysing data for Pasifika students outlines the strengths and weaknesses of their academic performance for the whole group and also provides individual data that will help them to recognise how far they have come and identifies areas of improvement to focus on. Monitoring would involve more than data but the connection with another person who cares would be more beneficial to the student, as well as supporting a healthy self-esteem which would impact on their capacity as a learner. One participant stressed the importance of keeping middle management accountable for their results. It is necessary for Board of Trustees to question under- performing statistics and to find out their strategies of supporting the learning of Pasifika students. It is detrimental to the success of Pasifika students if governance teams ignore the lack of achievement and their mind set of "that's how we do things here" (Connolly et al., 2011) and espouse social injustice and inequitable experiences for their learners. All of these factors must be discussed at governance level because the Ministry of Education (2013b) stipulates Board of Trustees to be culturally responsive in their practice.

Table 6: Samoan board members' perspectives reflecting the third intention of the PEP

3. Maintaining the Pasifika culture, language and identity of the learner in a learning environment to support and sustain success in education.	We have a strong Pasifika culture in the school where Pasifika language is heard amongst the students and the teachers; it is used for learning and is present in how the school functions. It is good for them to go to Tonga and Samoa so that they put into practice what they have studied in class. It is important for Pasifika students to see Pasifika teachers because they see this has the school valuing Pasifika identity. Students who are of Pasifika ethnicity should be able to be who they are in school. For example Samoan students should be able to be Samoan at school and Tongan should be able to be Tongan at school. We need to work for the students and understanding their background that they come from a Pasifika home and will return back to a Pasifika home.

Participants have strongly indicated that schools need to have a culture that is responsive to the Pasifika 'way of being' in order for Pasifika learners to feel validated as people and re-enforce the beliefs and values that are needed to connect the culture/identity environment at home and the learning environment of the school (MoE, 2012). The beliefs and values that enable this type of connection need to be embedded in the ethos of the school so that they can be shared amongst the Board of Trustees, students, teachers, staff, and the community in order to make an impact (Kondra & Hurst, 2009). The participants have identified

The cultural responsiveness of Boards of Trustees could influence the shift in the school culture towards the Pacific 'way of being'. The degree of cultural responsiveness of Boards of Trustees would be determined by how well the behaviours, attitudes and policy come together enabling them to work well in Pasifika dominated high school (Aquilar, 2011). Although the findings have shown varying degrees of school boards being culturally responsive, there is evidence in this study that participants who recognise inequalities and unequal learning experiences question the behaviours and attitudes of the board members. The participants recognise that there is still a long way to go towards improving the learning support that is conducive to Pasifika students.

In summary, when the Samoan board members were nominated and accepted the role they became part of the governance team in a high school with a large percentage of Pasifika

students in South Auckland. The board members placed in a position where their cultural understanding, beliefs and values could inform the decisions made at this level with the main objective of increasing the achievement of Pasifika students. However, this objective has proven to be problematic when dealing with other members of the board because of the tension between differing beliefs and values espoused. Attempting to persevere in trying to create a culture that values the partnership between Pasifika learners, parents and the community. Increasing the capacity of the learner while maintaining their culture, language and identity in a supportive learning environment is a worthwhile experience. This is what the Samoan board members achieved successfully and encourage other Pasifika members to do the same.

Participants have also discussed particular barriers that have challenged them in their role. They have taken their role seriously and have ensured that they were the voice for the communities they represented however in doing so they have experienced resistance or even felt that they were not heard and felt frustrated. Another barrier was the degree in which board members practice were culturally responsive because it influenced the effectiveness of decisions focused on Pasifika student achievement. It was apparent that student management, pedagogical practices and community engagement were areas that were identified in this research as needing improvement because there was a lack of understanding of students' needs, behaviour as well as culturally appropriate ways of engaging with students and the community. Therefore culturally responsive practice at governance level was a priority for participants because they seemed to be the only trustees with the capacity and capability that may raise student achievement. They were concerned with the needs of the Pasifika students and the community and so fuelled their passion and commitment for the role.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This study set out to explore the educational perspectives of Samoan school board members in South Auckland high schools. It aimed to provide insights and understandings into factors that are associated with the school board role in terms of nomination, clarification of role, purpose of role, working relationship, expertise and time, student achievement, maintaining culture, identity and language, from a Samoan perspective. As well as this, it set out to discuss the intentions of the Pasifika Education Plan and whether it was present in the discussions of Samoan school board members. By exploring these factors, this study aimed to introduce a new lens to inform governance practice in South Auckland schools that have a large student population of Pasifika and for educational research in New Zealand could view ways of empowering Pasifika school board members in their role.

