

**Second-generation migration:
An exploration of New Zealand-born Tongan experiences as secondary
school students in Tonga**

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the experiences of New Zealand born Tongan, young adults, who studied in a Tongan high school in their youthful years. This study was spurred on by my brother's experience of being sent to Tonga by my parents for exhibiting behavioural issues during his high school years. From his experience I wondered, was sending New Zealand born youth to Tonga (their parent's homeland) for behavioural reasons a common practice? I found little research on this subject although Schoone's (2008, 2010) study on 'youth-at-risk suggested that the sending back of youth exhibiting behaviour issues to Tonga "was a cultural strategy utilized to facilitate a more preferable future for their children" (p. 9, 2010). I found the term second generation migrants a useful one to describe this group of New Zealand born youth returning to the birth country of their parents. Starter questions for this exploratory study were: How would you describe this experience of living in Tonga during your secondary school years, looking back, do you think this experience shaped your life journey in the past ten years, and, would you recommend this as a practice for Tongan youth today? Participant criteria were that they self-identified as Tongan and had attended a high school in Tonga at least ten years earlier, adding a reflective element to this study. Individual *talanoa* were carried out with 12 participants - five females and seven males - were recruited through advertising on Facebook, followed by the use of a snowball technique. Although aims were that *talanoa* be face-to-face, four were conducted over the phone due to participants' commitments. Findings were that there were a variety of reasons why this group had done some high schooling in Tonga and three only had been sent back for exhibiting behavioural issues. Other reasons were parents' commitments in Tonga, parents return to Tonga after study, and in two cases the youth desired to go. All but four had earlier been on short visits to Tonga but all experienced an instant culture shock on arrival to Tonga, facing challenges in terms of the heat, lack of resources, the hard life of discipline, physical labour, and at times not having much to eat. Overtime it was clear they had come to terms with these challenges. Most participants came to realise that they not been quite ready for this experience especially with respect to language competence and practical knowledge of the way the *anga fakatonga* was practiced – this was especially so for the female participants. There were clear feelings of ambivalence and hurt in being classified as *palangi*, and in most cases perceived to be wealthy, spoilt, and not real Tongans. However, over time, each navigated their own pathways with some preferring to mainly socialise with other New Zealand born *afakasi* and expatriate youth. This group found schooling challenging, especially the harsh discipline, the

regimented day, the strict regulations and the facilities: each of these aspects of schooling were vastly different from what they had experienced in New Zealand. Looking back, their second generation migration experience had had a lasting impact on each of these participants. The lessons they learned had helped connect them more firmly to the Tongan language and culture as lived in Tonga, reinforced and fostered their identity as New Zealand born Tongans, and increased their understanding of their parents and the challenges their parents had faced in making their homes in New Zealand. Finally, participants believed such an experience would be invaluable for their own children - except that their children must be much better supported than they had been.

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GLOSSARY

<i>ako:</i>	school/schooling or education
<i>anga fakapalangi:</i>	behaving in a European fashion or style
<i>anga fakatonga:</i>	Tongan culture, Tongan way of life
<i>bots:</i>	self-confident, know-it-all
<i>fahu:</i>	a dignified rank, and is always the paternal aunty
<i>fai lelei:</i>	to do good
<i>fai kovi:</i>	to do bad
<i>faka'apa'apa:</i>	to respect
<i>faka'ofa:</i>	sympathy
<i>fakafāmili:</i>	family meeting
<i>fakapotopoto:</i>	sensible, prudent
<i>fakatamaiki:</i>	pertaining to children, childlike, or childish
<i>fakamole taimi:</i>	waste of time
<i>fala:</i>	mat
<i>fale:</i>	house, building
<i>fale koloa:</i>	shop, store
<i>fatongia:</i>	duty, obligation
<i>fēfē hake:</i>	how are you?
<i>fetokoni'aki:</i>	mutual helpfulness, reciprocity
<i>feveitoka'iaki:</i>	reciprocal respect
<i>fefie:</i>	firewood
<i>fi:</i>	to plait, to twist
<i>fi ua:</i>	two plaited hairstyle
<i>fie palangi:</i>	to desire to be European in manner
<i>foki:</i>	to return, to go back
<i>fonu:</i>	to feel full from food
<i>fonua:</i>	land, country, territory, place; afterbirth, placenta
<i>hafekasi:</i>	mixed ethnicity
<i>haka:</i>	food put on to boil or stew
<i>haua:</i>	continually wondering about
<i>heka:</i>	to ride in or on
<i>hoha'a:</i>	to worry, to be anxious or uneasy
<i>hoi:</i>	expressing exclamation
<i>huo:</i>	to hoe/clear grass and weeds
<i>ifi:</i>	school band

<i>ilifia:</i>	to feel afraid, frightened
<i>inu:</i>	to drink
<i>kane:</i>	bucket
<i>kava:</i>	either the plant (<i>Piper methysticum</i>) or the beverage made from its crushed root.
<i>kiki:</i>	animal food (meat, eggs, fish, shellfish etc.)
<i>kapa ika:</i>	tinned or canned fish
<i>kengi:</i>	group of people, gang
<i>lata:</i>	to feel at home or comfortable
<i>laupisi:</i>	to talk rubbish, nonsense
<i>lenitolo:</i>	rental
<i>loto-lahi:</i>	to be brave, bold
<i>lototō:</i>	to be humbly willing, deferential but kindly committed
<i>lotu:</i>	a place of worship and praise; church
<i>mālō e lelei:</i>	hello (general greeting)
<i>mate loi:</i>	weeds
<i>mānioke:</i>	cassava
<i>māfana:</i>	warm feeling (inwardly, subjectively)
<i>māsima:</i>	salt
<i>mātuku:</i>	a group of people can leave, go
<i>me'a lelei:</i>	something good, or of value
<i>misinale:</i>	annual church contribution/church fundraising
<i>mulī:</i>	foreigner, non-Tongan
<i>otai:</i>	Tongan fruit drink
<i>paa'i:</i>	to slap
<i>pālangi:</i>	European
<i>pau'u:</i>	ill mannered, naughty, mischievous
<i>Popua:</i>	village in Nuku'alofa
<i>poto:</i>	to be clever, skilful. To understand what to do, and be able to do it
<i>penifiti:</i>	WINZ payment, or payment from the government
<i>sima:</i>	cement, cement tank
<i>sio:</i>	to look, see
<i>sio lalo:</i>	to look down on someone
<i>tafi:</i>	to sweep
<i>talanoa:</i>	to talk (in an informal way), to tell stories or relate experiences

<i>ta'e fie tō:</i>	not wanting to fail, to fall from an upright position
<i>ta'ovala:</i>	piece of matting worn around the waist
<i>tō:</i>	to plant, to sow
<i>tauhi vā:</i>	maintaining relations or space
<i>tau'olunga:</i>	female individual action song
<i>tisikou:</i>	disco/dance
<i>toko:</i>	short for <i>tokoua</i> , meaning brother or sister (without regard to sex or age on either side)
<i>tupenu:</i>	cloth
<i>ulu:</i>	head
<i>ueh:</i>	oh
<i>umu:</i>	earth oven cooking
<i>vā:</i>	distance between, distance apart; relationships, towards each other
<i>vai:</i>	liquid, fresh water
<i>vale:</i>	foolish, silly, ignorant, unskilled
<i>wuss:</i>	weakling, wimp
<i>'ika'i:</i>	no
<i>'ofa:</i>	to love to care
<i>'oua:</i>	don't, not to, not
<i>ulumotu'a:</i>	head of the family (male)
<i>'ufi:</i>	yam
<i>'uta:</i>	land
<i>'utu:</i>	to get or draw, to pour liquid into

DEDICATION

To my daughter Adi Esita Elizabeth Tevi, this thesis is dedicated to you. Although you may not know it now, you have been the driving force behind my postgraduate journey, if you were not in my life I do not know if I would be where I am in my academic journey. Thank you for pushing me to be the best version of myself, for being a ray of joy during all the lows I have encountered, and for constantly making me a proud mum.

Also I make a special dedication to my Grandpa, Semisi Moala, who passed away during this journey.

‘Ofa keke toka ‘ihe nonga moe fiemali’e ‘ae ‘Eiki.



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To my siblings Sii, Terrence, Peti, Isi and Maopa, I am blessed to have you all in my life. Thank you to my two sisters for being Adi's second mums during my studies at University, I wouldn't have been able to get through this without the support and patience of both of you. To my older brother whose story inspired this research, if it wasn't for your journey, the urge to want to know more about others who experienced high school in Tonga as New Zealand born Tongan would not have been inspired. Thank you for sharing your knowledge with me and for being there to support me.

To my research participants, without your stories this thesis would not exist. I want to thank you all from the bottom of my heart for your willingness to share your wisdom with this stranger. Your stories not only presented valuable insight into the experiences of New Zealand born Tongans schooling in Tonga, but it also ignited in me a new appreciation for Tonga and the Tongan culture.

To my supervisor Tagaloatele Professor Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop, thank you for believing in me. I feel blessed to have had a strong intellectual Pacific woman lead me through this journey. Your passion and wisdom in Pacific Studies, and for Pacific peoples, is inspiring.

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This thesis is as much mine as it is yours.

Malo aupito and 'ofa atu to you all.

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 nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the qualification of any other degree or diploma of a University or other institution of higher learning except where due acknowledgement is made in the acknowledgements.

Signed:

Date:.....

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In 2004 when I was 14 years old my brother who was 15 left to go to Tonga. We had been to Tonga for family events but this time our parents booked him a one-way ticket to the place we only knew as a holiday destination. My brother had earlier been expelled from the high school we were both attending and enrolled into another school by my parents in the hopes that he would transform his worrying behaviour. However, not long after starting at his new school, the behaviour my parents and the school deemed worrying had snowballed and worsened to the point that he was more often truant than he did attend school. I knew about my brother's truancy and in the two years we had spent together at high school I had witnessed my brother disobey school regulations and also befriend others who were similar to him. Though these actions portrayed my brother in a negative light, what people did not see was a young man who hustled his way through high school to get a few dollars, not only for himself but for the both of us. Coming from a family of six children and one parent in employment, life was difficult during our school years. The money my brother hustled through gambling at school got us something to eat or bus money to get home, if we did not have it, to avoid the 5km walk home. I felt this was my brother saying we will be ok.

Once my brother started to get into trouble at his second school, this raised alarm bells for my parents. They booked him a one way ticket 'home'. I did not think much about his departure except that it left me and our family with a feeling of sadness and a sense of loss. While there were feelings of relief knowing my brother was away from the place where his bad habits had emerged, his absence did not go unfelt. At the time, this was the first I had heard of a New Zealand born Tongan youth migrating to Tonga for educational purposes. In fact, up until then, most stories were about Tongans coming to New Zealand for a better life. When I asked around my friends I found that this had been happening in other Pacific families as well although this was not openly talked about. I found that other Tongan and Samoan parents were sending their children back to the homelands and mostly as a result of "wayward" (Faleolo, 2016) or "at-risk" (Schoone, 2010) behavioural issues and that most often these were male youth. Overarching, I suspected was parents' fears that their children might get into trouble with the police.

I also wondered why Pacific parents were doing this if New Zealand was the dream: Why were they reversing the migration journeys of the many Pacific people who had ventured to what Cave and Koloto (2015) describe as New Zealand, the land of milk and honey? What did Tonga have to offer New

Zealand born youth and would they gain from going back to the islands especially in terms of educational gains in these high school years? For example, could their experiences be likened to Tiatia's (1998) stories of Pacific youth being "caught between two cultures?". The timing was also a critical factor given adolescence is seen to be the time of identity formation (Phinney, 1989). I also wondered, had he been well looked after and had his care been stern, adequate or right for a troubled teenager like him? And finally, how had this experience influenced his life and by extension, our close knit family here in New Zealand?

When I asked my mother why she and my dad had decided to send my brother to Tonga, this caused her to consider that day almost fifteen years ago when that decision had been made. Then she responded that they had sent him to Tonga so he could understand the life they had left behind to provide better opportunities for him and his other siblings. It was very clear that they saw this return as being in his best interests and that they had great faith that life in Tonga would be a transforming experience for him. When I talked with my brother he described going to Tonga as 'culture shock' and that the experience had come with many challenges. From what he said, I was definitely in no rush to jump on the first plane to study in Tonga. He spoke about the hardships in making friends, being bullied, corporal punishment being administered by school prefects and, skipping school to escape all the unpleasant consequences. He also talked about being labelled the 'New Zealand boy' and that he had taken on this 'New Zealand boy' label with pride, while at the same time reserving his Tongan identity for the world outside of Tonga. He said that he (and others like him) were viewed by Tongan youth as being 'big headed' and '*fie palangi*' (to desire to be European in manner). Interesting, and warranting further study was that going to Tonga had not really engendered powerful feelings of 'belonging to Tonga'. Instead, this reinforced his identity as a NZ born Tongan. Today he is a proud Tongan because of this journey and experience.

Research gaps and questions

A brief literature search yielded little research or mention of this phenomena and not surprisingly, no statistics. In sum, the journeys of New Zealand born Tongan youth to their parents' homelands during their schooling years was a silent un-talked about subject. In the little research available, behavioural issues were stated as the most common reason for youth being sent back to Tonga (Lee (2015; 2016), in some cases together with deportees, (Lee, 2015; Lee, 2016) they were "regarded as potentially causing trouble" (2015 p. 15). There was little research about those who might be doing their high schooling in

Tonga for reasons not associated with problematic behaviours although Schoone's (2008; 2010) research on the experiences of 'at risk' New Zealand born Tongan youth indicated that the intent of schooling this group in Tonga had been to reconnect them to the *anga fakatonga* (Tongan culture, Tongan way of life) which it was believed, they had departed from.

Research aims were to explore the experiences of New Zealand born Tongans who had attended high school in Tonga: their views of why they had gone, how these experiences had shaped their lives and their recommendations for this practice. Questions were:

1. How would you describe this experience of living in Tonga during your secondary school years?
2. Looking back, do you think this experience shaped your life journey?
3. Would you recommend this as a practice for Tongan youth today?

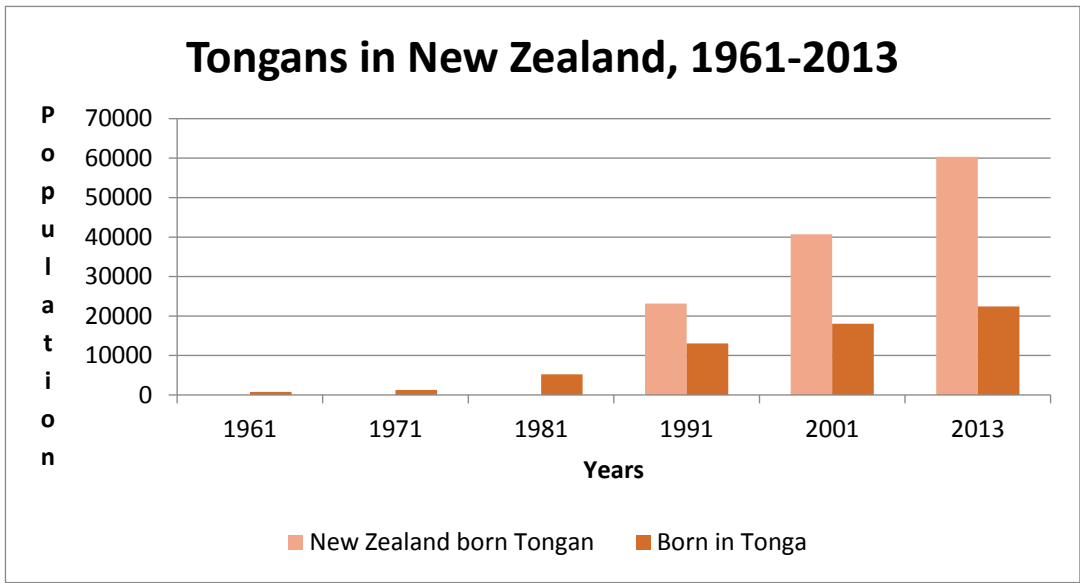
I saw individual *talanoa* (Vaioloti, 2006) to be culturally appropriate and well suited to my data collection approach especially given the sensitive nature of these conversations. As a Tongan I decided to apply an ethnic-specific approach rather than a Pacific wide approach for this exploratory study. Aims were for participants to be New Zealand born Tongans who had attended high school in Tonga at least 10 years ago so as to ensure a time period whereby participants could reflect and look back on their experiences and to include a spread of participants both male and female.

Research context

Tongan community in New Zealand

The Tongan community is a fast growing community in New Zealand. Between 2006 and 2013 there was a 19.5% growth in the Tongan population, and it was also identified that the Tongan population were the third largest Pacific group in New Zealand with 60,333 people (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). Youth formed a significant part of the Tongan population. 40.8% of the Tongan population was under 15 years old and 24.7% ranged in age between 15-29, highlighting the youthful population (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). By 2013, New Zealand-born formed a significant majority of the Tongan community (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: New Zealand/Tongan born Tongans in New Zealand, 1961-2013

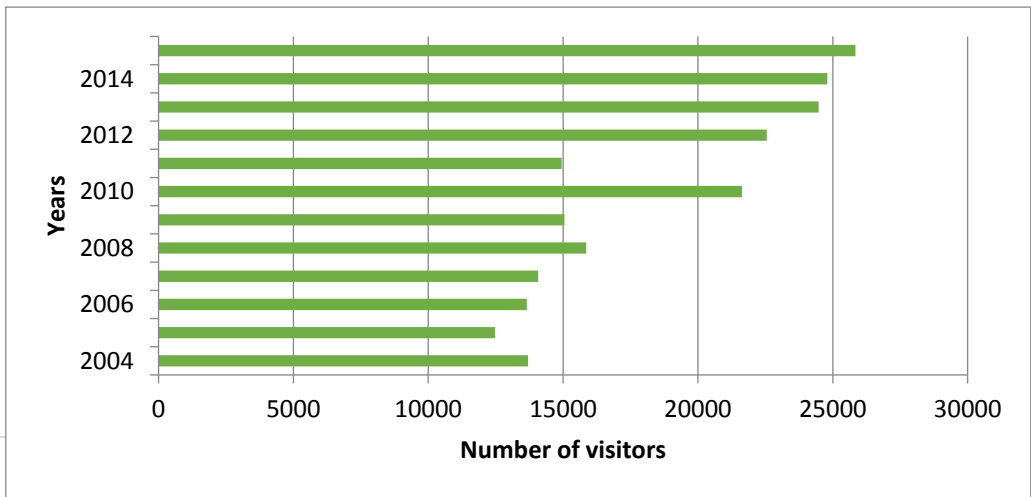


Source: Statistics New Zealand, 2013

A number of factors indicated the endurance of the Tongan ways in New Zealand today. For example, the 2013 census also highlighted the importance of the church to the Tongan community. A total of 50,121 Tongans affiliated themselves with at least one religion. The number able to hold a conversation in the Tongan language was 53.2% (30,807 people).

Data showing the remitting of money/goods also highlight the enduring relationships between the homeland and the New Zealand Tongan population, with around 25 percent of the total remittances going into Tonga from New Zealand (Vete, 1995), also visitor arrivals of New Zealand citizens in Tonga emphasise the ties between the two countries (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: arrivals to Tonga with New Zealand citizenship, 2004 - 2015



Source: Tonga Department of Statistics, 2017

The 2007 survey on 149 Tongan youth in New Zealand which identified: 97% youth as being proud of being Tongan, 83% satisfied with their Tongan knowledge, and that 81% spoke Tongan fairly well (Helu, Robinson, Grant, Herd, & Denny, 2009, p. 38). These figures indicate the richness of Tongan culture in New Zealand.

Research significance

This exploratory study has significance because there has been little acknowledgement or research about the practice of New Zealand born Pacific youth going to Tonga for their schooling years. By bringing to light these experiences, this research will:

1. Raise community and national awareness of this phenomenon, especially people's views of how this has impacted their lives and that of their families and communities in New Zealand. In doing so, it will also add to a better understanding of the vulnerability of Pacific youth in the diaspora as this practice impacts on all who are directly or indirectly involved with the group. For example, the effects on the family members who are left behind, the receiving family who care for the child, community in Tonga, and most importantly the child who is at the centre of this experience.
2. Add to the global literature on similar return to homelands journeys. As Cassarino (2004) pointed out, there is still a lot to learn on return migration, "who returns when, and why" (p. 253). Though studies on second generation Tongan schooling in Tonga have been carried out (Schoone, 2010; Lee, 2015; Lee, 2016), there are gaps within the literature that I am able to shed light on. Schoone (2010) identified in his study that a more 'long-term view' is needed to show the effectiveness of this practice on returnees in order to capture the lessons learnt from the return home. An aim of this thesis is to explain subsequent effects on the lives of the participants. Hence I decided to incorporate the idea of 'looking back' at least 10 years. This could enable me to identify how this practice influenced their lives and who they are today. Roberts, Caspi and Moffitt (2001) describe the transition from adolescence to adulthood:

The transition to adulthood is a time of growth and increasing maturity... many adolescents' negative actions, feelings, and thoughts will subside and, in their place, new psychological assets will emerge. (p. 681)

3. This study will provide the opportunity for participants to share their stories, and reflect on how their youthful experience helped shape their lives today.
4. This study further adds to literature on second generation transnational activity. As Lee (2016) points out, there has been a lack of consideration on second generation children of migrants involved directly or indirectly in transnational activity. My study fits in this category through the movement of the participants between New Zealand and Tonga.
5. Finally, this research also explores the significance of children's role in the decision making process for migration. Although previous research on overseas born Tongans attending high school in Tonga has highlighted this theme, this study accentuates how this influences the experience for youth.

Outline of thesis

This research will be presented in seven chapters. In the current chapter, I have outlined the aim and identified why this study is relevant. The following is a synopsis of each chapter:

Chapter Two *Literature Review*

This chapter will critically assess literature related to the research issue and set the study context

Chapter Three *Research Design & Methodology*

In this chapter I outlined the research design and method.

Chapter Four and Five *Findings*

Due to the study findings exceeding my expectations, I have presented findings in two chapters. In Chapter four I present responses to research questions 1 and 2, outlining participants' views of the journey to Tonga and their school experiences. In Chapter five I present responses to research question 3, namely participants looking back, and their reflections and recommendations on the practice.

Chapter Six *Discussion*

In the discussion I bring together the findings from this study and set these against the extant literature outlined in Chapter two.

Chapter Seven *Conclusion*

In this chapter I will elaborate on how this research answered the questions set and provide suggestions for further study.

