

How to grow a culturally responsive career practice

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Table of Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	4
<i>List of Tables</i>	4
<i>Attestation</i>	5
Chapter 1: Introduction	6
1.1 Collectivist Career Pathway	6
1.2 Purpose of Thesis	7
1.3 Youth of South Auckland	7
1.4 Aim and Objectives	8
1.5 Structure of Thesis	8
Chapter 2: Motivation	10
2.1 Introduction.....	10
2.2 Pacific Youth in South Auckland	10
2.3 The Pacific Adolescent Career Pathways	11
2.4 Pacific Peoples Workplace Challenge - A local viewpoint	12
2.5 Career Development & Management Industry	12
2.6 Conclusion	13
Chapter 3: Literature Review	14
3.1 Introduction	14
3.1.2 Overview	14
3.2 Cultural Responsiveness	15
3.3 Pacific Indigenous Frameworks	17
3.3.1 The modern construct of the narrative and the indigenous frameworks	18
3.4 Conclusion	18
Chapter 4: Methodology and Method	19
4.1 Introduction	19
4.2 Qualitative Research Methodology	19
4.2.1 Narrative Inquiry & Storytelling	20
4.2.2 Pacific & Māori Indigenous Ways of Being.....	20
4.2.3 Talanoa	20
4.2.4 Āhurutanga	21
4.2.5 O le Vā	21
4.2.6 Participants and recruitment	21
4.2.7 The Pacific youth	21
4.2.8 Parents of the Pacific youth	22
4.2.9 The career practitioner and youth workers	22
4.3 Data generation	24

4.3.1 Focus Groups	24
4.4.2 Interviews/Talanoa	24
4.4 Data analysis	24
4.5 Ethical consideration	25
4.6 Māori consultation	26
4.7 Conclusion	26
Chapter 5: Findings	27
5.1 Introduction	27
5.2 The Personas	27
5.2.1 Youth	27
5.2.2 Parents Persona	30
5.2.3 Career practitioner & Youth worker	32
5.3 Conclusion	35
Chapter 6: Discussion	36
6.1 Introduction	36
6.2 Key themes	36
6.3 Understanding the collective	37
6.4 The System	39
6.4.1 Schools.....	39
6.4.2 Organisations	42
6.4 Conclusion	43
Chapter 7: The new emergent framework of practice	44
7.1 BrownTale	45
7.1.1 The Collective.....	45
7.1.2 Spirituality.....	46
7.1.3 Indigeneity.....	46
7.1.4 The Strands.....	47
7.2 The Niu - Career Framework	47
7.3 Conclusion	50
Chapter 8: Conclusion, critical reflection and recommendations...53	
8.1 Introduction	53
8.2 Personal reflection	53
8.3 Research process	53
8.4 Research participants	55
8.5 Cultural Biases	56
8.6 Emergent frameworks	57
8.7 Conclusion - Future endeavours.....	59

References	60
Appendices	64
Appendix A: Research Process - Focus Groups/Interviews and Questions	64
Appendix B: Pacific Models and Frameworks	64
Appendix C: Recruitment and Invitations	68
Appendix D: Preparation - Focus Groups/Interviews and Activities.....	72
Appendix E: Ethics Category B Classification & Approval Letter	76
Appendix F: Participations & Consent Forms.....	80
Appendix G: Kaitohutohu - Maori Consultation	83
Appendix H: Excel Spreadsheet Activity Data	85
Appendix I: Research Procedures	83
Appendix J: Peter Apulu Resume	89
Appendix K: Learning Agreement.....	91
Appendix L: Shorten Review of Learning.....	111

List of Figures

<i>Figure 1. Bronfenbrenner Socio-Ecological model</i>	15
<i>Figure 2. Post-it Notes</i>	25
<i>Figure 3. BrownTale Core Principles</i>	48
<i>Figure 4. The Niu Framework 2021</i>	49
<i>Figure 5. The Niu Framework 2019</i>	52
<i>Figure 6. The Niu Framework 2021</i>	52

List of Tables

<i>Table 1. Pacific Youth</i>	22
<i>Table 2. Pacific Parent</i>	22
<i>Table 3. Career Practitioner & Youth Worker</i>	23
<i>Table 4. My Core Anchors</i>	45
<i>Table 5. BrownTale Core Principles</i>	45
<i>Table 6. BrownTale Framework</i>	47
<i>Table 7. The Niu Framework 2021</i>	48
<i>Table 8. The Research Matrix</i>	54
<i>Table 9. The Research Tasks</i>	54

Attestation

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

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

*E fofō le alamea le alamea – The Solutions lies within our communities
Samoan alagaupu - proverb. (Tayler, 2016).*

This alagaupu is a Samoan proverb utilised within Samoan society to affirm the importance of collaborative work for the common good among collective members. It denotes the significance of cultural protocols grounded within fa'a Samoa lived experiences. Using this alagaupu as a metaphor, this galuega-suesuega (research) positions my stance as the researcher of this project.

This practitioner thesis describes the evolution of my aspiration to take 'The Niu', my conceptual framework, into becoming the building blocks to the foundation of BrownTale, my professional practice as a career practitioner. BrownTale is the name given to my social enterprise, a career counselling practice based on Pacific indigenous paradigms that reflect the Pacific community in South Auckland. Therefore, I embarked on an exploration of the lived experience of the Pacific youth in South Auckland to draw findings on how to build a better informed culturally responsive practice.

1.1 Collectivist Career Pathway

Collectivist societies of the Pacific diasporic communities of Aotearoa revolve around what is best for the collective. Therefore, the collective inherently influences the career pathway of a Pacific person. The underpinning themes that influence the career decisions of Pacific peoples are the social nuances and norms grounded by the bedrock values and beliefs of family, faith and culture (Thomson et al., 2018). For a Pacific person, there is a tendency to consider the social norms more than individual attitudes when making career decisions. Interdependency of the alignment of personal and communal goals suggests that making career decisions benefits the family and community. In addition, Pacific communities value collaboration, communalism, constructive interdependence and conformity to roles and norms. The Pacific diaspora perspective of well-being and living standards by its very nature is collectivist, in contrast to Aotearoa's ideologies of a post-colonial history (Podsiadlowski & Fox, 2011) that values individualism.

By its very nature as a process, career development is a practice that intrinsically emphasises the individual's journey to accomplish future career goals. Consequently, the predominant ideology of individualism in Aotearoa governs the landscape of employment and career aspirations (PPWC, 2017, p.12). Career management is a process that espouses self-awareness to help the individual become apt at managing their career pathway, which is often measured by the individual's success. But for a Pacific person to navigate their career pathway, one needs to consider the unique experience of the duality of walking in both worlds, the individual pursuit versus the service to family and community. Therefore, the measurement of success is complex for a Pacific person when career aspirations are governed by the collective's social norms and expectations.

1.2 Purpose of thesis

Hence, the purpose of this thesis is to explore the lived experience of Pacific youth in shaping their entry into their careers whilst negotiating the dual expectations of self and community in the backdrop of the Pacific diaspora in South Auckland.

Furthermore, as a career practitioner working towards opening a career service in South Auckland, I investigate the role of existing career practitioners supporting the career pathways of Pacific youth in South Auckland. Including unpacking South Auckland's cultural, political, social, and historical landscape in playing a significantly influential role in Pacific youth's career decisions and aspirations.

1.3 Youth of South Auckland

The rationale for specifically researching the youth demographic was layered, but mainly due to South Auckland's large representation of a young Pacific population (RIMU, 2017) and the potential that this segment of the South Auckland population can offer in terms of future aspirations for the local community. Furthermore, the Pacific population in South Auckland has grown exponentially by 25% (NZ Stats, 2018) since the census of 2013. Therefore, existing literature and reports focusing on the career pathways for Pacific youth in South Auckland are targeted to prepare for the future's changing employment and career landscape. For example, the Pacific Adolescent Career Pathway Report (PACP, 2014), the Pacific People's Workforce Challenge Report (PPWC, 2017) and the Attitude Gap Challenge Report (AGC, 2016) all share similar insightful findings that forge the career decisions of Pacific youth in South Auckland.

The insights that I took from the reports to form the basis of my core research question were the quintessential thematic paradigms of family, faith and culture and how they play an important role in the career pathways of the Pacific youth. In addition, the reports stressed the importance of generating meaningful collaborative relationships to open up discourse to explore my research objective of 'how do I grow a culturally responsive career practice? For example, the statement below from the Ministry of Pacific Peoples Lalanga Report (2018) emphasises cultural identity as a strength, an element interwoven with family and faith that aligns with their findings:

'There is a growing desire among Pacific young people to learn, participate and contribute to the diverse makeup of Aotearoa. Cultural identity is seen as a strength for Pacific young people. Those connected to their culture reported it was something they valued because it gave them confidence and a sense of belonging (Lalanga Fou Report, 2018, p. 44).'