Samoan board members made sense of their role by establishing va-tapuia between their board members, the learner, parents and the community. They had a deep desire for Pasifika students to succeed and so this desire fuelled and strengthened their va-tapuia with all involved in the school community to ensure that these students were given every opportunity to succeed. Opposing views and beliefs weakened the va-tapuia formed but in order to move forward and to continue in the role there needed to be time to re-evaluate and to 'take care of' the va.

The participants added value to the role by providing a Pasifika perspective into a western-dominated school board. A Pasifika perspective provided essential knowledge for the boards to work effectively in predominantly Pasifika high school in South Auckland. These perspectives could inform leadership practice, policy and even philosophy at the governance level to create a more inclusive schooling environment for all Pasifika students and the whole community (Johnson & Fuller, 2014, as cited in Santamaria & Santamaria, 2015). A more inclusive environment will help to create a learning culture that is conducive to Pasifika learners' home environment (MoE, 2012).

The need to have skilful and knowledgeable Pasifika board members with a passion to make a difference for Pasifika learners was endorsed by the participants. Pasifika board members needed to be active in their role and to have the courage to recognise and dispute matters that may provide inequality or injustice to these learners. Furthermore, to provide opportunities and support for Pasifika learners to maintain their culture, identity and language while achieving successfully in high school.

Implications

The findings arising from this study have implications for those schools boards committed to meeting the educational needs of Pasifika students. One of the findings was participants needed to recruit potential candidates for Board of Trustees in order to maintain the Pasifika board representation and to ensure that they had suitable qualities and skills; however, it is essential that the representation of Pasifika in school boards is a reflection of the various Pasifika populations in the school. This is important because it recognises that Pasifika populations have differences in their beliefs and values and cannot be seen as homogenous. A representative board will have valuable insight into the world of the students and the community that is represented. A well thought out and carefully planned recruitment strategy would be beneficial for boards to inform the different Pasifika populations with the aim of empowering Pasifika parents to stand for Board of Trustees elections. For example, a fono (meeting) could be held for the community. Advertising for this fono could be translated into all the Pasifika languages whether using flyers or community radio and television programmes to inform a wider representation of the Pacific. The meeting could include the history and vision of the school and significance of school boards and the role that Board of Trustees have. This will provide a platform to dispel any myths surrounding the role and a chance for prospective board members, to learn about the vision of the school and a chance to hear from present members about their experiences.

Board engagement with parents and the community was one of the most significant factors in supporting the learners' educational needs. Some participants explained that it was important to connect with the parents and the community because they needed to know the significance of their role in supporting the Pasifika learners' achievement. It was strongly suggested that their presence in school community meetings was necessary to create relationships with the school community and to maintain them because the community being familiar with them as their board representatives.

The importance and urgency of school boards creating a school culture that was responsive to the needs of Pasifika students was another key finding. It is vital for boards to reflect on how culturally responsive they are to their students, parents and community. As they reflect on this it is important to question whether their attitudes and beliefs support cultural responsiveness. It is imperative that they read their policies to ensure that they are appropriate and provides equity and equal learning experiences for all Pasifika students. These practices could be seen

as a measure of a school board's commitment and dedication towards meeting the needs of Pasifika students.

