

An exploration of the factors that contribute to violent offending within the population of young Pacific Islanders in Auckland Aotearoa New Zealand.

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Abstract

The behaviour of today's young people never fails to captivate the interest of the society especially when it comes to the nature of their offending behaviour. Youth crime has been a longstanding topic of discussion both nationally and internationally with the overrepresentation of Indigenous and minority groups in the criminal justice system compared to the overall population. In Aotearoa/New Zealand, Māori and Pacific Islander groups remain disproportionately overrepresented in youth crime statistics. However, Pacific youth exhibit higher rates of violent crimes (Ioane & Lambie, 2016). This study's objective was to explore the multifaceted landscape of factors contributing to violence, attempting to understand how these elements interact, leading to violent behaviour among young Pacific Islanders. This qualitative study was guided by a phenomenological approach employing talanoa as a research method to engage with the 8 young Pacific Islander participants through talanoa sessions. Data was collected from the 8 participants of Pacific descent who shared their lived experiences and perceptions towards violent offending behaviour. These results, when linked with Pacific youth crime literature, suggest that the experiences that Pacific young people encounter during childhood - whether complex, difficult, or traumatic - have a significant effect on their overall well-being in later life. This synthesis of research into young Pacific Islanders' experiences and perceptions of violent offending underscores the importance of considering these viewpoints when developing interventions to comprehend, prevent, and address violent offending within this demographic. The findings reveal that young Pacific Islanders are prone to committing crimes due to risk factors including economic challenges, lack of education, and peer association. The root causes of their violent behaviour stem from negative challenges including first-hand experience of violence, influenced by social media criminal contents, peers, environmental influences, and the tendency to become violent as a means of self-protection. This study is only Pacific focused in the Auckland context, therefore future research is recommended to include both young people who offend and those who do not offend to identify the connection between them.

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Participant's background (age, gender, ethnicity, location)

List of abbreviations

AUTEC – Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

AUT – Auckland University of Technology

PTSD – Post-traumatic stress disorder

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my dearest parents, Sela and Veili Paongo. I cannot find the right words to express how lucky and blessed I am to be your daughter. I would not have made it this far in life if it wasn't for your prayers, sacrifices, love and never-ending support. Thank you both for taking the risk to migrate from our humble home in Tonga in hope of a better life and future for us. I am the person I am today because of you. I can never repay you in this life but with this piece of writing, I honour you both.



I also dedicate this study to my siblings Simaima, Silivia, Sione and Fifita. You all inspire me to give my best in everything I do. No matter where life may take us, I will always be right beside you. I am forever grateful to have you all in my life and I consider myself the luckiest sister in the world.

I love you all from the bottom of my heart.

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“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths” (Proverbs 3:5-6)

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Finally, to my wider family and friends, I express my gratitude for having been a significant part of my academic journey. I truly appreciate each one of you. ‘Ofa lahi atu.

Attestation of Authorship

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

Signed: *Akosita Paongo*

Date: 16/01/2024

Chapter 1 – Introduction

For many years, there has been a consistent overrepresentation of Pacific individuals in New Zealand's criminal justice system (Latu & Lucas, 2008; Ioane, 2023). Pacific people face a notably higher likelihood of being impacted by risk factors associated with engaging in criminal behaviours, which puts them at a disadvantage. The common violent offence among Pacific youth has been serious assaults, and nearly half of the Pacific youth offending population tend to commit violent offences as their first offence. Current statistics indicate that Pacific youth involved in criminal activities contribute to a higher percentage of violent apprehensions compared to their European and Māori counterparts (Ioane et al., 2016; Pacific Peoples, 2021). Violent offences are more prevalent among young Pacific Islander offenders compared to other groups, indicating a disproportionate representation of this specific type of criminal behaviour. However, despite the recent improvements in Pacific youth such as increased educational attainment, higher employment rates, and better access to community support services among Pacific youth, violent offending remains high (Polglase & Lambie, 2023)

Over an extended period, Pacific communities have traditionally been linked to elevated crime rates and an unreasonably high involvement in the criminal justice system. One of the significant concerns regarding Pasifika youth involvement in crime is their disproportionate representation in violent offences. According to New Zealand statistical data from 2010, about 44% of offences attributed to Pacific youth were violent offences, which had increased significantly over the preceding decade compared to a 7% increase for Māori and a 4% increase for Pākehā (Statistics New Zealand, 2010). This overrepresentation extends beyond violent crime and is also evident across various sectors, including education, health, economic participation, and engagement in risky behaviours such as drug abuse, suicide, self-harm, and violent acts (Fehoko, 2014). Research indicates that these risky behaviours often stem from factors such as low socio-economic status, alcohol abuse, gender disparities, the normalisation of violence as a form of discipline, challenges in forming relationships beyond the family, and a lack of resilience (Collins et al., 2016)

The youthfulness of New Zealand's Pasifika population raises concerns about the increasing overrepresentation of Pasifika youth in violent criminal offences. The present study explores the factors that contribute to violent offending among young Pacific Islanders in Auckland Aotearoa/New Zealand. This chapter aims to address the research gap by focusing on the dynamics surrounding violent offending amongst this particular population, specifically delving into social, cultural, and economic influences. By doing so, this research underscores the significance of understanding these

complexities and emphasises the urgent need for developing effective strategies to support and guide Pacific young people towards more positive and constructive pathways.

1.2 The Pacific community in Auckland New Zealand

Given the Pacific focus of the study, it is important to present an overview of the Pacific community. The Pacific population has a long history of migration and is characterised by its diversity and different cultures from numerous Pacific Islands. Currently, the Pacific population accounts for about 8.1% of Aotearoa New Zealand's total population with the highest proportion of children than any other ethnic group (Statistics New Zealand, 2018). The major Pacific ethnic groups in Aotearoa New Zealand include Samoan, Cook Islands Māori, Tongan, Niuean, Fijian, Tokelauan, Tuvaluan, and Kiribati (Statistics New Zealand, 2018). As Anae et al., (2001) pointed out, rather than a single homogenous Pacific community, people of the Pacific identify themselves differently in terms of culture, religion, ethnicity, family, gender, occupation, or a combination of factors. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge that the term Pacific people does not reflect a homogenous group but rather a heterogeneous one of great diversity in culture, language, and traditions as portrayed in the ethnicity statistics. The Pacific population in Aotearoa New Zealand is also characterised as demographically young due to its youthful population. It stands out as the most youthful demographic when compared to other ethnic groups with the median age being 23 years, which is lower than the median ages of Māori (25 years), Asian (31 years), and European (41 years) (Ministry for Pacific Peoples, 2021). At present, Pacific youth comprise the third largest cohort of youth offenders, with data indicating an annual increase rate (2.2%) within this demographic.

1.3 The terms Pasifika and Pacific

The term Pasifika collectively refers to Pacific peoples residing in Aotearoa, encompassing both those who migrated and those born in New Zealand. It holds different frames of reference: it serves as a transnational concept acknowledging ties to Pacific ancestral lands, fostering a collective responsibility that spans across oceanic boundaries. Within Aotearoa, Pacific scholars also define Pasifika as a diasporic notion, influencing evolving identities and creating new connections to places while maintaining strong ties to Pacific homelands and genealogy (Matapo, 2019; Ministry of Education 2012).

The term 'Pacific' serves as a broad category encompassing the islands groups of Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia in the Pacific Ocean. 'Pacific' is not solely a term to depict Pacific Island migrants currently living in New Zealand; it embodies a behaviour, a lens through which we perceive the world and engage with it. These terms refer to individuals who might be recent migrants to New

Zealand, long-established residents, or even born in New Zealand (Thomsen et al., 2018). The term Pacific is used throughout this research.

1.4 Research gap

Although there are a few existing studies on the subject, there is a scarcity of in-depth qualitative investigation into the individual experiences, stories, and viewpoints of Pacific young people engaged in acts of violence. This research gap is concerning, notably considering the youthful demographic of the Pacific population in New Zealand and their overrepresentation in crime statistics, particularly in instances of violent offences. Therefore, this study is aimed at exploring the factors that contribute to violent offending behaviours among young Pacific Islanders. It also serves as a foundation for tailored interventions and preventive strategies crucial in reducing violent offences within this population. Identifying and addressing these factors lays the groundwork for fostering supportive environments, enhancing educational opportunities, mitigating societal prejudices, and improving mental health provisions for Pacific young people. This exploration is pivotal in shaping effective policies, programs, and community initiatives aimed at nurturing a safer and more conducive environment for the holistic development of Pacific young people, paving the way for a more harmonious society in Aotearoa New Zealand.

1.5 Study Focus

Extensive studies on youth crime in New Zealand have encompassed investigations into the socio-demographic characteristics, offending behaviours, and prevalent risk factors among this cohort of offenders (Bersani et al., 2009). Conducting this qualitative research has the potential to offer a valuable understanding of young Pacific people's distinct challenges and their perspectives toward violent offending. Unravelling these factors not only aids in determining the root causes of violent behaviour among young Pacific Islanders but also sheds light on the complex interaction of socio-economic disparities, cultural integration, and systemic influences impacting Pacific communities in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Despite the recent declines in the rates of youth crime in Aotearoa/New Zealand, Pacific youths continue to remain high in violent offending rates. The focus of this qualitative research aims to offer valuable insights into the distinct challenges and perspectives of young Pacific Islanders towards violent offending behaviour.

To delve into the authentic life encounters of participants, it was important that this study be guided by a qualitative approach facilitating deeper reflection and resulting in richer and pure data. It was through the talanoa method that the findings of this research were obtained. This study has chosen Auckland as its research location due to the city's status as a Polynesian-saturated urban centre in

Aotearoa New Zealand, as indicated by Statistics New Zealand (2018). Consequently, it is deemed a fitting and primary location for my research. Eight young Pacific Islanders, aged between 18 and 24 (who have either committed or experienced violent crimes) participated in the study, representing diverse areas across the Auckland region. Despite these participants having faced challenges and negative experiences in their lives, these individuals maintain aspirations and optimism for a better future and eagerly anticipate positive changes. While this was not explicitly outlined in the research questions or the study focus, this aspect emerged through having an open talanoa with each of the participants. Talanoa encouraged an open exchange where the participants freely shared their stories, encompassing their aspirations and hopes for the future. As a result, this approach yields richer insights than merely responding to direct questions, allowing participants to share their hopes for a positive change in the community and life aspirations.

As a young Pacific Islander, I am deeply committed to shedding light on the complexities surrounding violent offending among Pacific youth. Growing up in the Pacific Island community, I have witnessed first-hand the challenges and struggles Pacific young people face in their daily lives and how violence can devastate lives and tear apart the fabric of our society. Some of the factors that lead Pacific youth to committing crimes are often related to structural racism, limited educational and economic opportunities, cultural disconnection, and exposure to substance abuse, however, what is more interesting is the violent nature of this particular group. Although violent crime can stem from things like community tensions, economic struggles, witnessing family violence as a child, historical traumas and modern influences, it is still a topic of concern that needs to be addressed. Hence this study is determined to delve into the root causes of this issue, exploring the factors that contribute to violent offending among young Pacific Islanders. By shining a light on these underlying factors, I hope to not only increase understanding but also pave a way for targeted interventions that honour the unique cultural context of not only Pacific youth but the Pacific community as a whole. This research is fuelled by a profound desire to create safer, healthier communities where our young people can thrive and fulfil their potential.

1.6 Research questions

1. What factors are more associated with the offending behaviour of young Pacific Islanders in Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand?
2. How do young Pacific offenders acquire the behaviours that lead them to offend?
3. How do these young people perceive their offending behaviour?

1.7 Thesis structure

This research unfolds in six chapters, all tailored to explore the factors of violent offending among young Pacific Islanders in Auckland, Aotearoa/New Zealand. Chapter one sets the stage, diving into the background, rationale, and significance of investigating factors contributing to violent behaviour among this demographic. In chapter two, a detailed review of the existing literature on Pacific youth delinquency in Aotearoa/New Zealand, exploring both risk and protective factors which lays the foundation for this study. Themes relevant to this project and factors thought to influence violent behaviour among young Pacific Islanders are explored, including personal experiences connected to this study.

Chapter three clarifies the methodology and data collection procedures. It discusses the chosen research methods like talanoa and their connections to the researcher's background and experiences, emphasising ethical considerations and potential limitations. Moving on to chapter four, this section reveals the study findings derived from the analysis of literature and the extraction of the emerging themes. Notably, it underscores that violent behavior among Pacific youth often stems from their upbringing and associations with violent peers, exposure to violence in their homes, experiences of childhood bullying, influences within the school environment, and peer pressure. These insights are drawn from both data analysis and personal experiences, shedding light on the factors contributing to violent offending among young Pacific Islanders. However, the discussion in this chapter is usually more descriptive and less analytical compared to chapter five.

Chapter five dives into a thorough discussion, exploring the evolving themes and how they link back to the reviewed literature, providing a comprehensive view of the factors at play. While both chapter four and five involve discussing themes and linking them to the reviewed literature, chapter four tends to be more focused on summarising the findings, whereas chapter five involves a deeper analysis and discussion of these findings, providing a more understanding of the research topic. Finally, chapter six brings everything together, offering insightful recommendations to address violent offending among young Pacific Islanders. It also candidly addresses the study's limitations, providing a well-rounded understanding of the research outcomes in the context of curbing violent behaviour among this demographic in Auckland, Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The growing issue of young people engaging in violent apprehensions is a significant concern in New Zealand and other major developed countries (Ioane, Lambie, & Percival, 2013). Exploring the factors that contribute to violent offending among young Pacific Islanders in Aotearoa New Zealand requires a comprehensive examination of the current body of literature. While there exists a considerable amount of data concerning violent crime among Pacific youth, the focus is merely superficial, with insufficient exploration into the underlying causes of their violent behaviour. This chapter intends to provide a comprehensive understanding of the literature relevant to the topic, highlighting themes and possible areas for further research.

2.2 A journey through history

The conduct of youth in New Zealand has been regarded as problematic to different extents since the mid-nineteenth century. It is commonly recognised that young people with Māori and Pacific Island backgrounds reveal higher levels of officially documented criminal behaviour compared to youths of Pākehā descent (Fergusson et al., 1993). A historical overview of violent offending among Pacific youth in New Zealand reveals a nuanced narrative shaped by socio-economic, cultural, and systemic factors (Carpenter, 2012). Since the mid-20th century, there have been documented instances of violent offences involving Pacific youth. These incidents reflect a complex interaction of historical circumstances and modern-day challenges.

The post-World War II era witnessed the migration of Pacific people to New Zealand, predominantly for economic opportunities. As these people established themselves, socio-economic disparities became evident, contributing to the vulnerability of Pacific youth to various social issues, including involvement in violent offending (Ioane & Lambie, 2016). The combination of cultural identity, socioeconomic situations, and educational differences has been considered as crucial in developing patterns of violent behaviour among Pacific young people in later decades (Le & Arifuku, 2005). Limited access to quality education and economic prospects, along with the obstacles of cultural integration, has resulted in a complicated environment that has been linked to increased rates of violent behaviour at times.

However, the notion that the most effective approach to tackling youth crime involves identifying "risk factors" in the lives of young individuals has gained popularity (Muncie, 2007). This approach is primarily based on the belief that recognising these risks facilitates precise targeting of programs

toward those who are at a higher likelihood of engaging in criminal activities. This, in turn, enables timely interventions to prevent further criminal behaviour by individuals, as advocated by Farrington (2000).