Therefore, my personal motivation to build a Pacific indigenous framework was an opportunity to establish a platform to birth transformative outcomes for Pacific youth. First, offer a career practice that promotes a sense of belonging for the Pacific community. Secondly, for Pacific youth to take the mantle of their unique Pacific lens as future leaders who influence and add value locally and to mainstream Aotearoa.

1.4 Aim & Objective

The specific aim of the research project is to explore the lived experience of the Pacific youth in shaping their entry into careers and of the career practitioners in supporting Pacific youth in South Auckland. The research objective is how do I build a culturally responsive practice? Given the nature of the exploration, a qualitative research approach using an interpretivist methodology (philosophy) from an inductive framework of narrative inquiry was applied.

To ensure a robust and rigorous analysis, I applied a set of questions aimed specifically at two groups of research participants. Group A comprises youth and parents, and group B includes career practitioners and individuals who have worked with Pacific youth in South Auckland. (See Appendix A).

1.5 Structure of Thesis

Chapter 1 has briefly introduced the study and set my endeavour to build a culturally responsive career practice. The importance of the research project, rationale and research questions have been outlined and I have shown how they serve the purpose of exploring the lived experience of Pacific youth of South Auckland in shaping their career pathways and career practitioners in supporting the Pacific youth.

Chapter 2 covers the initial reports that brought the first insights into a possible hypothesis of the gaps in responsive cultural strategies that govern secondary schools and organisations within South Auckland. The scope was large; however, my motivation was condensed down to particularly understand the social nuances and norms that governed the lived experience of the Pacific youth.

In Chapter 3, the literature review draws from existing Pacific culturally responsive frameworks. I also explore the work of Thomas and Inkson (2009) on cultural intelligence in the working environment. Next, I look at successful culturally responsive practices as a benchmark for working with the South Auckland community. Finally, I look at the framework of storying by career constructivist theorist Mark Savickas to guide my career counselling practice.

Chapter 4 describes the research methodology underpinned by a qualitative approach and incorporated within an interpretivist paradigm. The narrative analysis method is applied for the data collection process of semi-structured interviews and focus groups discussion. Thematic analysis is used to attain themes to present the findings by way of composite narratives.

For the findings in Chapter 5 I present the outcomes as composite narratives. The personas are an amalgamation of the research participants' stories. The personas are grouped accordingly by their commonalities and similar lived experience.

I provide an in-depth discussion in Chapter 6 of the findings from the composite narratives. I discuss results that cover topics on collectivism, the governing systems, including the themes of family, faith and culture and how they influence the career pathways of youth.

Chapters 7 and 8 focus on the new emergent framework and the journey taken to reveal the findings of Pacific youth's lived experience and the work of career practitioners in South Auckland. The objective is to build a social, culturally responsive career practice steeped in Pacific protocols and frameworks. Finally, I take away these learnings as a platform for further research to present resources for my peers working with the Pacific community or career practitioners interested in strengthening cultural competencies.

CHAPTER 2: MOTIVATION

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will outline the multiple levels that I investigated to arrive at the core purpose of my motivation to conduct the research, specifically focussing on cultural responsiveness. My initial aspiration of starting up my social enterprise catering to the careers and employment needs of the South Auckland community is the foundation of my motivation. However, this chapter seeks to understand the cultural competencies of the current support systems and institutions that directly and indirectly affect the career pathways of Pacific youth. I will describe the learnings and opportunities that motivated me to address the gaps in the cultural competencies and responsiveness of career development strategies in schools and organisations.

2.2 Pacific Youth in South Auckland

The PACP report (2014) research findings indicate that Pacific students need increased support when selecting subjects during their formative secondary school years. Understanding subject options play an important part in a student's career planning which is not indicative in the PACP (2014).

The gap in career development resources is not uniquely a South Auckland issue; it is a global challenge. For example, the Canadian Education and Research Institution of Counselling recently noted:

Career development has long been a part of high school, but its delivery is intermittent and scattered. Program leads, usually guidance counsellors, are often besieged with mental health issues, family engagement, academic recovery programming, at-risk students and graduation credits. As a result, schools laud graduation rates far more than post-high school planning initiatives. (Magnifico, 2020)

Similar narratives echoed by the career practitioners participating in my research stressing the lack of career development support in their schools is further explored in the discussion chapter. PACP (2014) says many Pacific students lack psychosocial factors such as self-belief, confidence, and motivation, despite the support from schools and homes. I believe there is an opportunity to explore and flip the narrative of strengthening resilience by shedding light on the positives of Pacific Identity. For example, the common denominator of these reports unilaterally agrees on the importance of family, faith and culture. Therefore, an opportunity to create tools that focus on uplifting these values and consider incorporating this philosophy to help decrease the gap of planning and scaling career development programmes in schools.

Interestingly, the report showed that the highest proportion of engagement of Pacific Youth was in church, sport, and cultural environments (PACP, 2014 p. 42). Activities where the collective is involved were also perceived as a significant influence in developing cultural identity, enhancing students' confidence in their ability to do well in school. In addition, the PACP report suggested that these activities enhanced students' leadership, time management and social skills.

2.3 The Pacific Adolescent Career Pathways

"Confident thriving and resilient Pacific young people" (Pacific Aotearoa - Lalanga Fou Report, 2018, p. 42) is one of the four goals the Ministry of Pacific Peoples (MPP) set in 2018 of a shared vision for Pacific peoples in Aotearoa. It speaks to the modern environment of the Pacific peoples, one where more than 60% are born in Aotearoa. The report states that Pacific communities must be the owners of Pacific wellbeing and culture. Therefore, a collaborative approach with the wider community and government is required to realise the aspirations of the Pacific communities to contribute to Aotearoa. I see this as a great motivator for BrownTale to be innovative as a partner in terms of an aspirational co-design career development learning initiative that can significantly influence the growth of the Pacific Community and the wider landscape of Aotearoa's economic and wellbeing strategies.

As with all government reports, the exercise gathers intelligence informing agencies to develop recommendations for policy changes. However, from my lens as a career practitioner, I do not see in this report a robust representation of the lived experience of youth with their career pathways that involved a career practitioner. Statements such as

The proportion of students who reported that no one helped them choose their subjects decreased between surveys 1 and 3. However, a high proportion of students did not receive help in choosing their topics at an important point in their education. (PACP 2014, p. 24).

The summation suggests an intermittent and fragmented career development plan and a lack of understanding of the importance of positioning and embedding effective career conversations at the appropriate time. The research question in the PACP report 'What is your experience with a career guidance counsellor/teacher?' suggests that there is a gap as to why a third of the students who participated in the research do not have a clear career pathway.

Almost one-quarter of all students in the last survey did not know if they were taking the right subjects for what they wanted to do when they left school (PACP, 2014, p. 24).

This statement is concerning, as it challenges how effective career development learning is in South Auckland secondary schools for Pacific students if the figures are this high.

What is not emphasized in this report is the role of the career practitioner. There is data profiling the Pacific learner and the cultural norms in the Pacific Community, including insights from Pacific teachers. However, a significant element is missing, the expert's role - the career practitioner. In my view, a definite flaw is not including the part of the career practitioner and associations like CATE (Careers and Transition Education Association New Zealand Inc.) and CDANZ. CATE specialise in helping young people transition from education to employment, as noted below.

For students to achieve their potential and be positive contributors to the community, economy, and nation, schools need to provide culturally responsive, effective career development programmes and services. (Career Development Benchmark Year 7 & 8 Report, p. 3).

The study followed 918 Pacific students in the South Auckland area (PACP, 2014. p. 5). A quarter of these students did not know whether the subjects they took prepared them for their future studies or careers. A Secondary Career Development Benchmark resource outlines career development programmes and services introduced to schools in 2011, with a specific portion dedicated to priority student groups (Māori & Pacific). However, only 20% of school leavers of Pacific descent in South Auckland achieved university entrance compared to 36% of all students in 2016 nationally.

2.4 Pacific Peoples Workplace Challenge - A Local Viewpoint

My first foray as a career practitioner was in 2010 - 2013 with a Private Tertiary Establishment (PTE) in South Auckland, which allowed me to engage with the community and receive an in-depth perspective of the vibrancy of South Auckland. My role as a career practitioner led me to connect with local initiatives and groups advocating for the youth in South Auckland, such as The Southern Initiative (TSI).

The TSI ethos of stimulating the community's involvement to find radical solutions to South Auckland's most pressing social and economic challenges required co-design frameworks and initiatives. As a result, TSI's partnership with the Auckland Co-Design Lab (The Lab) produced the report "The Pacific Peoples Workforce Challenge" (PPWC, 2018) supported by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE). I shared their insight that an investment in creating an environment recognising cultural practices works, resulting in employees thriving and productivity increasing.

The engagement with TSI and community partners inspired me to change the existing narrative from a deficit to mana enhancing stories in South Auckland, manifesting the idea to open up a social enterprise offering career services and calling it BrownTale. A newspaper article from the New Zealand Herald website is where I first heard the term 'brown tail' used to describe the educational achievement of Māori and Pacific students (NZ Herald, 2009). Consequently, I took the phrase, flipped it on its head, and changed it to BrownTale. BrownTale a Careers and Employment Service - cutting a blade of grass to shake the universe and create scaffoldings of grace and gratitude through indigenous frameworks. My attempt at retelling the narrative or the tale. A play on words "BrownTale" (Apulu, 2021).