CHAPTER 2: CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter reviews and critiques the available global and national literature relating to return to homelands journeying generally, by youth, and by Pacific youth. Literature on what it means to be a Pacific and more specifically a Tongan youth in the New Zealand and Tongan contexts is also discussed to provide a framework and rationale for this study. The focus was on the impacts of this return journey on the youth going and also their family members who remained behind. The process of reviewing the literature was extensive and included searches of books, journals, theses, online/offline documents and through Google Scholar. Defining the study focus was challenging because the New Zealand born youth were not returning to their homelands but to the homelands of their parents and in some cases the journeying might be a return or might be a first visit. So in the first instance the main keywords used were a mix of migrant returns to homelands, diaspora / ethnic minority youth education and the homelands and child migration to parental homelands. The search indicated very clearly that there had been little research on this phenomenon of youth returning to the birth place of their parent/s for educational or other purposes. An exhausting study of the literature on 'New Zealand-born Tongan youth schooling in Tonga', indicated that Schoone's (2010) study was the only one which focused on the educational experience. Extending my search more deeply I found the term second generation return migration and this yielded more results.

The literature is presented in five themes pertinent to this study: the phenomena of the return home, Pacific experience of the return journey; youth in New Zealand and their identity formation, the effects of migrating alone as a child, and the education system in Tonga.

A GLOBAL PHENOMENA – Second generation migration

The term 'second generation return migration' was a more far-reaching and valuable term by which to capture the journeys of NZ born Tongan youth. Second-generation return migration refers to migrants' children who return to their family place of origin or ancestral homeland (Reynolds, 2008, p. 4; King & Christou, 2010). Second generation return migration is a global phenomenon with studies carried out in countries such as Japan, Barbados, West Africa, Mexico and Samoa in the Pacific.

These diverse studies of second generation return migration added significant value to my research approach and also highlighted some of the similarities which connected these journeys.

How decisions are made

Research on children's place in any migration related decision making process, have become more prominent in the literature (Orellanna, Thorne, Chee & Lam, 2001; Dustmann, 2003; Bohr & Tse, 2009; Hutchins, 2011). Orellanna, Thorne, Chee & Lam (2001) proposed that although adults are usually the ones who make the decisions in family migration, children's presence (and voice) are essential in these decisions as children "shape the nature and course of families' migration experience" (p. 587). A study by Hutchins (2011) supported this view noting that individual family members have different interests and so, children's voices should be heard in decision making. Other studies have found that parents' decisions to separate from their children have been motivated by what parents see as enabling them to have a successful life in the host society (Bohr & Tse, 2009) and, in the best interests of the child (Dustmann, 2003 (Orellanna, Thorne, Chee & Lam, 2001; Hutchins, 2011). In sum, the decision making process was largely driven by parents' views of what they thought was best for their children.

The receiving countries

The little available literature highlights that host countries have both positive and negative views of the second generation returnees. For example, the return of skilled second generation migrants was seen to be positive in reversing the brain drain effect (Potter, 2005; Reynolds, 2008; Potter & Phillips, 2009). On the other hand, the return of Samoan youth gang members from Auckland to Samoa was seen to result in the transfer of New Zealand gang culture to Samoa (Faleolo, 2016).

The returnees

Similarly research shows both positive and negative impacts of the migration experience on the returnee. Bledsoe & Sow's (2011) study of children of West African immigrant parents living in Europe and those in North America found that being sent back to West Africa disciplined children, so that on return they were capable of competing in university exams and pursuing jobs. On the other hand, Ishikawa's (2009) investigation on the return of Japanese-Brazilians to Japan found that this group lost confidence in being

Japanese because they were believed they were accepted in Japan due to their Brazilian identity. In addition, this led to feeling a stronger sense of belonging to their birth country of Brazil.

Effects on children:

Studies have examined: youth views of the effects of their separation from and reunification with their parents. Suzarez-Orozco, Todorova & Louie's (2002) study of 'the experience of separation and reunification among immigrant families' found children experienced a sense of ambivalence on their return. For some there was "an excitement about the prospect of reuniting with loved ones and a new life" (p. 634), while for others the return was a bittersweet moment as they had become attached to their new caregivers.

PACIFIC RETURN HOME STORIES

The decision

Various reasons for parents' decision to send children to Tonga have been raised in the literature. Studies by Schoone (2008, 2010) and Lee (2010) suggest that second generation migrants are mainly troubled Pacific youth. For example, participants in Schoone's (2008, 2010) study were New Zealand born Tongan youth who had been engaging in 'at-risk' behaviours like truancy, non-compliance to family rules, and criminal activity. Schoone explored what had informed the practice of sending back New Zealand born Tongan youth to Tonga, the experience of those youth and how the Tongan community in Tonga were impacted by the return of these youth. His findings suggested that being immersed in the *anga fakatonga* through formal and informal means had contributed to ensuring the second generation experience had been valuable learning experience. Based on these findings, Schoone (2008, 2010) described the return of "at-risk" youth to Tonga as "a cultural strategy utilised [by parents] to facilitate a more preferable future for their children" (p. 11). Similarly, Cowling (2002) has pointed out that children who were unsuccessful in the New Zealand school system and viewed as not taking advantage of the opportunities available to them, were sent back to the country of their parents origin.

Lee (2015) took a broader approach by obtaining the perspectives of key stakeholders concerned with this group. She found that “spending time in Tonga was seen to be a way to ‘straighten them up’ and help them ‘learn the culture’” (p. 4).

Though a number of studies highlight troubled behaviour as a main reason, other reasons for attending secondary school in Tonga were tied to learning the *anga fakatonga*, and obligations the parents had in Tonga (Lee, 2015; 2016). In sum, it appears that sending their children home to Tonga was quite a common practice for migrant Tongan parents with the intention of moulding their children’s behaviour by placing them in a setting parents were familiar with.

Aside from the return to Tonga being for the purpose of education, there were other motives for migration. Duty to the homeland or family has been found to be a most common factor for the return to Tonga. Maron and Connell (2008) propose that the return migration to Tonga centred on “concepts of family, home, religion and above all duty – to one’s household and community” (p. 183). This concept of familial duty or *fatongia* is important to the *anga fakatonga* (Maron and Connell, 2008) and a show of *fetokoni’aki* between kin (Frengley-Vaipuna, Kupu-MacIntyre, & Riley (2011). Talakai-Alatini’s (2014) study found that visiting friends and relatives (VFR) reinforced the role of *anga fakatonga*. She noted that it was through the Tongan concept of *tauhi vā* (maintaining relations or space), that socio-spatial relationships and identity were built and maintained between those now living in New Zealand and the Tongan homelands.

While return migration has the potential to strengthen family ties, studies indicate other forms of return migration such as deportation have led to families being divided. In these and other cases Deportation was not only a traumatic experience for the deportee leaving family behind, but the experience of being removed from the place they called “home” was difficult (Pereira, 2011). As shown in Pereira’s (2011) research, conducted on behalf of UNESCO Social and Human Sciences Apia program on deportees in Samoa and Tonga, she stated that deportation entailed the forced removal of individuals to their country of birth or homeland, despite the fact that ties to home or their ideas of home may have been transformed during their migration experience. In Kinikini’s (2005) research on ‘the case of the American deportees’, she adds on that this was regarded as a “forced expulsion” from home, the U.S.

Lee (2016) also expanded on her previous study (2015) by focusing on and exploring “children’s agency in relation to migration and transnationalism” (p. 2573). Based on the findings, Lee proposed that

children's agency in migration shaped the outcome of their response to the environment they encountered.

The experience

The stories of return migrants' arrivals in the homeland indicate several clashes with the ideas youth had about Tonga. Findings from Small's (2011) study on American born Tongan youth visiting Tonga for the first time, were that these youth felt shocked and let down because Tonga bore little resemblance to "the pictures in the travel brochures" (Small, 2011, p. 155). In the same way, Lemihio (2003) found that her mother's memories about Tokelau of her youth had been very much romanticized. From the accounts her mother had shared, Lemihio had envisioned her mother's home as being a mansion. However what she was met with was very much the opposite: "it was the size of a small shed" (p. 163). Participants in Kinikini (2005) and Talakai-Alatini (2014) emphasised the wide difference between Tonga and the life they had lived overseas. Both groups of participants were unaccustomed to the environment in Tonga and pointed out that NZ was their idea of home.

Homeland views

The stories of second generation migrants to Tonga mostly describe the experience as a struggle not only for them to leave their birth countries but also because of the ambivalent attitudes shown to them by the people in the homeland communities. Some of the terms used to describe return migrants generally were *palangi* (European) or *fia palangi* because they would speak English or dressed differently (Kinikini, 2005; Talakai-Alatini, 2014), and mostly they were regarded as trouble or bad (Kinikini, 2005; Pereira, 2011; Lee, 2015). In many cases also this group were classified together with the deportee/criminals (Pereira, 2011). These and other factors contributed to this group being treated like and feeling like outcasts and / or outsiders (Kinikini, 2005; Pereira, 2011).

Students studying in Tonga were considered to be outsiders, a negative influence on the local community and were "regarded as potentially causing trouble" (Lee, 2015). In Kinikini's (2005) view this hostility could be attributed to misunderstandings the Tongan society hold about the life styles and values of other countries and those living abroad due to popular American culture. Studies of Tongan return journeying indicate that the returnees experienced marginalisation and developed a "feeling of foreignness... feeling of being an outsider" compared with their own people in the homeland (Talakai-Alatini, p.132).

Children's agency in migration

Whether or not children have been should or have been included in decision making is another question of debate today, especially given the hierarchical nature of the Tongan family where most commonly decisions are made by the *ulumotu'a* (male head of the family) (Moengangongo, 1986). From a Tongan perspective, the input of Tongan children in decision making is regarded to be inappropriate. In the Tongan status relations, children are required to show obedience and respect towards elders and those of higher status (Kavapalu, 1993; Lee, 2016). Although this silences children from any decision making, Orellana, Thorne, Chee and Lam (2001) have proposed that there are clear consequences of neglecting to listen to children's' voices on this matter.

Global research findings are that in most cases the decision to return is made on behalf of children, and viewed by parents as done in the 'best interest' of the child (Orellana, Thorne, Chee & Lam, 2001; Hutchins, 2011). In Hutchins' (2011) view "the inequalities that shape children's lives are influenced by the social status ascribed to them rather than by their lack of competence" (p. 1222), i.e. children were purposefully excluded because they are seen as vulnerable and in need of protection.

YOUTH AND IDENTITY SECURITY

In the literature, the youth years are the years of identity formation. My questioning turned to whether and if the removal of Tongan youth from their families during their high school years impacted on their identity security.

As reported, the impacts of being a New Zealand born Tongan in New Zealand largely focuses on being a constant negotiating of identities. An identity crisis or constant 'flipping the script' was also apparent with Tongans in America: their feeling of being placed, and having to negotiate their identities because of the dominant views of others they were not American in America but Tongan, and not Tongan in Tonga but American (Kinikini, 2005). In the same way, Anae (1997) researched the challenges of being a New Zealand born Samoan and feeling a sense of belonging to an identity yet not quite belonging with or accepted by others who identified as Samoan. New Zealand born P.I's being caught between cultures can be likened to Tiatia's (1998) comparison of changing identities to a "chameleon, changing colours to 'appropriately' operate in the environment of two distinct cultures" (p. 32). These factors contribute to a

disorientation in relation to belonging and understanding of who you are or where you fit. Mila-Schaaf (2013) proposed the risks of not feeling accepted and belonging have been associated with mental health, resilience and well-being issues.

Influence of home on identity

In some cases, the return migration has been an identity reaffirming experience. Talakai-Alatini (2014) describes Tonga as a training ground for acquiring Tongan values, beliefs and practices. She adds that second generation overseas born Tongans described their experience in Tonga as fulfilling because they had “relearnt the culture” with relatives in Tonga. In Schoone’s (2010) view visiting Tonga can reinforce feelings of being truly Tongan and being “accepted as ‘Tongan’ by those born and who live in Tonga” (p. 147). Morton (1998) describes those who achieved being truly Tongan by successfully navigating the *anga fakatonga* and Tongan language as “born again Tongan”. Given these points, return home was a positive influence on securing Tongan identity and being accepted by those living in the homeland.

Separation and reunification

Studies indicate that migrating alone and being separated from the family can have psychological effects on young individuals. Hernández, Ramírez García and Flynn (2010) describe the separation of parent and child by migration, strains their relationship especially if the separation is lengthy and may cause a negative outcome when parent and child are reunited. Findings from Schapiro, Kools, Weiss and Brindis’ (2013) study of children and adolescents left at home with transnational families were that reactions to separation were not only determined by the length of time of the separation but by the age and gender of the child. The environment, and communication with parent were also important factors. They proposed it was critical for an “open communication with children before and during separation in order to diminish resentment” (Schapiro, Kools, Weiss & Brindis, 2013, p. 62). Rania, Migliorini, Sclavo, Cardinali and Lotti (2014) have drawn attention to the fact that unaccompanied migrant adolescents still require support and care, including an open communication between parent and child. In their view, support in the host country should not only be in the form of emotional and physical support, but also assistance to the individual to achieve their purpose for migration.

EDUCATION

As noted, these students were not only leaving their families, they were changing their whole school and social and cultural environments as well.

Government vs. non-Government secondary schools

Statistics on secondary schools in Tonga show a great number of these are non-government schools; a small 20% are government owned (Lomu, 1995; Catherwood, Taufa, Scott & Cook, 2003). Research on the management of these schools indicates a distinct difference between the two systems. For example, Huakau-Tuqota (2012) wrote how the Tongan Government and Education Department have no administrative power over non-government schools, including school policies, curriculum and teacher recruitment. In addition, 40% of teachers in non-government schools were unqualified to teach secondary students and as a result of poor funding, schools were not in a position to recruit well qualified teachers (University of the South Pacific, 1997). Catherwood, Taufa, Scott and Cook (2003) have concluded that there is a need for government and non-government schools to work together in the national interest.

Discipline

Much of the research on schooling in Tonga has noted the use of corporal punishment. In Kavapalu's (1993) view, physical punishment is viewed as an effective method of child socialisation in Tonga. Discipline is seen by some Tongans as instilling the desired behaviour wanted from children (Lomu, 1995). On the other hand, it has been well argued that corporal punishment in school is ineffective and is associated with poor academic results and an increase in the number of early school leavers in Tonga (Tatafu, Booth & Wilson, 1997). McLean (2014) has drawn attention to the fact that corporal punishment in Tonga goes against the Tongan Constitution which should be protecting the rights of children from such actions:

...the right to freedom; the right to non-discrimination and equal protection before the law; the right to freedom of expression; the right to life; and the right to expect protection of life and liberty by the Government. (p. 75)

Summary

The little available literature on the second generation migration process and its outcomes has confirmed the importance of this study and, the use of a culturally appropriate approach of *talanoa* for this first study by a Tongan researcher. This study places a central focus on the voices of New Zealand born Tongans who attended high school in Tonga, their experiences and reflections. As noted, these students were not only leaving their families, they were changing their whole school and social and cultural environments as well. In line with Schoone (2008, 2010) who said that “there is a need of a more long-term view as to the effectiveness of the Practice” (p.143).

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction:

Research aims were to explore the experiences of New Zealand born Tongans who had attended high school in Tonga. Questions were:

1. How would you describe this experience of living in Tonga during your secondary school years?
2. Looking back, do you think this experience shaped your life journey in the past ten years?
3. Would you recommend this as a practice for Tongan youth today?

As noted, to answer these questions I wanted to get the views of New Zealand born Tongans who had attended high school in Tonga at least ten years ago. I saw ten years as an adequate period of time for participants to reflect back on this experience – the highs, the lows and the learnings and understandings gained. Because people experience phenomena differently, as well as by time and place, a qualitative research approach through a Tongan world view was chosen for this study to ensure participants' experiences were shared and interpreted in a culturally appropriate and respectful way (McFall-McCaffery, 2010). As Sanga (2004) "research with/of Pacific peoples must use strategies that are Pacific in nature" (p. 48).

This chapter is in three parts, part one presents the research design and in part two the research methodology and data collection strategies used in this study are presented. In deciding which enquiry method to undertake, talanoa was best used to collect data from the participants. In part three I present some reflections on my study

PART 1: Research design

Qualitative

As the purpose of my research was to explore the experiences of New Zealand born Tongans who attended high school in Tonga, a qualitative method was most appropriate. I knew that a quantitative approach would not be suitable because I was not so concerned about questions such as how many or

how much, or a focus on statistical over verbal data (Hammersley, 2013; Keegan, 2009). My interest was in gaining, documenting and honouring participants' voices of their experiences.

Qualitative research is interested in how people describe their lived experiences, and what meaning they give these experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). A qualitative approach supports my study as it focuses on participant's voices, which are their reality. In addition, qualitative research is inclusive and values all perspectives, each of which add to an overall understanding of the experience (Stake, 2010). Creswell & Poth (2017) support this view noting that qualitative study is holistic in that these multiple perspectives enable a sketching of the larger picture. Not only does every voice give a clearer understanding of the matter being studied, a qualitative research process also informs participants that their experience is knowledge worthy of being studied.

Phenomenology

My decision to adopt a phenomenological approach was because this gives priority to participants' lived experiences and views (Lester (1999) Goulding (2005). As Patton (2002) writes, phenomenology explores "how they perceive it, describe it, feel about it, judge it, remember it, make sense of it, and talk about it with others" (p. 104). Lester (1999) emphasises that phenomenology is not only concerned with the detailed comments of participants' experiences but also the "taken-for-granted assumptions" that others may not recognise as important. In this way phenomenology valuably encourages new knowledge to be brought to light or created. This new information and knowledge, in turn, can trigger a deeper appreciation of the phenomenon, especially for those, for example, who may have less awareness of potential wider influences of a practice (Stebbins, 2008) – such as that of sending New Zealand born youth to Tonga in their high school years. Adams & van Manen (2008) agree that the presentation of new knowledge or the ability to make other's studying this topic "see" something new, demonstrates a good understanding and application of phenomenological text. In addition to the value of phenomenology in informing new perspectives, it also challenges the researcher to eliminate bias in their investigation and to explore and search for newer descriptions and conceptualisations (Thorne, 2000).

Tongan worldview

As noted my qualitative research approach is through a Tongan world view which I believe reflects the values and beliefs, behaviours and aspirations of the proposed participants. As well reported, Tongans

view their place in the world as connected to three elements – their God, their family and community and, their land and environment. This world view is captured in Tuitahi's *Fonua* Model (2017). Tu'itahi describes the *Fonua* Model as a holistic and sustainable world view comprising an:

...intricate web of connected, on-going relationship[s] between the entire physical and social environment and humanity... the ultimate purpose of this relationship and exchange between the environment and humanity is to maintain harmony in life in sustainable ways.

The centrality of this holistic way of looking was reiterated by The Tongan Working Group (2012) which noted that wellbeing is achieved when the elements of mind, body and soul are in balance. Encapsulated in this holistic approach is that participants' experiences are influenced by range and interplay of social, cultural, spiritual and physical factors and contexts e.g. New Zealand and Tonga. An awareness of these different elements is necessary to understanding the unique Tongan way of thinking and doing. The application of Tongan knowledge, skills and values not only contribute to better knowledge sharing but also challenge the dominant view. For example by way of contrast with the western world view which carries the notion of individualism, a Tongan world view is described as being collective (Kingi-Uluave & Olo-Whaanga, 2010). As Thaman (2003) other ways of viewing the world are of value and must be valued:

It is essential to challenge the dominance of western philosophy, content, and pedagogy in the lives and the education of Pacific peoples, and to reclaim indigenous Oceanic perspectives, knowledge, and wisdom that have been devalued or suppressed... to contribute to and expand the general knowledge base of higher education... Worldviews are not only cultural and social abstractions but also the embodiment of our sense of self in the world. (p. 14)

PART 2: Research method

Given the sensitive and exploratory nature of this study and in strong agreement with the words of Fa'avae Jones & Manu'atu (2016) I saw individual interviews – or the *talanoa* - as my main data collection method. These revealed:

Pasifika social science researchers in Pacific contexts are encouraged to use research methods that reflect the lived realities of their participants, rather than reproduce what are seen as western methods of research. (p. 138).

I saw that in using *talanoa* my research was documenting our knowledge and giving our knowledge value (Tuhiwai Smith, 2004).

Talanoa – Individual interviews

Milena, Dainora & Alin (2008) note that participants feel more confident, relaxed and able to express their deepest thoughts through one-to-one interviews in comparison to group discussion, especially when discussing sensitive topics. In addition, that comfort is achieved when an environment of trust is created between researcher and participants. This is where the beauty of the *talanoa* asserts its influence, through its ability to create and foster an environment participants are familiar with and feel comfortable in. *Talanoa* strengthens the relationship between researcher and participant.

Talanoa has been described as having features which resemble that of narrative inquiry, where participants are given the opportunity to tell their story (Clandini & Caine (2012) However, telling of stories through *talanoa* is not new to Pacific Island people who have always passed on and shared knowledge through storytelling and oral traditions (Vaiioleti, 2006). In sum, *talanoa* is not only for withdrawing information or knowledge, but is more a sharing of knowledge and information. The use of *talanoa* is a framework of familiarity for Tongan people and presents itself as less daunting than the term “interview”.

To me personally the term ‘*talanoa*’, is to be in talk, conversation, discussion with another, and this may be either informal or formal. Halapua (2000) points out the following characteristics of *talanoa* that *talanoa*: advances knowledge, strengthens relationships, reduces tension and conflict, and acts as a mediator between different worldviews. Halapua sees these characteristics to be essential and stresses also the emphasis on relationship building.

Both *talanoa* and individual interviews have been described as conversations (Vaiioleti, 2006; Keegan, 2009) Marvasti (2003) proposes individual interviews go:

...beyond the presumed surface level of respondents' feelings and into the deeper layers of their consciousness. That is to say, the inquiries are directed at the unseen or the hidden dimensions of the self. (p. 22)

The voices of participants are the key to bringing to the surface new knowledge. With the participant being the expert in this study, as researcher I am the student grasping as much knowledge as possible (Milena, Dainora, & Alin, 2008).

Sample

For this research, I opted for a group of twelve participants. In comparison to larger sized groups, I saw this sample size as enabling me to achieve an in-depth exploration of the phenomena (Ritchie, Lewis, Elam, Tennant & Rahim, 2013). The criteria to be taken into consideration when selecting participants were: that they be a New Zealand born Tongan, have studied in a Tongan high school at least 10 years earlier and be aged between 25 to 30 years old. My aim was for a mix of male and female participants especially, as much of the available research is on male youth.