2.3 Youth delinquency in New Zealand

In recent years, societies throughout the world have wrestled with the complicated issue of violent crime among the young population (Maxwell & Morris, 2010). This issue becomes more severe in multicultural urban countries such as New Zealand, by the specific challenges encountered by distinct ethnic populations. Among these populations, young Pacific Islanders have emerged as a group particularly impacted by violent behaviour, making it critical to explore the underlying reasons leading to this issue (Tiatia et al., 2023). Violent offending among this particular group is an issue of significance that has drawn attention from both the media and society. Violent crimes are referred to by Rosenfeld (2009) and Gilbert and Daffern (2017) as any crimes involving the intentional use of violence by one individual against another. Although social scientists lack a consensus or universal definition of violence, criminologists frequently favour definitions that highlight harm to others or threats. In New Zealand, violent crimes involve homicide, kidnapping, assaults, and intimidation/threats (Seessenmann, 2002).

It is widely acknowledged that young individuals identifying as Maori or Pacific descent tend to have higher rates of official offending compared to their peers (identifying as Pakeha or Asian). However, research shows that when it comes to the rates of violent offences, there is an overrepresentation of Pacific youth offenders (Police NZ, 2008; Ioane & Lambie, 2016). Pacific youth involved in offending activities are responsible for a higher proportion of violent apprehensions compared to their European and Māori counterparts. Furthermore, Lambie (2018) observed that young individuals of Māori or Pasifika descent consistently appear more frequently in unfavourable crime figures, and maintain a significant population in adult prisons. Even though young offenders are not confined in these facilities, the adults serving sentences are individuals whose criminal activity began at an early age, evolving into a pattern of persistently more serious behaviour over time. Further research suggests that the amount of youth crime attributed to chronic offenders may be increasing (Payne et al., 2018). The earlier a child commits a crime, the higher the likelihood that they will continue engaging in criminal behaviour (Loeber & Farrington, 2012)

Given the fact that Indigenous and minority youth in New Zealand, as well as in other countries, appear more frequently in records related to criminal activities (Carpenter, 2012), understanding ethnicity becomes vital when examining youth crime in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Delving into cultural values and practices within Pacific communities in New Zealand involves understanding rituals,

language, storytelling, and art forms that contribute to their identity. Examining how these elements influence perceptions of violence or conflict resolution can shed light on culturally embedded responses to societal challenges. The discussion on the connection between ethnicity and criminal behaviour is complex and constantly shifting. Structural racism, embedded in societal systems and policies, creates unequal access to resources and opportunities, leading to certain ethnic groups being unfairly targeted. Institutional racism within law enforcement, courts and prisons also contribute to the overrepresentation of Pacific youth in crime statistics, underscoring the impact of structural and institutional racism on their experiences with criminal behaviour. However, the persistent overrepresentation of young Pacific individuals within the criminal justice systems highlights the necessity of finding effective ways to support Pacific youth.

Given the youthful demographic of the Pacific community in Aotearoa and the presence of various risk factors including inadequate education, association with antisocial peers, instances of family violence, and socio-economic challenges (Ravulo, 2016; Manuela & Anae, 2017), all contributing to involvement in criminal activities, the influence of this population on Aotearoa is likely to grow as the current youth demographic matures into adulthood. Consequently, researching Pacific youth and their criminal behaviour becomes essential to provide valuable information for targeted prevention and intervention strategies for this vulnerable population group (Ioane, Lambie & Percival, 2013). The following section provides a brief overview of the factors that contribute to violent behaviour.

2.4 Risk and protective factors

In the social development literature, according to Webb (2018), the primary emphasis of social development theories revolves around factors that impact socialisation, commonly termed as 'risk factors'. Armstrong (2004) argues that risk factors can be problematic as they are difficult to identify and can also be confused with other professional understandings of risk. Shader (2001) refers to risk factors as indicators that can raise the likelihood of someone behaving unfavourably or aggressively. They are often classified into categories including community, family, school and peers. As indicated by Farrington et al., (2012), risk factors are generally described as traits or hazards that when present in a specific individual, raise the risk that the individual will develop a disorder. Basically, a risk factor refers to anything that elevates the likelihood of an individual experiencing harm. Social risk factors encompass a spectrum of potential criminogenic influences stemming from family, school, friends, and the broader social environment. These factors involve emotional and educational deficits within the family and school context (Clarke et al., 2017; Moitra et al., 2018) along with potential associations between youth and delinquent peers (Thomas, 2015). An early study in the United States conducted by Wilson and Howell (1993) provides an illustration of risk factors for juvenile offenders. These factors include involvement with delinquent peer groups, poor school performance, residing in

high-crime neighbourhoods, lack of family connection, lack of consistent discipline, and being subjected to physical or sexual abuse.

In Aotearoa New Zealand, young Pacific Islanders often face challenges at home, schools, and communities, which all contribute to their involvement in criminal behaviour (Carpenter, 2012). Social risk factors like family violence, financial hardship, inadequate education, and peer influence also play a significant role in youth delinquency. Additionally, as noted by Schoone (2010), the combination of socio-economic stressors, large families, substance use, poor aspirations, disengagement in school and sense of detachment from the wider society can create a detrimental blend for some Pacific young people which contributes to their disproportionate representation in the criminal justice system.

Given all these risk factors pushing young Pacific people towards participating in criminal activities, without meaningful opportunities, these marginalised youth may struggle to distance themselves from crime (Bottrell, 2010). Protective factors are commonly understood as variables that are believed to lessen the influence of risk factors on future outcomes. These factors serve as protective measures against the influence of risk factors, fostering positive youth development, and reducing the probability of involvement in delinquency or criminal activities (Paterson et al., 2018). Common protective factors associated with a lower risk of youth offending include strong family bonds, positive peer association, adequate education, and community support (Lambie, 2018). In the Pacific context, protective factors extend to cultural connectedness, cultural identity, and a focus on cultural elements.

Other studies pinpointed protective factors for culturally and linguistically diverse communities (Bartels, 2011; Ravulo, 2016). These encompass involvement in church or community activities, engagement in sports, strong family connections, respect for elders and family, a robust cultural identity and ethnic pride, absence of discrimination, a sense of community safety, adherence to community norms against violence, and access to education and employment. However, despite the presence of many of these protective factors in the lives of some Pacific young people, they still engage in criminal activities (Ravulo, 2016). The following paragraphs will delve into a more detailed exploration of various factors that impact Pacific youth in New Zealand concerning their involvement in violent offending behaviour.

2.4.1 Peer influence

Joseph highlights that the most influential risk factor linked to delinquent behaviour is peer pressure (Joseph, 2012). As young people journey through adolescence and early adulthood, their peers hold immense power in shaping how they view the world, what they believe in, and even how they act.

These peers offer vital emotional support, companionship, and a sense of belonging, creating a space where fitting in and following the crowd feel incredibly important. The notion that peers have a substantial impact in influencing adolescents in delinquent behaviour finds its roots primarily in social learning theory (Kim & Fletcher, 2018). The social learning theory suggests that individuals learn criminal behaviour through a combination of social interactions, reinforcement, and observation. The theory emphasises that the influence of peers depends on the strength and closeness of relationships, with close friendships playing a particularly important role. The association with deviant peer groups is identified as a more potent predictor of delinquency compared to other factors including family dynamics, school environment, and community influences (Elliott & Menard, 1996). There is substantial evidence indicating that the delinquent behaviour of adolescents is greatly influenced by their peers. This is particularly evident among young Pacific individuals, within a context where community and social connections hold significant importance. Pacific cultures often emphasise collective harmony and group dynamics. In some cases, this pressure can lead to involvement in violent crimes. Although this fosters a profound feeling of inclusion, it can also result in conformity and a reluctance to stand out. For example, if peers are involved in violent offences or are part of gangs, there could be pressure on others to join in, either to maintain acceptance or to avoid exclusion (Mulvey et al., 2017). In a report by Brown et al. (2023), a considerable segment of the gang population in Aotearoa New Zealand consists of individuals with intricate backgrounds marked by intergenerational family violence, trauma, poverty, and neglect. In this regard, gangs serve a purpose by offering a sense of family and community to those who may have faced rejection in other settings. In certain instances, this connection extends to genuine familial bonds with ancestral ties.

Numerous studies have demonstrated the substantial impact of peer relationships on shaping attitudes, behaviours, and decision-making processes among individuals, with a particular emphasis on the vulnerability of adolescents and young adults to external influences (Pender, 2021). For instance, research specific to Pacific communities, such as the work by Liu et al., (2017) has highlighted the cultural significance of peer relationships and the impact of social networks on the behavioural choices of Pacific youth. The collectivist nature of Pacific cultures often results in strong ties within peer groups, amplifying the influence of these relationships on individual behaviour.

2.4.2 Economic factors/challenges

A recent study by Watson et al., (2023), shows that socio-economic challenges and living environments contribute to stressors that increase the likelihood of Pacific youth engaging in violent behaviour. The study also shows that when Pacific youth go through tough times and live in challenging environments, they often feel stressed, and this stress can lead to violent actions. This underscores the significance of acknowledging and comprehending the complex links between external pressures and the inclination towards violence in Pacific youth. Recognising the impact of

socio-economic challenges and demanding living conditions on their mental and emotional health is vital for formulating interventions and support systems that are truly effective.

In another investigation conducted by Ramakers et al., (2017), it was discovered that young offenders indicate a tendency to be either unemployed or working in low-paying, unskilled positions. The study delves into the correlation between the involvement in criminal activities and the employment status of these individuals, uncovering a noteworthy trend. This research discovered that a significant proportion of young offenders tends to fall into two distinct categories: they are either unemployed or engaged in low-paying, unskilled positions. Unemployment, as revealed by the study, emerges as a prominent factor in the lives of these young individuals, potentially contributing to a range of challenges. The lack of stable employment not only affects their financial well-being but may also be linked to broader issues such as limited access to educational and skill development opportunities, further perpetuating a cycle of disadvantage. Although there have been improvements in recent years, Pacific adults still report having insufficient funds to meet basic needs. Disposable income for this group is the lowest among all ethnic groups (Van Meijl, 2020).

Pacific children also face a higher likelihood of encountering poverty, even when there is a working adult in their household, possibly attributed to the larger size of Pacific households relying on a single low-income adult. Plum and Pacheco (2019) discovered that the rate of children residing in Pacific peoples' households experiencing in-work poverty is 17.7%, marking a 10.2 percentage point increase compared to children in New Zealand European households facing in-work poverty. This highlights disparities that could be attributed to systemic issues like structural racism that refers to the ways in which societal structures, policies, and institutions perpetuate racial inequalities, often depriving certain racial or ethnic groups while privileging others. In this case, the disparities in poverty rates between Pacific and New Zealand European households suggest systemic factors at play, such as unequal access to education, employment opportunities, healthcare, and affordable housing, which are all interconnected components of structural racism. As well as experiencing material hardship, food insecurity, or housing needs, Pacific children are more likely than children from other ethnic groups to live in such a household. People in crowded households tend to experience lower wellbeing on measures such as life satisfaction and material wellbeing (Stats N.Z, 2018). Economic deprivation and inadequate housing conditions can contribute to a higher likelihood of young people engaging in criminal activities.

2.4.3 Family violence

According to Tolan et al., (2006), family violence is a more comprehensive term that encompasses violence occurring among family members and intimate partners. It includes a wide range of

controlling behaviours, often physically, sexually, and/or mentally, that are often accompanied by fear, intimidation, and emotional deprivation (Campo, 2015). There is a growing body of evidence that demonstrates the effects of family violence on physical and mental health that are cumulative over time, both direct and indirect. In a Pacific context, family violence is described as actions that violate the tapu, which refers to forbidden and divine sacredness, affecting both victims and perpetrators along with their families (Havea et al., 2023). This form of violence is seen as a threat to family stability, capable of breaking down and tearing apart the foundations that bind a family together.

Academic research strongly supports the idea that family and living surroundings are significant factors contributing to violent behaviour, especially among Pacific youth (Fa'alau & Wilson, 2020). Factors contributing to challenging family environments include low household income, inadequate parental supervision, a lack of strong parent-child relationships, as well as having unskilled or unemployed parents, and a history of antisocial behaviour among parents (Fanslow et al., 2021). Concerning this matter, the connection between family violence and adolescent violence can follow various pathways. For instance, young people who are exposed to family violence may be more inclined to embrace violent norms that justify the use of violence as a method for addressing personal and interpersonal issues such as intergenerational, violence, incarceration, and trauma. Furthermore, young people brought up in environments characterised by violence may experience heightened negative emotions and form stronger affiliations with peers who exhibit violent tendencies, contributing to a cycle of violence (Liu & Miller, 2020).

Several studies highlight the powerful influence of family dynamics and living conditions on shaping behaviour. As stated by Helu et al., (2009), the violent behaviour among Pacific youth is a reflection of what is observed in the home. Research on young Pacific people suggest that family violence is considered an important concern within Pacific communities, impacting a significant number of young individuals raised in homes marked by violence, subsequently contributing to the manifestation of violent behaviours. Family violence is rooted in a multitude of factors, with financial stress and substance abuse being prominent contributors. Research discovers that young people who experience violence in their upbringing may find themselves caught in a distressing cycle, as they are more likely to perpetuate or become victims of family violence later in life. The interplay of financial strain and substance abuse creates an environment where the harmful cycle of family violence can persist, underscoring the need for targeted interventions to break this destructive pattern.

As indicated by Ferguson et al. (2007), many of these youths hailed from dysfunctional and disadvantaged home settings. Research has also indicated that children raised by single mothers tend to exhibit more aggression compared to those from two-parent households, suggesting a discernible

link between family structure and children's aggressive behaviour (Chavda & Nisarga, 2023).

Witnessing violence or physical abuse within the family during early stages of life is considered early exposure to violence. Chavda and Nisarga (2023) indicate that such exposure during childhood can elevate the likelihood of engaging in violent behaviour during adolescence. Additionally, even in cases where violence is not demonstrated within the home, research suggests that the lack of strong social bonds and controls, along with the failure of parents to impart conventional norms and values, increases the risk of children being involved in violence later.

Fergusson et al., (1993) further emphasise how family structure and dynamics play a key role in influencing violent behaviour in young people. This is particularly relevant to Pacific communities where family values and norms have a significant impact on individual behaviour. A recent investigation discovered that young offenders engaged in violent behaviour often originate from troubled family backgrounds compared to non-violent youths (McAra & McVie, 2010). However, another study revealed that children maintaining positive emotional connections with their parents are less inclined to develop associations with antisocial peers, a factor potentially linked to engaging in criminal behaviour (Ingram et al., 2007).

In the Pacific culture, young people are often brought up following the traditional 'Pacific way,' emphasising strict discipline, religious values, and obedience (Ravulo, 2015). In this cultural setting, corporal punishment might be employed as a disciplinary measure and perceived as an expression of affection. The intention behind physical punishment is perceived as a tool in which children can learn the difference between right and wrong. However, while some may perceive it as advantageous, Elgar and colleagues (2018) argue that experiencing corporal punishment is associated with increased tendencies toward aggressive behaviour, mental health issues, academic difficulties, and associated cognitive deficits. Pereira (2010) also asserts that children raised by parents who excessively use physical punishment as a means of control are prone to harming their relationships. These consequences can have enduring impacts on adult health and overall well-being of young people, increasing the likelihood of becoming violent (Gershoff & Grogan-Kaylor, 2016).