2.5 Career Development Management Industry

I joined the Careers Development Association New Zealand (CDANZ) as a subscriber a decade ago. When I embarked on my academic pursuit with Capable NZ in February of 2019, I changed my existing membership to a student membership. My motivation was for personal growth and development; however, it shifted when I felt the voice of Māori and the Te Tiriti o Waitangi's partnership did not reflect a visible prioritisation or resources on how that reflect in practice for career

practitioners. I felt there was also a lack of Pacific and Māori representation in CDANZ, which was reflected in absence of noticeable strategies to support the increasingly diverse population in Aotearoa, especially within Tāmaki Makaurau.

The above concerns piqued my interest to investigate the current statistics and reports of the Pacific community in South Auckland at that time. My findings showed that Pacific peoples comprise the youngest and fastest-growing population in Aotearoa, particularly in South Auckland, making up 40% (101,937), as reported in the Pacific Peoples Workforce Challenge Report (PPWC, 2019, p. 5). Furthermore, growth projections indicate that a third of the total workforce in Auckland will be of Pacific descent in 2026 (PPWC, 2019, p. 5).

Therefore, I pondered whether CDANZ, as the leading recognised industry voice, has a comprehensive strategy to address culture and diversity given the growth of the Pacific community and whether its members have the capacity and capability to serve. The many conversations I have had over the years before my study with non-members and members of CDANZ suggest a shared consensus of the disproportionate numbers of Pacific and Māori practitioners' represented in CDANZ Auckland. I believe it to be an opportunity to invite Pacific and Māori practitioners to build the organisation's capacity to reflect its bicultural responsibility firstly, and then Pacific. To understand the complexities of the growing communities, it only makes sense to invite those of the community to the table for a robust conversation to increase the number of representatives. I want to participate in an opportunity to add value to future strategies that reflect the needs of the Pacific communities, the partnership of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the diverse communities of Tāmaki Makaurau.

2.6 Conclusion

The intent of this chapter highlighted the hypothesis suggesting gaps in the cultural competencies and responsiveness of career development strategies in schools and organisations. Furthermore, I explored the current career development learning strategies in schools and the resources given to career practitioners. First, the PACP report focused on the level of uncertainty about careers and the difficulty in relating interests to a career plan (PACP. 2014, p. 7). In addition, the PACP report indicates that, despite the support of the school and home, Pacific students lack self-belief, confidence, and motivation (PACP. 2014, p. 5). Second, the work of TSI in the South Auckland community provides an example of a successful approach to implementing a co-design framework of inclusivity. A community-led framework recognised cultural practices as a tool to generate productivity and thriving working environments (PPWC, p. 5). Finally, I explored the cultural competencies of CDANZ as the leading voice for career development in Aotearoa and the lack of visibility of Pacific career practitioners in the organisation. From this chapter, I identified that the overarching opportunity to build and innovate culturally responsive career practices as imperative to the success of Pacific students in South Auckland. The following chapter will dig deeper into the available literature on cultural competencies, cultural intelligence, cultural safety and cultural responsiveness in career development and management.

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters, I bring to attention my motivation ignited by reports from governing bodies focusing on the career pathways of Pacific Youth. For example, the Pacific Adolescent Career Pathway (2014), The Attitude Gap Challenge (2016), and the Pacific Peoples Workforce Challenge (2017) all report the concurring theme of why cultural responsiveness is imperative to ensure success and sustainability for Pacific youth. This further reinforces the importance of understanding the cultural context of the social nuances and norms of the Pacific community that will help to work with the Pacific youth. This chapter will explore cultural responsiveness from a theoretical context, including cultural competencies in career development.

3.1.2 Overview

With the increasingly diverse population in Tāmaki Makaurau, career practitioners must navigate through the plethora of cultures and understand the differences of the varying ethnic communities. There has been noticeable attention to building culturally responsive practices and frameworks in other sectors like Health, Education, and Social Services. The research challenge has been finding academic literature surrounding responsive cultural practices specific to career development in Aotearoa. Although the literature is not readily available in career development, we have the work of Dr Lynette Reid for Cultural Values in Careers that explore Māori concepts (2010). However, this lack of targeted literature perpetuates the global criticism of clients' cultural context with different worldviews in the careers development field (Reid, 2010).

In this chapter, I explore literature on cultural responsiveness and draw inspiration from existing Pacific frameworks utilised in other sectors. The Health - Fonofale framework (Pulotu-Endemann, 2001), Ministry of Education - Tapasā framework (2019), Tātaiako framework, (2011), and Social Services - Kakala framework (Thaman, 2002) cultural competency frameworks operate essentially from four components:

- a) Awareness of one's cultural worldview - The Fonofale framework suggests to engage with Pacific communities, it is important to understand one's own identity and culture in profound and meaningful ways to have a genuine and fulfilling dialogue (2001).
- b) Attitude towards cultural differences - For example, Tapasā encourages teachers to understand and reflect on one's own biases, prejudices and actions of privileging (Tapasā. 2019).
- c) Knowledge of different cultural practices and worldviews - All the frameworks mentioned above stress the importance of opening up one's understanding of the cultures and worldviews of clients or colleagues that are different from one's own.
- d) Cross-cultural skills - Talanoa is a holistic method useful for communicating and engaging with Pacific staff, families and community, conducive to all ethnic communities. (Vaioleti, 2006)

The intention is to develop an ability to understand and work with people from other cultures and communicate responsibly. Many responsive cultural frameworks are available; however, I have purposefully highlighted those above for their intentionality towards Pacific identity and well-being (See appendix A for more detail). These frameworks are based on Pacific connectedness, religious centrality and embeddedness, familial wellbeing and, more importantly, cultural efficacy. Hence, I have drawn from across sectors and multidisciplinary approaches to cultural competencies such as Tapasā to facilitate my learnings and fill the gap in my field of interest careers development in Aotearoa. I will also be substantiating the importance of indigeneity, the underpinning philosophy of these culturally responsive frameworks that draw their knowledge from Tagata o le Moana (People of the Ocean). My inclusion of Māori frameworks and worldview stems from the ancient connections of our whakapapa, therefore I take the viewpoint that Maori are also people of the ocean and whanaungatanga (familial ancestral connection). Therefore, this chapter centres on critically analysing literature that focuses on;

- what cultural responsive is
- the relationship between modern theories and indigenous practices
- to provide a firm foundation of knowledge to support a culturally responsive career practice.

3.2. Cultural Responsiveness

Between stimulus & response, there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth & our freedom. - (Covey, 1989)

The operative word associated with cultural responsiveness is "response". How do we respond to others that do not share the same cultural background? The catch-phrase related to cultural responsiveness has been "it is all about relationships" (Berryman, Lawrence, & Lamont 2018). I hear this catch phrase used often and loosely in my current role as a community engagement adviser in the many meetings that I attend with discussions about the importance of community engagement. However, my experience suggests otherwise.

There needs to be more talanoa (conversations) based on what effective relationships may look like, allowing the career practitioner to operate from a place of conscious authenticity. The essence and skills to connect with others regardless of the cultural context are imperative. In the first chapter, I referred to the importance of relationships, especially the association of the student and career guidance counsellors in schools (PACP, 2014, p. 6).

Cultural relationships for responsive pedagogy is an "and/and" model such that both components are interdependent. Fundamental to this is the understanding that learning is not simply linked to relationships between people, but learning is deeply embedded in the types of relationships that exist between. (Berryman, Lawrence, & Lamont. 2018, p. 8)

The above quote refers to the importance of relationship and cultural awareness or lack thereof. However, there is a difference between awareness and the fortitude and intelligence in action. Thomas and Inkson's (2017) work on cultural intelligence gives tools and techniques to discard cultural biases and assumptions. They present exemplars that emphasize the importance of mindfulness, suggesting that knowledge of different cultures and worldviews and paying attention permits authentic conversations that positively affect the working environment.

Thomas and Inkson (2017) also address the importance of understanding the differences between a collectivist versus an individualist culture. The literature emphasizes the importance of mindfulness in creating spaces for an opportunity to have an integral and respectful conversation. The same sentiments of mindfulness also appear in training and development literature in the education sector, such as Tataiako (2011), a Ministry of Education (MOE) resource for teachers to develop cultural competency to teach Māori learners, and in Tapasā (2019), the MOE Pacific model for Pacific learners.

Tapasā suggests that you need to go beyond the individual to understand the Pacific learner. To demonstrate cultural competency of the Tapasā, it requires the teacher to understand the wider social context that a Pacific student operates in and how they may be influenced culturally, economically and socio-politically. A useful way of understanding this is to draw on Urie Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological systems theory. The model represents an approach that demonstrates the relationship between the child and their environment and the people, described as concentric circles.