One of the most concerning findings is the absence of the Pasifika Education Plan at governance level in high schools in South Auckland that have a large proportion of Pasifika students. Despite the Pasifika Education Plan being ambitious, it has very good intentions to outline to schools how they can best support the needs of Pasifika students. The findings of this study reveal the need for this plan to be promoted and recognised as a valid document and for boards to consider reading through the Pasifika Education Plan as a tool to inform their practice in meeting the needs of Pasifika students. And if necessary to implement the plan as part of the school's strategic plan to improve the academic performance of Pasifika students. To support the use of this plan in high school, the Ministry of Education must provide the necessary training, explain the purpose of the document and give guidelines on how school boards can best implement the plan into a school's strategic plan.

Limitation of Study

There were a number of limitations that have resulted from this study. Firstly, the term 'Pasifika' was used as a 'catch-all' to describe participants, but all interviewees were Samoan. To meet the true definition of 'Pasifika', other ethnic groups would need to be included. This would provide wider, if more complex, representation, and a stronger Pasifika voice in regards to the role of board members in South Auckland high schools.

Another limitation arose from the talanoa sessions. The talanoa sessions were recollection of their experiences, actions and conversations that occurred over three years. As humans, we may be selective in the memories we share and only may want to share the positives and leave the negative. So this will impact on the findings as interviews was the main method used to gather data.

Recommendation

Practice

Schools

Participants have strongly advocated for culturally responsive practice at governance level so that equity and power imbalances and social justice issues could be recognised and addressed in order to provide Pasifika students with equal learning opportunities. So therefore it is imperative that boards intentionally engage with the school and Pasifika community to learn reciprocally about Pasifika knowledge, values and beliefs, pedagogical and ways of being (Penetito, 2010, as cited in Hynds et al., 2015). As well as adopting a culturally responsive

lens when creating, reviewing or deciding on strategic plans and policy. In order for this practice to be maintained boards must ensure that their members are made up of a representation of their student population because it is crucial the Pasifika world-view is continuing used as a basis to compare and critique plans and policy.

Samoan and other Pasifika communities

It is important Pasifika leaders in the community are active in engaging with the community about the importance of being a member of the board. Especially when there is a lack of representation on current boards in New Zealand. Maybe an affiliated Pasifika group made up of Pasifika communities represented in the school could be established in schools and be represented on the board to represent the views of all ethnic groups. This will ensure that the aspirations and expectations of the community are discussed at governance level.

However, Pasifika members of the board must be passionate, committed, being skilful and have good communication. Participants emphasised the need for passion and commitment to the role and having the courage to ask critical questions in order to challenge the expectations and teaching and learning structure of schools. Pasifika communities must not leave the responsibility of educating their children solely to the school but have a voice to ensure social justice and to transform practice and outcomes for their students.

Policy

MoE

There needs to be a concerted effort in ensuring that culturally responsive practice exists in the governance of schools. The government has made the advancement of Pasifika education outcomes a priority (Airini, 2010) but schools have not made Pasifika education a priority. Pasifika students are still not performing at the same level as other groups so MoE must play an important role in ensuring that they support and empower schools to evaluate teaching and learning programmes to be transformed into meaningful and relevant discourse towards serving the aspirations and the needs of Pasifika students.

NZSTA

There is an opportunity for NZSTA to engage with Pasifika communities about promoting the trustee role on school boards in order to inform and empower Pasifika communities to take an active role in their local schools. An authentic partnership with schools and their communities could develop regular training workshops focussed on the purpose and expectations of the role.

Future Research

The present study contributes to the governance in schools literature in general, but it also contributes to what has been a limited body of research within New Zealand educational literature. The literature review in this study identified a major gap in the governance in schools literature. Firstly, there is a lack of research in exploring a non-western perspective on the role of board members in governance in high schools in Auckland. Most of the literature is centred around the impact of self-managing schools on most aspects of a school in mainly primary schools. This small study used a Pasifika lens focused on the role of trustees and though limited by size and scope it would be beneficial to further explore how primary school and high school Pasifika school board members contribute to the governance of a school on a wider scale.

A second area that requires research relates to cultural responsive practice of school boards and how this practice influences their engagement with the community. Johnson and Fuller (2014) discussed that culturally responsive practice impacts on students and families from culturally diverse backgrounds that creates a school environment that is inclusive (as cited in Santamaria & Santamaria, 2015). It would be useful to investigate beliefs and values espoused by school boards' around engagement with the community.