2.4.4 Educational challenges and experiences

Education plays a crucial role in shaping an individual's chances of success in society. It changes possibilities associated with criminal activity and delinquency, especially property crime among young generations (Ioane, Lambie & Percival 2018). However, insufficient education and skills can lead to a sense of hopelessness and frustration, driving young individuals toward involvement in criminal activities and delinquency.

The literature consistently demonstrates that youth involved in criminal activities often experience academic underachievement, with a low percentage completing high school or pursuing additional education. Kim et al., (2010) indicates that young offenders often grapple with educational challenges, such as a lack of suitable schooling. This insufficiency of suitable educational opportunities can be attributed to broader structural issues, including disparities in accessing quality education, inadequate resources in underprivileged communities, and systemic obstacles that hinder marginalised youth's educational achievements. These structural barriers intensify the factors that contribute to youth involvement in criminal activities, highlighting how educational inequalities are intertwined with broader societal challenges. Kim and colleagues further discovered in their study that overcrowded classrooms, racially and socioeconomically isolated surroundings, lack of effective teachers, and insufficient resources confine many young individuals to low educational settings. Low academic achievement can result in early delinquency and substance use among young people. These limitations contribute to student disengagement, elevating the probability of dropping out, subsequently increasing the likelihood of involvement in crime.

In Aotearoa New Zealand, Pacific youth are currently facing unequal access to quality education within the school system, which markedly impacts their living situations, subsequently leading to involvement in criminal activities (Fowler, 2023). Study conducted by Paterson et al. (2016) identified a robust connection between reduced engagement in delinquency and enhanced teacher performance ratings. Other studies also indicate a significant correlation between delinquency and poor academic achievement (Moffitt, 1993; Herrenkohl et al., 2001). Youth are at a high risk of delinquency when grappling with low self-esteem, academic underachievement, and limited aspirations.

Another study by Marriott and Sim (2015) found that economic hardships within Pacific communities often lead to fewer opportunities and resources, creating challenges for young people striving for a good education. This shortage of quality educational resources, along with financial constraints, hampers academic success and limits future prospects of Pacific young people. An example highlighting this educational inequality is seen in the unequal distribution of resources among schools (Ravulo, 2019). Schools in Pacific communities often face budget limitations, resulting in fewer extracurricular activities, limited access to advanced courses, and inadequate resources compared to more affluent schools. These budget constraints originate from systemic inequalities, particularly the uneven distribution of educational funding. This results in differences in educational opportunities between wealthy and disadvantaged communities. Consequently, Pacific schools are hit harder by financial restrictions, making educational inequalities worse and widening societal gaps. This unequal resource allocation directly impacts the education available to Pacific youth. These disparities also

limit educational opportunities for Pacific young people, potentially contributing to a higher risk of involvement in behaviours like violent offending.

Despite a rise in the duration of Pacific Island students' presence in schools, their educational attainment continues to be limited, posing constraints on their prospects for achieving an enhanced quality of life (Ferguson, 2008). Although there have been recent advancements in educational achievements and participation rates among Pacific communities, which have seen improvements across various domains, these rates still lag those of the general population, with consistent attendance not necessarily correlating with academic success (Ministry of Pacific Affairs, 2010). Further, the rates for tertiary completion remain low, and the proportion of young Pacific individuals who are unemployed, have no education or training are significantly greater compared to other population groups, except for Māori.

Moreover, the systematic and institutionalised practises, policies, and attitudes that perpetuate racial inequities and imbalances in society are referred to as structural racism. In New Zealand, structural racism is a key contributor to youth offending, particularly among young people from marginalised ethnic origins including Pacific Islanders (Alansari et al., 2020). Māori and Pacific Islanders have historically faced colonisation, dispossession, and discrimination in New Zealand, resulting in the construction of systemic imbalances that remain to this day (Reid et al., 2019). These disparities occur in a variety of spheres, affecting the lives of young people and determining their paths to criminal behaviour. For example, the education system, as highlighted by Salesa (2017), reflects discrimination that perpetuates the disparities faced by Pasifika communities in contemporary New Zealand society. Data from the Ministry of Education (2012) reveals a significant proportion of Pasifika students grappling with academic underachievement and a lack of engagement with the educational system. Based on scholarly studies, exposure to racism and prejudice has been found to increase the probability of resorting to violent behaviour as a form of protest or self-defence (Pihama et al., 2017). The presence of structural racism is linked to heightened socioeconomic challenges, which, in turn, augment the risk of involvement in violent criminal activities.

2.4.5 Substance Use

Regarding substance use, a study conducted in Australia revealed a clear association between substance use among youth offenders and their involvement in criminal behaviour, particularly noticeable among Indigenous youth (Prichard & Payne, 2005). This study identifies a clear connection between the two, suggesting that substance use serves as a contributing factor or a precursor to criminal activities among the youth population. Importantly, the research highlights that this association is particularly pronounced when examining the experiences of youth, emphasising the need for targeted interventions and support within this specific community.

Similarly, a study in New Zealand found that Indigenous youth (Māori) demonstrated higher rates of cannabis consumption compared to non-Māori, suggesting a potential link to increased risky behaviours during adolescence, such as delinquency and higher occurrences of behavioural problems (Fergusson & Horwood, 2000). Additionally, risk factors related to violent offending indicate a significant relationship between spending time in environments where alcohol and drugs are prevalent and instances of youth violence (Esbensen, Peterson, Taylor & Freng, 2009). These studies show a detailed picture of how using substances like cannabis is connected to risky behaviours among young people. The fact that Māori youth use more cannabis makes us wonder about the cultural factors contributing to this and how it affects their overall well-being. At the same time, when young people spend time in places where alcohol and drugs are common, it's linked to more instances of violence. This underscores the necessity for comprehension strategies aimed at addressing both substance issues and the broader determinants influencing youth behaviour.

2.4.6 Mental Health

A potential association could exist between violent offending among Pacific Islanders and mental health challenges, including conditions such as depression, anxiety, and trauma (Subica et al., 2019). Research study conducted by Fa'alili-Fidow (2016) found that Pacific youth encountered elevated levels of depression, a notable prevalence of self-harm and suicide attempts, and increased exposure to family and sexual violence. This indicates that Pacific Islanders residing in New Zealand encounter obstacles in accessing mental health services due to linguistic and cultural barriers, as well as the presence of social stigma surrounding mental illness (Kingi et al., 2018). These barriers reflect systemic inequalities within the healthcare system, where services may not adequately accommodate the diverse needs of minority populations including the Pacific people

Stigma associated with mental health in Pacific Islander cultures can lead to a variety of undesirable outcomes, including an increased likelihood of violent behaviour. Negative mental health impacts mean individuals are more prone to exhibiting aggression, expressing hostility toward others, trying to harm themselves, and facing an increased likelihood of being both victims and perpetrators of subsequent violence. The challenges related to mental health are likely intensified by the underutilisation of mental health and addiction services among Pacific communities. Individuals may be less inclined to seek care for their symptoms if mental health issues are stigmatised, which may worsen their illness and raise the likelihood of violent behaviour (Robertson & Curtis, 2014).

2.5 Summary

Research consistently points to several factors that often contribute to violent offending. Family and living surroundings have a significant impact on an individual's vulnerability to engage in aggressive behaviour. Peer influence is another major component that influences decisions and behaviours.

Substance misuse is commonly acknowledged as a substantial factor to violent crime. Mental health is also crucial, because diseases such as mental disorders can raise the likelihood of aggressive behaviour. Furthermore, the link between education and work is critical, with deficiencies in these areas potentially increasing the likelihood of involvement in violent offences. As stated in academic research, these elements are critical in understanding why people engage in violent behaviour.

Empirical data also suggests that criminal behaviour in young people is not likely attributed to a single risk factor; instead, a combination of internal and external factors collectively influences their actions (Baskin-Sommers & Baskin., 2016; Humphrey & Van Brunschot, 2018). The multi-faceted and overlapping nature of factors contributing to violent behaviour, such as family dynamics, peer influence, substance misuse, mental health, and education/employment opportunities, interact in complex ways. Family environments marked by violence, coupled with peer pressure and societal norms condoning aggression, can escalate tendencies towards violence. Substance misuse often coexists with mental health disorders, heightening the risk of engaging in violent behaviour. Limited access to education and employment opportunities exacerbates these challenges, fostering feelings of alienation and frustration. Recognising the interconnectedness of these factors is essential for developing effective intervention strategies that address the multifaceted nature of violent behaviour and promote comprehensive solutions.

Chapter 3: Research Design

3.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to provide the study's research framework to explore the factors that contribute to violent offending among young Pacific Islanders in Auckland. To capture the lived experiences and perceptions of young Pacific Islanders towards violent offending, a qualitative study was employed. This chapter consists of two parts. The first part focuses on the study's theoretical framework while the second part outlines the research method, data collection, data analysis, and ethical considerations.

3.2 Theoretical framework

3.2.1 Qualitative

This study is anchored in the belief that those with direct experience should have a voice. Employing a qualitative study was deemed the most suitable for this study's objective as it intended to explore the lived experiences and perspectives of young Pacific Islanders in violent offending. The qualitative approach examines how people construct their realities, experiences, and the meanings they attach to them (Maxwell, 2008). It entails searching for real-world experiences, conducting in-person interviews, storytelling, and asking questions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Neuman, 2014). Qualitative research is fundamentally participant-centred, enabling young Pacific Islanders to share their stories, beliefs, and experiences related to violent offending. By amplifying the participants' voices, the study intends to generate an authentic representation of their experiences.

This approach significantly allows participants involved to provide in-depth viewpoints on the phenomena that is being studied. Adopting a qualitative research design in this study enables a thorough, culturally sensitive, and profound exploration of the subject matter, potentially resulting in the development of more impactful interventions and policies. It captures lived experiences of individuals as they are presented in thoughts, perceptions, emotions and attitudes. In this sense, it develops new knowledge through participants' own stories and perspectives towards violent offending (Sherman & Webb, 2004). The adaptability of qualitative research also allows the incorporation of participants' cultural beliefs and practices. Therefore, using a qualitative approach ensures validity and authenticity to the research.

3.2.2 Phenomenology

Since this study aims to capture the lived experiences of young Pacific Islanders in violent offending, a phenomenology approach is relevant as it is all about the search for meaning. Phenomenology is the study of phenomena, the appearance of things, and their meanings (Smith, 2013; Flood, 2010). It allows for more in-depth exploration of individuals' lived experiences and the meaning they attach to their experiences allowing researchers to gain insights into participants' complex and nuanced perceptions of the world (Zahavi, 2003).

Phenomenology enables the researcher to analyse a phenomenon's meaning and essence based on how people attach their own individual meanings to their own social experiences as noted by Sokolowski (2000). In this sense, examining how young Pacific Islanders construct meaning around their experiences and perspectives around violent offending. By understanding their unique perspectives and the factors influencing their actions, it will gain insights into the underlying causes and potential pathways to intervention and prevention. It is ideal for delving into the genuine experiences of the participants since it acknowledges the wholeness of their entity considering all angles. Additionally, phenomenology does not just focus on how participants describe their experiences, but also delves into the implicit assumptions that may not be acknowledged by others (Lester, 1999).

I recognised that adopting a phenomenological approach would place the focus on the young Pacific participants allowing a space to voice their experiences and capture their realities in their own words, allowing the study to be more participant-centred and empathetic. Gibbs (1999) believes that human beings are unique in their own ways as they attribute significance to their actions, and to understand human behaviour, it is crucial that these meanings are taken into consideration. This will enable the study to not only explore the participants' experiences in violent offending, but also the factors leading to it, their reactions to the consequences and their aspirations for the future. Thus, the phenomenological approach is well-suited for this study as it offers a holistic, culturally sensitive and participant-centred means of exploring the participants' experiences and perspectives. The phenomenological approach is culturally sensitive as it acknowledges and respects the unique cultural perspectives and lived experiences of the young Pacific participants. By centering the study on the voices of the participants themselves, the approach recognises the importance of allowing individuals to articulate their experiences in their own words, within the context of their cultural background. This approach values the cultural nuances and meanings that participants attribute to their actions, behaviours, and experiences. As a result, it fosters a deeper understanding of the cultural factors that may influence violent offending among Pacific youth. As a result, it can lead to a more profound understanding of the complex factors involved and in turn, contribute to more effective interventions and policies.

3.3 Pacific worldview

With the purpose of exploring, obtaining and honouring the voices of young Pacific Islanders in Auckland Aotearoa New Zealand, it is purposeful and meaningful to apply a Pacific worldview framework to gain a more holistic insight from the perspectives of the participants (Fairbairn-Dunlop et al., 2014). Pacific worldviews are built upon values and beliefs that encapsulate the way Pacific people perceive the world (Sanga, 2004; Gegeo & Gegeo, 2001). It encompasses cultural norms, values, and traditions that influence how the involved participants perceive right and wrong, shaping their moral compass and influences their decision-making.

In the Pacific worldview, the connection between the researcher and the participants should be upheld and fostered through the cultivation of respectful relationships. This is evident in the manner in which the researcher and participants interact and communicate throughout the research process (Ponton, 2018). It is also imperative to emphasise that the actions and behaviours of individuals within this community are often situated within this holistic framework, where personal experiences are deeply intertwined with collective narratives and cultural heritage. The Pacific worldview is a fundamental component of the participants' and the researcher's daily experiences in this study. As such, I recognise its importance in driving the study design, allowing this study to explore the components that contribute to violent crime within the context of this multifaceted and interrelated worldview. As a Pacific researcher investigating Pacific matters, my cultural insider perspective and understanding of Pacific cultural values, traditions and community ties position me to undertake this research. My intersectional understanding and interdisciplinary background further enrich the research process, allowing for a nuanced exploration of the challenges and strengths of Pacific youth. My dedication to empowering Pacific communities and using research as a catalyst for positive social change further affirms my suitability for this study.

Therefore, to comprehensively explore the factors contributing to violent offending, it is crucial to acknowledge the significance of the Pacific worldview as it provides important cultural, social and historical context. As a result, interventions and policies may be shaped by cultural sensitivity to tackle these issues. Embracing a Pacific worldview in this study signifies an appreciation of the profound intricacies involved in the subject at hand. It demonstrates a deep respect for the cultural, social, and historical backdrop that moulds the experiences of young Pacific Islanders. This approach places a strong emphasis on fostering inclusivity and cultural sensitivity, with the goal of not only gaining a holistic comprehension of the factors underpinning violent offending but also offering guidance for purposeful and efficacious interventions within this unique and culturally diverse community. Thus, this study is carried out through the lens of a Pacific worldview.

3.4 Research Method

3.4.1 Talanoa

The utilisation of the talanoa method was well-suited for this qualitative study due to its alignment with the phenomenological approach and its resonance with the Pacific worldview. Talanoa holds great potential as a research method in the study context of exploring the factors that contribute to violent offending within the young Pacific population in Auckland. The term ‘talanoa’ is prevalent in several Polynesian languages, signifying informal conversations, storytelling or sharing personal experiences (Vaiotele, 2006). It can function as either a noun or a verb meaning ‘to talk’ or ‘to talk story’ (Tunufa’i, 2016). Talanoa has been practised in a wide range of contexts and is exceptional due to its cultural distinctiveness (Fairbairn-Dunlop 2014; Vaiotele, 2013). The attractiveness of talanoa to this study stems from its dynamic nature, its ability to resonate across cultures and extending its influence as a concept across Pacific circles. It demonstrates an understanding of cultures and processes, valuing and acknowledging all participants involved.