(image redacted)

*Figure 1. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) bio-ecological model of individual development.
(Source: Parenta, n.d.)*

At the centre of the model is the individual. The Pacific communities have many factors shaping who they are. Still, the model's secret is that a person's development is not only influenced by internal or immediate relational factors. Other key circles of influence are associated with the Pacific community, found in churches, cultural groups, and family commitments. The PPWC report states that Pacific employees consistently showed that Pacific peoples place a high value on the success of the 'collective' and interpreted success in a collective rather than individual way. In

contrast, western society, which governs the New Zealand employment landscape, places a high value on the success of the 'individual' and often measures success at work in individual terms (PPWC, p. 12).

Mahatma Gandhi puts it aptly that a nation's culture resides in the people's hearts and souls (Brainy Quote, n.d.). This segues perfectly into cultural safeness, a consideration for creating safe spaces or what Māori describe as āhurutanga (Philips, 2014. p. 68). A focus on cultural safety extends beyond cultural competence being just "all about relationships". International consideration of the definition of cultural safety suggests a need to focus on the social determinants of health to achieve access to equitable, high-quality health care and health equity for indigenous and ethnic groups. (Curtis et al., 2019).

As a career practitioner, the key message here is that cultural responsiveness requires creating a safe space where people of varying cultures feel fundamentally welcomed and a sense of belonging. A strong level of cultural intelligence in an individual needs to be complemented by an environment where they can build culturally safe platforms. This reflects how the culturally competent capacity of the practitioner and the wider system/organisation is needed to enact the required level of service. A practice that is akin to the protocols and principles of Te Ao Māori, whakawhānaungatanga, kotahitanga me manākitanga (Tataiako, 2011).

3.3 Pacific indigenous frameworks - addressing unconscious biases, attitudes and beliefs

I believe the introduction of Tapasā as a Pacific cultural competency framework of Pacific learners in 2019 will be useful to embed into the practice of career practitioners operating within schools. The Tapasā framework developed by the Ministry of Education (MOE) is a collective work in consultation with Pacific teachers, academics, and experts as part of the Pacific Educational Plan (Ministry of Education, 2020) to resource and increase all teachers' capability with Pacific learners. It would also address unconscious bias, attitudes, and unconscious beliefs that may hinder the dialogue between students and career practitioners. It is an opportunity for career practitioners to go beyond their understanding of Pacific peoples and explore the uncharted waters that will help enhance growth and development in their practice.

All these Pacific frameworks lend themselves naturally to a uniquely Pacific career narrative. They draw on the student's aspirations to tell a story of their si'omaga (circle of influence in their community), reflected in their career decisions. Thus, storytelling is a narrative-based approach and a naturally indigenous form of dialogue. The Pacific concept of using stories is to make sense of one's place by acknowledging experiences to stand firm in the present and formulate a future narrative that involves the collective.

3.3.1 The modern construct of the narrative and the indigenous worldview

Styres (2017) talks about the importance of indigenous knowledge of storytelling drawn from Mohawk and Haudenosaunee (First Nation) as well as Māori (Aotearoa) philosophy. She explains that indigenous storying can be a philosophical frame of

reference that can support career development when engaging with indigenous peoples.

In the Samoan culture, the art of storytelling is called fagogo, a performing art similar to the theatre, where the narrative comes to life through the storyteller's voice, action, and skills. In the narrative counselling method of "storying", championed by Savickas (2015), stories help give meaning and open a self-reflective process, extrapolating epiphanies in the interview process, highlighting experiences through responsibility and relationships to family, community and culture. Therefore, exploring Western frameworks and indigenous ideologies around storytelling is a marriage of approaches that I have incorporated in step 2 of my career framework, The Niu; I have penned 'I can'.

3.4 Conclusion

The previous chapter explored literature about gaps in cultural competencies and responsiveness of career development strategies in schools and organisations. It provided successful examples of cultural responsiveness in action with TSI. This chapter explored Pacific frameworks adopted by other industries and government agencies serving Pacific peoples and definitions of key concepts to support building a culturally responsive practice (see Appendix B for Pacific frameworks). I discussed the works of Mark Savickas in his methods of storying as a career counsellor to support my endeavour of merging Pacific indigenous frameworks into my practice.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

4.1 Introduction

At the beginning of formatting the structure to my learning agreement, the overarching objective was to start a social enterprise that served the Pacific community of South Auckland. Therefore, in the initial research and reading reports focusing on the Pacific community of South Auckland, the research aim took on a sharp focus on the young growing population of South Auckland. Which then became the catalyst of these three questions that have navigated this research project:

- What is the lived experience of the Pacific youth in shaping their entry into their careers?
- What is the experience of career practitioners in supporting Pacific youth in their careers?
- What would help guide and support a more culturally responsive career practice in South Auckland?

These questions will help shed light on the hypothesis of the gaps in the career development strategies of schools and organisations. Nevertheless, to also understand Pacific youth's career pathways and choices and how can I support these aspirations.

4.2 Qualitative methodology

Given that this research project focuses on the lived experience, it lends itself to a qualitative methodology. Therefore, a qualitative research design was chosen seeks an in-depth understanding of social phenomena within a natural setting (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

It was important to record the authentic voices and views of both youth and career practitioners. As Rubin and Rubin (2012, p. 3) suggest, 'Qualitative researchers focus on depth rather than breadth: they care less about finding averages and more about understanding specific situations, individuals, groups or moments in time that are important or revealing'. Patton (1990, p. 1) contends qualitative research as:

Qualitative research is an effort to understand situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context and the interactions there. This understanding is an end in itself so that it is not attempting to predict what may happen in the future necessarily, but to understand the nature of that setting – what it means for participants to be in that setting, what their lives are like, what's going on for them, what their meanings are, what the world looks like in that particular setting.

4.2.1 Narrative Inquiry

This study employs a narrative inquiry methodology to examine the personal experiences of youth and the professional knowledge of career practitioners. In the context of the research objective, the narrative inquiry intends to interpret the research participants' stories that examine Pacific youth's career choices (Elkatawneh, 2016) within the complexities influenced by family, church, and cultural institutions. In addition, I will utilise storytelling to communicate to a larger audience as a method for the researcher to attempt to shed light on the meanings of personal stories and events (Reissmann, 2008).

There are multiple layers of interpretation in the narrative analysis process. Firstly, the data collection process of gathering stories with the Pacific method of Talanoa in focus groups and semi-structured interviews underpinned by indigenous cultural practice rituals such as Āhurutanga. Secondly, I have interpreted the data through composite narratives based on the method that uses data from several individual interviews to tell a single story (Willis, 2019) and describe various persona's.

4.2.2 Pacific & Māori Indigenous Ways of Being

I weaved Pacific and Maori protocols to ensure a pan-Pacific perspective that reflected the research participants. An indigenous approach is not an antithesis to western frameworks but complements the narrative technique of Fagogo (storytelling).

4.2.3. Talanoa

As many of the research participants are of Pacific descent, it was advantageous to apply Pacific research methods such as Talanoa (Vaioleti, 2006) as it represents an opportunity to explore the lived realities of the participants. Talanoa can occur in different forms from simply informing to interviewing, critical discussion and evaluation. However, this holistic model is usually carried out face-to-face—a useful framework for communicating and engaging Pacific youth in the context of career guidance. The concept of Talanoa is a Pacific process about informal conversations that create spaces to have open, authentic dialogue where individuals can share their stories, thoughts and feelings. As defined by Vaioleti:

Talanoa can be referred to as a conversation, a talk, an exchange of ideas or thinking, whether formal or informal. It is almost always carried out face-to-face. Tala means 'to inform, tell, relate and command', as well as 'to ask or apply'. Noa means 'of any kind, ordinary, nothing in particular, purely imaginary or void' (Vaioleti, 2006, p.23).

The talanoa method is applied throughout the research process when having open, unstructured, organic conversations. This is similar to Bogdan and Bilken's (2007, p. 114) in-depth unstructured interviewing approach where participants speak from their frame of reference not limited by pre-arranged questions. The talanoa sessions of the semi-structured interviews and focus groups were framed in Pacific Indigenous cultural practices and ways of being. This approach aimed to invite and open a friendly forum that allowed the research participants to easily express their thoughts,

feelings, and experiences. In addition, the quintessential themes of family, faith and culture that were important topics of reference from the research literature review were the strong elements that helped construct the core of the research questions.

4.2.4 Āhurutanga

From the perspective of Te Ao Māori, āhurutanga is creating and maintaining safe spaces that ensure and promote the pursuit of best practices in any kaupapa. The application of āhurutanga as a foundational value helped create an inviting and relaxing experience for research participants to operate from a place of integrity and respect. This practice included small gestures, such as greeting participants in their mother tongue, opening up focus groups with karakia, and applying Pacific iconography in the resources helped participants see themselves honoured in the research process (see Appendix C and F as examples). I adopted an indigenous practice that observes the broader sense of spirituality on interconnectedness and a place for self-fulfilment through reflection and involvement in a collective dialogue (Phillips, 2014).