A third area of research could focus on Pasifika students' perspective on the implementation of the Pasifika Education plan contributing towards creating a school environment that is 'Pasifika'. This research could be used to investigate the effect of the Pasifika Education Plan at the governance level. The New Zealand Education Gazette (MoE, 2014a) shared stories about schools that have implemented the Pasifika education plan or have implemented some of the objectives as part of the boards' strategic plan to support the educational needs of Pasifika students. It would be interesting to find out the motivation and engagement levels of Pasifika students as a result of the implementation of the Pasifika Education Plan.

In conclusion school boards have huge responsibilities to ensure that their students, especially Maori and Pasifika students, succeed. School boards must govern the school in a way that creates a school environment that is inclusive of all the students and herein lies the importance of having a good representation of the school community in which different perspectives are valued and used to inform the policies and practice of the school. Culturally responsive practice may contribute towards creating an inclusive school environment and together with the teachers and school community, can influence a culturally responsive culture that may allow Pasifika students to be who they are and succeed in a New Zealand educational institute.

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Glossary

fesili taua	important questions
fa'aaloalo	respect
fa'amaualalo	humility
lotu	prayer
savali	walk
talanoa	talk, conversation
tu	stand
tautala	speak
Teu le va	tidy up the space between us or relationship
va	space, relationship
va-mafana	small talk, relationship
va-fealoai	greeting, relationship
va-tapuia	sacred space, relationship

Appendix One: Pasifika representation on the Boards of Trustees

Note:

1. *Only schools with sufficient number of Pasifika students to expect at least one Pasifika parent representative on the board are included.

Year	No of schools which have adequate representation*				% of schools which have adequate representation	
	Excluded schools	No	Yes	Total (Included)	No	Yes
2009	2,014	313	132	445	70.3%	29.7%
2010	1,990	304	147	451	67.4%	32.6%
2011	1,998	306	147	453	67.5%	32.5%
2012	1,968	308	164	472	65.3%	34.7%
2013	1,954	285	184	469	60.8%	39.2%
2014	1,942	275	187	462	59.5%	40.5%
2015	1,937	295	179	474	62.2%	37.8%
2016						
2017						100%
Target						100.00

https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/pasifika-education/progress_against_pasifika_education_plan_targets

Appendix Two: Participant Information Sheet
Participant Information Sheet - Board of Trustees

Board of Trustees / School: *(names to be inserted here – each letter will be personalized)*

Researcher: Tasi Poumale

Title of research: **The educational perceptions of Samoan School Board Trustees and the Pasifika Education Plan.**

Date:

Dear ………………………………………………….

This letter is to invite you to assist me with a research project I am conducting as part of the requirements for my Master of Educational Leadership degree at the Auckland University of Technology under the supervision of Dr Howard Youngs. The research is motivated by my passion towards the achievement of Pasifika students in secondary education.

The aim of my study is to inquire into Samoan School Board Trustees' perceptions on their purpose and role, as well as, the influence Pasifika education plan has on decision making around Pasifika student achievement.

For this research I have selected eight secondary schools in the Auckland region, including yours. Each school has a sizeable Pasifika student population. I have obtained this demographic and student attainment data from the Ministry of Education website. I have selected the board members with Samoan names, including yourself and would like to invite you to consider being part of this research.

My research will use one data collection method –individual interviews. The board members will be invited to share their perspectives on questions that will focus on their role and their understanding of the Pasifika education plan.
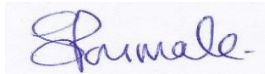
- This will involve **individual interviews** of board members who will answer supplementary questions and would be no longer than 40 minutes.

In the research report all information will be presented objectively and anonymously.