In line with the Pacific worldview, talanoa promotes a holistic understanding of the issue being discovered. It fosters an environment where participants are motivated to voice their perspectives, thus enhancing their understanding of the subject within a non-coercive and empowering context (Tunufa’i, 2013). In this case, it enables us to delve into the factors contributing to violent offending from multiple angles - cultural, historical, social, and personal (Vaiotele, 2006). This method's focus on storytelling encourages participants to reflect on their own experiences and those of their community, enriching our comprehension of the complex web of influences behind violent offending. Smith (1999) highlights that storytelling is fundamental in indigenous research and should be honoured as a means of conveying lived experiences, dwelling into personal beliefs and uncovering wisdom. Incorporating the talanoa method into this study represents not only a culturally relevant approach but also a respectful and inclusive one. It allows us to build bridges of trust and rapport within the community, facilitating deeper insights into the factors contributing to violent offending. The significance of nurturing relationships, trust and mutual understanding is highlighted by establishing a space where participants feel comfortable expressing their experiences and viewpoints (Vaiotele, 2006). These values are incorporated by creating a safe and respectful space for participants to share their insights and engage in dialogue. This is evident in the study through the interaction between the participants and the researcher. Additionally, the inclusion of kai (food) in the talanoa sessions is advantageous, as it resonates with the Pacific cultural affinity for communal dining, fostering relationships through shared meals and conversations (Ofe-Grant, 2022). Communal dining can create an atmosphere that encourages open and honest conversation, promoting trust and empathy among participants. The act of breaking bread together can lead to improved relationships and

reduced factors that may contribute to mitigating violent behaviours (Emery & Laumann-Billings, 1998).

By adopting talanoa, this study seeks to honour the cultural context of the topic being explored, recognising that participants' experiences and stories may be deeply influenced by their heritage, family ties, and community dynamics. The application of talanoa in this manner not only enriches the depth of understanding but also exemplifies a respectful and inclusive research practice. As a result, talanoa will yield strong and valid data as it has been openly shared, sanctioned, and affirmed by all participants involved.

3.5 Recruitment

As this research is of an exploratory nature, the primary objective was to provide a limited but in-depth exploration of cases that provide substantial data into the phenomena being investigated. Within a 3-month period, I made efforts to involve potential participants in the study through word-of-mouth and phone conversations. The recruitment criteria encompassed individuals of Pacific descent between the ages of 18 and 24 who were residing in Auckland. Since this study was conducted in Auckland, the snowball sampling tool was initially considered the most effective approach to recruit participants whereby first identified participants referred to others who also fitted the research requirements (Browne, 2005). This was also constructed by reaching out to my own connections including relatives, church members and friends to engage potential participants. While it is acknowledged that interviewing my own connections may present a conflict of interest, especially in Western research paradigms, it is important to contextualise this decision within the framework of Pacific worldviews and research. In Pacific cultures, relationships and interconnectedness hold paramount importance, and research is often conducted within the context of existing social networks and community ties. Therefore, the decision to reach out to pre-existing connections was made in alignment with the principles of reciprocity, respect, and relationality inherent in Pacific research traditions. I also identified potential participants through an alternative method: by distributing my recruitment flyer on social media platforms specifically Facebook and establishing networks within local community groups. Subsequently, I engaged with individuals who expressed interest, explained the purpose of the study, provided participants with my contact details and the study's participant information sheets.

While certain participants have not personally encountered the police, they are aware of relatives and other individuals within their circles who have had interactions with the police due to violence. On the other hand, some participants themselves have had direct contact with the police as a result of their involvement and experiences in violent activities.

Table 1: Participants

Participant	Age	Gender	Ethnicity	Location
Char	24	F	Samoan	South Auckland
Mel	22	F	Samoan/Maori/NZ European	East Auckland
Fina	19	F	Tongan	Central Auckland
Malia	21	F	Tongan	East Auckland
Dee	20	M	Cook Island/Niuean	South Auckland
Ken	22	M	Samoan/Tongan	West Auckland
Dev	20	M	Fijian	South Auckland
Elijah	18	M	Samoan	West Auckland

The above table provides brief information about the 8 participants who participated in the study. To safeguard confidentiality in accordance with AUTECH ethical protocols, each participant had the option of choosing pseudonyms, however it is important to note that some participants preferred to use their first names. The selection of pseudonyms in qualitative research is widespread and serves to safeguard the confidentiality of participants. Yet, there remains uncertainty regarding the preferred methods for choosing pseudonyms, particularly within ethnic communities. Patel (2017) argues that names are more than just words. They are a huge part of who people are, carrying their background, family history, and cultural heritage. Thus, the absence of participants' names may convey the impression that their distinct identities and cultural backgrounds are not valued. All participants were born and raised in New Zealand and were from all across Auckland (South, West, Central and East). Among these participants, 4 were females while the other remaining four were males. Among these eight individuals, three (Fina, Elijah, and Char) who were enrolled as students at AUT, willingly participated and were recruited through interactions at AUT (city campus). The other five participants, (Mel, Malia, Dee, Ken, and Dev) expressed their interest in the study through Facebook and were recruited in this manner. Of these five, all were currently employed, in contrast to the three AUT students. Importantly, all eight participants were proficient in English, eliminating the necessity for a

translator. These 8 participants provided valuable insights into their personal experiences and perspectives on violent offending despite the number of cases.

3.6 Data Collection

Initially, this study intended to conduct the data collection through both focus groups and individual talanoa sessions, however, upon reflection, it became apparent that incorporating focus groups talanoa might present challenges in this study. One of the challenges might be that given the fact that the nature of the topic (violent offending) might be sensitive for some, making it difficult to obtain accurate data. I recognised the significance of one-on-one talanoa sessions, providing participants who might be hesitant to discuss such matters in a group setting with a safe and confidential space to express their perspectives. The selection of the individual talanoa was also made as it allows a thorough and detailed exploration of the participants' perspectives on the subject - violent offending, resulting in richer and more in-depth data (Vaioleti, 2006).

The talanoa sessions took place in various venues in Auckland, including the AUT city campus, public cafes, and a local community hall in East Auckland. All participants were in agreement and comfortable with holding the talanoa in these selected locations and the interviews were audio recorded. Although participants had the option to communicate in their mother tongue if they wished to, they preferred to converse in English. I started and conducted each talanoa session with a prayer and some participants willingly joined in, fostering a sense of connection between myself as the researcher and the participants. I then started the talanoa by introducing the study, its purpose and ensuring that participants know what to expect in the talanoa. To build a strong rapport with participants, I began by asking introductory questions (where are you from; how are you feeling today) to ease participants into the conversation before delving into more deep questions. Each talanoa lasted for about 45 minutes.

In the Pacific culture, the act of sharing kai (food) is a common practice that signifies hospitality, generosity and unity as it brings people together, fostering stronger relationships and building mutual trust (Goodyear-Smith & Ofanoa, 2022; Fehoko, 2014). Since sharing kai plays an important role in nurturing and upholding relationships, refreshments were provided for each talanoa session. This not only provided enjoyment but also offered participants an opportunity to strengthen and maintain connections throughout the talanoa. Following each talanoa session, I expressed gratitude to each participant by offering a koha (gift) in the form of a \$30 prezzy card as a token of appreciation for their willingness to share their knowledge and participation in this study. Each participant appreciated and extended their thanks for the koha and refreshments that were offered.

The overall data collection process took longer (6 months) than expected due to some instances where some potential participants needed to reschedule the talanoa while others encountered difficulties in taking time off from work. Consequently, this led to a delay in the data collection.

3.7 Thematic analysis

The data analysis in this study was guided by a thematic analysis approach for identifying patterns within the data, in which emerging themes were used as analytical categories (Bowen, 2009; Mogashoa, 2014). Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that thematic analysis is particularly effective, especially with qualitative methods such as talanoa, where there is a substantial amount of raw data to be examined. In 2021, Braun and Clarke revised their approach to thematic analysis, advocating for reflexive thematic analysis (RTA) as a preferred method for identifying patterns in qualitative data. A central part of RTA is recognising the researcher's role and subjectivity as integral to the process. Rather than minimising it, researchers are encouraged to actively utilise their perspective as a valuable resource in analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Thematic analysis provided a remarkably adaptable tool for acquiring an in-depth, intricate, and comprehensive insight into the talanoa discussions. This approach involves an in-depth review and scrutiny of the data which attempts to investigate the factors that contribute to violent offending among young Pacific Islanders in Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand. Additionally, it offers a systematic structure for uncovering significant findings derived from diverse experiences shared by participants. The analysis method not only provides for a full analysis of the many elements leading to violent offending, but it also guarantees that these results are firmly based on what is known about the participants' real-life experiences.

Since talanoa is used in this study as a research method to explore factors contributing to violent offending among young Pacific Islanders, Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework for doing a thematic analysis was adopted. This structure comprises the following stages: (1) acquaint oneself with the data, (2) generate initial codes, (3) search for themes, (4) review these patterns, (5) articulate the identified themes, and (6) document the findings.

Following the transcription of the talanoa, the initial step involved reviewing and reacquainting myself with the transcript. After finishing the transcription, I revisited the transcribed text while simultaneously listening to the recordings. My aim was to identify any spelling mistakes and ensure that the transcript was appropriately anonymized, preventing the identification of participants through details such as names, locations, or significant events mentioned.

Throughout the talanoa sessions, I annotated the margins and applied colour-coded highlighters to specific themes. Braun and Clarke (2006) states that a theme encapsulates significant aspects of the

data related to the study questions. Among these 8 talanoa sessions, participants' viewpoints were rational, consistent and notably common. I went over the talanoa scripts to identify themes, then re-read them again to identify more sub-themes.

3.8 Validity

In qualitative research, when there is a strong internal validity, the findings are deemed reliable and genuine. Validity refers to the accuracy of results or the findings (Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2008). This is dependent on the method's ability to capture the diverse perspectives and experiences of participants in the context of Pacific Islander populations. In order to establish the trustworthiness and authenticity of this research, the talanoa sessions were conducted in a culturally sensitive and respectful manner, placing a strong emphasis on fostering trust and building rapport. This approach significantly contributed to reinforcing the method's validity. Using appropriate data analysis tools to identify recurring themes and patterns strengthens the reliability and trustworthiness of talanoa. Talanoa has the potential to offer meaningful and culturally informed insights on the factors leading to violent crime among young Pacific Islanders in Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand, when used appropriately within the study context.

3.9 Ethical consideration

This study adhered to the protocols for conducting research involving Pacific participants. Approval for this research was granted by AUTECH on March 27, 2023. Participants received comprehensive information about the study both before and during the talanoa sessions. Consent forms were provided to all participants for their signature prior to the commencement of the talanoa, confirming their willingness to participate. These consent forms were carefully explained before and after the talanoa, with a specific focus on ensuring participants understood their right to withdraw from the talanoa or the study at any point, up until the completion of the write-up. This process was guided by the principle of informed consent, where participants willingly and knowingly consented to be part of the research.

Throughout the research procedure, participants' privacy and confidentiality were carefully protected. In instances where participants chose to use their real names, maintaining confidentiality while respecting their autonomy was approached by obtaining explicit consent from each individual. Prior to using their real names, participants were informed about the potential implications and risks associated with identifying themselves. They were given the opportunity to make an informed decision regarding the use of their names in the research. Additionally, measures were taken to ensure that any sensitive or identifying information shared during the study was handled with utmost care

and kept confidential. This approach allowed participants to exercise agency over their own privacy while still contributing to the research in a manner consistent with their preferences. These ethical measures were critical in ensuring that the research upheld the study's integrity and trustworthiness while respecting the rights and well-being of the participants in full compliance with established ethical guidelines and standards.

3.10 Summary

This chapter has outlined the research design, theoretical framework, research method, and data analysis approach. The use of qualitative methods, phenomenology, talanoa, and a Pacific worldview framework collectively contributed to a comprehensive exploration of the factors that contribute to violent offending among young Pacific Islanders in Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand.

Chapter 4- Results/Findings

4.1 Introduction

Discussed in this chapter are the key themes that have arisen from the talanoa conducted with the 8 participants about their experiences and perspectives of violent offending. Each talanoa demonstrated the participants' own perspectives and understanding of what constitutes violent crimes and the factors that drive young Pacific Islanders towards violent offending behaviour. These talanoa sessions reflect the understanding that criminal behaviour can be attributed to a variety of factors, including family violence, financial hardship, poor education, peer influence, and more. These factors, including the life goals and ambitions of the participants, will be further explored and discussed. Derived from these talanoa sessions, participants expressed satisfaction with their upbringing and indicated that they had experienced a conventional childhood. However, some of these participants, despite reporting a positive childhood, later engaged in violent criminal activities.

During the talanoa sessions, a marked difference was observed between the ways in which the young male participants described their experiences compared to those of the female participants. Specifically in some cases, young male participants displayed a lack of emotion while sharing some of their experiences with violence, while the young women were more elaborate, providing detailed descriptions and expressing their feelings about their lived experiences and perspectives on violent offending. Furthermore, female participants were more inclined to refrain from involvement in any criminal activities, while male participants demonstrated a higher likelihood of engaging in violence, including violent offences. Prior to each talanoa session, part of building rapport with the participants was to ask questions regarding childhood experiences, home environment, and neighbourhood, serving the purpose of establishing rapport and creating a more relaxed space with participants before delving into more detailed and serious questions.

4.2 Childhood Experiences

Childhood plays a pivotal role in shaping one's identity and upbringing, hence why it was essential for the study participants to share their childhood experiences. This is crucial in gaining a deeper understanding of their origins and the developmental pathways that have brought them to their current circumstances (Farrington, 2013; Damon & Hart, 1991). Rutter (1989) believes that childhood experiences play a significant role in shaping individuals and influencing their development to adulthood.

During the talanoa sessions, most participants shared favourable childhood memories, recounting being raised in a culturally rich environment and regularly attending church. In participant Char's

explanation, *“I grew up with both parents in a Catholic religion and we always did prayers at home. My household was surrounded by family and it was a fun childhood.”* Participant Fina also shared that his childhood was no different from anyone else’s:

“My childhood was no different from anybody else’s, We’ve all had our ups and downs and there were rough times and we’ve also experience things that were out of the norms” (Fina).

However, as for some individuals, childhood was not overly difficult despite the challenges of being raised by a single parent – mother – in most cases. Participant Dev described his upbringing as typical and average despite being raised by a single mother. He commented *“I come from an average family, single mum and one sibling and yeah it wasn’t a rough childhood but it was pretty average”*. While acknowledging the hardships and challenges growing up, one participant (Dee) shared that his mother instilled positive values such as generosity and the importance of giving to others in him. However, he spent a significant amount of time away from home, starting at a young age (7 years old), frequently loitering around shops, which often resulted in receiving hidings from his mother.