4.2.5 O le Vā

Where āhurutanga focuses on creating safe spaces, Le Vā firmly places itself in the sacred space of the relational realm (Anae, Mila-Schaff, Coxon, Mara, & Sanga, 2010). In the context of my lens as a Samoan, O le Vā is the sacred space between two entities, commonly referred to as the space between brother and sister, parent and child, young and old. In addition, it represents the relationship between the individual with communities, environment, ancestors and the heavens. I expressed this practice in terms of my relationship with clients, colleagues and staff in the space of professionalism.

4.2.6 Participants and Recruitment

The research participants were recruited through purposive sampling, a technique used to recruit participants who can give in-depth and detailed information about the phenomenon (Teddie & Yu, 2007). All the youth at the time of research were between 18 - 25 years old, generally viewed as young adults by Western standards. However, you are often considered a youth in Pacific communities if you are not married. The research participants' final sample size comprised five youth, five parents and eleven career practitioners, and other professionals who have worked with Pacific youth in South Auckland.

4.2.7. The Pacific Youth

In order to participate in the research, the youth had to be:

- Aged of 18 - 25 years
- Resident of South Auckland
- Of Pacific descent
- Attended Secondary School - either locally or out of the South Auckland zone
- Accompanied by a parent

Of the five youth, three were of Samoan descent, one of Niuean/Rarotonga descent and a Tongan youth. Unfortunately, the Tongan youth and parents could not attend

the focus group due to unforeseen circumstances. However, I organised a zoom meeting with the youth and parents. Below is a table profiling these participants.

Youth	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Higher Education	Employed
A	M	20	Samoan	University	Part Time
B	F	19	Samoan	University	Part Time
C	F	18	Niuean/Cook Island	Tertiary	Full-Time
D	M	21	Samoan	Tertiary	Full Time
E	F	18	Tongan	University	Full Time Student

Table 1. Profiles of the Youth Participants

4.2.8 Parent of the Pacific Youth

I had enlisted eight parents to compensate for any attrition or fallouts throughout the fieldwork process.

To participate, the parents had to be living in South Auckland and of Pacific descent. All parents are church members of different denominations (this information was shared at focus groups). Two of the parents are immigrants; the remaining are the first generation of migrant parents. The parents' employment backgrounds also varied.

Parent	Ethnicity	Location	Raised	Education	Employment
A	Samoan	Mangere	Mangere	Tertiary	Public Servant
B	Samoan	Mangere	Mangere	University	Social Entrepreneur
C	Niuean/Cook Islander	Otara	Otara	Tertiary	Educator
D	Tongan	Otahuhu	Tonga	University	Educator
E	Tongan	Otahuhu	Tonga	University	Pastor

Table 2. Profiles of Parent Participants

The decision to involve parents was to add richness and depth to understand parents' impact on their children's career decisions, explore, and compare the parent's experience when deciding their career pathway when they were young.

4.2.9 The Career Practitioners and Youth Workers

Practitioner participants were required to have worked for at least three years in South Auckland. However, the average period was 13 years of experience, a substantial amount of years that generated rich data.

Out of the network, 11 attended the focus group. Unfortunately, two could not participate in the focus group due to unforeseen circumstances but attended an interview. In addition, members of recognised career development associations or guilds in New Zealand attended. The table below shows the background of each participant and the depth of experience and knowledge they brought to the research.

Participant	Role	Industry	Years of service	Ethnicity
A	Career Advisor	Government Agency	15	Samoan
B	Consultant	Self-employed	15	New Zealander
C	Career Advisor	Education	6	Maori
D	Social Worker	Iwi	20	Maori
E	Civil Servant	Government Agency	15	Niuean
F	Employment Consultant	Education	10	Samoan
G	Youth Worker	NGO	5	Samoan
H	Project Lead Employment	Government	20	Samoan
I	Educator	Early Childhood	20	Samoan
J	Educator	Early Childhood	20	Cook Islander
K	Civil Servant	Government Agency	25	Samoan
L	Careers Advisor	Education	30	New Zealander

Table 3. Profile of Career Practitioners & Youth Workers.

4.3 Data Generation

4.3.1. Focus Groups

The main objective of the focus groups was to gather the narratives of the lived experience of the Pacific participants and Career practitioners that reflected a Pacific outlook to give a deeper understanding of when research participants engaged in a focus group or talanoa session (see Appendix H).

4.3.2. Interview/Talanoa

The method of talanoa is applied to enable the participants to speak freely and add to the conversation comfortably. The interviews were online via zoom and face-to-face in café settings.

4.4. Data Analysis

As an interpretive framework of qualitative research, I chose to conduct a narrative analysis to capture the stories of the individuals, which included a thematic data analysis step to extrapolate patterns from the data (Braun and Clarke, 2014). These themes were the basis for formulating my findings and representing them as composite narratives through personas comprising an amalgamation of the individuals' shared and common experiences (Willis, 2019).

All recordings were transcribed verbatim through the transcript software OtterAi. As an audio learner, I checked the recordings for accuracy by listening to each recording multiple times over six months (Apr-Aug 2021) for at least an hour a day. I immersed myself in the data to ensure that I captured the nuances and the authentic intent of the participants. In addition, this was to ensure I applied a rigorous approach to analysing the data, coding the references, and grouping the findings to check the validity and reliability of the generated data.

I recorded the data from the questionnaire activity through post-it notes used in the focus group sessions (see Figure 2 below). I transferred this data onto a colour coded excel spreadsheet to organise visually for ease of analysis of the data. (See Appendix I: Colour coded spreadsheet of data from activities).

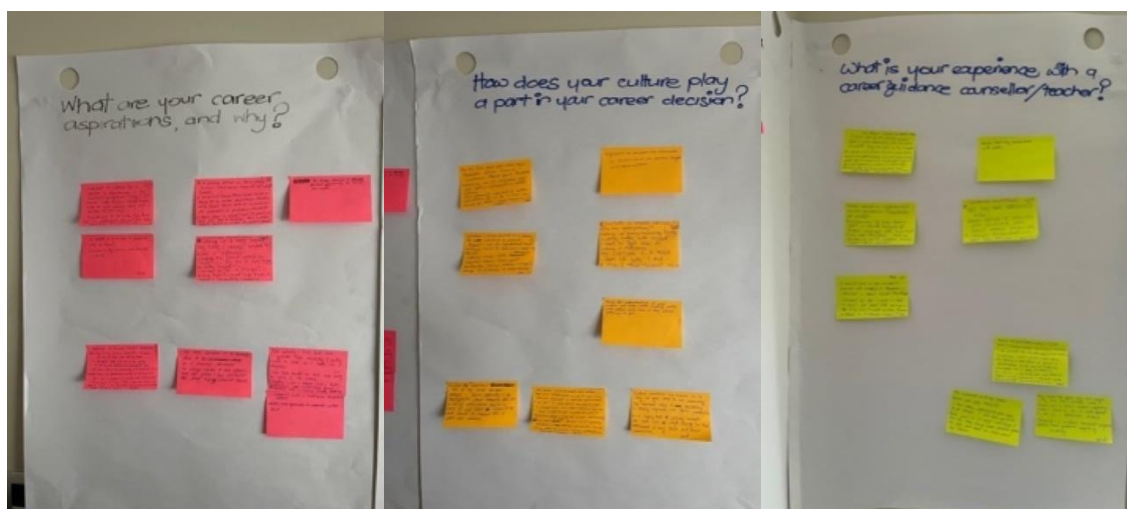


Figure 2. Photos of post-it notes from Youth and Parent focus group on March 13, 2020 (own image).

Next, to analyse the data, I invested in a two-month contract with the qualitative data analysis software Quirkos. I uploaded all my scripts and data from the questionnaire activity and coded the data electronically, which involved the manual colour coding to identify related comments, commonalities of experiences. In the event that there was more than one theme appearing in the comments, the comment would appear in more than one grouping.

An example will be an answer to the question on cultural responsiveness from a research participant stating - *'The only reason we discuss cultural responsiveness is because of our colonial history (colonialism) and that cultural responsiveness is needed to try to readdress societal inequality (systems)'*. I colour coded this statement and placed it under systems and colonialism. Quirkos also had a field in which I wrote corresponding notes as to why I placed under specific themes and making sense of my interpretation as to why. This was to ensure that the data had equal attention and that all relevant extracts from each theme had been collated.

Key themes were starting to present through the automatize colour coding resulting into main groups and subgroups. Quirkos enabled me to recognise the dominant

themes emerging and its relation to the key aspects of my inquiry and the questions to my research project.

Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances, I lost all this data and applied a manual collating of data instead; fortunately, I managed to capture the bulk of the findings. I was able to retrieve the data from memory due to the full immersion prior before uploading the data electronically. These themes became the basis to creating the composite narratives to present the findings.