Recruitment

I planned for my recruitment process to follow three steps:

Step one:

To utilise Facebook as an advertising tool to invite potential participants. Chu (2011) notes, that "Facebook in particular have emerged as primary "hang outs" for young users" (p. 30) and so I saw Facebook as a suitable place to draw in participants for this study. Through my advertisement I would also be identifying who I am as the researcher, why this study is being conducted, what the study entails and what the research criteria is. An added advantage was that I saw my Facebook advertisement might be shared or re-posted by friends and family, which increased the chances of my advertisement being viewed by a large audience. Another useful feature of Facebook was that potential participants could be linked to my recruitment poster through being "tagged". Those who felt they fitted the criteria and were

interested in participating could reach me through Facebook or my contact details on the advertisement (see Facebook Ad. below)

AUT
UNIVERSITY
TE WĀHANGA ARANGI O TAMAKAU MANUKAU

Research Study

**Auckland University of Technology
Department of Social Sciences and Public Policy**

Are you willing to take part in some research that I am doing?

For my Master's I will be looking at the experiences of New Zealand born Tongans who spent some, or all, of their secondary schooling in Tonga.

Who is eligible?

- New Zealand-born Tongan
- Studied at a high school in Tonga
 - Ages 25 - 30
- Both male and female

What will you be asked to do?

- 1 hour individual talanoa session at AUT Manukau Campus
 - Reflect and discuss your experiences in Tonga

*If you have any questions or are interested in participating, please contact:
Vai at (021) 1737617 or Private Message Vaimoana Tevi on Facebook.*

Step two:

This was a screening process. When potential participants made contact, I would send them information sheets and consent forms which detailed my research in more depth. For those who fitted the criteria and then agreed to move forward a *talanoa* time would be arranged where consent forms would be discussed and signed and the *talanoa* commenced. On the completion of *talanoa*, a gift of appreciation would be presented to participants.

Step three:

Snowball technique. If I did not manage to recruit 12 participants through Facebook I would adopt the snowball technique and ask those who had responded by Facebook to nominate others who met the criteria, who I might approach. Morgan (2008) notes “snowball sampling uses a small pool of initial informants to nominate other participants who meet the eligibility criteria for a study” (n.p.). These methods of recruiting through Facebook and the snowball technique would recur until a total of twelve participants had been recruited and *talanoa* sessions held.

Interview guidelines

In preparation for the *talanoa* a set of interview guidelines were prepared featuring areas of study interest or conversation starters. These were piloted and worked well (see annex 2). Although questions were listed in an order this was only a guide, the stories told by participants gave direction to the *talanoa*.

Ethical considerations

Due to the study utilizing personal narratives, ethics approval was required to show that this study would be conducted in a way that protects the rights of each participant through the following ethical principles: informed consent, voluntary participation, participants remaining anonymous and confidential, and minimizing risks (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2010). This study was assessed and obtained ethics approval from the AUT Ethics committee (AUTEC) on 26th of July, 2016.

The observance of Tongan values and protocols of *faka’apa’apa*, *feveitokai’aki* (sharing, co-operation), *lototo* (humility), and *tauhi vā* (loyalty and commitment) will contribute to protecting participants.

Participant profile

Presented in Table 1 is the profile and codes of my 12 participants and the schools they attended.

*Table 1: participant profile. Note: *The coding for 'Guardian' indicates whether the participants stayed with I = (immediate family e.g. parents & siblings), E = extended family (aunty, uncle or grandparent/s) or F = family friend.*

Participant	Year started High School in Tonga	High School	Length of study (Years. Months)	First time to Tonga (Yes/No)	Guardian*
M1	2006	A	0.7	N	E
M2	2007	A	2.5	N	E
M3	2004	A	6	Y	E
M4	2004	B	4	N	I
M5	2004	C	3	Y	E
M6	2007	C	7	N	E
M7	N/A	N/A	N/A	Y	F
F1	2007	B	5	N	I
F2	2005	B & D	3.1	N	E
F3	1996	B	4	N	I
F4	2003	B	3	N	I
F5	2002	B	5.5	Y	E

Table 1 shows there were five female and seven male participants which closely corresponds with my desire to have equal representation by gender. Four of the 12 had never been to Tonga prior to this journey. The years that participants started their high schooling in Tonga ranged from 1996 to 2007 with the majority entering high school in 2004. The wide gap between the first participant F3 (1996) and the last (2007) suggests New Zealand born Tongans schooling in Tonga was not a new or recent phenomena and the range of time participants spent at school in Tonga ranged from a short 7 months through to 6 years. Participants attended four high schools (A B C D) with most attending B which was a co-educational. One only (F2) changed high schools attending B and D. While M7 had not attended high school, I included him in the study because he had sat the Tonga High School Entrance exam and had intended to school there but then had left. M7 had been cared for by a family friend. Also, there were differences in whether participants travelled alone or not, for example and where they stayed. Some had their immediate families alongside them during this new chapter in their life. However, most were under the care of extended family and as already noted M7 was cared for by a family friend.

The talanoa

Participants were given the opportunity to appoint a time and location for their *talanoa*. AUT south or city campuses were suggested as a location for *talanoa* however, this was open, and participants were able to suggest somewhere more suitable to them to accommodate other commitments they all had.

Four (M1, M3, M6, F1) of the 12 participants chose to have their *talanoa* at AUT. Three *talanoa* (M5, M7, F2) were conducted within the homes of participants as these participants had family, work and church commitments they also had to attend to that day. There were no interruptions in the homes as family members of the participant understood the *talanoa* was happening and supported this by ensuring no disruptions were made. One participant was interviewed in a barbershop. The barbershop was located close to where the participant resided and was owned by a friend who provided a separate space where the *talanoa* was conducted privately. And lastly, despite face-to-face *talanoa* being the preferred method of discussion, four phone interviews (M4, M3, F4, F5) were completed as two participants could not make time for face-to-face *talanoa* because of work and because two participants lived outside Auckland.

The duration of the *talanoa* ranged from 40 minutes to 2 hours, this variation was in regards to the participants' level of engagement and interest. All *talanoa* were in English, however in some cases Tongan terms were used to describe what the participant felt or experienced. For example, words like *faka'apa'apa* (respect) carry a deeper meaning than its English translation 'respect', it is a way of being and doing.

While *talanoa* was taking place, all data were audio recorded with the consent of participants. As well as this, some notes were taken about major points to be remembered or discussed further. However most of my attention was on listening and engaging with the participants. As these stories were new knowledge, this kept me intrigued and focused. I found also that all were interested in my story and the research generally. This was shown not only in the participants' willingness to participate in the study but also in comments made by participants prior to *talanoa* occurring, like M3 expressing his excitement in being able to share his journey to Tonga.

As a show of appreciation, all participants received a gift (\$25 gift card, box of chocolates) and a meal at the conclusion of the *talanoa*. Where interviews were conducted at home, a small package of food items were gifted to the children of participants, or lunch for the family (e.g. sushi platter). The sharing and gifting of food play an important role in maintaining the *vā* (distance) between people in the Tongan

culture (Fehoko, 2014). Although it was not required to provide additional gifts of chocolate, food packages and so on, these were given out of feeling *māfana* (warm feeling) and joy that this group were willing to pass over their stories to make this thesis possible.

All *talanoa* were then transcribed. I found that with phone interviews I encountered issues with transcribing due to the volume not being loud enough and certain parts of these *talanoa* not being clear. Any errors, or words misunderstood, in transcribing were clarified by participants when transcripts were emailed to participants to revise. As well as this, further questions were asked of participants via these transcripts if participants highlighted significant topics which I did not probe further during *talanoa*, for example reasons for being viewed as “palangi”. Transcribing twelve *talanoa* was a lengthy process as I did not have access to transcription software which would have assisted in speeding up the process.

On finalising transcripts with participants, these were then collated and compared with each other. Similarities from each *talanoa* were then brought together to show how experiences connected or diverged from one another. Through this process, themes emerged which helped in writing up the findings.

Data analysis

Thematic analysis has been applied in this research. The use of thematic analysis will help bring together common ideas or experiences that either answer a research question or form new insight into the situation. Aronson (1995) emphasises the quality of using thematic analysis by stating that “themes that emerge from the informants' stories are pieced together to form a comprehensive picture of their collective experience” (p. 2). This picture of the participant’s stories is an immediate indication of whether the experience for New Zealand born Tongans is positive or negative

PART 3: Reflections

When reflecting on my research journey I was reasonably satisfied but saw some areas I could have managed better.

Participant recruitment

Prior to recruiting for my research through Facebook I understood that the chances of finding participants through my personal Facebook page would prove difficult due to the small number of friends and family I am connected to via social media. Although the challenges of applying Facebook were clear, the reason for going forward with Facebook was because of the Facebook tools available which allowed friends and family to share what was posted on Facebook to their personal friends and family, or link people they think may be of help. This resulted in the number of people who view my advertisement increasing.

While there was a great show of interest in the study, securing interviews with potential participants was difficult for the following reasons:

- i. Many who showed interest did not fit one or two of the criteria for study
- ii. When following up on some people who showed interest, most of the time they did not respond when I made contact, were busy or lost interest

This process was time consuming and required a lot of patience. I also did not feel comfortable following-up on potential participants who did not respond to me the first time I had made contact with them because I felt like I was bothering them. I found that those who were recruited through the snowball technique were easier to approach as I did not have to follow up because my participant/s referred people who fit the study, and were willing and waiting to be interviewed.

Another issue I encountered with recruiting was not being specific enough with the participants I needed for my research. I felt a couple of things were unclear in the advertisement and participants interpreted them differently from what I intended. This was an error on my part:

- i. The targeted age group for this study was 25-30 years due to my aim of recruiting participants who were able to “look back” at least 10 years on their experience and reflect on their journey. However, a few of the participants do not fit within this age range but their experience fit within the frame of being at least 10 years prior since they commenced their high school journey in Tonga which highlights another issue. I did not indicate whether the 10 years was to be counted from the time the participant returned to New Zealand, or taken from the time they arrived at high school in Tonga. As mentioned above, this was calculated from the year they started high school in Tonga.

- ii. The aim was to interview only those in Auckland. But, some of the participants who were recruited through the snowball technique resided outside of Auckland. The potential participants who fit the proposed criteria were not rejected on the basis of living outside of Auckland.

The use of Tongan language

As Tongan is my second language, the interviews were all conducted in English. Where English words could not give depth to what I was explaining then Tongan words were used in place. For example, when I asked questions about Tongan culture some participants interpreted this as Tongan history, dance, royal family and so forth. Even though these are important elements in Tongan culture, the question was fixated on the *anga fakatonga*, the Tongan way of behaving. I recognised from this mistake how important it is to use Tongan words when needed as these words carry layers of knowledge that cannot be found in the English translation. I became aware that I had to choose my words carefully and incorporate Tongan words when needed even if I lacked confidence and fluency in speaking Tongan. Participants I interviewed also used Tongan words where appropriate which was not an issue.

Talanoa

My initial thought before commencing on talanoa was that interviews with female participants would be easier than male participants due to me being a female interviewer and I felt this may discourage male participants from wanting to share their story. But this was not the case, I found that *talanoa* sessions with both male and female went well. The duration of *talanoa* were similar, and many memories and laughs were shared by participants.

I did find it challenging interviewing those who I somewhat knew (2) as these talanoa were the shortest of all talanoa, and I found it hard to probe deeper into the answers they gave to most questions. I am unsure if these interviews being challenging for me the result of myself or the participants. A cause of this could have been the participant assuming that I could fill in the gaps for their interview which I should have clarified in the beginning to these participants. Whether the feelings were mutual regarding the interview experience not being as straightforward as others is not known.

As previously mentioned, there were difficulties experienced with phone interviews in regards to transcribing. To further elaborate, *talanoa* being unclear was not only during playbacks of *talanoa* but

also when I asked participants to repeat themselves during some parts of their talk. I felt that constantly asking participants to repeat themselves must have been irritating for them.

Lastly, being face to face with participants I felt that barrier of “strangers” was somewhat eliminated by having familiarity with the face interviewing, which was not possible with phone interviews. For me, this was important as I wanted to some extent, to gain the participants’ trust to share their story with me. Another advantage of face to face interviews was being able to examine the participants body language as their facial expressions or hand gestures would also indicate how they were feeling. This however did not detract from the richness of information gathered from phone interviews, they were just as rich as face-to-face interviews.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS – THE TONGAN EXPERIENCE

Introduction

The discussions shared in the talanoa were so rich and varied, rather than limiting participants' voices and views shared, I presented these in two chapters. In this chapter, I present responses to questions 1 and 2 and label this 'the Tongan experience.'

Question 1: How would you describe this experience of living in Tonga during your secondary school years?

Question 2: Looking back, do you think this experience shaped your life journey in the past ten years?

Responses to question 3 are presented in Chapter 5 which I have labelled 'reflections on this second generation return.'

Question 3: Would you recommend this as a practice for Tongan youth today?

A full profile of the participants is presented in table 1, chapter three of this thesis. To reiterate, each participant is looking back at their secondary school experience in Tonga after at least ten years from the time they studied there in their teenage years. For four of the 12 this was their first time in Tonga. However, while the other 8 had been to Tonga, this had been mainly for short visits to family for example or for specific events. Only M7 had lived and schooled in Tonga previously for any length of time.

Every talanoa was a winding journey backwards and forwards across time and place, new and older relationships and, aspirations. However, coming through strongly and underpinning all *talanoa* was that despite their differing backgrounds, the experience had forced (generated) a constant thinking about, learning and a questioning for each participant of who they were, who did they want to be, and what this experience meant in their lives. While every *talanoa* was unique, taken together, stories highlighted the differences and also many of the similarities between participants' lives and schooling in New Zealand and life in Tonga. This chapter is in two parts which matches the research questions. Part one - From New Zealand to Tonga and Part 2 - The schooling experience. Themes emerging in the *talanoa* are presented together, and where there are clear differences, as for example gender, these are highlighted.

PART 1: From New Zealand to Tonga

Question 1:

Main themes emerging in response to this question have been grouped in four inter-related areas for ease of discussion. Each provides the context for the experiences shared by participants. These are:

1. Why did they go?
2. Where did they live?
3. First impressions.
4. Had they been ready for this experience?

Why did they go?

Much of the research on second generation migration to the homeland has focussed on those sent for behavioural reasons. Only three of these participants fit this category, in which the decision to go was made solely by their parents, who were hoping to keep their children out of trouble (F2, M1, M2). Three said this journey had been their personal choice (M2, M3, M5) while for four doing their high schooling in Tonga had been related to family interests – such as study or missionary callings for example (F1, F3, F4, M4). Though born in New Zealand, the remaining three had been sent home to Tonga at an early age and been raised by grandparents (F5, M6, M7). Undoubtedly the reasons underpinning their going influenced their experiences.

Behaviour

I begin with the stories of F2 and M1. Not only had their parents made this decision these two had learnt what was happening on the actual day. F2 was told this at the airport by his father and M1 received this news just before he was (he thought) departing Tonga to return to New Zealand after an aunt's funeral. Both acknowledged that they had been playing up in New Zealand but never the less there was hurt in the way the decision had been made:

I was naughty as... I got expelled from [school in New Zealand]. I wanted to go
Tonga... [but] like I didn't know kind of thing... My dad sold his 4WD and purchased

my ticket with it, and um the night I was meant to go Tonga um my brothers and him took me to the airport, they said we were gonna have a feed at Mc Donald's airport. And then we ended up at the airport. I was in my pyjamas and they told me get out I was going Tonga. (F2)

I was playing up, but it wasn't like anything big. It was just that beginning of that one year, 2006, but before that I was like coming first in my class, doing really well and then the beginning of that year I was like oh I'm doing well at school I might as well you know muck around every now and then... Being the oldest they were like 'oh what are we gonna do' and [my parents] just went to the extreme. But I didn't even know that I was staying there [Tonga] we went there for a funeral with my mum and on the day we were leaving she goes 'oh come I need to talk to you in the lounge', and she goes 'you don't have to pack your bag you're staying here' and I was like 'aye?' (M1)

F2 still felt a sadness that she had not been able say her goodbyes to her friends or had a proper farewell. In addition, she felt betrayed. Like F2, M1 remembered the day "like it was yesterday":

I felt sad. Like I felt like they didn't love me [laughs]. Yeah I was like thinking, 'how could you guys do this to me'... when stuff happened to me in Tonga I blamed my parents and my brothers. (F2)

...I got angry as I started swearing and stuff. And then she was like 'there's nothing [you can] do about it, we only got you a one way ticket', and I didn't know... I felt betrayed aye, like that's sad. (M1)

A family return

Parents' return for missionary work was another main reason for three of these New Zealand born participants returning to Tonga for high schooling:

Well the core reason was because we were only here [in New Zealand] cause they (parents) were studying and then we went back [to Tonga] once they graduated from uni... my parents are based in Tonga. (F4)

Oh well my family moved there (Tonga) because my parents were gonna go help establish a church, our church, so that's the main reason why we moved and then I just went to school there... They were just like, yeah we're going that's it. We were still young so we didn't really understand. (F1)

Um my parents took all of us kids back there because they were doing some missionary work there and they um also wanted all us kids to spend time in Tonga. (F3)

My decision

A small group believed they had definitely been involved in this decision. M3 said he had always been inspired by the stories his father told of growing up in Tonga. He also said he wanted to be like his father.

It was mainly my dad aye. He um just started talking about this school in Tonga aye... and it just made me think 'man, I wanna be like him', like if my car breaks down I know what to do, if my parents pass away I know what to do, like I can rely on myself. And he [dad] just kept bringing up this school, and he kept saying 'you guys won't be able to survive it' you know... and I just kept bugging him and then he goes 'oh yup you go for two years'... And I wanted to prove to him, and I wanted to be like him. Everything that happened he had like this motivation... So that's pretty much the reason why I went to this school in Tonga. (M3)

M2 said that he had seen the local high school when he was young and had decided that was where he wanted to go for his high school years:

I just chose to go there aye... Like I admired the school when I was in primary [school] there [Tonga]. (M2)

M5 knew he had been a troubled youth but at the same time he believed he had had some control in the decision to enrol for his high school years in Tonga:

My parents they um they spoke to me about it, like it would... [be] good for me to experience what they experienced when they were growing up. They didn't force me but they really wanted me to... [So] I decided for myself but they like, they encouraged me. (M5)

M5 had been happy with the decision he had made and he said he understood that was what his parents wanted for him.

Came as children

Others had been sent to Tonga because their parents wanted them to be raised by grandparents, for health reasons, and to ease the struggles and open up opportunities for their parents in New Zealand:

I was born in New Zealand um but I was sent back when I was 3 months old to be raised by my grandparents. (F5)

My grandma just told me I had... belly button [wound] and I think they couldn't heal it over here... then she took me to Tonga and did Tongan medicine and it worked, and she just raised me from there.... My mum was at Massey [University] so she was studying at the moment and probably that's... the other reason, is for her to focus on her study. (M6)

Well my mum was struggling aye when I was born so my mum sent me to my grandparents [in Tonga]... (M7)

The experiences of this last group of participants suggest a more positive outlook to schooling in Tonga than that experienced by F2 and M1. By way of contrast with F2 and M1 who described themselves as forced to go, this group did not have to leave New Zealand but they were willing to go.. These remarks also indicate these youth were articulate, capable of making, and being involved in such decisions.

Where did they stay?

Most participants had lived with their own families, with members of their immediate families, (grandparents, aunties, uncles) and one with a family friend. Three lived in the boarding accommodation at their school.

Family

The majority of participants talked very positively about the support they had received from their families living in Tonga, and for the group who had been sent as young infants, family was the only life they knew:

Because I was there with the support of my whole family um we all had such a positive like and transforming experience. (F3)

I was sent back when I was 3 months old to be raised by my grandparents... For me growing up with my grandparents was really good cause you know, I felt as if they were my parents. (F5)

I lived with my grandma [and] grandpa, they really, like really paid attention to me.
(M6)

M7s grandparents had agreed that he go and live with the family of a friend of his dad. This had not been as good as expected:

...my dad's family friends found out that he had a son and then they came looking for me and then they took me in... my grandparents gave me to them cause they were like a wealthy family, and like a brainy family... I just felt like I was treated different. Cause like I would always get blamed for stuff aye, like the older ones would say 'oh it was [M7's] fault'... and I would always get a hiding... from the parents. (M7)

When discussing why this was so M7 felt that he had been treated differently because he was adopted. Now that he was older, he saw that this may have been because his new family had been trying to teach him the good ways:

Because I use to run away from school... I think they were... trying to get me to have a good future aye. (M7)

Generally participants were appreciative of the families they lived with but some found that the children of the household were not so gracious to these New Zealand born youth:

My grandma's sister... She was ok to me, her kids nah. Cause she has like I think eight kids, and then having another one added was just a big no no... They just didn't like me, like they didn't wanna give me a chance to like get to know them. (F2)

However, F2 believed there was an element of jealousy underpinning their behaviours because they envied her quite easy access to money:

I was treated different by my nana's sister cause my parents sent me money... I had lunch money to school, I had bus fare money. With them there was no such thing as lunch money, it was go to school, wait 'til you come back home. (F2)

F3's comment captures some of the topsy turvy views shared by participants:

There's so much love... [but if you] be a real little shit you know [laughs] it's different.