Another participant (Ken) also shared that his upbringing in Tonga was different from what it might have been if he had been raised in New Zealand. His childhood experience in Tonga involved a considerable amount of corporal punishment, an experience for which he expresses gratitude, acknowledging that it imparted valuable lessons to him:

“My childhood was the best, in Tonga, there were a lot of smacking (Ken laughs) but I wouldn’t change that for anything because it taught me a lot about life” (Ken)

4.3 School environment

School is a significant social institution that creates an environment where individuals interact with their peers. I believed it was important to gather background information about the participants' experience in school to better understand the social context in which violent behaviour may have developed. Understanding their experiences will help identify patterns of peer relationships, bullying, or social isolation which can contribute to violent behaviour.

When asked to share their experiences at school, most participants expressed that school was enjoyable, however for some, school was seen as just a place where they could hang out with their friends while some did not enjoy school for other reasons.

“Yes, I did but mostly just went there to hang out with my friends” (Char)

“Uh I only enjoyed part of it uh and that’s just hanging out with my friends so yeah” (Elijah)

Ken, however, mentioned that he had a negative experience in school due to extensive bullying, causing his reluctance to attend school. Another participant (Malia) also revealed that her negative experience in school was fuelled by racism from teachers, making the overall school environment unpleasant for her. As a result, her primary motivation for attending school was to socialise with friends rather than to focus on academic work, resulting in poor grades and the need to repeat certain subjects. Mel similarly stated that she had dropped out of school quite early because school was not ideal for her.

Despite the adverse challenges encountered by these participants in school, they may not have contributed to violent crimes, however, these challenges influenced these participants' lives, resulting in the development of violent behaviour and the impetus to continue associating with like-minded young people later in their life journeys.

For one participant (Ken), his turn to violence was attributed to 'built-up anger' resulting from frequent mockery and bullying from family members and during his high school years, along with other challenging experiences. On the other hand, participants who had positive or normal school experiences still developed violent tendencies later in life. However, their violence was influenced by their home environment, exposure to negative material they encountered on the internet, and their association with peers who were prone to committing violent offences.

4.4 Home environment

Understanding the participants' home environment was crucial for identifying potential root causes or factors that may contribute to the development of violent behaviours. For instance, a violent home environment may influence the adoption of aggressive behaviours. Therefore, participants were asked to share some of their experiences regarding the existence or not of violence at home.

Participants generally expressed positive family relationships and an enjoyable home environment despite being raised by a single parent. Regardless of their obstacles and financial hardships, most participants felt a sense of love from their families. As described by participant Dev; *"I was raised by a single mother and although I had no father, my family was always around supporting us and yeah I had a pretty allgood childhood no drama"*.

However, for certain participants, the home was not considered a safe environment given the challenging experiences they encountered. One of the participants (Dee) shared that despite growing up in a great home environment with his brothers, he opted for the same lifestyle as his older brother, involving gangs and related activities. He consistently associated with his older brother's associates, whom he referred to as his brother's friends who were much older than him. However, Dee had to remain at home with his younger brother after his older brother moved in with other relatives. This

had an impact on Dee's life. He noted that losing his older brother brought him sorrow and created a void in his heart. This was due to his family's disapproval of the lifestyle he embraced, preferring to spend time in the streets with peers rather than at home. Dee's decision resulted in his family considering him the 'black sheep' and disapproving of the path he had taken. Additionally, he pointed out that his remaining brother at home chose not to follow the same lifestyle as Dee, worsening the situation;

“My little brother that I stayed with didn't choose the life I chose and my family didn't like me cause they kinda like labelled me as like the black sheep or whatever and when my older brother left, that left a hole in my heart because my little brother he was soft aye he couldn't hold the balls so we couldn't do a lot of things together” (Dee)

Another participant (Ken) shared that while his home environment was generally positive, he often faced mocking and bullying from his relatives which motivated him to develop toughness to prevent anyone from treating him in a similar manner.

“I used to get mocked and bullied a lot by my relatives and I would not tolerate that so I became violent because I wanted to show them that they can't touch me” (Ken)

4.5 Neighbourhood

All participants expressed a sense of security in their local community, yet they also identified specific areas within their neighbourhood that they would avoid due to safety concerns and perceived danger. The 8 participants were also aware of the need to avoid approaching or going near gang members due to the perception of their dangerous nature in the community.

One participant, Elijah, described his neighbourhood as a small community that is friendly and connected. However, he also noted that their community has recently become more dangerous due to ongoing incidents of violence involving the youth in the area:

“It's a little bit more dangerous now compared to before like there's been a lot of violence against youth with the youth like stabbings and shootings” (Elijah)

Dee also adds how the media frequently characterises his neighbourhood as unsafe, a place prone to assaults and violence;

“The media always labels my hood as bad or a place where you would get beaten up or get assaulted or whatever” (Dee)

Nevertheless, Dee contends that his neighbourhood is quite secure, to the extent that one could leave their car unlocked at night without any incidents. However, he maintains that the feeling of threat arises only when outsiders enter the community.

“They come and behave in some type of way to make themselves get robbed you know what I mean, but if they just come and mind their business and not cause trouble to the community, then it’s fine” (Dee)

Dee further states that the constant presence of the police in his neighbourhood gives the impression that they anticipate wrongdoing. This perception leads to a feeling of being targeted, creating an uncomfortable and negative experience. It serves as a motivation for engaging in criminal activities as individuals feel that the police are anticipating their actions.

“Anywhere outside the neighbourhood is unsafe but then even inside the neighbourhood, it was only dangerous with cops because growing up, the cops would look at us like we were doing crimes so yep, me and my friends came together then we formed our little gang so you know we can give them oh yeah do you want trouble we gonna cause trouble” (Dee)

Malia also pointed out that in her community, it's common to see police officers nagging daily, creating a sense of unease among the residents in the neighbourhood.

4.6 Understanding violent crime

Each of the eight participants provided a consistent description of the term 'violent crime'. This includes any action involving violence that inflicts harm on others, whether through verbal or physical means. It is through personal experience and social media that participants have developed their understanding of violent crime and what is considered violent.

According to Fina, he has personally encountered physical violence and has been influenced by his family members in this regard.

“My mum’s little brothers are gang members and um seeing what they’ve done um some people these days call it giving people a hiding, and I mirror that and I go do that to other people outside of home” (Fina)

In recognising the participant’s family's history with gangs and her subsequent replication of violent behaviour outside of the home underscores the profound influence of family dynamics on youth violence. This indicates a deeper understanding and awareness of the intricate interplay between

family influence, observational learning, and the normalisation of violence within Pacific communities.

One participant shared a similar response, but also stated that getting a hiding is a normal form of discipline for Islanders;

“Um, physical assault um yeah physical assault only because I’ve seen violence from you know my family members getting physically abused and you know uh Island way of getting a hiding, um you know in our upbringing being a Pacific Islander um it’s kinda normal for families to get beaten up for discipline” (Char)

Although physical discipline or “getting a hiding” may be viewed as a culturally accepted method of instilling discipline and respect in young people, it may not be for some. This practice may stem from cultural values that emphasis obedience and respect, however, it is important to recognise that normalising physical discipline can contribute to a wider acceptance of violence as a means of resolving conflicts or exerting control. Despite the normalisation of physical discipline within Pacific Islander upbringing, Char's willingness to question this cultural norm demonstrates a commitment to breaking free from intergenerational patterns of violence.

In Dee’s views, violent crime is not primarily associated with physical aspects;

“Not really physical because like if someone got cheeky to you even though he was drunk, and you wanna punch him, is that violent? For me that’s not violent like bro you deserved the jab” (Dee)

However, he mentioned that when it comes to the police or court, it will be a different story;

“But if its’ the police or the court, they’ll say you’re violent, you need to go get rehabilitation and do this anger management” (Dee)

Moreover, there is a belief among participants that social media plays a crucial role in promoting a public understanding of violent crime and it influences young people to commit crimes.

“The media and how they influence perceptions of violence in different ways like when I see violent pictures and things on social media um I see it too often and it becomes a norm like it’s part of the culture” (Malia)

*“I think the media has everything to do with the development of understanding violent crime”
(Mel)*

It is clear that the media has a substantial influence on the development of these perceptions. These participants highlight the influence of the media on shaping perceptions and understanding of violent crime. In Malia’s response, it emphasises how frequent exposure to the violent contents on social media normalises such behaviour, contributing to its acceptance as part of contemporary culture. Mel directly links media portrayal to the development of societal understanding of violent crime, indicating its significant role in shaping public perception and discourse.

These insights shed light on the impact of social media on attitudes towards violence, underscoring the importance of critical media literacy and responsible media representation in addressing the issue of violent crime. Dev’s perspective highlights how social media magnifies the pressure within Pacific communities to appear tough, a trait often associated with cultural norms and strength. He believes that social media amplifies this phenomenon by portraying toughness as desirable. However, this perspective can overlook the potential negative impacts it may cause such as promoting aggression and discouraging emotional expression.

4.7 Contact with Police

One participant (Dee) mentioned that he had been in contact with the police quite a lot due to criminal activities including aggravated robbery. His engagement in crime was driven by financial difficulties, association with gangs, and other factors. When being asked the question “have you been involved with the police due to violence”, Dee responded;

“Yo heaps of times, and it was due to aggravated robbery”

On the other hand, another participant (Ken) came in contact with the police as a result of engaging in violent altercations caused by alcohol consumption. According to Ken;

“I came in contact with the police due to drinking uh there was a fight breaking out and I was involved in the fight, but I wasn’t arrested only the people around me” (Ken).

Ken also mentioned that he learned a lesson from that experience not to hang around with wrong people.

Another participant Mel shared that she had encounter the police due to being in an abusive relationship where she was experiencing domestic violence. From this experience, Mel pointed out the necessity for improved efforts by the police in safeguarding individuals involved in abusive relationships, citing a perceived lack of adequate protection.

“I will say that I didn’t feel to this day if I was in that position again, I’d be more careful because I didn’t feel protected by the Police, I guess they came and took him away but they can only keep them away for so long, yeah I feel that there’s need to be more done to protect people in domestic abusive relationships” (Mel)

While Dev himself has not had any direct encounters with the police, he has observed numerous instances where his family members and friends have been apprehended by law enforcement, often due to involvement in violent incidents.

“I’ve never been in contact with the Police but my family and some of my friends are always involved with the police” (Dev).

4.8 Factors that contribute to violent offending.

When being asked “what encourages young Pacific Islanders to commit crimes”, the majority of the responses consistently emphasised the influence of peers including family and friends, financial hardship, and family violence, poor education and peer rejection.

4.8.1 Financial hardship and high cost of living

Financial hardship was mentioned as one of the key motivations why young Pacific people would commit criminal activities nowadays. Financial hardship can contribute to the occurrence of violent behaviour through various interconnected behaviours such as stress or frustration.

“I’ve seen family members beat up their wives because of financial stress and hardships like they would come home and take their anger out on their wives” (Malia)

A few participants recognised that the current cost of living also drives young people to committing crimes like robbery to afford what they desire. For instance, Char noted that financial hardship and poverty contribute to engaging in criminal activities, such as theft, to afford their living expenses and desires.

Dee also mentioned that his current earning is not enough especially considering the high cost of living. He envisions that for young people facing even higher expenses, resorting to theft becomes a more convenient option to obtain their wants and needs.

“I feel ripped off because half of what I earn goes to tax, and imagine the youth, they would be attracted to the motorbikes, the fast cars, the gold chain, watches and that equals more than my rate but they could make that in a week” (Dee)

In Mel’s views;

“I think it's the cycle, the pattern of life like the way they were brought up but nowadays even the no smacking law has influenced like discipline and also the prices rising at the moment influence them to do more crime” (Mel)

Due to the participants' encounters with the high cost of living, Malia believes that young Pacific people might find it more convenient to socialise by drinking alcohol with friends, as it is a more affordable option than purchasing movie tickets.

4.8.2 Peer influence

Several participants emphasised that the influence of peers significantly contributes to the delinquent behaviour of young individuals. Peers were regarded as role models, friends, and even family members. Participants reported that violence was perceived as acceptable or normal at home for some which resulted in them likely to engage in violent actions. Peer influence can contribute to the social learning of violent behaviour. Through interactions with peers, individuals may acquire new violent skills or techniques, further increasing the likelihood of engaging in violent offending. For instance, Malia and Char noted:

“The people you hang with can influence how you behave, if they steal for money of course you would be encouraged to steal too. Also having no parents to direct you the right way so you just listen to your surroundings, whatever they do if they get themselves into trouble then I'm getting in trouble too” (Malia)

“Uh hanging around with the wrong crowd who influence you to steal, hanging with people who are already doing the crime, so it can be a cycle, lack of discipline in the family, not knowing what is right or wrong” (Char)

These insights underscore the influence of social dynamics and parental guidance on individual behaviour. By highlighting the influential role of peer influence, this draws attention to the socialisation processes that shape the attitudes and behaviours among youth. The notion that individuals may feel compelled to engage in criminal behaviour to conform to the norms of their social circle speaks to the powerful influence of peer pressure and the desire for acceptance and belonging. Moreover, Malia's recognition of the absence of parental guidance as a contributing factor further emphasises the importance of familial support and guidance in steering youth away from delinquent behaviours.

Ken also added:

“I really think that Pacific people just do it because of the people they hang around with because a lot of us Islanders are Pacific built and when we do crime we feel guilt because our parents wouldn't want that but we do it because the people we hang with do it, we do it to look cool” (Ken).

Fina holds a strong belief that social media plays a role in motivating young Pacific individuals to engage in criminal activities.

“In my opinion, what I feel like is what they see on social media, they think that they're allowed to do those certain things and they think if they go do that, they'll think they're cool and they think they'll be more tougher than others uh not knowing that there's consequences at the end” (Fina)

It is clear that from these responses, peer influence continues to be one of the key motivators that encourages young Pacific people to commit violent offences.

One participant expressed a sense of rejection from her peers, stating that being labelled as the black sheep of the family makes her feel angry and ignored. Consequently, she acknowledged that this anger sometimes leads to violent behaviour, with others becoming the target of her frustration.

“Being the black sheep of the family, you know when you don't meet their expectations, it feels like you're not doing enough so that just makes you feel isolated which leads to anger and you go and let out the anger at other people and that's when you become violent” (Malia)

Similar to the situations Dee encountered, as discussed in the findings section, he felt isolated when his family designated him as the family's black-sheep, especially after his brother departed. Some

participants emphasised that engaging in violent behaviour enhances their perception of being cool and tough.

“You wanna be the tough one out there, you don’t wanna seem weak or not able to handle, and pride I guess” (Ken)

“From experience, I think it's mainly showing off in front of your friends tryna be the tough guy tryna show how strong you are and I think mainly in Pacific people Pacific youth I think we always wanna show we’re the tough guys you know” (Elijah)

“I can’t say I’m perfect but I also did some bad things that my mum wasn’t proud of but I guess my anger was that I was fatherless and no father figure or anyone to teach me what’s right and wrong so I just had to be tough” (Dev).

Nevertheless, when asked the question "why do you believe young Pacific individuals behave violently," Dee provided his perspective;

“When you back these youths to a corner where they feel like oh they all tryna get me they all tryna get me and they’re like nah I’m going out like a gangster and if they got a gun man they gonna come out shooting, if they don’t got a gun they gonna get into a car, steal a car and get away, and when they get away their mentality are gonna be worse and they gonna get worse and everything just becomes worse” (Dee)

4.8.3 Violence at home

Three participants revealed that their upbringing involved exposure to violence, leading them to adopt the belief that violence was a normal aspect of life. This perception was shaped by their experiences of witnessing and being exposed to violence within their families and social circles. The normalisation and intergenerational impacts of violence reveals how these experiences preserve cycles of violence and shape individuals' attitudes and behaviours towards it. It highlights the profound influence of family and social contexts in shaping individuals' perceptions of violence and underscores the need for comprehensive interventions to break these cycles and promote healthier, non-violent norms and behaviours.