I adopted a composite narrative approach similar to that used by Willis used to (2019). I created composite narratives to describe and present complex accounts of the individuals rather than breaking them down as categories. The composite narratives are amalgamated accordingly by their commonalities in lived experiences. All quotations come directly verbatim from the research participants' transcripts to keep the authenticity of the dialogue. I did not draw any judgment or opinions in creating the personas; all feelings or motivations captured are those of the participants. For example, the views on culture described by the youth persona Fa'afetai; reads 'Fa'afetai views culture as something sacred'. That should be embraced as a sense of self that takes her through life's challenges; this shows an example of how the participant's feelings, not my own, are interpreted. These elements create the personas to ensure a transparent connection between the original transcript and the final narrative (Willis, 2019).

4.5 Ethical Consideration

Ethical approval was gained from the Otago Polytechnic Research Ethics Committee Category B Delegated Authority, on 26 October 2020. (Refer Appendix E: Ethics Approval Forms).

Both focus groups opened with a karakia and whanaungatanga for a culturally safe environment. Recognising the power dynamics in my role as the researcher and my shared social and cultural identities with the research participants, I sought to minimize the formality of the traditional sense of a focus group and interview process. I applied cultural efficacy upfront to ensure a safe space that included the dynamics between parent and youth, emphasising the freedom to express their views openly. The Participants Information sheet and Consent Forms were given to participants at the beginning and signed off. (See Appendix F: Participation & Consent Forms).

Though the consent forms outlined the confidentiality of the career practitioners, it was further secured in the findings process by amalgamating the narratives under the personas for privacy, as I am aware that our career practitioners work in organisations with high profiles. Therefore, no names were mentioned to assure anonymity.

4.6 Māori Consultation

The recommendation from the Office of the Kaitohutohu Māori Research Rōpu was to consider changes to two focus group/interview questions:

- Being of Pacific descent, what are the advantages, opportunities, and challenges related to your career aspirations?
- What are the advantages, opportunities, and challenges concerning your career aspirations as of Pacific descent?

The above question is for the youth, a slight change, replacing the word related to concerning. At the time of the focus group, this question was separated into three categories as open discussion - advantages, opportunities and challenges.

- What would help guide and support you to be culturally responsive in your career practice?
- 'What does cultural bias look like to you and what do you do to address any discrimination?

The original question assumes that the career practitioner understands cultural responsiveness and can articulate this. Therefore, the reframing of the question solicits an accurate understanding of the career practitioner. (Refer to Appendix G: Kotohutohu Research Consultation Feedback).

4.7 Conclusion

The underlying essence of this methodology chapter was to apply a qualitative research study as a process of inquiry, seeking an in-depth understanding of the lived experience of the Pacific youth, their parents and the support of the career practitioners. Embedding Pacific methods to the data collection process helped gather rich insights that contributed to the composite narratives' formation. I will reflect on the strengths and limitations of the methodology in the critical reflective commentary.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents composite narratives directly extrapolated from the raw data of the lived experience of the three groups of research participants, giving an ethnographic lens into the Pacific community of South Auckland. As a researcher, I was exposed to a deeper look into the career journey of the youth and the choices they made, as well as parent recollections from when they were young. In addition, provocative topics such as racism and cultural bias are shared amongst the participants, giving a chronological insight into how far the community has come and the work that is still required.

This chapter covers the background of each persona as composite narratives. These personas are findings made up of the reflections of each participant's stories, amalgamated accordingly by their commonalities and similar lived experiences. Thus, the richness and texture of the narratives have been gleaned from the collected data whilst maintaining the anonymity of participants. The persona names are Polynesian names with symbolism and nod to the participants' shared values and essences.

All the quotations used are recorded verbatim, and they come directly from the focus groups and semi-structured interview transcripts. This ensures that data captured accurately reflects the narratives shared by the research participants.

5.2 The Personas

5.2.1 Youth Personas

Fa'afetai is a composite of two Pacific youth that share many similarities in terms of the trajectory of their career pathways. Two factors solidified their grouping. Firstly, they are both working and attended South Auckland Secondary schools. Both have a stint at tertiary education; however, they have chosen to work to support the family.

Fa'afetai currently holds a full-time job as a security guard in South Auckland and is working towards the police force. At high school, Fa'afetai carried a long ambition to become a policewoman because she wanted to see greater Pacific representation in the police force. However, her loyalty and obedience led her to fulfil what she thought her parents wanted her to do, and that was music. Fa'afetai felt she was given autonomy to explore options that her parents did not have. However, what was evident was the deep-seated, unspoken call to choose roles that supported the goals and aspirations of the collective.

Family is important to Fa'afetai; she described the family environment as a "sense of belonging as links that keep whanau and people together"; she felt it represented the importance of family. This sense of belonging is where important decisions are made within Fa'afetai's family and the strengthening of bonds. Part of this sense of belonging is where obedience played a big role in her decision making; an example being her choice to take up music at a Private Training Institution in Central

Auckland in 2019. Fa'afetai is a skilled musician, playing several musical instruments in the church. Her parents are pastors of a Pacific Island church in South Auckland. Her parents requested she learn music to be the accompanying pianist at a young age. She felt that this was what a dutiful daughter must do, which eventually played a role in pursuing further education at an established music training institution in central Auckland.

Fa'afetai attended a South Auckland secondary school where she only used the career advisor to help fill out the application forms to enter the local tertiary establishment. In all her years at secondary school, Fa'afetai had only one other experience with a career practitioner. She filled out a career questionnaire and survey on being a police officer and the needed subjects. I asked if there were questions posed about her background and community from her career advisor, to which she replied 'no'. I further prompted Fa'afetai whether the career advisor asked how her life outside of school influenced her career aspirations, to which she replied no. In addition, there was no involvement of parents and a lack of pastoral care or an opportunity to have an in-depth career conversation. Fa'afetai felt if she had pastoral care and her parents' involvement, she might have had the chance to explain her dreams of being a police officer to her parents and career advisor. An opportunity may have resulted in her earlier entrance to the police force. Overall, Fa'afetai's experience with a career advisor was minuscule to the point that they could not remember the name of the career advisor.

Fa'afetai views culture as something sacred that should be embraced as a sense of self that takes her through life's challenges and that by serving others; it would be reciprocated through blessings.

Fa'afetai is still discovering what faith means from a spiritual perspective; however, she understands that faith is the moral compass to how she carries herself in the world. In terms of career pathways, she does not see faith as an impetus to influence her career decisions but rather as an element of personal growth.

Langi is a composite of the three Pacific youth currently pursuing higher education, all attending high schools out of the South Auckland zone.

Langi is currently in the first year of university pursuing a bachelor's degree to enter a career centred on serving the community in either business, law or health. Langi went to a faith-based single-sex school out of the South Auckland zone in the central business district of Tāmaki Makaurau. The decision to be educated out of the area was because her parents decided it was best to enter into schools that were well resourced and offered a better chance for Langi. Langi attends church and is involved in community work. Both her parents are leaders in the church and community advocates.

Langi concentrates on completing her studies to move into a trade or profession that involves serving and helping the community. She says, *"It's about how everyone benefits, not individual decisions, doing your part for your family."*

In her upbringing, Langi witnessed cultural reciprocity naturally displayed by their parents in their circles and everyday dealings with the wider community. Langi states

that reciprocity is a drive in the pursuit of success, as it builds character and a sense of service:

The important value of reciprocity is deeply ingrained into Pacific communities. So in saying that, working towards the role that will effect change for the betterment of my Pacific and Maori communities.

Langi shared a personal lens on reciprocity as a second-generation Pacific youth. While watching her mother look after their grandmother, an understanding and knowing that the sense of duty to do the same will come in time, a responsibility that Langi expressed will be embraced:

One thing I would say about being Pasifika is that we're resilient people; we can do more things than just one because we have the ability to do so in our spirit. So, being able to say that my career is straightforward, this is what I want to do seems too small-minded for me, or maybe too simple. My culture plays a huge role in what I want to pursue as my career or maybe careers as it opened my perspective to more than just one job. I can do all my dream jobs at once. I can be a sports player, a chiropractor, for example.

Langi has a strong faith; it is a source of strength and wisdom applied to make meaning of the career choices:

I think for me, faith is one of the biggest aspects of my career choice I plan. As someone who is your usual Pasifika Youth Christian, always doing loku (prayer) with Nana, being a bible reader etc., I always try to do things according to the plan that has already been written for me and doing/being in a career that enables me to help people traditionally is what I feel is in my plan.

Langi attended a faith-based school in central Auckland, and the experience dealing with a career advisor, in Langi's words, was awesome:

Because I was privileged of going to a great school (best school in the world). I was provided with the best opportunities, including an awesome career's advisor, who actually, in fact, helped me get into my preferred tertiary provider, and who continuously encouraged me to apply for everything BUT, my mum and my Aunty were probably the biggest and still are influencers in my career choices—encouraging me that I do more than one thing.

Langi spoke of how the school intentionally placed strategies to ensure positive outcomes for Pacific students. For example, the school went as far as to employ a career advisor that worked extensively with Pacific students in South Auckland and who had a culturally responsive outlook because of her tenure in South Auckland. It was also evidence of pastoral care and the opportunity to have in-depth conversations about career pathways involving parent support.