Most participants had lived in the homes where their parents had been raised. There were several laughing moments as this group shared that these homes had not resembled the homes their parents had talked about so glowingly and described with such tremendous warmth, love and pride. With little upkeep, these houses had become less comfortable over time especially when compared with the New Zealand homes they had been used to:

We were living in this um house my dad had built early 70s... It's this tiny little *fale* (house)... like the living room/kitchen was so small and... no interior plumbing and stuff, really basic electricity, um my parents had one room, and then us four kids we fit in two bunks into one tiny room and it literally just had room for the bunks you know, like it was really small. (F3)

When compared their house with the old photos her mum had shown her, F1 commented:

When we got to our house, so it was my mums house she grew up in... So we drove in, there was our neighbour there and our house there. The neighbour just renovated their house so it was flash! So we were in the driveway and we were like, 'Oh cool that's our house!' and we were all like, 'omg that is so cool it looks like our house back here in NZ!', and then my mum she was like, 'no that's our house', and we were like 'what the heck' (laughs). We saw pictures of the house but that was when it was first built... when it was the nicest house in the neighbourhood... and our expectations were high! We were going into Tonga with that mind-set... it was way different! (F1)

School hostel

Three of the male participants stayed at the school hostel and had this to say about their initiation into the boarding experience:

There were no beds (laughs), you just had like a box and um... you'd just have a mat and if you have a mattress as well you could bring a mattress as well. We'll wake up in the morning, you fold everything and put it in your box, like clear it away like there was nothing there. (M5)

It's like dorms... there's beds now but before you gotta take your own like bed aye... take your own *fala* (mat) and that, yeah you're basically sleeping on the ground. (M2)

While each had their own jokes about the sleeping facilities a second learning was that if you were not in school for a day, it was likely that your belongings would go missing. These comments by M1 and M2 were given with a quick head shake and a long chuckle:

The first night I had like a nice as mattress aye and then like I went somewhere and I came back and it was gone, and I was like 'Ooooooh! After that I left all my shirts at my uncle's house, acted like I had no money, no smokes, no nothing. (M1)

If you're not in school, if you're sick, you best have a [storage] chest that's like pretty good. Everything gets stolen all the time. (M2)

M3 has been instructed by his older brother, who was also a boarder at the hostel, that if clothing or anything went missing, this was what you did. M3 said:

One thing I learnt was *fakatamaiki* (to pertain to others), *poto he fakatamaiki* (be good at pertaining to others). Like when someone asked for a t-shirt [I would say] 'nah, nah' then I come back and it's gone, I see the dude wearing it... 'Bro you just stole my t-shirt!' (laughs)... I was lucky that I had my older brother, he taught me 'shh *oua hoha'a koe kia'i*' (don't you worry)... this is how you *fakatamaiki*, if you wanna *fakatamaiki* this is what's gonna happen"... Just being at that school you sort of learn how to give, not like give stupidly like 'oh yeah gee have my whole thing, have everything'. Being in my last year I gave everything cause I knew it was gonna be my last year... So you sort of learnt how to be *fakapotopoto* (sensible) at the same time. (M3)

A third biggest lesson was routine: everything at school was timed: the time you ate, slept, studied and worked in the plantation was also scheduled. With their days planned out for them, they felt like they had no free time for themselves – that their lives revolved around the school - except for rugby:

Yeah just the timing... 6 o'clock you wake up, like the houses gotta get together and have a house prayer then you gotta make your beds, probably 7[am] its breakfast. Depending on the days, if it's a Monday then you gotta wake up extra early cause its assembly and you gotta march to assembly. But yea, you'd be lucky to get a break because the whole day is just taken up. I reckon all the students' um happy time is um when it's time to sleep, some actually use that as their free time to just kick back even though they're not supposed to... And you actually see it the next morning cause half of them are like sleeping in class and getting hidings for that. (M2)

So you go work and you're gonna get like some *feŋi'e* (firewood) for them to do the breakfast for tomorrow morning and dinner the next night. And then straight after all that dinner, then after dinner study, then after study straight to sleep. You have no free time, unless you play rugby... It's like everything's on time, you have to be here at a certain time... when you're over there you wake up 6[am] and you sleep by 9[pm] I was like bro! (M1)

The arrival

For eight participants the experience of arriving in Tonga was not new as shown by M5 who said it "alright cause I'd been there before". However all commented on the intense heat, the coconut trees, transport and amenities. Overwhelmingly and in every talanoa, the differences from their New Zealand life were noted, time and again

It was hot. It was real hot and just real muggy. I thought it was the engine that was really hot but then I realised I was still walking and it was still hot... so yeah, just the weather, it was real, real hot and heaps of dust. And also I've never seen so many coconut trees in my life! And just how small the airport was too... You just walk straight out... there's no indoor way or something you know, or like a little bus to take you from that to that, I think cause we were just stubborn growing up in New Zealand... Everything's small and everything looks real old. (M4)

It was hot aye! And like you know here there's a walk way when you get off and when you get on? But there you actually gotta hop off! It's like 'man, this is a poor place!' (laughs)... Yeah it was a shock. All the heat and just seeing everyone, you're like 'these are what Tongans look like'... When we left the airport it was sort of dark-ish so there's like one light [on the road] and then there's darkness, and another light, and then darkness. (M3)

I was shocked cause here [in New Zealand] you have to put your seatbelt on [in the car], when I got there (Tonga) my whole family just squished into a van. So that's eight of us! And I saw pigs running around, I was like shocked! And I was like, whoa what the heck is happening. (F1)

The Tongan lifestyle was a big change especially as participants couldn't help comparing the lifestyle in Tonga from that in New Zealand:

It was hard. Like um growing up your whole life in New Zealand and having it easy, like and then going to Tonga... Sometimes my parents wouldn't send me money to get the stuff, the food that I wanted and that... Sometimes there was like no such thing as meat for that week and so like I had to eat *manioke* (cassava)... [They would] tip the soy sauce on the *manioke* and eat it and that was all goods. And then I was like crying cause I didn't wanna eat that, I was hungry, and then I got angry more at my parents... Like New Zealand you get to drink the water from the tap in your kitchen, in Tonga if you didn't have your own *sima* (cement, cement tank) which collects the rain water you had to go use the neighbours... carrying how many bottles to the next door to 'utu (pour liquid into) the *vai* (water)... there was like no shower head, it was just like a tap... so all you do is fill up the bucket and you have to bath [from] the bucket... The toilet had no running water. (F2)

We didn't have hot water, so we had cold water. It was really yuck cause our toilet, that was the same toilet our mum used when she was [younger]... We went through like the lows of sometimes having no food to eat at some stages... like even if you get a job in Tonga the pay is crap.... I struggled with the weather, and also cockroaches. Like when we were there we had never seen a cockroach before (laughs) like this is how *laupisi* (to talk rubbish, nonsense) we were... and we were drinking 'otai (Tongan fruit smoothie) out of a *kane* (bucket) and we were like, 'what the heck is happening?!'... But yeah, it was a shock. It was like, I wanna go back to New Zealand! The plane ride is over now, can we go back. So yeah, that was my experience. (F1)

Turning points

Most said that overtime they got used to, adjusted to, and accepted their Tongan lives:

I kind of got used to it and then I realised that like I wouldn't always get what I wanted... As time went and I started to build a relationship with um my nana's sister's kids then I started feeling sorry for them. Like um I was being a brat at first like having my own stuff and that, and they had to like share rooms and that, and then here's me... Cause I'd just got to the shop and grab whatever I wanted to eat and then I'll just go to my room and eat it, and then go to sleep... so I stopped doing it, I stopped whatever. If my parents couldn't send me money for what I needed then I didn't care. (F2)

I have never seen someone homeless in Tonga when we were there, so we were quite sheltered from the reality of Tonga. And then we went X (village in Nuku'alofa) cause my mum was so annoyed at us, she was like 'you guys are so unthankful'...

She took us there and we got like the shock of our lives, and I think that would've been one of the turning points where we became thankful for what we had. (F1)

Was I prepared for this?

These comments captured the experiences of most participants as they came to terms with life in Tonga:

...when we got to Tonga we were like thrown in the deep, like we had to get into the culture... there are some families that are still brought up in the Tongan way [in New Zealand], but with my parents they weren't really like that. I mean they brought us up well, but it was different. (F1)

F2 who had usually travelled to Tonga with her family, described arriving by herself for this journey quite unnerving. The absence of her family had transformed the whole experience of going Tonga for her. She said:

When I got there I felt different cause I wasn't with my family ... before it was get off and so excited, but [this time] was like stink, cause like I had to adapt to being with a whole different family besides my own family... Like you know how you look forward to seeing family [overseas] but you're with your family, but it's just you by yourself? You feel like you're an orphan or something, or like a foster child or something (laughs). You just look *faka'ofa* (sympathy, pity) at the airport [laughs]. (F2)

Three main themes about readiness and fitting in to Tongan life were shared in the *talanoa*. It was clear that each had been concerning at the time, and still was for these participants. These themes were: language and culture, gendered roles, and expectations of New Zealand borns. These are not prioritised.

Language & Culture

These New Zealand born participants did not feel confident in speaking the Tongan language in Tonga. Whether this was actually the case or whether it was being in a totally Tongan language speaking environment, was difficult to ascertain. Interestingly, most linked their Tongan language competence back to their lives in New Zealand and to their parents:

I wasn't fluent in Tongan, um I had some sort of idea because of going to [Tongan] church here. Um yeah it was very little when I arrived. (F4)

Uh it was pretty bad um when we were little my dad refused to speak Tongan to us because he um didn't want us to have broken English. And then when they decided to go back to Tonga we had like a year of um Tongan classes with one of his friends... But yeah we could just say basics, like say 'my name is'. (F3)

Tongan's like my second language growing up. But like at home, my parents tried to encourage us to speak Tongan but then, we kind of like mixed [Tongan and English]. Like [home] was the only place we speak Tongan, when you go to school and yeah, you just speak English. Before I went... I didn't know much. (M5)

Oh just all the negative swear words (laughs) just that um and all the mocking words, and just the casual like you know '*mālō e lelei*' (hello) and '*fēfē hake*' (how are you) and that um that was about it. (M4)

Not fluent. I knew like basic stuff, like every day Tongan that you use at home with your parents. Not like a full on conversation with someone [Tongan] that doesn't know English at all, can't even say yes and no in English. (F2)

And M3 summed it up with these words of:

I could understand... [But speaking,] plastic bro. Oh bro I was plastic aye. (M3)

F4 believed that "migration for a better life" was a reason for some parents not enforcing the speaking of the Tongan language:

I guess it's just the exposure that they don't have from home. I guess some of them (migrant parents') when they migrate here they want to adjust, like the parents want to adjust straight away to the environment and believe that their kids should grow up the same way as other natives but they don't, it's just because they don't have the experience either of growing up here as a youngster. (F4)

F3 endorsed this view, saying her dad hadn't wanted her or her siblings to have "broken English" so had chosen not to talk the Tongan language at home. However F1 had a slightly different view:

My mum she didn't really care, if you speak Tongans you do, if you don't that's ok. Like no offence Tongans only needed here, you don't need it anywhere else. (F1)

While participants may have been a bit ambivalent about their Tongan language competence, most were more sure of their understanding of their *anga fakatonga*. Respect was the first aspect of culture mentioned by all:

Oh just the normal, come to the *lotu* (church), you know um respect your sister, you're not allowed walk into her room... But *sio* (watch) TV my parents were like that's alright its watching cartoons, but when a movie comes on you don't really see who's in the room, you just want to watch the movie... The culture was new, but it was interesting aye... There was some stuff I learnt at home but not as strict as it is in Tonga. (M3)

Oh just stuff from my parents and my grandparents, respecting your elders and stuff, help out when you can, stuff like that. (M1)

At home it wasn't too much, like we wouldn't speak back to our parents or anything. (M4)

Females said:

Though dad didn't teach us Tongan he taught us lots of the *faka'apa'apa* and stuff, the respect and stuff, so um yeah that was like the main thing. [Also] we knew about Sunday's and you know... probably the family sort of structures. (F3)

We had like zero, nothing. I understood the basics like the *tauolunga* (Tongan dance for females), and I mean I understood the basic Tongan... I guess we knew of the culture, like seeing it on TV, or seeing our cousin's get involved [in events], going to events, knowing our status. (F1)

As emphasised by M5, in Tonga, respect was "on a whole new level!":

When I was growing up here, like um, like my parents they instilled it in us like the respect and all that. But then when I went to Tonga it was on a whole new different level, like it was way more serious and yeah. (M5)

Gender roles

Most participants faced challenges of abiding by and understanding the Tongan rules of conduct. For females especially understanding how gendered roles were played out on a daily basis was hard, because "there's so much value (placed) in the girl" (F1):

There would be a lot of things I would change. Like I don't really like how girls... stay at home, you're sheltered. But for me I was sheltered way too much by my parents, I know they just didn't want me to do wrong but they just sheltered me like to the extent where I was only going church-home, school-home, that's it. And I got the meanest hidings [laughs] cause I was sheltered, and my parents didn't want me to do this and this. (F1)

Appropriate dress was another aspect raised:

Growing up in New Zealand, and growing up with boys I was like... a tom boy kind of. And then going to Tonga, to them it was a big no, no. Like I couldn't wear like my big throwbacks (football jerseys) (laughs), snapback hats and that, I don't know, they hated it. Like [I] had to wear skirts and wear a *tupenu* (cloth), or if you were gonna wear pants you had to wear a *tupenu* outside of it around the house. Like that kind of stuff. (F2)

My mum's mum died so she had to go back to um New Zealand ... and so she left my dad with four kids and so my dad thought it'd be a good idea to take us up to our home island. And um so we were just going around doing our own wee thing and um my grandma didn't know where we went or saw us all take off. And we went, us girls, went with our boy cousins down the ocean and she came down called us out of the water and she ran after us all and gave us like a massive hiding cause that's not acceptable, we shouldn't have been doing that you know. Um and that really stayed in my mind (laughs) cause... yeah it was hard (laughs). (F3)

F5 commented on her feelings of being watched and judged all the time:

Especially like you know cause it's (Tonga) small and there [is] like family everywhere and even friends of your parents and stuff. And um yeah I feel in Tonga... you were being watched [laughs]. All of a sudden you know my mum would say 'oh my friends said they saw you there and there' [laughs], and even like strangers would like um criticize your every like you know what you wear and stuff and all that... I guess there was that expectation outside, you know, to still behave... and to be respectful and stuff. (F5)

She brushed away these feelings with the words "it's just in the Tongan nature (laughs)". In M4's view being judgemental led to hurtful gossip and rumours which travelled fast.

Even just walking with girls, or you know a girl walking with a boy at like 7 o'clock at night... Tonga's such a small place, heaps of false rumours... Like since we were part of the church um we were quite gifted at music and that so we'd do some gigs and that, and then you'd kind of like [get] 'oh there's that church singer' (laughs)... And then when you actually go out cause you wanted to go out clubbing or something, just a night out with your mates, since Tonga's real small 'oh hey aren't you that church singer?' (laughs). Before you even get to church the next morning, you have all these people asking questions (laughs), you're like 'whoa that was fast!' um and then your mum and dad start giving you that talk...Rumours spread real fast, like real fast! Faster than social media (laughs). (M4)

Male participants referred more to the responsibilities and duties associated with being young Tongan boys in Tonga, especially farming and harvesting jobs that young boys in New Zealand would not be doing:

When you're 13 you know, all 13 year olds [in Tonga] they already know how to make the pig, and you know kill a chicken or all those different things, go to the plantation and you know, come back with some *manioke* or some '*ufi* (yam) and that. But like coming from New Zealand we don't know jack! (laughs) And you know, 'oh we're going to '*uta*' (land, plantation), 'oh what's '*uta*?' and then you'll be keen as and when you get there 'oh nah! (M4)

Every Saturday... we'd go '*uta* and like *huo* (to hoe, clear grass), get all our food ready. And like we'd go in the morning and then come back at night, like Saturday was always a stink day for me cause I knew we'd always have to go. They teach you that from a young age! Like you have to go like look after all your crops and everything every Saturday, like normally here (New Zealand) Saturday's kids will be playing with their friends and that, not over there in Tonga. Saturdays you gotta go and get food for Sunday cause you can't go on Sunday and get food... We owned a big farm and like before I'd leave to school I'd wake up at 6[am] and go um chase the cows from one farm to another, like every morning! (M7)

Expectations of New Zealand borns – the palangi

A number of expectations about New Zealand borns had rankled these participants, they felt they had been continuously classified and labelled. For example, there was a belief that participants were all financially well-off because they were born in New Zealand; that they did not have a deep value or

understanding of being Tongan. In addition they questioned the use of the label 'palangi' which they said was attached to anyone that looked palangi, came from overseas and had money or other valued things:

There's that expectation that just because you're palangi or because you've been overseas that you've got money and stuff, and that's quite hard. (F3)

At our village like people didn't know that my dad was Tongan, they thought my dad was palangi or something... seeing the way I was living in Tonga... So everyone thought 'oh her dad must be palangi, like her mum must be with a palangi man', 'look she gets what she wants, she has her own tab' and that... Everyone thought I was the rich kid, but they didn't know that my parents was probably *penifiti* (payment from the government) in New Zealand while I was living the high life in Tonga (laughs). (F2)

For F2 there was that expectation that she maintain that appearance of being "rich" and "live up to what they thought" of her:

Like if I went to church, if I wore like the same clothes I wore like two weeks back they'll say like, 'why does she wanna be all that when she can't afford to change her clothes like to church'... Or like if people come over to my nana's sister's house and we had no *kiki* (meat) that week they were like, 'why you wanna *heka lenitolo* (ride in a rental) for when you can't even buy you *kiki*'. It was like that! And you're just like, 'I never told you I was rich! You thought we were but we weren't.' (F2)

Many of these quite new experiences and learnings were added to and reinforced again in participants school experiences discussed in the next section.

Part 2: High School Experience

"...I thought going school in Tonga was like New Zealand"

Overall, participants had not really been prepared for school in Tonga. Some factors were due to their level of preparedness and others to a perceived lack of support by their schools. In describing their schools' organisation and culture, the words most often used were formal, discipline, uniforms and rules to the point that these students learnt how not to stand out. Less was said about the curriculum. Comments about being accepted on their own merits and not being instantly classified by other students as rich, palangi and 'not knowing much about the *anga fakatonga*' were factors which stayed

in their minds. Themes emerging in response to question two have been grouped as first days, the school environment, making friends and 'who am I?'

First days

Yeah you just sort of like get thrown in the deep end... like over here [in New Zealand] like the teachers... monitor you more even when you're out going for lunch and stuff like that, kids playing you must have cap on and sunscreen and stuff like that. Where is over there like the interval and lunchtime, pretty much there is nothing, no support at all there. (F4)

It was just straight, here, chuck you in, straight in the deep end. (M1)

You just get thrown in and then you blend in and try figure it out yourself. (M6)

Though M1 commented "it was good" and that he "got along with everyone", others felt the "first day was a struggle" (M5).

Oh it was alright... Everybody was like friendly at first. Like they see you're from overseas and then they'll try and be your mate for like perks and like benefits and that (laughs). (M2)

Because F2 attended two different high schools in Tonga she was able to comment on the two experiences:

When I started school (school B) um my nana's sister just took me into the office and then the reception told my nana's sister to go off that I'd be alright, and then she just told me to go look for the class number and that was my class.... so I had to wonder around this massive as school that I've never seen before in my life and look for, and what doesn't help is like the classrooms don't even have numbers... then one of the students saw me walking around and then asked and then I told them I was looking for this class and then they showed me... With that school (School D) like they showed you around the school. (F2)

Similar remarks were made about the teachers. M4 found some showed compassion to new students and some did not:

Um a bit of both. Like I remember cause I had afro kind of hair... going to school and it needs to be short, so um I remember... teachers didn't know that I was a new student so they'll come like pull my hair and say 'man this is too long!' (laughs), then their like 'oh no he's a new student', and then they'll be 'oh ueh (oh)! Sorry welcome to [School B] (laughs). So they kind of, a bit of both... some teachers they actually helped me out and um actually gone into their time to actually give me some notes and that, but then other teachers just explained to what was happening and then yeah I had to pick it up myself. (M4)

Some teachers um they were supportive but some just like just say 'oh just hurry up and do this and do that', just give them the work and just let the kids suffer (laughs) yeah some teachers were like that. But some teachers were good um they'll sit down with you and actually go through the assignment and give feedback, but some teachers just no good. (M6)

F2 and M5 was that they thought school in Tonga would reflect what they knew high schools to be like in New Zealand:

Yeah so first day at school for me was like uncomfortable and like, I don't know, I thought going school in Tonga was like New Zealand... they (School B) were meant to like be like another New Zealand school for me. Like it's meant to be like a palangi orientated like school... they taught in English! But they kept their Tongan way like, got the hidings, the detentions... So I asked my mum to pull out of that school, it was too hard for me. (F2)

Oh shucks, it was like a shock [laughs]. Like the first day at school I was expecting to see something like here in New Zealand but it just like um, like little brick houses and like little wooden (laughs) just like, it was all one storey flat buildings. And yeah it didn't look like a school to me, cause what I was used to here is like a big, big building, and like heaps of facilities, and computers. (M5)

M3 knew he was fortunate because he had the support of his dad's friend who was a tutor at the school he attended:

I was lucky cause there was this tutor that knew my dad... he helped me a lot aye. (M3)

Those who had been to Tonga before or had friends found this transition a lot easier:

By then I knew people so it was a lot yeah, it was a lot easier. And you... fit in with the culture. (F3)

The school environment

For a number of participants the school environment including buildings were imposing as was the strict atmosphere. He was amazed that students were rarely seen out of their classes:

To me it was like a prison aye cause it's got that long as road and it's bumpy as, oh back then it was bumpy as... and I was like 'aye where are we going, is this like in the middle of the bush?'. And then my mum told me 'oh the prison's right next door!', 'cause the Tongan prison is right next door and I was like 'aye what the hell!'... When we got in [to School A] like there was no kids, you know how like you go school here like there's just kids walking around out of class and stuff, you don't see anyone walking around [at School A] everyone's where they're supposed to be. I was like 'aye where is everyone'.... that's how strict it is. If you get caught walking out of class they'll be like 'aye where are you going', give you a hiding and then [say] hurry up and get back to blah blah blah. (M1)

“...they try make everyone dress the same, look the same”

All participants quickly came to realise that there was an expectation at school to look almost identical to everyone else and there were “uniform inspections every now and then” (F1). Participants point out having to wearing a uniform and their hair a certain way were a priority, and that accessorising for female students was a ribbon in the hair which was required and natural beauty. M7 believed this was driven by the school, focus on maintaining its reputation and status:

I felt uncomfortable. Like we had to wear... the uniform that looks like a netball dress or something kind of thing. And you had to like um plait your hair in twos, and you had to fold it like your *fo'i fi* (plait) on your *ulu* (head). And you had to wear those ribbons and tie it in a bow on your ulu... you couldn't wear earrings. (F2)

You're not allowed to dye your hair, you're not allowed to pluck your eyebrows... they check... You had to *fi ua* (two plaited braids) it... And your shirt, girls would like leave

it open (top buttons)... and that wasn't allowed. Like you had to make sure it was like, the shirt was done up here (to the top button) so that it covers your body. (F1)

... like your hair has to be cut, the girls' hair has to be like plaited in a simple way with a ribbon in it... They try make everyone dress the same, look the same... I think it's the school status, so they can go 'man that school there they look really good'... The reputation means a lot to them. (M7)

The consequences of not abiding by the rules was mentioned many times, for example:

There'll be a day where you stand in line, like the whole school, all girls stand in line and the teachers will come and look at your eyebrows and they need to see that it's growing. If it's not growing you're [told to] stay home, and you have to stay home for a couple of days until it starts growing. That's dumb aye? And then they'll give us lectures, like 'God created natural beauty, you don't need to pluck your eyebrows', and I'm thinking 'you're so old school.' (F1)