“Could be upbringing, some are already grew up with violence around them, I say this because I have lived experience with violence at home when I was growing up, a lot of us would think that it’s a cool thing being violent and we just kinda follow that direction. It all

comes down to upbringing and being influenced by the wrong people around you and you know when you really have nothing, the only answer is to rob someone and of course you're gonna do it in a harmful way just because you think that's normal and it's the only way they will listen to you" (Malia)

Mel expanded on this by expressing her belief that individuals who grew up in a violent household, such as herself, perceive violence as a normal aspect of life.

"Growing up in a violent home, my father was a violent man and me and my siblings hated him and we built that anger inside like we wanted revenge and we took it out on people" (Mel)

In Fina's views;

"What they see at home and social media they go and mirror those things thinking that it's allowed. I think it's all built up anger, um for example some people who umm kids our age, they are more violent because they see their parents being violent and I think that if they see their dad hitting their mum I think it's the anger from that.

4.9 Hopes for violent crime reduction in the community

4.9.1 Community work

In light of these factors, participants were queried about their opinions on what steps the community should take to prevent young Pacific individuals from getting into trouble. The goal was to gather insights that could inform the development of additional community intervention programs, if such initiatives were not already in place. The following responses consist of participants expressing their viewpoints and suggestions in response to the question.

Participants offered insights on several measures that could be beneficial in supporting young Pacific Islanders to stay out of trouble. Majority of the participants shared their perspectives which are mentioned below;

"Uh they could have courses where the youth can develop their skills and life skills, managing money uh have the youth to do community work for their neighbourhood, yeah have training, courses for youth that dropout of school" (Char)

Another participant Ken is of the opinion that having excessive free time without engaging in productive activities makes it easy to turn to alcohol, which, in turn, can lead to trouble. He advocates for the community to encourage young people to dedicate themselves to activities like sports or courses. This, according to him, would provide them with a constructive way to spend their time, preventing them from being in the streets and potentially influenced by others to engage in unnecessary criminal activities.

“Have them committed to other things than having too much time in their hands um allowing them to hang around with people that think of unnecessary things to commit. Or get them involved in sports, sign them up for courses because I found when I was not doing any of that I found myself drinking a lot, going out alot causing trouble” (Ken)

Malia also proposes the idea of having more Pacific youth workers who comprehend Pacific values and are eager to assist children facing challenges, guiding them away from trouble and preventing their involvement in criminal activities.

“The community should invest more and getting education for these young people or like maybe run training like sports cause some people may thrive in sports rather than getting a qualification cause education is not the only option and that’s not the only way” (Malia)

Mel suggests;

“I think the community should come together to just kind of revalue discipline being there for your children um there's many things that would change that, that’s a hard complex question. I know that there's already youth programmes and stuff but yeah things need to change in order to change” (Mel)

From an education point of view, Elijah suggests that the community or people should teach at a different way that is not traditional

“Because I know a lot of Pasifika students who don’t learn the same as other kids would so I think that if there was a new way that they would teach us in ways that we could understand better I think that could drop crime rates” (Elijah)

For some participants however, they believe that it should all start from home.

“In my opinion, I think it shouldn’t be the community and peoples focus to try and change our young Pacific people, it all should start from home and that’s all, that’s what I think” (Fina)

4.9.2 Life aspirations

It was essential to voice the participants’ life aspirations and career goals in the study as it encourages a space for hope and change. Questions were asked around their hopes for their future in terms of careers, developing positive lifestyles and the changes they wish to see in the community. The aim was to shift these participants' negative life experiences and past mistakes to future possibilities, encouraging a positive mindset. Participants considered these questions inspirational as they prompted them to reflect on their passion for fostering positive change and their desire to build a community where young people receive the support they require to stay on the right path, avoid getting into trouble, increasing the chances of long-term success. Despite the challenges and negative experiences these participants have encountered in life, they remain hopeful and aspire to achieve their full potential, aiming to make a meaningful impact in the lives of young Pacific Islanders in the community. Char wishes to pursue a career in the social work field so she could help her neighbourhood and community tackle crimes among young Pacific people;

“I want to get into some volunteer work around my neighbourhood to develop my skills for more opportunities in social services work, I want to be a youth worker so I can just help them with their goals to have a better future” (Char).

Ken also wants to get into social work because he believes that is where the help most people need are;

“I want to get into social work because I think that’s where the help I needed growing up and I think that’s where the help is”

Nevertheless, one participant (Fina) expressed the intention to prioritise personal development and maintain healthy relationships with people while pursuing his life goals in terms of developing a positive lifestyle. He states;

“My goals for the future are focusing on personal growth, maintaining healthy relationships and pursuing my passions” (Fina).

4.10 Summary

The lived experiences and perceptions of these participants towards violent offending underscore the necessity for targeted intervention programs and treatments tailored specifically for young Pacific individuals to address their unique needs and promote positive outcomes. While participants discussed the factors that lead young Pacific individuals to engage in criminal activities, the root of their violent behaviour often traces back to their upbringing and hanging with violent peers. Overall, the findings highlighted the complexity of factors contributing to violent offending and highlighted the importance of holistic and culturally sensitive approaches in developing effective interventions for this demographic.

Chapter 5 - Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a comprehensive discussion of the findings from the participants' responses to the questions;

1. What factors associate more with the offending behaviour of young Pacific Islanders in Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand?
2. How do young Pacific offenders acquire the behaviours that lead them to offend?
3. How do these young people perceive their offending behaviour?

The research questions guided the study to uncover the multifaceted influences that shape the experiences of the young Pacific people. The following sections will provide an in-depth exploration of participants' perspectives on violence and examine the main common factors that contribute to violent behaviour, as highlighted by the current study.

5.2 Understanding the development of violent offending behaviour

It was crucial to assess the participants' comprehension of the term 'violent crime' and to identify what actions or behaviours they considered to fall under the category of violent offences. Participants in this study had varying understandings of what constitutes violence and what is considered violent crime. All participants were aware of the term 'violent crime' and were also familiar with its meaning. Some participants characterised violent crimes solely as physical acts of violence, while others extended the definition to encompass non-physical forms, such as verbal and emotional violence. However, some participants pointed out that their understanding of violence hinge on the nature of the crime and its characterisation. For instance, one emphasised that if an act falls under self-defence, it does not consider a violent crime because it is done in self-defence. This perspective aligns with Felson (2009), who asserts that violence and crime are interconnected but not synonymous, as certain acts of violence, such as those in self-defence, may not be deemed criminal or deviant. As stated earlier, participants comprehension was predominantly shaped by exposure and first-hand experiences.

The talanoa sessions further discovered that although verbal and emotional violence might not be as visible as physical violence, they still have profound effects on participants. Significantly, the impact of social media and peer influence played a key role in shaping the participants' understanding of violence. It is widely acknowledged that there has been a longstanding presence of crime-related content on social media. However, the way in which crime is depicted in today's media landscape is a

growing concern, particularly for youth (Salter, 2016). Most participants conveyed that their understanding of the term violent crime mainly arises from online sources such as the internet and social media, including documentaries, movies, and news content. The frequent portrayal of criminal events on social media has become a prevalent aspect of participants' daily existence. On the other hand, some participants have encountered and been exposed to violence personally, shaping their comprehension of the concept. As per the study participants, their views regarding the impact of media on the involvement of young Pacific individuals in violent offences originate not only from their exposure to media content, but their experiences and observations of violence within their home environments during their upbringing. Consequently, engaging in violent offences became normalised in their lifestyles, influenced by the actions of relatives or friends. However, the primary motivation behind their violent behaviour is rooted in a desire to avoid undergoing the same mistreatment they endured during their upbringing. This compels young people to resort to violence as a means of self-protection.

In terms of upbringing, the findings indicate that participants faced significant adversities during their childhood, leading to considerable mental, emotional, and physical impacts on their lives. Such experiences include family domestic violence, bullying, unpleasant school experiences, poor academic performance, peer association, and robbery. These results indicate that participants show the negative impacts of their negative childhood experiences include violent behaviour, low self-esteem, feeling isolated, sensing a lack of belonging, and feeling unsafe. Such effects can lead young people to experiencing mental health and physical health issues which could also lead to consequences including substance abuse, aggressiveness and delinquency. Studies consistently find that young individuals who have witnessed or experienced family violence, along with other factors, are more likely to engage in violent behaviour during their youth (Pacific People's, 2021). These youths often suffer from poor mental health outcomes, displaying aggression, self-harm, suicidal tendencies, and facing increased risks of being victims or perpetrators of future violence. Moreover, it may contribute to addiction-related effects, such as depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Although participants did not mention suicide as a result of negative experiences, the negative feelings and the enduring impact of their adverse experiences could potentially contribute to such thoughts in the future if those negative experiences persist. This is supported by the literature (Fa'alau & Wilson, 2006; Rees et al., 2011) that experiencing verbal or physical abuse tends to have long term effects on behavioural issues.

5.3 Common factors that contribute to violent offending behaviour among young Pacific people

The current study recognised factors such as peer association, economic challenges/high living cost, negative school encounters, family violence, and being stigmatised as troublesome as significant influences on violent behaviour among young Pacific Islanders in Auckland. The results indicated a frequent interconnection between financial difficulties and family stress, increasing the probability of engaging in criminal activities such as aggravated robbery. Additionally, the study underscored the significant impact of peer groups in both normalising and sustaining these behaviours. The key drivers of the young people's violent behaviour though are rooted in their personal experiences of violence, upbringing and the environment around them. In consistent with the literature, these are all results of risk factors, driving young Pacific people to be involved in committing crimes (Ioane, 2016).

5.3.1 Peer association

Certainly, there are numerous studies that have emphasised the influential role of peer associations in shaping how Pacific youth behave (Acosta, 2014; Gifford-Smith, 2005). The current study reveals that the composition of participants' social circles significantly contributes to the presentation of deviant likelihood and the liability for engaging in violent conduct among this demographic cohort. Peer association was found to have a strong connection with violent behaviour. From the findings, it is evident that the primary influences were family members and friends, leading to shared behavioural learning. These observations align with social learning theories, which emphasise the role of observation and reinforcement in shaping individuals' behaviours within social contexts (Bandura, 1977). For instance, one participant noted that his family members are affiliated with gangs, and witnessing their actions towards others influenced him to copy those behaviours, as he felt compelled to follow suit if they were engaged in such activities. In this context, it illustrates how individuals may adopt behaviours through observational learning, particularly when such behaviours are reinforced or normalised within their social networks (Bandura, 1986). This is consistent with the literature discovering that hanging out with peers who engage in deviant behaviour is a more potent indicator of engaging in delinquency compared to factors like family, school, or community (Hoeben et al., 2021). Participants also expressed their views on the influence exerted by peers, with some noting that peers can shape one's behaviour. For instance, if peers engage in stealing, individuals may feel pressured to follow suit. This underscores the role of peer influence in fostering the social learning of violent behaviours, as highlighted in the study's findings.

In terms of community environment, friends and peers have a huge influence on how they act and fit in. In certain Pacific cultures, there is an association between toughness or aggression and strength, creating a perception that violence is a means to demonstrate one's resilience (Yee et al., 2007). From the findings, a participant revealed that the significant loss of his older brother had a profound impact, leading to alterations in peer relationships and a feeling of let-down within the family dynamic.

Another participant highlighted the challenge of not having parental guidance, emphasising the necessity to rely on one's surroundings for direction, even if it entails getting into trouble. The absence of good role models can make negative peer pressure even stronger, giving young Pacific people fewer options (Morgenroth et al., 2015).

All these factors combined strongly influence Pacific young people to turn to violence as they try to fit in and be accepted in their communities, dealing with the pressures of social norms. The complex interplay between cultural values, the lack of positive role models, socio-economic factors, and intergenerational influences collectively contribute to the challenge of providing diverse pathways for young individuals within these communities, making it imperative to address these multifaceted issues to foster healthier environments for growth and development. Although participants shared positive experiences and a feeling of security in their neighbourhood, they also expressed a sense of insecurity. For instance, participants identified specific areas, particularly those occupied by gangs, as dangerous, though a few mentioned that the neighbourhood is only perceived as unsafe when outsiders enter and cause trouble. It has been observed that living in neighbourhoods where there is little sense of community connection and where trust and safety perceptions are low can lead to decreased social capital and negative outcomes for young people raised in such areas (Shader, 2001).

Regarding peer rejection, some participants expressed having experienced such rejections and being labelled as the family's '*black sheep*' by their relatives. Being labelled as the black sheep or facing peer rejection can significantly contribute to the development of violent behaviour in young Pacific individuals according to the findings. These experiences can induce feelings of isolation, diminished self-worth, and anger, which may manifest in aggressive or violent actions. Peer rejection has been established as a key motivator of aggressive behaviour (Liu et al., 2013). This is reinforced by the literature indicating that young people displaying aggression face an increased likelihood of developing behavioural issues when experiencing rejection from their peers. This implies that the interaction between peer rejection and aggression can worsen externalising behaviour problems (Okado & Bierman, 2015). Hence, compelling evidence exists linking peer rejection to aggression, irrespective of the specific nature of the relationship. Although participants did not disclose any direct violence toward their families for labelling them as such, they internalised the anger, later expressing it towards others as a result of feelings of isolation, neglect, and exclusion by peers. Another participant shared feelings of inadequacy, perceiving herself as not meeting her family's expectations and not doing enough for them.

5.3.2 Economic challenges and high living costs

Consistent with the literature, there is a correlation between individuals engaged in violent offences and their experiences of economic hardship and educational difficulties (Fergusson et al., 2004; Jaleel & Suphala, 2023). This pattern appears to resonate with the observed lower socioeconomic status prevalent among Pacific Islander youths involved in offending, coupled with their reportedly higher rates of involvement in violent behaviours compared to other ethnic groups. In this study, some of the participants advised that financial hardship, especially with the high cost of living motivates them to commit crimes like robbery as young Pacific individuals are drawn to current trends and materialistic things such as expensive cars, gold watches, and chains. Despite being unable to afford these items, the desire for them persists. The rising cost of living further motivates these young people to turn to theft. For some, stealing and robbery may be viewed as a quicker way of acquiring these things compared to working long hours, especially when a significant portion of their salary goes towards taxes. Through the utilisation of force or violence, young people may carry out such actions to achieve their desires without interference. This is related to Liddell et al., (2017) findings where it was discovered that young Pacific people from low socio-economic families experienced financial hardships at home, prompting them to engage in theft or committing assaults to meet their necessities. The assembly of economic hardship and high living costs among Pacific youth in Aotearoa New Zealand often leads to a disheartening cycle that drives young Pacific individuals towards violent behaviour. Economic hardship stems from systemic inequalities and limited access to resources among Pacific communities. Furthermore, the ongoing housing affordability crisis places a disproportionate burden on Pacific families, worsening their hardships. As a result, Pacific youth may feel marginalised and overlooked in mainstream settings, leading to frustration and isolation. In such contexts, engaging in violent behaviour may be seen as a way to assert control or seek justice in a society that appears indifferent to their struggles. Participants expressed that given the prevailing high cost of living, where everything is expensive, young people might opt for more economical socialising options such as drinking alcohol with friends, considering it a more affordable alternative to buying movie tickets or other activities.