5.2.2 Parent Persona

Matua is a composite of the five parents, and all are South Auckland locals, born and raised first-generation Pacific peoples.

Matua is a first-generation kiwi born to Pacific migrant parents who immigrated to Aotearoa in the 1960s. Matua's parents worked and were homeowners, religiously participated in church and were heavily involved in cultural celebrations and activities. Matua is a child of the late 1960s, bought up in the 1970s and 1980s, raised to pursue higher education or enter an office job, and discouraged from working in a factory. Like her parents, Matua still lives in South Auckland and is well paid, owns a home, serves the community and is a parent to one of the youth in the research.

Matua shared her take on the ubiquitous unspoken assumptions of the Pacific communities' expectations regarding social and cultural norms that governed her choices and those of her friends regarding their career aspirations as youth and now.

When Matua was young, she remembered her father's reasoning to get a job in the office. Matua's father would come back from long shifts at the local factory covered in sweat and residue of the factory floor, and her father would say:

I don't want my children working in a factory, and I don't want you to get your hands dirty. I don't want you to be cold. But what he saw in his workplace was these palagi women sitting in the office, they worked in this beautiful office, and it was warm. So in his mind, and this is his rationale, you know. And you know, it is what I call that career guidance, he says to make sure you get a good office job. And by the love of God, I did.

Matua speaks fondly of her father and his commitment and strong work ethic. As a child, Matua distinctly remembers the early cold winter mornings and hearing her father getting up early and walking to work, as they could not afford a vehicle. Matua says she understood at that young age the sacrifices and resilience of their parents to work in low paid jobs to make ends meet. These lived experiences of Matua fuelled the need to do better, to honour her parent's sacrifices by building a better future for generations to come.

Langi's reflection of why family is important reminded Matua of a common bible verse that prompted a discussion amongst all:

Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee' - Exodus 20:21 King James version

The bible verse gives a window into how religion is weaved into the cultural nuances of Pacific communities and will later feed further into the conversation focussing on faith.

As a child of migrant parents, Matua understands that the Pacific way of life has deliberately influenced cultural identity:

Culture is a huge part as it is about the influence of parents. Respect and love for my parents and work hard to achieve and help my family. Cultural values, faith, fa'aloalo (respect), tauivi (work hard), tautua (serve), tatalo (prayer), always remember to help the family. My career decisions have been made with family first in mind.

Family is so important as I belong to them, and they belong to me. I see, hear and feel the sacrifices made. Father waking up early to walk in the cold to a factory job. Arguments of when a fa'alavelave (more than one rolls in and which what is priority). An argument is usually because there is very little resource.

Though it is specific to Matua's upbringing, the narrative shares common themes. The sense of belonging, the sacrifices, the resilience, the support, the challenges of cultural expectations and the socio-economic struggles for a Pacific family in South Auckland.

Matua speaks of fa'alavelave - a term used in Samoan communities to describe an event that disrupts everyday life's flow, typically funerals, weddings, Matai titles, births, special birthdays and building dedications. The lived experience of Matua is these events were seen as acts of reciprocity and celebrating the sense of togetherness and belonging. However, it is also considered a burden for families with the demands and expectations to provide financial support to the wider family or community in bringing these events to fruition. Matua's description of the argument in the narrative is a common occurrence, mainly in Samoan and Tongan families. The challenge is not in not wanting to participate; it is the challenge of the financial burden and the lengths of sacrifice required at times to save face. An obligation entangled and woven by cultural norms, faith and family commitment, and a desire to find well-paid employment and career pathway that will cater to the family and community commitments.

Matua saw faith as an obligation required in her youth; it did not overtly affect career decisions. However, as an adult, they can now see how faith was intricately woven into culture and family and now understand how it became part and parcel of Pacific families' natural flow of life:

Faith played a big part because what I decided to do in life had to give back to the community as part of my service to God and our people. Thankful to God for life, opportunity thus giving back.

Matua sums up her comments by saying that family plays an important part *"because it's an intricate part of our culture, also belonging to a faith community. Furthermore, our faith enables us to overcome some of the challenges we face in this journey"*.

5.2.3 Career Practitioner & Youth Worker Persona:

Tapasā is the composite of the five Pacific career practitioners.

Tapasā is a Pacific career practitioner who has worked in South Auckland for over ten years. Tapasā is well educated and respected for her advocacy and pursuit of equitable opportunities for Pacific and Māori communities. She is currently working across Tāmaki Makaurau, emphasising working with Pacific & Māori. Tapasā was raised and educated in South Auckland, brought up by migrant parents who were church attendants who worked at least two jobs to supplement remittance with familial ties abroad, as is common with diasporic communities. Though frustrated by the hegemonic systems, Tapasā continuously finds ways to work creatively within the landscape of the career industry to serve the Pacific Community. Tapasā has a deep understanding of the lived experience of South Auckland and participates in community groups to attain an authentic narrative of the community to help with their practice and to keep a pulse on what is current.

Tapasā states that cultural responsiveness is a 'concept created to address the social inequities resulting from Aotearoa's colonial history and another way of compartmentalising the issue of inequities.' For example, Tapasā wants to run a talanoa session to build a career framework co-designed with the community to address an education system that disadvantages Pacific learners. Tapasā also emphasised the importance of understanding the young person's circumstances, setting a platform to encourage them to talk more.

Tapasā further highlighted the need for a fair system that accommodates a true understanding of diversity inclusion in one's practice; and an informed insight of the landscape, social nuances and impacts of working in South Auckland to address the differences of practices and skillsets required. For example, the industry code of conduct and professional expectations that govern the industry are far removed from their experience as Pacific career practitioners in South Auckland. The demands associated with the role are a plethora of non-career skills that includes being a social worker, a father, a teacher, and a community worker; Tapasā coined it as being a 'life-changing coach.'

Tapasā's insider lens of once being a Pacific youth of South Auckland afforded first-hand knowledge of the challenging phenomena of walking in both worlds, adding an empathic consideration when dealing with Pacific youth. Tapasā explained the juggling act of personal pursuits and balancing the commitment and expectation of family and community on youth:

Church obligations can provide a leadership opportunity, but they can also hinder as they may be too confining or demanding on the young person.

Tapasā suggested that Pacific practitioners who want to be culturally responsive need to some degree 'to be aware that they have inherited unconscious bias because of colonisation and that everyone purges decolonisation differently.' Tapasā went further on to explain that the impacts of colonisation can be connected to the present social issues and challenges found in South Auckland. Therefore, as Pacific practitioners who wish to open up a career conversation, understand the colonial history to deal with a systemically racist institution. Tapasā believes that the remedy

is in the word 'partnership'; if we honour Te Tiriti, we celebrate the important value of kotahitanga working in unity, in solidarity.

Rongo is the composite of the three non-Pacific career practitioners who have worked in South Auckland for over ten years.

Rongo is of Māori descent, was not raised in South Auckland; however, she has forged strong bonds with the community due to the relationships built during her employment. Rongo has worked in several roles in South Auckland, which include positions within government departments and agencies—currently working with high school students and with Iwi. Rongo recognises the need to build responsive cultural practices and understand the shared colonial impacts for the Pacific and Māori communities. Rongo strongly believes that if we get the partnership aspect of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, we enhance stronger bicultural practices that eventually feeds into the multicultural communities of Aotearoa.

As a career practitioner, Rongo views cultural responsiveness as an obligation to know the whole person, the act of whakawhānaungatanga focusing on relationships, negotiating boundaries, creating and holding a safe space to connect (Pohatu, 2003), before going into a deep conversation. Rongo also suggested that not everyone wants to work with people from their own culture to avoid being judged and confidentiality issues. Rongo applies Tikanga Māori into their framework of practice underpinned by manākitanga to be open, respectful, pono, tika and, importantly, aroha.

Rongo talked of the pressure placed on Pacific youth to financially support the aiga (family), suggesting that the family's needs come first instead of the youth's career aspirations. Rongo further added that youth felt that they did not have the luxury to discuss dreams and aspirations. The immediate need is finding employment to put food on the table, pay bills, survive week by week and on top of that to contribute to family, church and community:

Not all situations suit our youth, and in some instances, I could imagine our youth trying to express their thoughts and feelings. So hinder YES.

Rongo provides a practice based on the Māori value of manākitanga, always being respectful and open to others to allow a space to be inclusive, collective and collaborative. Rongo says that being culturally responsive is something that they are not consciously aware of because it is part of their being. It is only inherently obvious when they are asked as Māori their opinion to explain Tikanga or Te Ao Māori. Rongo is mainly concerned with the deficit theorising by some teachers and career practitioners having low expectations of Māori but also Pacific students, adding to the self-fulfilling prophecy of the low educational achievements of rangatahi.