Uniform was uniform. If not you had to go back home. If not they probably would've given you a hiding or something. (F2)

It's like so strict the school aye. Like if you come and you're not doing anything right you'll get a hiding for it... or if you come and your hairs long they'll cut it right there at the school, like that's the one thing I remember is always getting my hair cut at school. (M7)

Discipline

"...you fall out of line you gotta get discipline"

According to participants, although discipline did scare some, the view on discipline in schools was that "corporal punishment and stuff like that... have its place" (F3). As explained by most, discipline was a result of your own wrongdoing. For those who gave discipline, M4 stated that this was "the Tongan mind-set... you just get a hiding and you learn from it" which did illustrate having an effect on some. Also, participants specified there were different forms of discipline given, and the severity of discipline for males and females was not the same

The first shock was the first hiding I saw in class, was um the bible studies class. The teacher goes 'where's your guys homework?' and this was my first day I was like 'aye, what' and then he looked at me and he goes 'oh nah you're alright cause this is your first day'. And then everyone was trying to like pull out something and then like a couple of guys had nothing and he pulled out a slingshot but it had a rock like cello taped to it (laughs) and then he goes 'put your head down' and then I was like 'aye

what's going on here!' and then he just pulled it back and it went ding and I was like 'what the hell!'. This was to a guy across and I was like, bro this class is ruthless! (M1)

I didn't really get any bad hidings, like the bad I've seen, but I was smacked with a 2x4 two times from the head prefect. But yeah it was discipline. (M2)

I just had to do five push-ups and he'd whack me across the backside... It was from a prefect... It wasn't his wrongdoing, I was just a bit smart (cheeky) and just thought I was cool. This was when I was 13, still fresh and still new [to school] and then after that, oh humble! No more! (laughs). (M4)

You had to like go outside and um... in Tonga it's called *mate loi* (weeds), it's like um outside on the grass... got spikes on it? You had to go and take those out of the grass with your bare hands... detention was that or you get a hiding. (F2)

For the girls not bad, there's one situation you could like pinch the skin over your ribs and like twist it... It's kind of like a bad torture aye (laughs). And... when the teacher's used to make us put together the tips of our fingers altogether and then you'd hit the tips of your fingers with the duster, like the stupid duster for the chalkboard. Um that really hurt, that's like crazy torture man... and um I got hit on the butt with a broom once um and my dad came in and had a wee talk with the teacher (laughs)... then I think the other time I got smacked with the broom... I knew I was being a punk... That was the thing that set me apart... I'd prefer to have the hiding and be included do you know what I mean? (F3)

...the teachers would give us hidings but it wasn't all that bad, it taught us. To us it's you know, discipline its ok... at the end of the day we did something wrong. (F5)

M1 and F1 said that the way discipline was enforced led them to act in ways which would reduce their chances of being disciplined:

And I was just like, 'oh man I'm never coming to this class'... I use to find like empty classrooms 'cause some of the classrooms had like holes in the walls and I'd go in there and have a smoke. (M1)

I've seen all of that and it's scary, that's why I tried to be good. (F1)

F2's least favourite moment was getting a detention after school because then she had to figure out how to get home, unlike New Zealand:

Like where we stayed its like 45 minutes, an hour, to town... and the bus comes like every half an hour... If I get detention... would probably go up to 5[pm], but the buses stop going to our place... around 4.30[pm]. So if I stayed for detention I would miss the bus home... [In New Zealand] like you miss the bus, oh yeah I'll just call my mum to pick me up. In Tonga it's like my nana's sister had to go ask for a car cause we didn't have our own vehicle... to come pick me up and then she had to pay them to utu their car, and *utu* the car in Tonga is [expensive] *hoi* (expressing exclamation). So yeah it was hard ... And like at those times, like sometimes I used to like cry. (F2)

In these participants' view the severity of discipline an individual received was determined by two things, misconduct and the person carrying out the discipline. Findings were that teachers were not the only group disciplining students, prefects were also, and some chose to abuse their power:

I think it depends on the teacher to be honest, like I had one's who, like I had really good teachers and I had really bad teachers. And um the good teachers, like the teacher who did the whole pinching thing on the ribs um like you know under your armpits, she would only do that if she was so mad. (F3)

It becomes normal depending on who the teacher is you already know what's happening so the kids automatically behave depending on which teacher it is and if they did get a hiding it would be something that, not deserved to get a hiding but they did screw up. (F4)

Some prefects they get like high headed sometimes, they're like oh I can do this, they'll like walk over there and when a kid hits them they'll *paa'i* (slap) them, 'sio where you're going!' (M3)

There were people [in school] that actually abused that power that they had... Cause I remember once there was also a teacher that got suspended um cause he smacked a girl on her backside with a stick or something, and um... [she] started bleeding, yeah so then he got suspended. (M4)

However, few students snitched to their parents, unless 'if it was real brutal'. M1, M4 and M6 noted:

In the culture that was there you know, you wouldn't nark on someone, or you wouldn't tell tales cause you'd look like a wuss (weakling, wimp)... if you like went and told someone 'oh that person gave me a hiding for this and this and this'. (M4)

We never told my uncle what was happening cause nah that's snitching like you know, if we tell on them we're gonna get a bigger hiding... The only time my uncle found out was when I got that big hiding and I had to stay at his house cause I couldn't sleep cause you sleep on the ground on the concrete. We lost our mattresses ages ago. (M1)

I was really scared, like I couldn't even really talk or something... I just felt like my freewill was taken off me... You know how reporting something to the teacher is bad cause you'll get a more brutal [punishment]. Snitching! So I really can't say anything... that's how afraid I was cause I might get another bigger hiding. (M6)

"I wouldn't say it's being bullied"

Participants did not consider that they were bullied simply because they were a minority group. Female participants didn't raise bullying as an issue, however males said that if other students gave them a hard time they just viewed this as normal, an initiation type bullying:

I wouldn't say it's being bullied, probably just toughening you up cause they know you're from New Zealand you know, they're gonna give you a cheeky smack just to you know [make you] be aware its gonna come out of nowhere... Cause there was so many kids that came over that year, so many faces but they didn't last long it's because they'd just get straight chucked in and then you know, 'Come here! *bam*' [then] gone. (M1)

Like when you're younger um like you have people try and pick on you, and I think it was a testing time so I didn't take it you know, so I'd mock (tease) them and I'd run away, I'd run for my life. (M4)

It's kind of like an initiation-like type of bullying... it's bullying (laughs) but it's a good bullying (laughs)... Like they'd bully but they'd never cross the line, like physically. (M5)

I would say it's bullying but at the same time you kind of just saw it as normal. Like yeah, they just call it as like playing around over there (laughs) and you just got used to it. (M2)

From the comments, it seems as though this "bullying" was a time to test new students when they start school to show them high school in Tonga will be tough. Like M1's comment shows, not everyone who goes Tonga from overseas is able to last long in school because of this.

“...you have like this torch on you”

Few participants made reference to joining extra activities at school with the exception of M3 who said he was motivated to “do everything” offered at high school in Tonga so he could bring back those lessons. Interestingly, almost half of this group were quite prominent individuals within their schools as prefects and rugby players:

Band, um I was in the magazine committee... Yeah and I was a prefect as well... [for both] Form 6 and Form 7. (M6)

I was in the *ifi* (band), played rugby, I was a prefect, I was in the scripture union... and they're like 'gee this palangi dudes doing everything'... So I was a prefect for two years. (M3)

I cracked (made) rugby team... (M4)

Both M3 and M4 described how being in the 1st XV or a prefect helped them through school:

...I had my ways [around discipline] (laughs). I had my ways around the prefects, the boys and the senior tutor, and when you're on his (senior tutor) side it's a lot easier doing life through school. It was quite funny 'cause when you started playing rugby you have like this torch on you and um heaps of people want to be your mate, or even teachers... We weren't smart but we'd get away with it 'cause we were in the 1st XV. (M4)

Oi you get so much respect! More than the prefects here. There was this one time there was this class they *mātuku* (to leave) out of their classroom and they were running around, and me and my mate (another prefect) were walking to go to our class... me and him just walked and the class they just all moved to the side. And honestly it's like 'Holey, man we're like the Kings of the college'. (M3)

“...the education there was pretty good”

When discussing with participants the quality of education in Tonga, there was mutual agreement that although there were struggles with English class, for the most part it was good. The evidence shows that the struggle in English class was delivering lessons in the English language due to Tongan being the

primary language in Tonga, not to mention, M7 also described the quality of Tongan education in comparison to New Zealand as “advanced”

Nah the school work was pretty much the same, just in Tongan... Except the English language it was a bit more basic. But apart from that everything was still the same. The education there is pretty good. (M1)

Oh the education was like, it was really good for me. When I was there like I notice they're really smart, the only thing they struggled with, like English was the only subject... and that was the subject I did well in cause my English was good... But yeah, like in terms of Maths, Science and [other subjects], like they understand and can explain everything but not in English... in Tongan. (M5)

This group had their own ideas about how high schools ranked in Tonga. There was almost a consensus that School B was the smartest school in Tonga in terms of academic achievement and spoken English:

[School B's] supposed to be known as the smartest school in Tonga. I wasn't smart, I don't know how I got in (laughs). (M4)

They still say it's supposed to be the, you know top school...that's what everyone's says in Tonga...I don't know about now...established for future leaders of the government. (F5)

School B is like one of the highest schools in Tonga and it's hard to get into there. So kids like start from primary, intermediate, like their exam trying to get into School B. (F2)

In F2s view, school B had not meet its reputation of being “*palangi* orientated”. She had found school D to be more like a New Zealand type school:

It's meant to be like a palangi orientated like school but... they taught in English! But they kept their Tongan way like, got the hidings, the detentions, the yeah. So I asked my mum to pull out of that school, it was too hard for me... [school D] was like another New Zealand school for me in Tonga. Their education was like high standard... they had like computer classes... the students had laptops and... their teachers were like professors and that from Australia, from Cambridge University. (F2)

Although M4 attended school B which was a co-ed and day school, he pointed out that they fell short of discipline in comparison to boarding schools in Tonga. M4 distinguished schools by the students' behaviours of being "well-mannered" and "quite whack":

I was fortunate enough to play in the Tongan schools [rugby] and we had like our training camp at School C, and um I didn't go school one day and I just dressed up as one of the boys (laughs). And yeah some of the things that happen in those kind of schools, it was really like pretty full on... The guys at the boarding schools they have much more respect, um more respect for teachers and prefects. And just the whole school, they're more well-mannered than School B, than the mixed schools. So if you do get a hiding it's because you've been playing up... you learnt so much more when you went into a boarding school. And just in those couple of weeks that I was in that training camp I learnt so much, um you know just hanging out with those guys... it's kind of like a brotherhood, they're real family to you, and yeah it's quite interesting. But in School B there were some kids there that were quite whack and had no respect at all to any teachers or stuff like that, just seeking attention. (M4)

School pride "...they saw you for what colour you were wearing"

Part of the high school experience had been the rivalries between some schools in. According to a few, the uniform you wore outside school could either attract or discourage trouble:

I've been beaten up and stuff, like been attacked. I guess it's just something you go through when you're coming through like school... Like in our school we always have um beef with other schools and... some liked our school and some didn't... so no one saw you for who you were, they saw you for what colour you were wearing. (M5)

Others had not had that experience. M3 spoke of the freedom he had because the school he attended did have rivals:

...the cool thing about going School B was I could walk around freely with my school uniform by myself and not be scared that I was gonna be jumped by people from another school. (M3)

M2 and M7 said that the solution to safeguarding yourself was to make sure you always had other members from your school around you - to intimidate:

Once you're outside the gates everyone's just brothers. Everyone's all together when they're outside school cause like the school fights and that, you just become brothers. (M2)

To be honest every school kept to themselves aye. Like if you're from [School B] of course you will be as one, if you're from [School A] you will be together as one, like they just kept to themselves as groups just in case something happens you got your numbers there. I never saw high schools mix, whatever high school you were from you keep to your own people. (M7)

School Friends

“...I didn't really get much friends until I joined the band”

Making friends was a key factor in the school experience. Part of this was because they felt Tongan students had views of them that either attracted friends for the wrong reasons or discouraged friendships:

I started school probably a week late and um, yeah I didn't like it (laughs)... I didn't have any set friends... Yeah it was quite hard cause people would think I was *fie palangi*... They thought I was *fie palangi* when I wasn't speaking in Tongan, but at home we don't speak in Tongan, we speak in English. So that was the issue that I had, like they thought I was wannabe white that's why I didn't speak in Tongan to them... I tried to speak in Tongan. I remember on my first day from school, I came back [home] and I was speaking like a fob, like not speaking English properly, and my sister told me off 'why are you speaking like that?' and I was like 'I just wanna fit in', cause I didn't fit in. But I eventually found people that spoke in English so that was ok. (F1)M6

On this point, M6 had coined the phrase “false friends”:

I just hated um false friends... It's just that we had a business at home and sometimes I have money and when I don't I'll just experiment or something. So I went for a whole week with no money to school and no one was like 'how are you' or something like that, coming up to me saying this and that. So yeah after that I just like shut it down. (M6)

He described girls' behaviour in the following way:

It's quite interesting, it was more the girls cause their like 'oh look there's fresh meat' and so they're the ones talking. I'm still 13 and I'm thinking 'what the heck'... And there was this one dude that kind of spoke to me, and then started hanging out, and then yeah he became one of my good mates. But yeah it was all the girls trying to guide you to the different classes and all of that (laughs). And here you are thinking, bruh (bro) I need time and space... like they'll say 'oh what have you got for lunch', I'll be ten steps ahead and say 'oh nah I don't have lunch' but I have lunch in my bag and then I'll eat it by myself (laughs). And then some of the boys too, they'd be kind to you. (M4)

M7 also used the term "false friends" and pointed out that after a while, New Zealand born Tongans "knew what they were up to" (M7):

Like they thought like just cause they're from Tonga and they know how to like be tricky they think us New Zealanders are stupid but they always forget we're all Tongans, we will click, but the difference is that the New Zealand guys click and we just keep quiet and we know what's going on, and we just try to avoid it. But then they go hard out to that point where they get carried away and they don't realise how far they're going. (M7)

Not surprisingly, friendships were made easiest with those who had similar interests and experiences

The people that lived in the same village that I lived in, they were the ones that I kind of actually got along with cause you know, we see each other every day and... go to each other's houses and that. (M4)

It just depended on like what year you'd go in... like you just hang around the people in your class, your class mates. (M5)

If I'm Form 5 I only stick with Form 5's... Like me I didn't really get much friends until I joined the band. So I have someone that we have the similar interests or similar work after school and that's when... I know these are the boys I'm gonna hang with, the band boys. (M6)

At the same time for some there was a fine line between overseas' born and *afakasi*'s. For example:

Most of my friends were from overseas or they travelled a lot, so that's kind of why we got off 'cause we um shared the same experience I could say. (F1)

It was different [at School D], like I made friends straight away cause ...all the kids that go there is like they're from overseas: New Zealand, Australia, America, and like Fiji and that... Like um, most of the kids that go there is like kids that get sent to Tonga by their parents for being bad... so it was easy for me to talk to them. (F2)

...the friends I made the easiest were probably the people who... had either lived overseas or um were half-caste like me. (F3)

... for us it was quite hard cause a lot of our friends were like the kids of the high commissioner or you know, business people and so they'd be like 'oh Saturday we're gonna go um catch the boat over to one of the islands and hang out for the day and buy food' and stuff like that and we're like, 'yeah ok', I can't do that (laughs) you know. Or mum made us you know, like she'd be like 'I'll pay you but you know you gotta work for it' you know. Um so that's that, that was another sort of difference between us and most of the *hafakasi*'s over there as well (laughs). Um yeah um kind of finding that sort of where you belong kind of hard. (F3)

Labelling “...they straight away thought like ‘oh spoilt brat’... brainy... fie palangi”

M3 stated, “yeah I live in New Zealand but it actually doesn't mean I'm a palangi”:

...everyone looked at you different at first cause they thought 'oh she's from New Zealand she's *fie palangi*', like that. And you just couldn't fit in with them. (F2)

Because we couldn't speak Tongan, or cause our Tongan was so broken, uh you know everyone's like 'aye palangi, palangi, palangi' and it made it kind of harder for us to blend in... some of that would be... cause they saw us with our mum and she's white, cause we're half [Tongan]. But at the same time other people who didn't even know my family, they would look at me and know I was half you know, um or they'd know that I was from overseas you know, they'd know I was palangi... I didn't think that the fact that I belonged to two races meant that you know I shouldn't get accepted do you know what I mean. (F3)

They called all of us palangi's... Like it didn't matter if your parents are both full Tongan, it's the fact that you were born overseas. They all call everybody from

overseas palangi's, Americans, Australians, New Zealand, they're just all viewed as palangi. (M2)

At first I was like, 'yeah gee I'm a palangi!' aye. But then like going onto the second week, third week, bro these dudes are *sio lalo*, these guys are looking down on me. But then you know your like 'I'm a Tongan now', yeah I live in New Zealand but it actually doesn't mean I'm a palangi. They just say I'm a palangi cause I'm a FOB (fresh off the boat), I don't really know how to speak [Tongan] and I don't know any of the Tongan culture and all that. (M3)

Everytime someone comes from New Zealand or Australia you stand out... the language and culture and that, I understood that but um it was getting singled out. You get singled out and they pick on you. (M5)

Some guys were curious cause I was pretty whiter than them, and they just [asked], 'oh where you from?'. (M6)

It was quite hard, cause I didn't look like a New Zealand born (laughs). Like you know how you're supposed to be fair skin [laughs]. Like F1 she's fair skinned and um I'm actually quite dark skinned, very dark, so they (Tongans in Tonga) just thought I had really good English until they seen my passport (laughs) and then they're like 'oh what happened?'. So Tongans in Tonga they always think that you know, if you're a New Zealander you're supposed to have like beautiful skin, you're supposed to be white. Man you need to get it right... [they're] stink to me. (M4)

M4 and F1 went on to say that being called *palangi* made them behave in ways that would not draw attention to them:

I wasn't really a seeking attention kind of guy, I just kept myself quiet when I can, and I wouldn't speak English, and I wouldn't go to all the people from New Zealand um [say] 'oh sup gee!' (laughs) you know start that conversation, I'd just leave them. People knew that I was from New Zealand but I never really went out to go speak English and that cause I didn't wanna get mocked for thinking I was all that speaking English. (M4)

When I pay attention to it, sometimes they feed off that and they think it's funny. So I just didn't care, I wouldn't pay any attention to it. So if they say, 'oh you're so fie palangi', that's when I'd try not be *fie palangi*... I don't want to be palangi, I want to be Tongan. (F1)

For M6 being raised in Tonga, he states that being called *palangi* was not necessarily a negative thing, he defined it as

...a distinctive um feature. Like if you say 'oh who was in this fight', its like 'oh you know that palangi'... [It's used] to identify them, just making conversations easier. (M6)

Being called palangi was not the only label participants mentioned being tied to, there were also the perceptions of them being wealthy and brainy:

Yeah they think you're really wealthy and they ask you for a lot of things. And when you don't have [anything] they try bully you. (M5)

When I got to know the Tongan kids at [School B] and mixed with them, and like see what they were viewing us as, as soon as they saw a kid from overseas like they straight away thought like 'oh spoilt brat', gets everything. I just found out that if your like from overseas all the Tongan kids try make friends with you cause they know you have money, they know you have lunch money or you have packed lunch [laughs]... And sometimes the Tongan kids think as soon as they see an overseas student like they think straight away that they're brainy, like get them to help them with their work and that. I was like, what? (F2)

SUMMARY

Findings show the reasons this group of New Zealand born Tongan youth were studying in Tongan high schools were not only motivated by parents' desire to discipline them. Though it can be said that most of these journeys were triggered by parental interests and what they thought was in the "best interest" of their child, in a few cases students played a lead role in the decision to migrate and other students were returning with their families.

Though transition to life in Tonga was hard for most participants and there were few differences in reports by male and females, findings were that for those who had been to Tonga before that exposure to Tonga had assisted in making their arrival for schooling much smoother. However, for those who were going to Tonga for the first time, this experience was quite a shock especially in the early days. There had been a quick realisation on arrival that Tonga was not going to be like New Zealand and that students would

need to adjust and fit in to what many described as the hard Tongan lifestyle and, also, the anga fakatonga. All participants commented on the heat, housing, and a lack of access to resources and foods they had been familiar with in New Zealand. For example, working with other family members in the plantation was another difference shared by male participants, as were the difficulties forming friendships for mostly all. For a number, sports had been a key mediator.

The schooling experiences differed quite significantly across participants and by the schools they attended. As illustrated, by boarding school, government school, non-government/church schools, English speaking schools and boys only schools. As noted, one had changed schools because she could not cope with the discipline and the school not being like another New Zealand school she was familiar with, she found the new school more in line with her expectations. The small number who were already familiar with schooling in Tonga had adjusted quite smoothly. By way of contrast, those who had only studied in New Zealand had assumed that schools in Tonga would mirror those in New Zealand. This group shared the view that they had been 'chucked in the deep end' and left to navigate the new settings alone. Mostly they talked about the highly disciplined nature of schools in Tonga in terms of organisation, the curriculum taught, inadequate resources, and mostly about quite harsh discipline by teachers, but also by prefects.

Finally and despite many incidences of kindness, these New Zealand born Tongan youth came to understand life in Tonga, facing the challenges of finding acceptance amongst their peers as being "Tongan". From the stories told, it was clear that many in this group of participants either found, or felt themselves to be, separate from the Tongan born youth due to their early life experiences in New Zealand. Different levels of Tongan language speaking were one factor, and a second was youth understanding of anga fakatonga roles and behaviours, more particularly male/female roles and relationships. Being labelled palangi had been a contentious and hurtful experience for all participants, especially given that in New Zealand they were always identified as Tongan. Overtime, the more participants experienced, learnt, understood and adapted to the Tongan life, the better their Tongan experience.

CHAPTER 5: REFLECTIONS ON THIS SECOND GENERATION RETURN

In this chapter I present responses to question 3, would you recommend this as a practice for Tongan youth today?

These reflections have main themes which emerged namely, the reasons for the return to New Zealand, any impacts of their Tongan experience on their lives since that time, and finally recommendations they would make to others contemplating this practice for their children. Responses are presented quite fully largely because shortening these stories in any way also reduced their cohesion and importance.