The desperation bred by economic strain can foster a survival mentality, where violent actions are perceived as a solution to urgent needs. Moreover, within environments where economic challenges prevail, there is a risk of the normalisation of aggressive behaviour as a means of coping or obtaining resources, perpetuated by socialisation and peer influence. These cumulative factors create an environment where the line between survival and criminal behaviour blurs, pushing some Pacific youth towards violent actions as a perceived means of navigating their challenging circumstances.

In addition, economic shifts, such as increased unemployment rates and income gaps between different ethnic groups, especially noticeable between Māori and Pacific communities compared to non-Māori and non-Pacific groups have a significant impact (Statistics New Zealand, 2020). This financial pressure puts Pacific families at greater risk, leading to a higher occurrence of violence within their households (Connolly & Doolan, 2007). Findings emphasised unemployment as a central issue affecting their families. The lack of stable employment opportunities not only intensifies economic hardships but also contributes to heightened tensions within households, potentially leading to an escalation in domestic violence incidents. This collective economic strain creates a challenging environment, disproportionately impacting Pacific families and increasing the likelihood of violent behaviour within these communities.

5.3.3 Unfavourable school encounters

The literature has demonstrated a clear and consistent connection between poor academic performance and engagement in delinquent behaviour (Moffitt, 1993). Factors such as low self-esteem, poor academic accomplishments, and limited aspirations elevate the risk of delinquency among young people. Based on the current findings, participants recounted adverse encounters in schools, predominantly instances of bullying and racism from teachers. These experiences played a role in their aversion to attending school and subsequently, their academic underperformance. All participants, apart from Ken, shared varied experiences in school, encompassing both positive and negative aspects. Ken's revelation about enduring significant bullying contributed to a collective experience that fostered an unpleasant school environment, resulting in a reluctance to attend and consequent academic struggles. The presence of bullying made schools seem risky, leading some to feel the need to join gangs for protection. Poor academic performance was also described as a factor paving the way for truancy and eventual dropout. Malia's experience of racism at school also played a role in her frequent absence, leading to academic struggles and poor performance.

Within the realm of literature (Dost & Mazzoli Smith, 2023), disparities in educational achievements, also known as educational gaps, have the potential to cause feelings of isolation among students. Some individuals among the participants view themselves as marginalised and overlooked, potentially leading to frustration and an increased vulnerability to become violent or get involved in criminal activities as a way to express their anger or seek empowerment. However, while these participants did not display any violent behaviour or engage in criminal activities during their school years, the built-up anger and sense of exclusion from such experiences manifested later in violent behaviour. This, in turn, resulted in negative outcomes such as low grades, dropping out of school and forming associations with peers. In addition, young people dropping out of school often get attracted towards peers with negative influences who provide acceptance, unlike schools for example. Once exposed to

these behaviours, young people often develop a tendency to explore further, potentially escalating into more criminal activities, including violence. For instance, one participant revealed that extensive bullying in school led him to avoid attending school and instead engage in drinking with friends. This choice ultimately resulted in encounters with fighting and violence while under the influence. This narrative aligns with Siciliano et al., (2013) findings, indicating that drinking patterns, especially intoxication and heavy episodic drinking, significantly predict aggressive behaviours. This study clearly reveals that such experiences are connected to delinquency. Although some participants encountered positive experiences in school, these participants viewed school primarily as a social space to spend time with friends without displaying any violent behaviour. Young people with positive self-perceptions tend to report significantly lower levels of delinquent behaviour (Levey et al., 2019).

In this chapter, it becomes evident that delinquency lacks a singular pathway. Nonetheless, the results suggest that presenting positive self-esteem during school years, supported by strong and healthy peer relationships as well as academic accomplishments, is likely to set young people, specifically, young Pacific Islanders in a direction toward a positive future. The study findings also suggest that in order to reduce delinquent behaviour among young people, it is important to create opportunities where young people can access and achieve accomplishments and implement anti-delinquency initiatives in the school environment.

5.3.4 Exposure to violence at home

Throughout history, instances of family violence in Aotearoa New Zealand have surpassed those in the Pacific Islands. As indicated by Malungahu et al., (2016), Pacific peoples encounter higher levels of violence compared to many other ethnic groups. This study has highlighted family violence as a significant factor influencing adverse outcomes among young Pacific Islanders, contributing to long-term effects on their behavioural and mental well-being. The majority of participants noted the presence of violence in their households during their upbringing. A few participants mentioned experiencing violence from their partner while some witnessing violence between family members at home. As a result, these young individuals developed a normalisation of violent behaviours, as it was a recurring aspect of their upbringing. Aligned with existing literature, experiencing physical, sexual, or emotional abuse during childhood or witnessing such abuse within the household can impact the likelihood of engaging in violent behaviour in the future (Moylan et al., 2010).

Interestingly, one participant recounted enduring constant bullying from his siblings at home. This is something literature refers to as sibling violence (Button & Gealt, 2010; Relva et al., 2013). Sibling violence, while less commonly discussed compared to other forms of interpersonal violence, can

indeed occur within families and is recognised in various cultures, including some within the Pacific. In certain Pacific cultures, there might be instances where sibling relationships are characterised by a different dynamic compared to what might be considered the norm in some other societies. The Pacific culture, diverse and varied across different Islands and communities, often places a significant emphasis on familial ties and respect. However, within these close-knit family structures, conflicts or tensions among siblings can sometimes arise. While not universal across all Pacific cultures, there might be instances where sibling rivalry or conflicts escalate into what could be categorised as sibling violence (Morrison & Tupou, 2009). It is important to note that while some instances of sibling conflict might escalate to the level of violence, it does not define the entirety of familial relationships within Pacific cultures.

However, despite the participant refraining from retaliating directly, he internalised the anger, leading to adverse effects on his later behaviour. In order for him to put an end to the bullying, he felt compelled to turn to violence or aggression as a means of ensuring that he was not a target. Consistent with findings from a study conducted by Ingram et al., (2020), aggressive behaviour is observed in various contexts and environments during adolescence such as bullying in both school and home environments.

On the other hand, participants shared their experiences witnessing family getting beaten up as a way of discipline. Viewpoints were expressed regarding the utilisation of corporal punishment as a traditional method in the islands to demonstrate love or instil discipline. While some argue its efficacy as a means of discipline, others perceive it as a form of violence against young individuals, potentially resulting in enduring effects on their overall well-being. However, the literature underscores the complexity of this issue, highlighting the need for a nuanced understanding of disciplinary practices and their potential impacts on young individuals' development and well-being.

5.3.5 Violence-fuelled toughness: A perception unveiled.

In addition, the talanoa findings indicate that young Pacific Islanders have a preference for being perceived as tough, leading them to show aggression. The findings also suggest that these participants are inclined to engage in violent or tough behaviour not only out of a sense of pride but also as a response to past experiences of abuse. This behaviour serves as a way for them to assert that they will no longer tolerate being mistreated. In some Pacific cultures, being tough or aggressive is seen as a part of being masculine, which mistakenly links violence with strength. Understanding and addressing these underlying factors are pivotal to facilitating positive change within these communities. It involves not only challenging existing stereotypes but also providing support, education, and resources that promote alternative and healthier expressions of strength and resilience.

5.3.6 Being stigmatised as risk

Although participants have encountered the police due to violence, one individual conveyed a negative experience with the police. He expressed that, based on his experiences, the police tend to stereotype young people, particularly those with a brown complexion, as troublemakers, passing judgement solely on their appearance and the neighbourhood they reside in. As previously cited in the findings chapter, Dee noted that he and his friends consistently feel monitored by the police, either through direct observation or the presence of cops in the neighbourhood. This constant scrutiny causes him an uneasy feeling and contributes to a sense of being labelled as a risk or threat to the community. Consequently, Dee explained that these negative sentiments motivate individuals to engage in disruptive behaviour simply because they believe the police view them as potential criminals. This aligns with the study findings conducted by Cortez (2023); Besemer (2017), indicating that labelling young people in this manner constrains their opportunities and expectations. Importantly, the stigma attached to these individuals shapes their interactions with law enforcement from a young age. This is also supported by Farrington, Loeber and Howell (2012) who argue that when groups of young people are categorised and labelled as 'risky', social stigmatising occurs, reducing future growth. This exploration invites careful examination of how these labels disproportionately affect communities like Pacific youth, influencing their self-perception and interactions with law enforcement. Moreover, it encourages analysis of how societal attitudes, perpetuated through channels like social media, contribute to the stigmatisation of disadvantaged areas as inherently unsafe. Through this critical lens, students can uncover the systemic factors, including structural racism and socioeconomic inequality, that sustain cycles of criminal behaviour and hinder opportunities for marginalised groups, fostering a more nuanced understanding of societal dynamics and the need for transformative change.

Further, the findings revealed that social media constantly stigmatises certain areas especially disadvantaged areas as unsafe and more susceptible to assaults and violence despite the participants belief in the safety of their neighbourhood. This clearly demonstrates how the act of labelling and categorising groups of young people - in this context Pacific young people can lead to criminal activities, sustaining a cycle of criminal behaviour and a lack of opportunities later in life.

5.4 Minimising violent offending among young Pacific people through community engagement and interventions

Understanding participants' life aspirations can help in addressing the underlying factors that may contribute to criminal behaviour. The majority of participants demonstrated significant interest and eagerness to secure employment in the youth sector. Their goal is to assist young Pacific individuals

facing life challenges, aiding in the prevention of risks or early involvement in activities that might lead to violent offending. Some participants express an interest in pursuing social work as they believe it is a field where significant support and assistance can be provided.

Despite the various challenges explored and faced by the participants, all participants expressed a strong sense of connection to their community. Pacific communities hold a rich heritage of resilience and protective factors that serve as powerful weapons against youth involvement in violent offences. Protective factors consist of a diverse weave of cultural values and community support, reinforcing the resilience of young individuals in the Pacific communities. In relation to participants' life aspirations, all participants wish to work in the social services field for many reasons (Perkins, 2015). In detailing what they envisioned for their community to address the escalating youth crime, particularly violent offences, participants shared their perspectives and desires. These individuals have expressed the importance of investing in educational or training programs tailored specifically for Pacific young people, emphasising the need for such initiatives to be led by members of the Pacific communities. Additionally, some participants support the idea of involving young individuals who may be at risk of dropping out of school in sports or employment opportunities. The rationale behind this suggestion is the belief that idle time can lead to boredom, potentially fostering associations with peers and involvement in criminal activities. It is important to highlight that promoting a deeper comprehension of one's cultural norms and the values conveyed through one's language can serve as an impactful intervention strategy for Pacific families. It is deemed crucial to integrate these norms and values into the government's legislation, policies, and allocation of funds for the prevention and intervention of family violence in Pacific communities.

Providing therapeutic intervention for Pacific peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand remains a persistent challenge for practitioners and service providers, as Western paradigms often diverge from a Pacific worldview. However, effective community engagement and interventions are crucial in combating youth violence within Pacific Islander communities in New Zealand. Tailored programs must align with Pacific cultural values and involve community leaders, elders, family and youth for relevance and acceptance. Empowering youths through education, mentorship, and skill-building initiatives is vital, redirecting their focus towards positive pursuits. Establishing family support networks, addressing trauma through culturally sensitive mental health services, and promoting non-violent conflict resolution methods are essential. The participants' responses clearly highlight the importance of offering increased employment opportunities for young individuals. This would facilitate their entry into the workforce, leading to a shift in their perspectives and discouraging the reliance on crime as the sole solution. Education campaigns challenging harmful norms and collaboration with authorities and institutions for early intervention form integral parts of comprehensive strategies. By

embracing these approaches, these communities can foster safer environments where Pacific Islander youths flourish while reducing the prevalence of violence.

5.5 Summary

This study has explored the common factors that contribute to the violent offending behaviours of young Pacific Islanders in Auckland. Such factors have long term effects on young people's whole well-being. The responses from the participants also shed light on various aspects, allowing for a deeper understanding of the factors that contribute to violent offending among young Pacific Islanders in Auckland. By delving into these multifaceted factors, this discourse seeks to offer a profound understanding of the complex challenges confronted by young Pacific Islanders. While accepting the exploratory nature of these findings, this study provides a solid framework for further research on Pacific violent offending. It clearly underlines the existence of an immense resource of unexplored information among this group, emphasising the need for greater in-depth investigation. The potential forthcoming insights from this cohort hold significant promise in shaping governmental strategies and methodologies, particularly in light of the prevalent incidence of violent offences among this specific demographic, compounded by the youthfulness of this population segment. As research in this area develops, there is hope for a more enlightened Aotearoa, ready to provide culturally sensitive interventions suited to the unique needs of this generation.

CHAPTER 6 - Conclusions/Implications

6.1 Introduction

This chapter revisits the study's aims and goals and draws conclusions. This study has unravelled a variation of contributing factors including peer pressure, financial challenges, educational experiences, exposure to domestic violence, substance use, mental health, and societal bias. Each factor plays a distinctive role while intimately blending with others, forming a complex framework that shapes young Pacific Islanders' behaviours and experiences. The use of talanoa as a research method was weaved in which has been instrumental in enriching the depth and understanding of this complex topic. Talanoa, as a storytelling and dialogue-centred approach deeply rooted in Pacific cultural traditions, has also provided a unique avenue for community engagement and the sharing of lived experiences.

6.2 Research Questions

The research questions that formed the basis of this research asked:

1. What factors associate more with the offending behaviour of young Pacific offenders in Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand?
2. How do young Pacific offenders acquire the behaviours that lead them to offend?
3. How do these young people perceive their offending behaviour?

The purpose of this research was to explore the factors that contribute to violent offending within the population of young Pacific Islanders in Auckland Aotearoa New Zealand. The exploration into the factors of violent conduct among young Pacific Islanders exposes a multifaceted and interconnected scenario. Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework for thematic analysis was applied to delve into the factors influencing violent offending among young Pacific Islanders in Aotearoa, Auckland New Zealand. This chapter concludes by summarising the participants' experiences, highlighting limitations, and suggesting recommendations essential to this study.

As demonstrated by the literature, the identified factors concerning young Pacific Islanders are not discrete entities but rather interconnected elements within a broader socio-ecological framework. Viewing these factors in isolation would be akin to examining fragments of a complex system without acknowledging their mutual interactions and collective influence. Addressing only one aspect without acknowledging its connection to the broader network could lead to an incomplete understanding of the multifaceted contributing factors to violent offending behaviours faced by young Pacific Islanders.

Therefore, it is crucial to take an inclusive approach that considers how these factors intersect and interact to fully grasp the context shaping their experiences and behaviours.

The participants' experiences and stories have broadened our understanding of how the identities and viewpoints of young Pacific Islanders influence their perceptions of violence, resilience, and the dynamics within their families and communities. Furthermore, through talanoa, this research has shed light on the narratives of resilience and coping mechanisms adopted by young Pacific Islanders in the face of adversities. It has elucidated the dynamic nature of resilience, how it is cultivated within familial and communal settings, and how it acts as a shield against the negative impacts of these contributing factors. Understanding the experiences of young Pacific Islander through the talanoa method is paramount in developing targeted interventions and support systems that harness existing strengths within these communities.