I wish to give you the following assurances. The participation of the board of trustees' are voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from this research at any time, or withdraw information that has been provided up until data collection ceases, without giving a reason. I anticipate this will be on April 22, 2016. However, if a participant withdraws then their data will not be used. To protect the identity of participants, consent forms and data will be stored separately and securely by my supervisor at Auckland University of Technology. These will be kept for a period of six years and then destroyed. Hard data will be shredded. Every attempt will be made to protect the identity of your school and board of trustees', through coding and pseudonyms, although anonymity cannot be guaranteed. A draft copy of the interviews will be sent to all participants to read and make any changes if needed by a certain date. At the completion of the study you will receive a summary of the main findings.

If you have any further queries please contact me or my Supervisor. I do hope you will agree to participate in this research. If so, I would appreciate you signing the Consent Form and completing the short questionnaire. Please return consent form and questionnaire to me in the envelope provided.

Yours sincerely

My contact details are:
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Appendix Three: Consent Form
Consent Form - Board of Trustees
This form will be held for a period of six years

Board of Trustee: *(names to be inserted here)*

Title of research: **The perceptions of Samoan School Board Trustees and the Pasifika Education Plan.**

Researcher: Tasi Poumale

I have read the Participant Information Sheet, and I have understood the nature of the research and why I have been asked as a board of trustee member to participate in this study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction.

- I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary and I am able to withdraw my participation at any time, without giving a reason. If I do withdraw then I understand that my data will not be used.

- I understand that I may withdraw information that has been provided at any stage up until data collection ceases on April 22nd 2016, without giving a reason.

- I understand that a draft copy of the interviews will be sent to me and changes could be made by a certain date.

- I understand that data will be kept for 6 years, after which they will be destroyed.

- I understand that this Consent Form will be securely stored separately from the research data for six years beyond the completion of the research, when BoTsh will be destroyed.

- I understand that neither my name, nor any identifiable information about me, the school, will be used in the research report. I also understand that while every attempt will be made to protect these identities through coding and pseudonyms, anonymity cannot be guaranteed.

- I understand I will receive a summary of the research findings.

I, _____agree to participate in the focus group for this research project
(please circle one)   **YES**   **NO**

I, _____agree to participate in an individual interview for this research project.
(please circle one)   **YES**   **NO**

Board of Trustesignature………………………………………………………………………………………

Date………

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 27 April 2016 AUTEC Reference number 16/46

Appendix Four: Initial analysis of document

Template for Document Analysis

1. **Type of document (Check one)**

- Newspaper	- Map	- Advertisement
- Letter	- Telegram	- Meeting minutes
- <mark>Legislation</mark>	- Press release	- Census report
- Memorandum	- Report	- Other (specify)

2. **Unique physical qualities of the document (Check one or more)**

- <mark>Logo,</mark> letterhead	- Notations
- Handwritten	- Stamps (date received)
- <mark>Typed</mark>	- <mark>Signature(s)</mark>
- Seals	- Other (specify)

3. **DATE(S) OF DOCUMENT**

4. **AUTHOR (OR CREATOR) OF THE DOCUMENT**

5. **FOR WHAT AUDIENCE WAS THE DOCUMENT WRITTEN?**

6. **ANALYSIS**

A. *List three key ideas/themes/issues identified in the document*

B. *Why was this document written and what evidence is there for this conclusion?*

C. *What questions are left unanswered by the document?*

Appendix Five: Commonalities found between Wylie (2006) findings and Samoan trustee perspectives of the role

Below N represents the number of participants that referred to each aspect in their talanoa with the researcher. Note not all findings were used just the ones that showed commonality.

Questions	Wylie (2006)	N=
Reasons for joining the board	Contributing to their community	2
	Wanting to help their own children	1
What trustees felt they had gained from their participation?	Making a contribution to the school	1
	Increased knowledge of education	1
	Indication of the multidimensional role of school boards	3
	Friendship and support	1
	Increase in their skills in working with others	2
What would they change, then, in their role?	The desire to be able to do more in the term they served on the board	2
	Have more time to focus on the strategic issues for the school	1
Working relationship with the Principal and the trustees	Very good	6
Main aspect of their role as trustees	Strategic direction of the school	4
	Partnership with school staff	1
	Parent representation	1
BoTs capability	Lacked some expertise such as strategic planning and legal skills	2