The return

All participants returned to New Zealand after their time in Tonga. Notably M4 and F5 said they didn't return to New Zealand until they had their own families and then they had returned for their children's education. Reasons for returning included higher education (M6), friends leaving Tonga, and the passing of a main caregiver:

My whole family moved back 'cause of me going to uni... There were a lot of times where my mum was gonna send me back here for Form 7 cause she did that [when she was younger] and she knew it would benefit me but because I was blinded by this high school love... I begged my parents to let me stay and then they did... So that was the main reason, for uni and because my whole family was coming back. F1

I just had enough... 2010 in the middle of the year my best mate he got a scholarship to Oz (Australia) and he wasn't around, I didn't really have anyone to kick it with and I guess yeah, I just had enough. Things just weren't the same. He was the principal's son. M2

When my mum's older sister came back to Tonga for a holiday... I was crying to her aye. I told her like I wanted to leave that family cause I was always getting picked on and then she was like oh yup and they just went and got my passport... and I came back to my parents. M7

My aunty and my grandparents died that's why I came back. Like if they were still alive um I'm not sure what would've happened, I would've probably been a professional farmer or something (laughs)... in my mind I was gonna stay there for good. M5

Like M5 who envisioned his future in Tonga, M3 and F2 wanted to stay on in Tonga but had their parents decide for them that it was time for them to go home. Though M3 was not aware his flight to New Zealand for a break was not a return ticket to Tonga, F2 was informed:

Yeah my dad took it (passport), I was disappointed aye... All the [school rugby] boys hated me because I knew I was gonna go Australia, then come New Zealand then go back to Tonga... So they all *heka*-ed to go Tonga, and I *heka*-ed to go New Zealand (laughs)... As soon as I landed my dad took my passport, I didn't even click aye, I was like 'bro I'm gonna finally rest!'... Then um then it just went weeks and he was like telling me 'oh there's a course over here at MIT', 'aye? *Ikai teu toe foki*', he goes '*ika'i ika'i*, nah nah', then the *fakafamili* he told me, I was like 'jack!'... Bro I begged him aye... I was disappointed. M3

I came back to New Zealand um... after schooling and that I wanted to stay in Tonga! But my dad said nah that was enough for me. And like um I was getting older and like [being] a girl, you know the typical Tongan parents, like come back to New Zealand to your mum and dad in case something happened to me in Tonga... my dad said that he wouldn't live with himself knowing that if something happened to me in Tonga [while] him and my mum here, so that's why I had to come back. Yeah I would've just stayed there. F2

Others like M4 and F5 actually stayed on in Tonga and started their own families before they decided to return to New Zealand for their children's education and the opportunities available:

I wanted my kids to get an education here and then they can go back... for a year or two and then bring them back so they can do uni and all of that. M4

I found that there's more opportunities here for my daughter... like here they have rugby for young boys, netball for girls... and like there's plenty of other opportunities here for you know kids growing up so um I thought that's its best to move back here like. F5

M1's return home sets his story apart because he purposely triggered his return home by making the decision to "play up" which caused his parents to end his journey in Tonga:

I think I would've stayed longer if I wasn't being really naughty and stuff. Like they (parents) saw that I was getting worse and they were like 'oh nah we need to bring him back'... I already told them I want to come back, but at the same time I was

thinking I might as well play up as much as I can so I can go home... and it kind of worked. M1

When my mum's older sister came back to Tonga for a holiday... I was crying to her aye. I told her like I wanted to leave that family cause I was always getting picked on and then she was like oh yup and they just went and got my passport... and I came back to my parents. (M7)

Looking back

"...it can go two ways"

According to the participants, some returned "really good [and] well-disciplined" (M1), while others "ended up getting back into trouble" (M2). Based on the findings it can be said that the differing views reflect back to the environment some found themselves in, but also their own motivation to change:

I think it depends... on the school, the background and everything. 'Cause if you're rich and you just send them there, they go to a rich school, they go School D, and they go and they live like in a flash area, they're not gonna really understand the culture as much. (F1)

I know of some other people that actually have a complete different experience where they were quite naughty here and they went to Tonga and then they hung out with the wrong crowd and became even more worse (laughs) and so... this goes back to the kid. If he's really motivated and he wants to change then he will, and if he wants to be motivated to learn the culture and learn all of that etc. then I think he will, but if he doesn't then he will just drift around, might go church, might not... Like it will just depend on the kid basically. (M4)

The people the participants were placed with in Tonga were an influencing factor as well:

It really depends on who they live with, it really depends on that. I lived with my grandma, grandpa, they... really paid attention to me... And whenever I'm gone and I come back like late they will always give me discipline. And yeah it just depends on who you're living with... if it's a good place to live then you'll be fine, if it's not then I don't know, its better off living here. (M6)

For me I think it's the um the guardians that they go to there... I guess they don't discipline them enough... or maybe they do but the kids already used to getting away with things... But that's what I find in some kids that I know off that have been sent to Tonga and there's no difference... Maybe in a way it's the kids um getting back at the parents again for sending them away. (F5)

M4 mentioned that some "got worse" on return to New Zealand. This and other views shared suggest that the environment in Tonga may not have been the best for all:

I just snapped back into my bad habits... If I stayed in School B I reckon I would've changed... but going [School D] and mixing with New Zealand and Australian kids and that, they were like into hip hop and all that fie gangster days... smoking and drinking. (F2)

...you can come back like a really good, well-disciplined person or the whole time you're there [in Tonga] you're just like 'fuck why did they [parents] do that to me'... Like my cousins they're a perfect example, like he became a prefect and everything and that, and then there was me I was just like missing from programmes from school and that. (M1)

Coming to New Zealand it made me worse from what I use to be... When I moved from Tonga to here I started smoking, I started drinking, I started smoking weed... [and] school nights I'd go and don't come back 'til like 1 in the morning or something. Like I was on that stage where I'd just go hang with my friends, school and that wasn't important to me. Kicking it with my friends, smoking and drinking was more important to me... I don't blame anyone it's just all myself, like I made that wrong choice. (M7)

There's a positive effect [and] negative effect to it... I just came back and I just ended up getting back into trouble. Like the life lessons I learnt I still hold on to but I just manage to get myself into trouble all the time... 'cause it was there when I left [New Zealand] so when I came back I just fell back into it... I don't think Tonga has nothing to do with it. (M2)

Although M2 and M7 show that they were positively affected by the experience of living in Tonga, the negative influences that were in New Zealand were still there on return. Many experienced difficulties transitioning back into New Zealand such as F3 who found "It was just as hard to try get back into life here as it was to get... used to being in Tonga". Things they missed and experienced conflicts with were

further studies, opportunities in sports, and reconnecting with friends and family. Many experienced a real sense of feeling like they “missed out” while they were away in Tonga:

I had cousins um we lived at my uncle’s house [in New Zealand]... I was trying to adapt to them and stuff... I didn’t know how things flow... I just felt like someone visiting, just accommodating or something. (M6)

When I first came back I was like, I missed so much here [in New Zealand] like my friends and stuff that I had here like they were all different and I was like what did I miss out on?. (M1)

Fitting back into schooling was another factor:

I thought, oh I go School B [I’m] getting a really good education. And then I come here (New Zealand) and I was like far out, what did I learn? I didn’t even get much from School B. And I think that would have to be one of the least, just feeling I was like confused. (F1)

I told all my brothers if there’s a [school] ball go to it gee... you guys are lucky you guys have a ball. Back in Tonga, jack gee, you wouldn’t have time to go *tisikou* (disco) around... Yeah just missing out on that. [And] like coming from Tonga you don’t really get picked up in rugby, that, and... when I went and did the plumbing course I was lucky to get it cause they were asking what school I went to, ‘oh I went school in Tonga’, they *sio lalo*, ‘oh I don’t think you have the qualifications to do this’, I was like gee! That was one of the negative[s] of schooling over there. You come here and you try do something and they look at your background (M3)

M3 added that he was six years over there! I didn’t really get to spend time with my parents.

“...man I learnt a lot aye”

The richness of what participants learnt in Tonga was identified by M3 when he said that his “bag” was bursting with knowledge:

Man I learnt a lot aye... When I went to [School B] for example let's just say I took a bag, it was empty! And when I finished in 2009 that bag I couldn't even lift it, it was *fonu* (filled) with everything I learnt, and that's what I brought back to New Zealand. That's [an] example of the experience that I had there. (M3)

M7 pointed out that these lessons were not only learnt at school, but in different settings:

You learn like how to go to like the farm and that, like not just at school, you learn everywhere, like you have to learn how to survive to look after your family, its way different to here New Zealand. (M7)

I never actually noticed how much I've learnt until I came back here a couple of years later... Like the culture, your identity, your history, like where you come from. Um I believe that it plays like a big part in your upbringing. (F4)

Most were appreciative of the experience they. Some of the other lessons they said they learnt included having common sense, being able to handle tough situations, to work hard and be disciplined. Examples included:

It taught me to like handle things more kind of thing, the tougher situations, not give up so easy, I guess that's the main thing that it taught me. (M1)

Overall I just picked up life lessons like um don't take anything for granted and that... like you appreciate the smaller things more... It made me appreciate a lot! (M2)

I think being privileged to go back to Tonga kind of opened a bit of my knowledge um first of all to the language, and just to the culture, and actually to the upbringing, yeah and being thankful for things... I think it opens your eyes to not just look at what you don't have... being thankful and grateful for things that we had [in Tonga] cause it was very little...Cause we had heaps of things um growing up here in New Zealand but then moving over, although we were helping the church you know my parents still had to find a job to look after the family and they had a big pay cut in their wages (in comparison to NZ). So everything that we were used to or all that we could ask for um we would have to minimize it... I'm just really glad that we went Tonga so you know, I could learn to be really grateful for what we do have and not be ungrateful for what we don't have, um and be stubborn and a lot of things, the respect and all... I gained a lot of [skills]... common sense, and a lot of initiative as well, not [having] to wait to be told by [my] parents or by whoever's in charge... I wouldn't have learnt that if I didn't go Tonga. (M4)

I enjoyed every part of my time in Tonga... I was happy I went cause... It's only had a positive effect on me. It's made me more grateful for what I have, it's like disciplined me and it's helped like turn my life around. Yeah I was heading the wrong direction and like going to Tonga and seeing how they struggle there made me feel grateful. Yeah like just being grateful and disciplined, that's the two main things that stand out for me... It just really disciplined me to like, even if you have nothing you're still happy with life... its prepared me well to the person I am now. (M5)

It was a hard life aye, like it taught me how to survive on my own, like to appreciate what you have, and appreciate the stuff that people do for you. Like that's what I learnt when I was there. (M7)

Oh it's changed my life heaps. Like I said before, it's humbling. It makes you more humble and thankful. And I'm really thankful for that... I'm thankful for the experience... When you come to a position where you've got at least something, you're really thankful... If you asked me this while I was still going through that, I'd be like 'fuck this I hate this, I wanna go home (laughs) I wanna go back to New Zealand, stuff this'. But yeah, looking back now I'm really thankful. (F1)

An illustration of what they had learnt in Tonga was illustrated by F4's comments that it was the act of being selfless that made them grateful:

Being more grateful... My highlight would be the experience and knowledge... I'm from a normal middle class family we don't really struggle to get certain things... [but] in high school I'd say like 99% of kids there don't have lunch or... they don't even get to eat from [the] tuckshop... Um yeah it's that experience of... being selfless... every little thing, whether you have... like a bun... if you're going to the tuckshop you have to make sure that you get [or] you buy something that you and ten other of your friends will be able to get, or if out of the ten girls you hang out with, two or three people will bring in money.. those three people have to make sure you buy enough for the ten people that you're with. Or even if we have absolutely nothing and those who don't barely have even something would like walk us or we'd catch the bus to their house during lunchtime cause we can do that in Tonga, you can leave and come back, we'd catch the bus to their house and like have like a *haka* (food put on to boil)... and the mum would barely have anything but she'll probably go get a *kapa ika* (tinned fish) or something like that and everyone eats it no one complains. (F4)

Language and culture

Responses showed that their experience in Tonga had also extended to their appreciation of the Tongan culture and way of life. Participants said they returned feeling more Tongan, and proud of being Tongan because their knowledge of the Tongan culture and language had been enriched:

Another thing that Tonga taught me is like, always try and stay connected to your roots kind of thing, that's what my dad told me as well. I always go inu kava (drink kava), like you know talking with all the old men like helps me you know keep talking Tongan cause I'm at work most of the time speaking English, um try go to church every now and then. You know speaking Tongan, it's just a good thing... The only things they (younger generation) can say is 'toko' (brother/sister) [laughs]. (M1)

Tonga actually helped with knowing more about like respecting your sisters and that, respecting you elders. (M2)

Bro I learnt so much aye... I recommend myself lucky that I can speak English and speak Tongan, and actually understand Tongan! And understand English as well... I learnt [to] not just *haua* (wander about) without telling your parents. (M3)

I'm really grateful that I can say 'oh nah, I'm not a plastic Tongan' and actually talk fluently in Tongan, speak it, I could say a Tongan speech or whatever, even like do the pig and that (laughs), make an *umu* (underground oven), so all of that... Learning my Tongan culture and the Tongan language it makes you more of a proud Tongan, but knowing that you are born in New Zealand. (M4)

I identified as Tongan, was proud to be, but my understanding of the culture and tradition was poor. [This] was enriched [while] living and learning in Tonga... It stayed the same. Felt more proud because I had a better understanding and appreciation of the culture and language. (M5)

Yup, I reckon it's really been a good experience for me 'cause I learnt to be nice and stuff, and yeah I learnt respect, even knowing the Tongan language as well. It really impacts me on more on my manners. (M6)

Even though I'm not fully in the whole Tongan culture thing, like I don't understand some things still, but I'm glad... I know a bit more in comparison to before. (F1)

It's been positive. Um I learnt a lot, I learnt more about the Tongan culture, I can speak Tongan fluent... Now I understand um, like there's all that taboo stuff they do with the Tongan culture... like I can't watch TV with my brothers and like um there's certain stuff I can't do around my brothers.

In F2s view acquiring this knowledge made her stand out from her siblings and other family members in New Zealand, importantly this made her parents proud of her:

So like coming back to New Zealand, my parents were proud of me in that way, that I learnt about the Tongan culture. And in my family like everyone's like gutted they didn't send their kids cause I'm the only one that knows the Tongan culture. My brother's and that don't really know anything, they're like mixed... [they] ask me stuff to do with the Tongan culture, like they don't know it. (F2)

Identity

This was a difficult question for all participants. Although the views on how they now identify themselves after Tonga vary, with some still holding the same identity prior to this experience, New Zealand born Tongan or Tongan, a few acknowledged how their identities had shifted from New Zealand born Tongan to Tongan because of the experience:

I'm a New Zealand born but I'm a Tongan, but then when I went there and I came back I was like, I'm a Tongan living in New Zealand! It's like staying there six years um actually made me a Tongan, like there's still stuff for me to learn like in the culture and that but living there for six years and seeing everything that Tongans do actually made me wanna be a Tongan! (M3)

Before I went to Tonga my parents used to tell me, 'stop being fie palangi you're Tongan', and I'm like, 'no I'm not I'm born in New Zealand so I'm a kiwi, I'm not Tongan, I'm a kiwi'. And then going to Tonga and coming back it's like no you're Tongan (laughs), you're not a kiwi, you're a Tongan born in New Zealand. (F2)

[Before], a New Zealand-born Tongan... I think I'm a Tongan-Tongan now. I believe that... knowing exactly where you come from gives you an identity and you can be proud. (F4)

While schooling in Tonga had assisted some in strengthening their cultural knowledge and competence in Tongan language, M2 and M6 contended that this relied on the individual getting into the culture:

Guess if they really get into it aye. (M2)

Um language yes, um culture somewhat in the middle, medium. Cause in school we do learn Tongan language but when you get up to Form 5, 6, 7 you're obliged to choose not to take it and take another paper so it's yeah. It's like good sometimes because I didn't really take Tongan, I didn't really like Tongan um I mean the actual subject cause it was pretty hard for me cause I was going back and forth from here (New Zealand) I was speaking English... and it was just boring sometimes... But when I came here I actually wanted to go back and learn more (laughs). M6

The lessons learnt had prepared them for the future, learning to work and provide, take care of their families:

That's one thing I learnt was um preparing your own food... like 2004 [in school] if we *tō* (plant) the *manioke* then probably 2005 we'll eat it... So that's just for me, learning that when I leave Toloa I gotta look for a job, so that job's gonna pay for whatever and whatever. (M3)

I wasn't expecting anything. But when I actually left Tonga, and growing up in the culture... I think that's one thing that I've learnt is that you've gotta work... that [mentality] that you need to work for what you want, and you can't just be lazy... especially now that I'm a father, looking to provide for my kids and my wife. (M4)

I've learnt a lot from what I've been through aye like... it made me realise how I would treat my kids when they grow up, how I would talk to them, like how I would show them life, just from the way I grew up. (M7)

It's meant that I've brought up my kids a lot more Tongan and I'm a lot closer to all my Tongan family... I value that link with my country... Me and the boys we, until I started studying, we used to go back um every year like once... cause I just know that they you know they need [that] exposure cause they're three quarters Tongan, only one quarter palangi... this is your culture you know, you need to know it... it's not an empty word like being Tongan, it's an actual thing. (F3)

M4 emphasised that all he had learnt in Tonga would not have been gained growing up in New Zealand, he would have been a different person:

I probably most likely wouldn't have learnt that if I was here in New Zealand um just be that little wuss playing inside and just playing on the computer, or playing games instead of helping you know dad, helping out parents and that. (M4)

F3 believed that being half Tongan and half *palangi*, the experience of being in Tonga had made her and her siblings closer on their return to New Zealand and less *anga fakapalangi*:

I think we (F3 and siblings) just had a greater appreciation for um being Tongan and like just the things that people prioritised, we had different priorities and stuff... Yeah um I found it hard to kind of get back into a western culture and I think we're all way tighter and that as a family because of it like we all live close together and just you know... just your standard Polynesian family (laughs)... we probably never would've been like that if we didn't go Tonga... we would've been a lot more *anga fakapalangi*, you know what I mean, like we would've been a lot whiter (laughs). (F3)

Hopes for the future

The impact Tonga had on F3 on return to New Zealand led her to returning to Tonga for an additional five years:

You know when we first went there I didn't want to go and then when we left I didn't wanna leave (laughs). I actually came back here and I started at high school, I did Form 7 for one term then left and worked and went back to Tonga by myself (laughs). Yeah went back and I lived there 5 years by myself, and yeah got married over there and stuff like that. (F3)

Additionally, she expressed that her time in Tonga made her want to reverse the brain-drain effect from Tonga by giving back to Tongan society one day

I've still got another year of my training and I've said to the boys, you know I'd love to go back and live in Tonga for a year if it's possible... You know how much potential there is in the country and you see all the, you know bad things, the bad things that can be fixed and stuff. And you just see like this massive brain drain, you know, like all the smartest most educated Tongans leaving and never coming back you know. (F3)

M3 said he had carried his pride of School B with him when he returned to New Zealand:

I wanted to do everything [in Tonga], so when I come out here like you bring [School B] with you... I had this motivation like I didn't want to bring the school down cause it's done so much for me... I just had this *ta'e fie tō* (not wanting to fail) feeling in me ever since that and it's still with me now. (M3)

It is evident the impact of Tonga on participants was great, their return to New Zealand with a new attitude and perspective on life shows how they were shaped by the experience.

Would I send my children?