6.3 Contributions to the literature

This study contributes to the existing literature on the factors contributing to violent behaviour among Pacific young people in several ways. The appropriateness of the talanoa sessions as a research method foster community engagement, ensuring that the voices and experiences of the Pacific young people are central to the study which adds depth and authenticity to the identified contributing factors. This research also goes beyond traditional research methods by creating a space for genuine engagement and collaboration within the community. By centering Pacific voices, the study captures the complexities of the factors contributing to violent behaviour in a way that previous research has often overlooked. Moreover, by contextualising these findings within Pacific cultural frameworks, the research offers invaluable insights that can inform more effective interventions and policies tailored to the needs of Pacific communities. In essence, this research not only adds depth and authenticity to the existing literature but also empowers the community by acknowledging and honouring their lived experiences.

6.4 Limitations of the study

There are of course limitations to this study which is important to acknowledge. The reliance on qualitative data, while providing rich and contextual insights in understanding the factors that drive violent behaviour among Pacific Islanders, might limit the validity of the findings. Therefore, it is important to note that these findings might not directly apply to or be as relevant for other communities or ethnic groups since the study was limited specifically to Pacific Islanders. Moreover, the subjective nature of perception poses challenges in interpreting and comparing individual experiences of offending behaviour among young Pacific Islanders.

Focusing solely on a specific age group (18-24) was seen as a limitation of this research due to various reasons. Primarily, this narrow focus might limit the comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing violent behaviour among Pacific Islanders. Different age groups within the community could perceive and experience these factors differently, and by narrowing the study to a specific age range, this research might have overlooked crucial variations in behaviours and influences across different age brackets. Moreover, behaviours often develop and change across different developmental stages, and by solely focusing on one age group, might have missed influential periods in behaviour formation for younger or older individuals.

I acknowledge that the study's limitation also lies in its sample size of 8 participants, which does not capture the complete diversity of experiences among Pacific Islanders. It is essential to highlight that while the smaller sample size allowed for a deeper exploration of individual experiences, it inherently limited the breadth of understanding within the wider Pacific Islander youth community. Therefore, while acknowledging the insights gained from these 8 participants, it is crucial to consider the constraints posed by the limited sample size when interpreting and applying the findings.

6.5 Recommendations

Considering these limitations, recommendations can be made for future research and practical interventions that address the multifaceted factors contributing to violent offending among Pacific Islanders. A more recent longitudinal study encompassing a wider geographical area and diverse demographic groups could offer a more comprehensive understanding of the evolution of these factors over time. Additionally, implementing culturally sensitive intervention programmes run by Pacific, bolstered by the narratives shared through talanoa, can aid in the development of targeted support systems tailored to the specific needs of young Pacific Islanders.

In terms of policy, planning, and development, some of the participants highlighted various resources, services, and initiatives crucial for preventing violence offending behaviour. Policymakers should prioritise resource allocation towards preventive measures targeting family violence, economic empowerment, and educational interventions for Pacific Islander communities. Investments in youth-focused programs, mentorship initiatives, and employment opportunities can redirect the trajectory away from violent offending. Policymakers must craft interventions that are culturally sensitive, acknowledging the unique cultural context of Pacific Islanders.

Moreover, when making policies, it is crucial to consider multiple factors at once rather than addressing each factor in isolation. This means taking into account how different aspects interrelate

and impact one another, rather than dealing with them separately. This approach calls for comprehensive support programs that encompass education, economic opportunities, mental health services, and community engagement initiatives. Investing in early intervention programs targeted at “at-risk youth” is paramount, aiming to provide support and guidance in educational settings and addressing family dynamics to prevent the escalation of violent behaviour.

Recognising the strength of community ties, policies should encourage, and support community-led initiatives tailored to address the specific challenges faced by Pacific young people, ensuring active involvement and ownership within these communities. For instance, Scull and Cuthill (2010) emphasise the importance of active involvement and ownership within Pacific communities to effectively address issues such as youth unemployment and educational disparities. Similarly, the success of culturally responsive programs initiated and driven by Pacific communities in promoting positive outcomes for young people, underscoring the value of community-led approaches in addressing complex social issues (Checkoway, 2012; Maxwell et al., 2004). By drawing upon these examples, it becomes evident that policies aimed at empowering Pacific communities to take the lead in addressing the needs of their youth can yield meaningful and sustainable solutions.

6.6 Future research

While these research findings are significant, this study sets a foundation for ongoing research on Pacific youth crime, specifically violent offending behaviour among Pacific youth. There remains a wealth of untapped information within this population, signalling the need for further exploration. Future discoveries in this area are poised to influence governmental policies and practices, especially considering the gravity of violent offences within this demographic and the overall youthful age of the population. Additionally, conducting more comparable studies across diverse ethnic groups in Aotearoa New Zealand is crucial to fully understand violent behaviour from different angles. Continued research is likely to enhance Aotearoa's understanding, leading to the development of culturally sensitive interventions tailored to this group. These interventions, once implemented, have the potential to mitigate the detrimental impact of offending on Pacific young people, their families, and the broader Aotearoa community.

6.7 Concluding statement

Addressing the complexities of violent offending among young Pacific Islanders in Auckland, New Zealand, requires a realisation that quick solutions are not viable. Instead, what is imperative are sustained, medium to long-term changes. By comprehensively exploring the contributing factors leading from childhood experiences to potential involvement in the justice system, we pave the way

for transformative interventions. These changes should not merely address the immediate challenges but ought to focus on reshaping the intricate pathways that steer young Pacific Islanders away from violent behaviours, thereby interrupting the trajectory that leads to adult incarceration. Through this research, we sow the seeds for systemic changes that not only impact the present generation but also have the potential to break the cycle, ensuring a more promising future for Pacific youth in New Zealand.

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List of Appendices

Appendix A: Ethical Considerations

1a). Ethical Approval



Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)

6 June 2023

Laumua Tunufa'i
Faculty of Culture and Society

Dear Laumua

Re Ethics Application: 22/381 An exploration of the factors that contribute to violent offending within the population of young Pacific Islanders in Auckland Aotearoa New Zealand.

Thank you for your responses to AUTEC's conditions.

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 1 June 2026.

Standard Conditions of Approval

1. The research is to be undertaken in accordance with the [Auckland University of Technology Code of Conduct for Research](#) and as approved by AUTEC.
2. All public facing documents must have the AUTEC approval number and be of a high standard of spelling and grammar. Dates on the Information Sheet(s) and Consent Form(s) must be consistent.
3. Any amendments to the project must be approved by AUTEC prior to being implemented.
4. A progress report is due annually on the anniversary of the approval date.
5. A final report is due at the expiration of the approval period, or, upon completion of project.
6. Any serious or adverse events must be reported to AUTEC, this includes unforeseen issues that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project.
7. AUTEC grants ethical approval only. You are responsible for obtaining management permission for access from any institution or organisation at which your research is being conducted and you need to meet all ethical, legal, public health, and locality obligations or requirements for the jurisdictions in which the research is being undertaken.

The application number and title need to be referenced on all correspondence related to this project.

All forms are available online <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics>

For any enquiries, please contact ethics@aut.ac.nz
(This is a computer-generated letter for which no signature is required)

The AUTEC Secretariat
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: skositapaongo@gmail.com; zqh3361@autuni.ac.nz

1b). Participant Information Sheet



Participant Information Sheet

Individual Talanoa

Date Information Sheet Produced:

10th of February 2022

Project Title

An exploration of the factors that contribute to violent offending within the population of young Pacific Islanders in Auckland Aotearoa New Zealand.

An Invitation

Firstly, I give all thanks to God for his continuous blessings. I also acknowledge any Pacific researcher that has gone before me. Thank you for paving a pathway for this study to take place. Malo e lelei and warm Pacific greetings, I am Akosita Paongo, and it is an honour to invite you to participate in my Master of Criminology and Criminal Justice research thesis by sharing your experiences and perceptions of violent offending behaviour among young Pacific Islanders in Auckland. Participants may participate in this study if they have been charged by the Police with violent crimes such as assaults, robbery, rape or murder. It may also involve those who have threatened people using threatening statements such as "I will kill you".

What is the purpose of this research?

Pacific youth and young people are overrepresented in violent crime in Aotearoa New Zealand. Therefore, the purpose of this research seeks to explore the factors that contribute to this. The expected outcome of this study is to help discover the factors that drive young Pacific people to violent offending. It intends to discover ways to minimise the high rates of this population in violent crime through exploring interventions and programmes fit for young Pacific people. The findings of this research will also grant me a master's degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice and may be used for academic publications and presentations.

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

You contacted me through email showing interest in taking part of this study. You were identified as a potential participant as you are a Pacific Islander who is between the age of 18-24 years old and is residing in Auckland, New Zealand.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

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

What will happen in this research?

The individual talanoa will take about 45 minutes to an hour of your time depending on the flow of the talanoa. The talanoa will explore your experiences and perceptions towards violent offending. The talanoa will take place at public venues such as café, AUT meeting rooms (North, City, South) and pods where it is safe and secure to conduct the interview in. You will be given a consent form to read prior to the interview and a consent form to be signed. This is an individual talanoa between me and yourself and you can withdraw any time during the interview with no consequences.

What are the discomforts and risks?

You might find some of the questions unsettling given the nature of this study. You might also be ashamed of past behaviours and personal circumstances like family issues. However, risks will be managed in the actual writing up of the study by using pseudonyms if you wish to keep your personal details confidential. You might have issues with transportation to get to the interview location due to economic disadvantage.



How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

It is your right to refuse to answer any question or discontinue the interview at any time if you feel uncomfortable continuing. If you struggle with transportation, you will receive a petrol voucher or a \$20 topped-up hop card. AUT Student Counselling and Mental Health is also able to offer three free sessions of support for adult participants in an AUT research project. These sessions are only available for issues that have arisen directly because of participation in the research and are not for other general needs. To access these services, you will need to:

- drop into our centre at WB203 City Campus, email counselling@aut.ac.nz, call 921 9998, or go on the website - <https://www.aut.ac.nz/studentlife/student-support/counselling-and-mental-health>
- let the receptionist know that you are a research participant and provide the title of my research and my name and contact details as given in this Information Sheet.

What are the benefits?

As a participant, you may find personal satisfaction in helping advance knowledge about youth crime by telling your stories and voicing your opinions on this matter. This study will raise awareness in Pacific communities about youth crime and the factors that drive young Pacific Islanders to participate in violent crimes in Auckland, Aotearoa, New Zealand. Additionally, it might improve the way policies are developed as well as the interventions and programmes specifically designed for this population. Overall, this thesis will also help me grant a Master of Criminology and Criminal Justice qualification.

What compensation is available for injury or negligence?

AUT Student Counselling and Mental Health can offer three free sessions of confidential counselling support for adult participants in an AUT research project. These sessions are only available for issues that have arisen directly because of participation in the research and are not for other general counselling needs. To access these services, you will need to:

How will my privacy be protected?

Your personal and identity details will be kept confidential to protect your privacy. It is my responsibility to ensure that the individual talanoa is not overheard or repeated by others and I will only obtain the information which is relevant to the purpose of the study and avoid any irrelevant information.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

Taking part in this study will cost you 45 minutes to an hour of your time.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You will have two weeks to confirm your participation in the study with me after receiving the participant information sheet.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

You will be given a transcript of the individual talanoa for your approval, and you may also receive a one to two page summary of the findings once data collection has been gathered and summarised.

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

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should immediately be made known to the Project Supervisor, Dr. Laumua Tunufa'i, laumua.tunufai@aut.ac.nz, 0212225688.

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

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?



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

Researcher Contact Details:

Akosita Paongo

Email: gqh5361@autuni.ac.nz

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Dr. Laumua Tunufa'i

Email: laumua.tunufai@aut.ac.nz

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on *27.03.2023*, AUTEK Reference number *22/381*.

1c). Consent Form



Consent Form

Project title: *An exploration of the factors that contribute to violent offending in the population of young Pacific Islanders in Auckland Aotearoa New Zealand.*

Project Supervisor: *Dr. Laumua Tunufa'i*

Researcher: *Akosita Paongo*

- I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 10/09/2022.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.
- I understand that if I withdraw from the study then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of my data may not be possible.
- I agree to take part in this research.
- I wish to receive a summary of the research findings (please tick one): Yes No

Participant's signature:

Participant's name:

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 27.03.2023 AUTEK Reference number 22/381

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this for

1d). Advertisement



CALLING FOR PACIFIC YOUTH PARTICIPANTS

HELP EXPLORE THE FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO VIOLENT OFFENDING WITHIN YOUNG PACIFIC ISLANDERS IN AUCKLAND AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND



Pacific youth are overrepresented in the rates of violent crimes in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Violent offences include assault, rape, robbery, and murder which are a major concern for both the Pacific and the wider community. If you're a Pacific female or male aged between 18-24 who wish to tell your stories and share your perceptions towards violent offending, then consider this your chance!

I am a Criminology Masters student at AUT University, and I am conducting a research on factors that contribute to violent offending among young Pacific Islanders in Auckland.

This is a one-on-one talanoa where you will be asked to share your experiences, thoughts and perceptions on violent offending and the factors which you believe drive young Pacific people to participate in violent crime. The talanoa will take about 45 minutes to an hour. It will take place at any of AUT campuses, North, City and South or other public venues (café). Refreshments will be provided.



Participants must:

- Identify as a male or female Pacific Islander
- Reside in Auckland
- Be between the age of 18 to 24
- Have been charged by the Police for either assault, robbery, murder, or have threatened other people by using threatening statements.

If you wish to partake in this study, please contact: gqh5361@autuni.ac.nz OR text 0274294860

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 27.03.2023 AUTEK

Reference number 22/381

Appendix 2: Interview Schedule

Indicative talanoa questions



Talanoa Questions

Objective: To build rapport between the interviewer and the participant by getting to know each other more

Can you tell me a bit about yourself?

- How old are you and what ethnicity do you identify as?

Can you talk to me about your childhood?

- What was your childhood like?

Tell me about your neighbourhood, where did you grow up, did you like it?

- How safe are you in your neighbourhood?
- Are there any areas where you feel uncomfortable walking through?

Where did you go to school? Did you enjoy school?

Can you talk to me about your family?

- Who lives in your home?
- How comfortable is everyone, from your view, living at your home?

Objective: Discovering/Understanding the factors that encourage young Pacific Islanders to commit violent offences

Have you heard of the term 'violent crime'?

What's your understanding of violent crime?

- How did you develop that understanding?
- What was the biggest influence in the development of that understanding?
 - Media? Police? Church? Home? Community? School? ect

What's your own personal point of view of violent crime?

- What do you consider violent behaviour?

Have you ever been in contact with the police? (If yes, then ask the following sub-questions):

- Was it violence-related?
- Can you tell me more about that experience? Remember, don't share with me anything that you are not comfortable sharing, please.
- What lessons did you learn from that experience in terms of understanding violence, its causes and motivations, and the policing of it?



If 'No', then ask the following sub-questions:

- Do you know of anyone who has been in contact with the police due to violence?

What do you think encourages young Pacific people to commit crimes?

- Why do you think they behave violently because that's what the research suggests?

What do you think the community and people should do to keep young Pacific people out of trouble?

Objective: Life aspirations

What are your goals for the future in terms of developing a positive lifestyle?

How are you going to achieve those goals? Ask about:

- Educational/training opportunities
- Occupational plans
- Family plans, etc

NOTE: It is important to conclude the interview with a positive tone.