Participants had mixed views about encouraging their children to go or sending them to Tonga for school. Many highlighted the first-hand experience of life in Tonga being a positive, like reconnecting to their Tongan identity and being more appreciative of the life they have in New Zealand. These motives for recommendations were in line with the lessons they said they had learnt in Tonga:

Yeah. I reckon they should. Especially those stuck up brat ones... those ungrateful kids, they should go see how kids are living in Tonga and like how parents are like selling stuff just to get their kids school fees... There's this lady from our village she goes around like people's houses like asking... to do their washing or like *tafi* (sweep) their house for them to give her money to feed her kids. And like some people... just give her \$10 but to her that was like heaps, as long as it was enough to feed her kids. So like I reckon if New Zealand kids here go back to Tonga, see stuff like that happening, like how the struggle is real there they can appreciate what they have here. (F2)

Yeah I believe that it's good... The positives of sending your kids to Tonga, I believe that knowing your identity and where you actually come from um plays a big part in where you want to go in life... If you send them back to Tonga to understand where they (parents and grandparents) came from and the reasons why they actually came here and the efforts that they made back in the 70s and 80s to get here for them, for the generation today... that actually motivated me to become, or to get my life in place... If he/she didn't come here for that reason and I didn't actually go to Tonga to see where my grandparents actually grew up to eat and live... how they got to school walking, and the circumstances that they were in, it wouldn't motivate me to get to where I am today... It's not that they've (New Zealand born Tongan) forgotten, it's just that they don't know. And I believe that sending them back to where they came from

would let [them] appreciate and actually know that the life that they are living is luxury cause they are getting so many opportunities from left, right and centre. Where as in back at home the only way to get somewhere is through education and not everyone is like that, has the brains to do so. (F4)

I think if every child from overseas has a Tongan experience it would be good for them if it's to just to you know learn the culture, not coming for punishment or anything but to actually come and learn, and know your roots and all that, it'll be good... for them to come and see how, where their parents grew up and stuff I think, there should be more... You do learn about it here at home and stuff but not enough, unless you're actually there in Tonga. (F5)

Yeah I reckon everyone... just having a shower [in Tonga] is a big thing. It's like wow! What is this! What are these buckets of water, things like that. It's good to know where you came from. (M1)

It'll actually give them like a good overlook on life, just to appreciate things more. (M2)

I reckon Tonga's a good place where you can start from, learn your origins, learn the culture and that, and then use that as motivation to get somewhere in life um get an education, and know actually what you're going to do in the future. (M4)

Although the majority saw the positive in New Zealand born youth being schooled in Tonga for they identified areas that could have made the journey smoother. Recommendations made were generally concerned with the support and sending of the child:

There would be a lot of things I would change. Like I don't really like how girls, like I know there's so much value in the girl so you stay at home, you're sheltered. But for me I was sheltered way too much by my parents, I know they just didn't want me to do wrong but they just sheltered me like to the extent where I was only going church-home, school-home, that's it. And I got the meanest hidings (laughs) cause I was sheltered, and my parents didn't want me to do this and this... I was a rebel... to my parents, I was the real obedient golden child, Jesus loving, church praising daughter. But mate, when my parents weren't looking, I was naughty! (laughs) I was bad, I was really bad. I'm not blaming my parents cause I picked everything I did, it was my fault. They didn't tell me to go do it, they taught me right from wrong, I just chose to do wrong... If they're gonna go through that they just need to listen to their kids and provide them with the right support. It also depends on the child, like if someone's not happy to go [then] I wouldn't push them too much. Cause there may be some people who really struggle, and... I would hate for a child to go and commit suicide cause they hate their life... that's overboard. But I guess it would have to depend on the

child, and if they have enough support, yeah I'd say go for it... don't force them, and give them a good background of what to expect, otherwise it's just nah. (F1)

If they force they're gonna make their kids depressed (laughs) I was depressed when I went to Tonga (laughs), like I thought my parents didn't love me. (F2)

I don't think it should be done unless you know the setting you're sending your kid into. You know like sending a rebellious teenager to their elderly aunty and uncle and expecting a positive outcome you know... That's just you know, that's not gonna open your eyes to the potential in Tonga and the beauty in our culture and stuff... And then I've seen the negative ones where they just send this child who's totally lost and not cared for because the family just like, 'oh if we look after you your parents will send us money' and you know... 'cause there are those families... Because I was there with the support of my whole family um we all had such a positive like and transforming experience. I think more parents should go with their kids to Tonga. Um the worse things I've ever seen are the kids who get into trouble overseas and their parents send them back to their family in Tonga. (F3)

The kids still need their own parents. Even though I grew up with my grandparents... and even though I called my aunty mum there was a missing piece you know, that you missed your real parents and all that. Getting money is not enough... money's money, it just provides and stuff but it's not gonna do anything. (F5)

I'd say just for them to share their story just like my dad you know. He was saying his story [about] how [School A] was and it made me wanna go! Like most of the kids when I was prefect um they got sent there (Tonga) by their parents, just because their parents wanted their kids to go learn something. It's not because their kids wanted to go, it's because they got forced and that's why it gave them a hard time in Tonga because they got told to go. But the reason why it made me *lata* (enjoy) is because I wanted to go, think that's why I was there longer. 'Cause I know M1 didn't wanna go... that's why he didn't really last that long... Encourage, but like not force. Their mind switches like, 'bro stuff this bro!'. That's just like my other cousin... 'cause he got forced to go there, he was *pau'u* (ill-mannered, naughty) here like *kengi* (gangs), drinking, smoking weed, he did the same thing there in Tonga... (M3)

Yeah I think it's a good idea. Like it was for me, they shouldn't like force them, keep it open. And if they wanna stay on then yeah, cause the worst thing you wanna do to children is force them cause they'd go the opposite direction [laughs]. I think if parents go about the right way of doing it then it would be good. (M5)

Yeah? And I think it just depends... cause there's no point of sending someone to Tonga if they're not sending them and letting them actually learn the culture. Cause some people just send for the sake of sending and it does no good like what it did to

my mate, it just made him even more bad. Yeah it's just knowing what the intention is and just having like set goals for your kids... You can't really take it lightly in sending, but actually be intentional in what you're doing if you're sending your kid... And it's also good to tell them stories of just the different experiences cause my dad would always tell me stories of his upbringing and all of that. (M4)

Some asked whether going to Tonga was for discipline or education:

Education wise I think it's better here than going back to Tonga. But if they wanna get your kids to more discipline then probably Tonga would be a good place. (M6)

In terms of education children will be better off staying here. But for culture and like tradition and stuff yeah. (M5)

Others mentioned that sending back to Tonga depended on the child, whether they were "smart", to handle this experience:

Um maybe, depending on the kid. Like if he's a really good kid, smart, can handle tough life send them there for like a couple of terms. Cause if that kid's onto it then that kid will come back after those couple of terms and it won't really affect them. (M1)

Unless they are a smart child you know, like someone that really respects their parents and wants to do good for them... I reckon if the parents um... teach their children to respect them then they'll go off and come back changed. (F5)

On the other hand, there were those who felt that parents sending or encouraging their children to go to Tonga were not taking responsibility for their own children:

I think they're just dodging their responsibility aye. I think they're just like 'oh nah I can't put up with you anymore, I'm gonna send you to Tonga so you can learn your lesson'. And they go Tonga and find it hard, and when they finally convince their parent they're good they come back, and they come back worse cause they know how hard it was in Tonga and they know how easy the life is over here... I think parents do play a role in it 'cause if they weren't too lazy to put their foot down and look after their own kids they wouldn't come back that worse or turn out that bad. (M7)

Basically you know that's your responsibility... don't give up easily on your child just 'cause they're getting into trouble. And I guess you know the child will play up more when they send them away like that you know... It will be better to get them [to go] like if they want to go... Instead of forcing them when they don't want to and then they'll just go and get up to no good... Like just sending them off to someone else to deal with them um I don't think that will make a difference at all, it will kind of um I guess they do come back a little more humble and all that but they still... didn't come back as changed as they should've. And instead of punishing them you know just... tell them they're going to just you know like try it out... If they are to send them back, go back with them (laughs). Only send them back if you're gonna go back yourself. Look after them, make sure they're not getting into trouble instead of you know giving more headaches for the rest of the family and yourself. F5

F5 believed that sending children to Tonga in their teen years was more complex and complicated than sending children at a younger age:

Obviously when you grow up you already have a mind of your own and then you send them away it's just, I don't think it makes a difference and they're already in like their teen years... cause the kids/youth have already developed a mind of their own. (F5)

In F3's view, when parents send their children to Tonga they are not able to protect their child from negative influences while they are living in New Zealand:

There's no way of you know looking after a child cause they're here [in New Zealand]. They just kind of like expect them to do the same sort of things that their kids are doing you know, to be able to get up and go work in the bush and stuff like that and... the difference between you know you can't watch that movie with your girl cousins or you know, all those little things... and its such that that can just shut you down entirely. Like my friends who don't like Tonga, who would never go back to Tonga are the ones who have been sent over like that. You know, where it was a punishment so that like even though it was for something negative like drinking or something like that, like at the dairy you know the *falekoloa* (shop) you can just go down there and buy cigarettes whatever age you like, or alcohol whatever age you like you know, it's not a very sensible place to go (laughs). (F3)

Sending their own children

A number of participants agreed that they would consider sending their own children to school in Tonga to benefit from the culture and knowledge that is there, but under specific conditions. F3 stating that she would support her children on their journey and “never let them go by themselves, another condition was returning children to New Zealand to prepare for university:

I'd send them for high school 'cause it'd be an awesome learning experience for them and I don't feel like it's a six month stay, it's more of you know a couple of years, three years before you actually understand what the culture is and actually understand of doing the best with what you have cause there's heaps of limitations in the different schools in Tonga, everything has to be done manually. (M3)

I would, as I said, put my kids through that because they would learn things being there and they would learn the Tongan way. But because I would have the expectation for them to go university I'd bring them back Form 5, Form 6, Form 7... I think they deserve to go through that... it is actually a good life lesson, it would teach them well. I want them to see the struggle, I want them to go through the struggles, meaning I would take them to Ha'apai to see that life 'cause my family's not well off in Ha'apai. (F1)

If I do have kids no doubt I will definitely send them to Tonga for that experience 'cause you can never get it elsewhere. (F4)

As explained by F5, her daughter is well aware of F5's plans to school in Tonga in the future and is looking forward to one day going back to Tonga where life is not busy:

Yeah we (participant and husband) always talk about it for her to go back and um you know, it's not something to punish her but to go back and experience it like I said. And she's always wanted, cause we lived in Tonga her first five years of her life and she, like me considered Tonga as like home. And her grandparents are there, she's always going back holidays and stuff... And even now she wants to go back to Tonga (laughs) to school... But we have talked about you know um taking her there for like a year in high school and stuff, that's if she's not committed to something here like in sports or anything. (F5)

By way of comparison, M5 and M7 are not for the idea of sending their children to school in Tonga:

Nope (laughs)... Honestly no aye... if I send them to Tonga and if anything goes wrong I'll be like 'why didn't you go school, where were you?' like I'll get angry at the person who was looking after them cause I put all my trust in them. And if anything goes wrong it wouldn't be their fault, it's the kids fault, but as a parent of course you'll react like that. But... if I have the kids here like I would know everything that's going on and I would do everything to help them and talk to them in a way for them to understand...I'd drop to their level. I've been through it and I know what it's like... Maybe I'll do it wrong one day, but I can only learn... I'll take them one day to Tonga and go 'this is where I grew up, this is how the struggle is' and I'll just show them. (M7)

I think the window you're doing [is] a good time... Like 2008 onwards, Tonga has really changed, its catching up to New Zealand. Like I think if I have children I'll just leave them in New Zealand [laughs]. They're better off here in New Zealand, like you just hear of more dangerous things happening over in Tonga. Like it's a small island and everything's real accessible. At least here you can kind of monitor your children... Tonga when I went there was better than it [is] today... even like all the old people they said it was better back then. Yeah so it's getting worse and worse. (M5)

“... be a peoples person”

Despite the fact participants were not asked if they had any advice for New Zealand born youth, these suggestions were raised in their discussion regarding why New Zealand born Tongan youth should school in Tonga. The recommendations made by participants focused on gaining acceptance and respect by their peers:

Um if you're like tough and you can handle it and you're like... very good and you can socialise then I think you'll be fine. Um, and if you speak the language well I think you'll be fine but for someone like me it takes a while to kind of socialise and I won't approach you. (F1)

In school it's like once people knew you weren't up yourself (laughs) you know, 'look at me I'm *muli* (foreigner, non-Tongan)' and that sort of stuff then it was fine, yeah. I fit in quite well to be honest. (F3)

One thing that I learnt um going to Tonga being a New Zealand born, and being your first time going Tonga, you actually gotta stand up for yourself... cause most New

Zealand dudes that go over there they're just 'ilifia (scared), they just don't want to stand up... After that um no one bullied me aye. (M3)

M7s comment sums it all up. First, to be social, second, be Tongan in your nature, and lastly to not have high expectations:

I think you have to be a people's person aye if you come from New Zealand to go college cause if you're not then their gonna go 'oh he thinks he's cool cause he's from New Zealand' and everyone's gonna hate on you... Like don't go there with your head held high 'cause just remember it's just you by yourself and there's like a whole school there and they're all from Tonga and they grew up the Tongan way, and when you come from New Zealand and you try think you're all that everyone's gonna shut you down 'cause you're by yourself, you need to mix... just act like a Tongan, like there'll be moments when like your New Zealand side will come out and like when this moment comes out everyone will buzz out cause you hardly show it, and when you show it everyone will be like 'fuck this guy's good. He's from New Zealand but he doesn't think he's all that, he still acts like we're all the same... he still knows the Tongan way and he knows how to act like a Tongan, he's not here to tell everyone he came from New Zealand, he's dropped his level down to us', and everyone will respect you... Don't expect much aye. If you go there with a free mind you're good... don't expect to see what you've seen most of your life in New Zealand is [what] you're gonna see in Tonga cause you'll get disappointed. (M7)

"... Tonga's got that mantra... they just wanna throw you in the deep end"

Aside from the support of family being of value to the high school experience in Tonga, additional views on ways the high school experience can be improved in Tonga were discussed, preparation and some form of mentoring programme were recommended:

Everyone needs support, just to make the experience a bit better... So the support and just letting them know of what to expect so they've kind of got an idea, not just throwing them into the deep 'cause that just sucks. (F1)

I think it's good for the parents to visit a bit more. But other than that if they are planning on sending someone to Tonga, depending on what school, it's just good to get them ready. (M2)

Probably like... an association... so they can meet other kids or other people... born here (New Zealand) instead of just popping over, you feel like 'what the hell, I'm so lost, I'm so alone'... 'cause that was so hard. (M1)

Family plays a really big role 'cause... it really gives me that little um, little push... carry on with the studies and stuff. So it's really just family. (M6)

Although F5 felt that she did not think that "there's really much you can help" with, that "it's just up to the kids", she did illustrate some ideas that may help New Zealand born Tongans become accustomed with high school in Tonga:

Maybe make sure there's like someone else that has been from overseas... that's been there (Tonga) a year... be there to like guide them... If they could have like counsellors or something, or... mentoring programmes for kids that come you know from overseas so that they won't really get a shock, like just to help them adapt, especially on the first day... I think that'll be good for each school... Especially those ones and they're expecting you know kids from overseas. They should have like a mentor programme ready. (F5)

With regard to comments made by F4, M3 and M5, they disputed the need for any form of support, that being thrown in the deep was acceptable:

It's hard 'cause Tonga's got that mantra that um they don't wanna do what people do here [in New Zealand], be like nice, they just wanna throw you in the deep end. It's like tradition, you can't change it. It's just like today my parents... they've got *misinale* (annual church contribution). And its stuff like that, it's like wasting money and all that but it's a way of life that no matter how much we talk about it and stuff, the culture is too strong and the tradition... Unless you want to wipe out that whole generation (laughs). Like some of this generation will go onto it and the chain won't break. (M5)

I reckon the way I got chucked in, I reckon that's just an all goods way aye. For me, it taught me to be *lotolahi* (to be brave). Like see now, when something gets chucked at me... I'll be like, yeah I'm *lotolahi* to do this... You take what you learnt over there and you still live with it. Like nowadays you see the kids now their soft. (M3)

I don't believe they need to get a special kind of treatment or some sort of support from the government in Tonga just cause they're from overseas, no not at all... I mean, that's like reality... it's like an overseas experience anyways. When foreign kids go for their O.E it's the same experience they get, they don't get special treatment or anything because they're from another country. (F4)

Summary

Most of these participants had not felt the impact of their Tongan school years' experience until they had returned to New Zealand where they came to realise how their outlook on life had changed, and how different they had become, from their New Zealand friends and family. Clearly for many this rich experience had moulded them into the adults they were today. Whilst all views were shared with much laughter and a certain nostalgia for the good times in Tonga, for others and especially those who had gone to Tonga without their family, there were feelings of loss and some regret at not having spent time with their families, and friends in New Zealand. It was clear that it had taken some time for this group to fit back into the lives they had left behind in New Zealand as they had become accustomed to the life in Tonga. Not only did it take time for some to be with family and old friends, the transition back into the New Zealand environment and school had proven to be difficult also. That said, all participants shared that the experience had secured their identity as being Tongan and that their pride in being Tongan had grown hand in hand with the new knowledge they had acquired in Tonga. Whether or not this group would send their own children back to Tonga was influenced by their own individual experiences. Most understood and were able to give examples of the benefits of their experience during their teenage years. Firstly, understanding and having a better relationship with their parents, second, understanding their knowledge and competence in the Tongan language and *anga fakatonga*, thirdly, securing identity and feeling of belonging, and lastly learning to appreciate the life they have in New Zealand and the struggles they experienced in Tonga. This contributed to their new perspectives. Nevertheless, I could not help thinking that a lot was unsaid as people tend to share the good times and overlook the negative.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Introduction

In this chapter I discuss the research findings by question, namely, participants' reasons for going to Tonga in their high school years, their experience, and, their reflections as they now look back on that experience including whether and how this shaped their lives today.

Reasons for going

In the very little available literature on this topic, the impression is gained that New Zealand born Tongans who attended high school in Tonga were sent by their parents because of behavioural issues in New Zealand – which is similar to my brother's story. The focus of Schoone's study for example was on New Zealand born Tongan youth who were found to be engaging in 'at-risk' behaviour. Some of these at-risk behaviours included non-attendance at school, fighting, alcohol consumption, disrespectful behaviour towards family, and criminal activity (Schoone, 2008; 2010). Other global studies indicate that parents sent children "home" as an attempt to keep them on course (Bledsoe & Sow, 2011) and to reshape children who were seen as going "off track" (Orellana, Thorne, Chee & Lam, 2001). This was their hope, especially for their troubled youth

Only three of the participants in this study said they had been sent home for behavioural reasons and these participants were both male and female. M1 described this experience as an "extreme" response to altering behaviour and getting youth off the "wrong track". While it cannot be said how parents expected their child's behaviour to be changed by the Tongan experience because parents were not part of this study, comments were made on this matter by the participants. Participants' commented that they had learnt respectful behaviour, culture, to speak fluently in Tongan and farming skills indicate the likelihood that acquiring appropriate Tongan values, language skills and behaviours figured highly in the behavioural transformations parents were hoping for. This supports Faleolo (2016) and Lee's (2015) findings of the potential for second generation return migrants to be reshaped by their experiences in their parents' homelands.

A mix of family reasons and personal choice were other reasons these New Zealand born youth gave for their attending high school in Tonga, a finding which aligns with Lee's studies (2009; 2015; 2016), Lee writes that motives for second generation migration included family obligations, culture, and a personal desire by youth to experience life in Tonga. In sum, study findings confirmed that attending high school in

Tonga was not always because youth had been naughty. While there are no statistics to give a clear indication of the numbers of New Zealand born Tongans studying in Tonga, these findings challenge the idea that all such migrating to Tonga is for the purpose of correcting behaviour.

The small number who had gone to Tonga as infants believed this had mainly been done to enable their parents to pursue their work, their career, or for their further education. Sending children home so as to give migrant parents a better chance in their new environments (Bohr & Tse, 2009). At the same time, this better chance had no doubt increased their potential for better jobs and earnings and in turn, better remittances back to the homelands. One participant who had been sickly as an infant, had been sent to Tonga to the care of his granny and so that he might benefit from the Tongan traditional healing practices.

The stories their parents had told them about growing up in Tonga were another important factor motivating this second generation migration. While parents had not pressured them to be schooled in Tonga one said that he had wanted to go to the high school he had seen and the other than he wanted to learn the skills his father had, and to be like his father. Clearly, participants' expectations about Tonga and Tongan schooling had been built on the memories of their parents. M5 had laughed as he shared that while his parents' stories about "the good side" of life in Tonga had played a part in his decision to go, he had found on arriving that this was not the Tonga of his parent's time. Like those in Macpherson and Macpherson's (2009) study of the New Zealand born Samoan returnee' experiences of Samoa, these youth found Tonga to be a "very different reality" from the stories they had been told and loved.

The decision

Mostly, decisions about going to Tonga and to return to New Zealand had been made by parents which was not unexpected given the place of the child in the Tongan family decision making systems (Kavapalu 1993) In addition, most decisions had been made with a view to what parents saw to be their child's "best interest" which fits studies by Orellana, Thorne, Chee, and Lam, 2001; Dustmann, 2003; Hutchins, 2011; Lee, 2016). 'Best interest' included factors such as exposing children to the home culture (Lee, 2016) a concern for children's futures in unsafe environments, (Hutchins, 2011) and with the aim of developing "their children toward the goal and values they hold for them" (Orellana, Thorne, Chee, & Lam, 2001, p.

587). Although parental reasons can only be inferred, there are questions as to whether the decision made was or had been in the children's best interest.

In the cases of family migration, it can be said that the decision to migrate to Tonga was made with a view to the parents' or family interest (Hutchins 2011). Examples here were those who returned to Tonga as families after parents had completed their study in New Zealand and those returning to Tonga for missionary work.

Contemporary research highlights the importance of children having a say generally, in family decision making and especially in decisions that affect them. Furthermore, that whether children have been involved, impacts on their acceptance of the decisions made (Hutchins, 201). The participants in this study had simply done as they were told - abiding by the *anga fakatonga* and the hierarchical Tongan structures that place parents in a higher status to children coupled with the expectation that those of lower status show *faka'apa'apa* and absolute obedience to those of higher status. (Morton-Lee, 2003) Frengley-Vaipuna, Kupu-MacIntyre and Riley (2011) capture the hierarchical structure of Tongan society with these words:

Cutting across the ranking system is social differentiation based on status. In any given context, a person's status is relative to that of whomever else is present. It is primarily determined by seniority (chronological or genealogical), gender and kinship relations. (p. 43)

Even the participants who did not feel forced to go to Tonga demonstrated *faka'apa'apa* towards their parents by accepting and not questioning their decisions. By way of contrast those who were forced or sent back did not go without protest. As in Orellana, Thorne, Chee, and Lams study (2001) their disapproval was shown by their complaining and protesting which actually goes against the *anga fakatonga* of being obedient. While studies point to the endurance of the Tongan way of doing things in Tonga and in New Zealand, small adaptations and changes have also been noticed in Tongan parent and child dynamics over time. Whether today's New Zealand born youth would have accepted their parents' decisions so readily, warrants a more in-depth study.

A clear study finding was that participants' perceptions of the factors influencing their going, impacted in turn on the experience.

The Experience

The *talanoa* findings confirmed that most of these participants had not fully appreciated the magnitude of what they had learnt until they had returned to New Zealand. In addition, most had not given voice to their experiences until this research.

In the first place, there was little difference in the experiences of those who had been to Tonga before and those who had not. Although it would be expected that those who had been familiar with the Tongan environment would have had a better experience, this was not so. It was clear that prior experiences had not really delved into the actual and day-by-day realities of life in Tonga. For example on reflection, F4 described her earlier holidays to Tonga as being like a tourist experience of drinking coconuts. She and others had found that the reality was the struggle most families in Tonga faced to ensure even basic needs were met such as finances to pay school fees.

Second, and not surprisingly, experiences shared by these participants were marked by an almost constant and sometimes unconscious comparison between New Zealand, their country of birth and, their ancestral homelands, a finding also outlined by Kinikini, 2005; Potter, 2005 and Talakai-Alatini, 2014. Some of this shock was related to the physical conditions such as intense heat, the smallness of Tonga (where everybody seemed to know everyone) the cold showers, plantation work and 'pigs running around'. Other factors were more social and related to participants' obvious distress and hurt in being classified as 'other' for example as being rich, that they do not know much about Tonga and being called palangi, as will be discussed further below.

While their school experience had played a major role in transitioning these youth into Tongan life, again participants could not help comparing this with their New Zealand Schools and schooling. For example, M5's picture of schools which featured "a big, big building, and like heaps of facilities and computers" was vastly different to the Tongan school experience of discipline, uniformity and punctuality, whereas for Lee (2015) discipline was a "normal" part of school life. The experiences participants shared relating to discipline suggest the persistence of Kavapalu's (1993) comment that discipline was viewed as an effective method of child socialization in Tonga and also Lomu (1995) that discipline was viewed as a way of role modelling the desired behaviours. However, Tatafu, Booth & Wilson's (1997) suggestion that corporal punishment contributed to poor academic results and early school leaving was not evident in this study. Although the discipline participants experienced and witnessed from teachers and by senior pupils stirred fear, with the exception of M1, these participants did not resort to leaving school early, but chose to do anything to avoid discipline. M1 on the other hand, skipped class to avoid discipline. All participants

disliked the discipline intensely although some believed it had its place because of the positive moulding effects it had on them. No participant raised a comment such as McLean (2014) who brought attention to corporal punishment going against the Tongan Constitution which protected their rights.

Along with discipline, and for female participants especially, there was an intense dislike of what they described as the really judgemental nature of some Tongans which in a sense was effectively another form of disciplining, and of keeping these second generation migrants in check. As with Lee's sample, (2016) participants found the constant monitoring of, and commenting on their behaviours by others, to be extremely challenging and hurtful. This finding also aligns with Talakai-Alatini's (2014) observations that a village event for the New Zealand families had been marred by unnecessary gossip and jealousy from the locals, even over the smallest things such as individuals preferring to wear full academic attire so as to demonstrate their achievements. Talakai-Alatini (2014) also drew attention to the extremely competitive nature of many events focussing on such things as "who wore the shiniest outfit... and if you wore something that wasn't shiny or not fit to wear by someone from an overseas country you are definitely asking people to talk about you" (p. 149). In a similar vein, F2 said that because she had a phone (to keep in contact with her parents) and her mum had hired a rental car when she came to Tonga many locals had described her family living in New Zealand as very rich, but also, a little bit 'showy'. Her response had been "I never told you I was rich?! You thought we were but we weren't... my parents were probably *penifiti* in New Zealand while I was living the high life in Tonga (laughs)".

Schoones (2008; 2010), has proposed that those who have a thorough knowledge of the *anga fakatonga* are more likely to avoid being found guilty of misconduct in Tonga. Participants found it was a bit of a trial and error type process to get to know what was right and what was wrong when they found themselves in troublesome situations. So, some participants perceived misconduct in Tonga could be attributed to a lack of knowledge about the Tongan ways. Taufe'ulungaki (2002) identified three spaces where children's cultural learning occurs and is reinforced as the household, the school and the church. Participants' comments suggested that in New Zealand these learning contexts had not stressed the importance of, or made it compulsory for them, to be competent in the Tongan language and culture. In M4's view, in New Zealand, the New Zealand way of life had weakened their Tongan way of behaving, for example, the high level of respect towards family members, dressing in a modest manner and so on. As a result, New Zealand born Tongans have a different interpretation of the Tongan culture, from that of the homelands of their parents, because of what they have learnt in their New Zealand homes, schools and churches. As these participants shared, their parents' views on the importance of them learning,

knowing and understanding the Tonga language and culture, ranged from those who were not too bothered, through to those who had tried to influence fluency with no luck, and included parents who were too lenient in teaching or requiring that their children observe the anga fakatonga. As is well reported, what parents decide is of value and what they pass on to their children affects what children view to be of value. As F1 stated, her mum “didn’t really care. If you speak Tongan you do, if you don’t that’s ok.”

Lee (2016) and Macpherson & Macpherson’s (2009) findings that mother tongue competency and culture are key factors in youth fitting in to the homeland context was true for this group. Each had experienced a harsh interplay of what they had learnt in Tonga. This experience had made them ponder their lack of competence and confidence in the Tongan language and other factors which had contributed to this situation. Interestingly, integration into Tongan homelands for the males especially had been facilitated by excellence, in rugby for example.

Who am I?

One of the biggest shocks for these participants was their being viewed as foreign – when in New Zealand they had always been ‘the Tongans’. Most participants had shared the unjustness and hurt of the “feeling of foreignness... [and] being an outsider” (Talakai-Alatini, 2014, p. 136) in some form and degree. Despite the fact that they felt Tongan, looked Tongan and/ or had Tongan parents, these participants found that in Tonga they were identified, classed together and labelled by their place of birth. This had been a tremendous surprise. Other identity labels included visitors, foreign, palangi, alien, the English person and outsider. In many cases also, they were grouped together with others such as the overstayers and returnees who had temporarily returned to the homeland of their parents (see also Potter, 2005; Ishikawa, 2009; Kouvaka, 2009; Lee, 2009; Macpherson & Macpherson, 2009; Whitehouse, 2009; Pereira, 2011; Talakai-Alatini, 2014; Lee, 2015; Lee, 2016).

In going to Tonga, these participants had expected and also desired acceptance as Tongan: they certainly had not expected to be called palangi (see also Lee, 2015). Although they were singled-out in many ways and reported feeling like they did not belong, each had carefully navigated their way around the perceptions which excluded them. Of note also, is that a small number had begun mixing mainly with

expatriate children, *hafakasi* and other New Zealand borns. This fits Ishikawa's (2009) study of Japanese-Brazilian participants who on visiting Japan found comfort in their Brazilian identity because they were not accepted as Japanese in Japan.

Did they feel supported?

Participants in Lee's (2015) study said they had experienced a lack of support in and out of school, and that when they had experienced problems there was no one they could confide in, especially regarding issues such as violence in school. Those experiences were also shared by deportees who felt they were being removed from their family and friends overseas and "left in a strange country (Tonga) to make their own way" (Pereira, 2011).

By way of contrast, all study participants believed that they had been well cared for by the families they had been sent to, although some said they had experienced some angst in these households. Their experience fits the findings from Schoone (2010) who described the '*ofa* of caregivers and how this had been expressed through constant conversation and caregiver involvement in the child's journeying. In most cases caregivers had understood well the responsibilities of this role and their role had been supported by ongoing communication with participants' families in New Zealand. This point is a highly significant reminder to parents that ensuring appropriate and adequate support for their children in Tonga is crucial. In addition, that whether this support is carried out by themselves or other family members this support is an essential element in the second generation migrant journey. These parents put a lot of trust in these caregivers to support their children and, to help shape their behaviours. While there was evidence that this role was demanding, the caregivers had committed to this role through '*ofa* and *fetokoniaki* between kin. As seen in stories shared, most participants had become attached to their caregivers and those who had gone to the homelands as young children had come to regard their caregivers as their parents. So the return home had not been easy. This point affirms Suárez-Orozco, Todorova & Louie's (2002) comment that returning to their parent/s could be a bittersweet moment. No participants experienced family members taking them into their care because of hopes for financial gains. However, F3 had witnessed this with other families. Further research to identify why caregivers take on such a duty is warranted.

Parents and siblings were deeply missed participants as they coped with their new environment. Even though F5 described her grandparents and aunty as being like her mum, there was a "missing piece...

that you missed your real parents”. In fact, research has shown the vital importance of regular communication with parents as being linked to better reunification outcomes (Suárez-Orozco, Todorova & Louie, 2002). Whether those who were separated from their parents had any issues on reunification warrants further study.

Support in the school environment was another matter. All participants would have preferred a little more support in entering and in coming to terms with the school environment. Their comments about ‘being thrown in at the deep end and left to figure things out on their own indicated feelings of being alone. In Lee (2016), a comment made by a teacher in Tonga expressed that the Tongan “culture, it’s not a lot of sharing or talking or asking or discussing” (p. 2583), actions spoke louder than words. Schoone (2008; 2010) however, shows that it was the relationship established between caregivers and youth that provided the major and main support for those at-risk students. Schoone noted that the caregivers in his study intentionally encouraged *talanoa* with those youth, and it was this factor which contributed to producing “transformative moments”. Some youth in Schoone’s study emphasised that this support had been far more beneficial to them in correcting at risk behaviour than any physical discipline.

Return

Like the transition from New Zealand to Tonga, many participants found the transition back to New Zealand to be just as hard. There was a feeling of having “missed so much here [in New Zealand] (M1). They found life was different and they had difficulties fitting in to their family life again, the friends they had were different, transition to university was confusing, but they also enjoyed exploring the tremendous opportunities available in sports and for further education. Even M1 who had been away from New Zealand the least (7 months) said he experienced changes on his return. Like the youth in Faleolo’s (2016) study, participants described feeling a sense of déjà vu – that they had already been through this experience in Tonga.

At the same time, although they noticed and felt many changes, they were also felt different within themselves. It is clear that these second generation return migrants had gained a lot of new knowledge in Tonga and learnt many lessons. Like Talakai-Alatini’s participants, most had found the Tongan experience to be fulfilling for a New Zealand born Tongan. They were also highly appreciative of the experience which they said had made them feel more Tongan. As with Lee’s study (2016) they had

gained a great pride in developing their cultural knowledge and their fluency in the Tongan language. All believed they had gained confidence and acceptance by becoming immersed in the *anga fakatonga* and language and believed they had finally (or at least almost) been acknowledged as 'real' or 'true' Tongans. Like Lee's participants, there was a feeling that they had gained a badge of honour for learning and for surviving the hard life in Tonga. The positive impact of the return experience was that it had given them the chance to learn the values they felt they needed to succeed when they returned to their birth country. Of the three who had been sent for disciplinary reasons, one said he had returned immediately changed by the experience. Participants also described themselves as having become more ambitious as a result of their experience, and as having a new outlook on life. This was seen in their motivation and determination to work hard on return to New Zealand.

This matches Bledsloe & Sows (2011) study of West African children returning to the US and UK who returned with a driven attitude to work hard and to do something that would be of benefit to their future and the future of their families. Unlike some of the participants in Faleolo's (2016) study the return to New Zealand was not marked by a return into youth gang culture. Instead, each participant in this group said they had adapted to an *anga fakatonga* which in some ways was differently expressed in New Zealand from Tonga. By choosing to adapt to the cultural ways of Tonga, these second generation migrants had been able to find the beauty of the Tonga that their parents had lived.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

Introduction

The study questions were:

1. How would you describe this experience of living in Tonga during your secondary school years?
2. Looking back, do you think this experience shaped your life journey in the past ten years?
3. Would you recommend this as a practice for Tongan youth today?

To answer these questions the Tongan research approach of talanoa were carried out with twelve male and female participants, each were looking back to a high school experience in Tonga which had taken place at least 10 years earlier. To reiterate, there were 12 participants, seven males and five females and the length of time in Tonga for these second generation migrants ranged from 7 months to 7 years. This exploratory study has added further insights into the high school journeys of New Zealand born Tongan in Tonga. For many of the participants, discussion and reflection on their experience was a first, which brought on many positive memories, but challenges also.

Question 1: Why did they go?

A main finding was that participants' experiences were affected by how the decision for them to go had been made and, whether these had been individual or family journeys.

Findings were that a variety of reasons contributed to this group of participants journeying to the homeland of their parents for schooling. These included their engaging in concerning behaviour in New Zealand, family migration and personal choice. Only three of the group had been sent by their parents for disciplinary reasons in the hope that sending them to Tonga could correct or minimise any errant ways. For some, these journeys were related to parents' work commitments in missionary ventures and /or to parents returning to Tonga after completing their studies in New Zealand. Other reasons given were to ensure that youth experienced life in Tonga, and to help parents in New Zealand who needed assistance with caring for the child. Apart from the two participants who said they had initiated their own journey to Tonga, for many these

decisions had followed the Tongan tradition of being the obedient child and respecting their parents' decisions – even though they may not have agreed with these.

This study has confirmed that there are a range of reasons why New Zealand born youth are going to Tonga for their high school years and that second generation migration is undertaken not only by those whose behaviour in New Zealand is problematic.

Question 2: The experience

Participants' stories highlighted a range of different experiences, from initial uncomfortable shocks at the realities of daily life in Tonga, to starting to understand these differences and finally to enjoyment of their stay. For most, the stories of Tonga as told by their parents did not match up to the realities of living in Tonga. Looking back they saw their parents' stories as romanticised and sugar-coated - the good side, which had left participants unprepared for what was ahead.

While participants lack of knowledge about Tonga, and the belief that Tonga would somewhat resemble New Zealand, coloured much of their experiences, over time, the majority came to accept the new environment they were in, and to manoeuvre their way through their experiences of Tongan life. Their journeys became much easier as they learnt and relearnt the Tongan language and *anga fakatonga* as practiced in the homelands. Joining sports teams and other groups within the school was a major factor in making friends. For those who had played rugby in school and became prefects, there was a great level of respect given, not only by students but teachers also.

Participants shared the huge differences in their daily life experience, such as the heat, accommodation, foods, long work days on the plantation, and the cash poverty of families, each of which added significance to their stories. Other factors identified in this study also influenced the experience, like who they stayed with, their level of wealth, and the school attended. As it was described, they were "thrown in the deep". Second, schooling conditions, organisation and curriculum were a different experience across participants.

A main challenge each faced related to their identity and how they saw themselves in the Tongan context, which is an area that warrants further research. In New Zealand participants had been know

as Tongans, but in Tonga they were perceived to be “high-headed” and “palangi” and, as not knowing much about the *anga fakatonga*. To a large degree their experiences diminished rather than reinforced or empowered their feelings of being Tongan and what this meant. Some believed they had become more Tongan and less palangi in Tonga because ‘the culture was more serious in Tonga’. For others, this experience had served to make them more proud of being Tongan because of their deepened understanding of the Tongan culture. Some, had ended up mixing only with expatriates, *hafakasi* and other New Zealand Tongans for example. Whichever pathway taken, participants questioned themselves and how they identified themselves because they were also proud of their New Zealand born identity.

Question 3: The looking back

The Tongan high school experience proved to have a lasting effect on all participants. Not only had it shaped participants into being more disciplined, the experience had also motivated participants in other areas of their life like providing for their family. The experience was also viewed as putting into perspective a lot of things, for example, being grateful, appreciative and content with life and, appreciating their parents’ efforts in making a life for them in New Zealand. In sum, these New Zealand born youth had gained a lot of wisdom and will-power from these experiences. They felt they had been mentally equipped for any challenges the future might hold.

To bring these experiences together, one participant shared a quote that was told to him by an ex-student of the school he attended while he was studying in Tonga which was “*ako keke poto* and *ako keke vale*” (M3), literally meaning learn to be wise and learn to be bad which caused me to ponder on what this phrase meant. M3 continued with the words “*ako keke poto he fai lelei* and *ako keke vale he fai kovi*” meaning learn to be wise at doing good and learn to be bad at doing wrong. To my mind, these words captured the learning process of migrating to Tonga. It was the process of learning good behaviours and unlearning the bad

Research approach

The *talanoa* research approach proved appropriate and an ethical way to approach this exploratory study. Interestingly while I had seen the face-to-face *talanoa* as highly important to establishing rapport with my Tongan participants, I found that some participants preferred to share their experiences via telephone conversations.

Limitations

The sample was small - a much wider and targeted study would be useful in shedding light on particular instances of the second generation migration process.

Recommendations

This exploratory study has provided valuable insight into the experiences of New Zealand born Tongans looking back at their high school journeys in Tonga and the long-term impact of this experience. Aside from statistics on the extent of New Zealand/overseas born Tongans studying in Tonga, further study is warranted with little research exploring this topic. The following are suggestions for future research:

Parent's perceptions

The role of parents in the sending of children to Tonga was continually raised. What influences parents to send their children to Tonga? What stimulates their decision to go or not go with their children to Tonga? What is the decision making process behind this decision?

Overseas born Tongan females studying in Tonga

Despite this study presenting a number of female journeys to Tonga, there were points raised by some of the female participants that brought on questions about the protection and security of young females sent away from their parents to school in Tonga. As F2 pointed out, her return to New Zealand was

triggered by her parents concern over what might happen to her knowing that she was not under their supervision during this time. This concern is due to the value of Tongan women which F1 described as “sheltered”, and ideally “modest, dignified, restrained, and sexually unavailable outside wedlock” (Morton, 1995, p. 169). What are the experiences of overseas born Tongan females in Tonga sent away from their parents, trying to negotiate being overseas born and being a Tongan female in Tonga?

Concluding statement

To bring this all together, a comment that stood out was M3 describing the experience as taking an empty bag to Tonga and returning to New Zealand with a bag filled with knowledge. This to me fits the journey these participants took. The knowledge these participants returned with was rich. I can say that I am a prouder Tongan because of the knowledge I have gained, thank you to my participants for enriching my knowledge not only in the *anga fakatonga* but the experience of returning to Tonga for school.

Malo ‘aupito.

Vai Tevi

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APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Individual talanoa

Introduce myself, the research, participant information sheet and consent form signed.

PROFILE:

- Male/Female
- Age:
 - How old were you when you left to Tonga?
 - How old are you now?
- How long did you stay in Tonga for school?
- Have you been to Tonga before this?
- Where did you go for school in Tonga?
 - How long were you studying here?
- Who did you stay with in Tonga?
 - Did you know these people before this trip?

THE LEAD UP:

- Why did you go to Tonga for school?
- Who made the decision for you to go?

THE EXPERIENCE:

- What was your arrival in Tonga like?
- What was your knowledge of the Tongan language and anga fakaTonga before this trip?
 - Did this in any way influence your experience?
- What was your first day at school like in Tonga?
 - How did those in Tonga view you as a New Zealand born Tongan?
 - Was it easy to make friends?
 - Did the school help in any way to help you merge into the Tongan school life?
- How was it adjusting to life in Tonga?
 - Was there a different experience for you at school in Tonga and being outside of school?
- Do you think you were ready for this new challenge?
- What were you expecting from this experience?
- What were the highlights and unfavourable moments from this experience?
- Why did you return back to New Zealand?

IMPACT:

- What effect has this experience had on your life?
 - Is this practice positive or negative?
 - Has this transformed you?

FUTURE:

- Do you think parents should encourage their children to go school in Tonga?
- Is sending New Zealand born Tongan youth to Tonga a way of strengthening the anga fakaTonga?
- Are there, if any, ways this experience can be improved?

Are there any final comments you want to make on this experience or topic?

APPENDIX 2: ETHICS APPROVAL

AUTEC Secretariat

Auckland University of Technology
D-88, WU406 Level 4 WU Building City Campus
T: +64 9 921 9999 ext. 8316
E: ethics@aut.ac.nz
www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics

26 July 2016

Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop
Faculty of Culture and Society

Dear Peggy

Re Ethics Application: **16/245 reverse migration: New Zealand born Tongans looking back on their experiences as high school students in Tonga.**

Thank you for providing evidence as requested, which satisfies the points raised by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Subcommittee (AUTEC).

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 25 July 2019.

As part of the ethics approval process, you are required to submit the following to AUTEC:

- A brief annual progress report using form EA2, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics>. When necessary this form may also be used to request an extension of the approval at least one month prior to its expiry on 25 July 2019;
- A brief report on the status of the project using form EA3, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics>. This report is to be submitted either when the approval expires on 25 July 2019 or on completion of the project.

It is a condition of approval that AUTEC is notified of any adverse events or if the research does not commence. AUTEC approval needs to be sought for any alteration to the research, including any alteration of or addition to any documents that are provided to participants. You are responsible for ensuring that research undertaken under this approval occurs within the parameters outlined in the approved application.

AUTEC grants ethical approval only. If you require management approval from an institution or organisation for your research, then you will need to obtain this. If your research is undertaken within a jurisdiction outside New Zealand, you will need to make the arrangements necessary to meet the legal and ethical requirements that apply there.

To enable us to provide you with efficient service, please use the application number and study title in all correspondence with us. If you have any enquiries about this application, or anything else, please do contact us at ethics@aut.ac.nz.

All the very best with your research,



Kate O'Connor

Executive Secretary

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: Vai Tevi, mtev001@aucklanduni.ac.nz

APPENDIX 3 PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Date information sheet produced

31/5/2016

Project title

Reverse migration: New Zealand-born Tongan looking back at their experiences as high school students in Tonga

An invitation

Malo e lelei.

My name is Vai Tevi and I am a Master of Arts student at Auckland University of Technology. I am of full Tongan descent, born in New Zealand. As part of my Master's degree, I will be conducting research on the experiences of New Zealand-born Tongan who went to Tonga at least ten years ago during their high school years. I kindly invite you to take part in this research by reflecting back on this journey and to share your story. Participation in this research is voluntary, and in no means are you required to participate outside your will. If you do not wish to participate, or decide to withdraw from this research, this in no way will disadvantage you.

What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of this research is to explore the experiences of NZ born Tongan youth looking back on their journey as high school students in Tonga. This study not only gives a voice to NZ born Tongan, but these voices shed light on a practice that is not well recognised but continues to reappear overtime with Tongan youth from the diaspora going to Tonga for school. The aim is to make clear the benefits and disadvantages of this experience, and remove the idea that going back to Tonga for school is only for negative reasons.

What will happen in this study?

For this research you will participate in an individual talanoa interview with myself. The talanoa session will focus on your memory of this experience, how you think this shapes the person you are today, and your recommendations of this practice for NZ born Tongan youth. These sessions will be voice recorded for the use of this research only. As the

circumstances of each individual are different, these talanoa sessions will be held at a public location where the participant feels comfortable.

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

There should be minimal to nil discomforts or risks during the talanoa process. All measures will be taken to ensure your participation in this research is given the utmost consideration. Should discomforts arise, you are more than welcome to have a support person with you.

What are the benefits?

From your insight, a deeper understanding is gained on what effect this experience has on NZ born Tongan youth. The information you provide will raise awareness not only with the Tongan community overseas but those in Tonga also as they play a part in this practice. Your story will assist in creating steps to improve this experience in Tonga which may cause an increase in the number of NZ born Tongan youth going back voluntarily.

How will my privacy be protected?

All information you disclose in the talanoa will remain confidential, along with your identity. A coding system will be used in place of your name to highlight what you have said in the main findings.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

There are no costs involved with you participating in this research. I do ask that approximately one hour of your time be given for the talanoa interview. Refreshments will be provided at the end of the talanoa and a small gift will be given to thank you for your time and wisdom.

How do I agree to participate?

You can consent to participating in this research by completing the attached consent form.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

If you wish to receive feedback on the results of the research please feel free to contact the researcher.

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

Any concerns regarding the nature of this research should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor: Professor Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop at (09) 921 9999 ext 6203, email peggy.fairbairn-dunlop@aut.ac.nz.

Concerns regarding the conduct of this research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTC, Kate O'Connor at (09) 921 9999 ext 6038 or email ethics@aut.ac.nz.

Whom do I contact for further information about the research?

Researcher's Contact Details:

Vai Tevi

Mob: 0211737617

Email: mtev001@aucklanduni.ac.nz

Project Supervisor's Contact Details:

Professor Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop

Ph: (09) 921 9999 ext 6203

Email: peggy.fairbairn-dunlop@aut.ac.nz

Malo aupito.

***Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 26th July 2016,
AUTEC Reference number 16/245.***

APPENDIX 4: CONSENT FORM

Project title: **Reverse migration: New Zealand-born Tongan looking back at their experiences as high school students in Tonga**

Project Supervisor: **Professor Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop**

Researcher: **Vai Tevi**

- ☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated / / .
- ☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ☐ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- ☐ I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.
- ☐ If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.
- ☐ I agree to take part in this research.
- ☐ I wish to receive a 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 26 July 2016. AUTEK Reference number 16/245.

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form