It is obvious from the many experiences discussed that cultural bias can present itself differently. Rongo pointed out the assumptions of the practices and viewpoints of teachers that were overtly feeding unconsciously into the adage of deficit theorising when working with Pacific and Māori students regarding career pathways. For example, with such common statements as 'this is what we have always done,' when referring to young male students for gateway programmes into trades, not considering the student's voice when discussing career options or paths. Rongo states that even though cultural bias is sometimes institutionalised, we can do many

things to minimise this by 'becoming aware of students' backgrounds and actively engaging them in discussions related to their culture and cultural differences to create more awareness.'

Rongo had a similar experience of cultural bias in her community where she was not offered a job because she did not speak Te Reo fluently. Even though she had extensive work experience in the community, let alone a lived experience.

Felēni is the composite of the two non-career practitioners and three youth workers in South Auckland.

Felēni is currently working with the Pacific community in education, focusing on literacy and numeracy. She has had many positions in education and youth work within South Auckland, ranging from a facilitator, educator and restorative justice. She does not necessarily have extensive experience in the careers and employment arena but does have an in-depth lens working with Pacific Youth. Felēni is not a local of South Auckland but was born and raised in Aotearoa. However, Felēni has worked in South Auckland for over five years and has first-hand experience of the negative impact of cultural biases, which she describes 'as excluding options or the ability to furnish honest conversations for Pacific youth.' As she says:

I have had many places and conversations (in worksites) where cultural responsiveness is non-existent. In some places, it is almost hazardous to suggest that there is a different option that would be valuable and would embrace the cultures around us.

Felēni, in the one on one semi-structured interview, described cultural responsiveness as a responsibility to observe, be open, and be taught new ways of seeing the world. However, Felēni shared where she had encountered an experience overseas where the host they were billeted to enforce a particular ban on tea, which Felēni found rather peculiar. The banning of tea in this household was a cultural norm in the family; for Felēni back home in Aotearoa, partaking in a cup of tea was part of the norm. The expectation from the host for Felēni to conform to the social standard left them in an uncomfortable position but endured in their own words by putting on a "fake smile" and going without the practice of having tea. Felēni made an epiphany when recounting the experience and reimagined the "tea" experience by reflecting on Pacific peoples and their lived experience in Aotearoa and realising it is not just one confronting cultural incident everywhere for a Pacific person. Felēni goes on further to say

And I've made a list somewhere. But, you know, it's not only the cultural things, and the colonisation on top of that, and just, you know, what you eat and drink on a daily basis, which is such a part of our identity, and what we listen to, and I'm bringing in my own work, what the different parts of us, like, interact with life, like, visualisations, the music, the way we feel, you know, but it's also the development of, you know, a baby toddler or a child, teenagers, you know, then people are kind of battling, not being allowed to be in their Mojo, and just having a fake smile all the time to get through the day..... man, I just put myself in that "tea" situation, then thought of everything else that there is, and then realised how I might have thought as being culturally

responsive, but it was still only a drop in the ocean of what we could be systemically could create an environment for cultural responsiveness that would allow that fake smile to go into more joy and delight of living. To someone to have to be able to really live in their own identity to be valid, to be validated, validated. And, and so rather than saying, No, you're not having tea, we're going to take, you know, what environment can I create?

Felēni currently has a contract for a government agency to work with individuals with literacy needs that sometimes includes Pacific peoples. The work is to upskill or rehabilitate clients into employment; unfortunately, some Pacific clients have been targeted for careers that are nowhere near, what they want. The operative word here is 'targeted', as Felēni believes her referred clients have been negatively profiled on their ethnicity and pigeonholed into roles based on assumptions. Felēni passionately enforces the fundamental need for career practitioners to have conversations that recognise the individual and listen with intent.

5.3 Conclusion

It has been a profound privilege and deeply moving to have been able to listen, observe and be included in these dialogues. In the narratives, I followed the parallels in the existing literature on the importance of family, faith, and culture. I was confronted with the impacts of racism, tokenism, and cultural biases experienced by the participants. However, the resilience, drive, passion for operating within the context of systemic racism is highly commended and further explored in the discussion chapter. I looked into the virtues of hope, loyalty, and service exemplified by the youth throughout the data expressed as foundational blocks to build their career decisions leading them into the pathways they have taken.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

6.1 Introduction

In the conclusion section of the findings chapter, I acknowledged the data gathered grounding the concepts of family faith and culture. I introduced the themes of service, loyalty and hope, virtues that underpin the migrant dream and still play a major part in the career decisions of the modern Pacific youth. I discussed the perceived negative impacts echoing from a colonial past that has lingered on as a systemic issue adding to the institutional racism in Aotearoa. This chapter provides a thematic discussion of the findings related to the research intent, the research questions, and the literature to substantiate the hypothesis suggesting gaps in the cultural competencies and responsiveness of career development strategies in schools and organisations.

6.2 Key Themes

Throughout the data collection process, I have recognised the duality and tension of the Pacific diaspora worldviews versus the western concept of success. The Pacific and Māori participants placed value on the success of the collective above all else.

Analysis of the research findings illustrates the importance of the key elements of family, faith and culture in the Pacific institutions that define and contribute significantly to the career decisions of Pacific youth. However, the results also indicate the deeper underpinning concepts of service, reciprocity, and belonging, the duty of care expressed by the participants as fundamental requirements to sustain their families, communities and themselves. Throughout the focus groups and interviews, I came to understand that these shared cultural concepts are seen as an expression of love and reciprocity to kinship and protocol (Tamasese et al., 2010), which I believe can be translated as cultural capital. In addition, the overarching pattern that consistently emerges from the participants is the shared value of service. Enactment of service is a value etched in Pacific peoples' psyche and is an underlying theme addressed throughout the data. Still, mainly in the focus group discussion and its importance to the culture and the learnings, I gleaned for BrownTale.

The results indicate that the duality and tension of walking in two worlds identified the impacts of cultural biases, institutional racism, and the systemic inequities experienced by some Pacific participants and the observations of the non-Pacific participants. In addition, the pressures and challenges of the social norms, expectations and prejudices experienced by first-generation Pacific youth (parent) versus the strength-based philosophy of the second generation Pacific youth who infuse positive and inspirational aspects of their Pacific identity.

The arrangement of this chapter is based on the key themes extrapolated from the composite narratives:

- Understanding the Collective
- The Systems - schools, organisations

- Service - Reciprocity, belonging and a sense of duty

I will further touch on the scope of how these key findings contributed to the growth of framing my professional practice.

6.3 Understanding the Collective

He whakatauki - Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, ēngari taku toa he toa takatini.
Maori Proverb - Success is not the work of one but the work of many (Mō Te Puni Kōkiri, n.d).

The focus group participants shared a universal narrative commonly found in collectivist communities of maintaining their Pacific ways. Thus, revealing insights into how family, faith, and cultural institutions govern and navigate the participant's dreams and aspirations. The research questions opened up a conversation seeking to interpret these social norms from the participants' perspective and how these insights further influence the career practitioners and youth workers in terms of their practice.

The intention was to explore the participants' career aspirations to understand the rationale and purpose of their career choices. The decision-making processes in schools to capture career aspirations can be complex and require a multi-step approach, including psychometric questionnaires and survey tests measuring capacity and capability. However, these processes do not capture the cultural nuances found in ethnic communities (Schaff, 2006), as these processes are generative and non-relational by nature. Furthermore, this tick-box exercise is transactional and based on a linear approach, whereas Pacific youth value a relational dialogue based on their surroundings' concentric circles of influence (Bronfenbrenner, 2001; PACP, 2014). Hence, the question "What are your career aspirations, and why?" revealed the underpinning ambiguity of walking in two worlds and balancing the challenge of belonging to a collectivist community whilst operating in the predominant culture of Aotearoa that measures success in individual terms (PPWC, 2016).

The youths Langi and Fa'afetai felt that they had the freedom to choose their career pathway without expectation; however, they share a self-belief and absolute value that their career aspirations and individual success are for the collective good. This presupposition was in contrast to the experience of Matua when she was a youth in the 1980s, where the collective expectation of career pathways was explicitly focused and measured on being a lawyer, doctor, teacher, nurse, bank teller or office administrator in a government department. Matua made a conscious decision that the experience would be different for her children; they would have the freedom to choose.

Shared similarities in the intergenerational aspirations of having careers benefitting the family and the larger community are strongly embedded in the psyche of both parent and youth. This is a concept supported by the PPWC report (2016, p. 16), which states that Pacific employees consistently showed that Pacific peoples place a high value on the success of the 'collective' rather than the individual. Further highlighting the challenges and contrast of walking in two worlds, the western

society, which governs the New Zealand employment landscape, places a high value on the 'individual' and often measures success at work in individual terms versus the Pacific community who view the success of the collective above the individual (PPWC, p 12).

The career practitioners and youth workers understood the duality of individualism and collectivism as part and parcel of being a Pacific youth in South Auckland, the push to do well at school as an individual and then the unspoken expectation that the successes of the individual are to benefit the whole community. Rongo talks of the pressure on Pacific students to succeed and put the needs of the families first over their own. Rongo shows how her students see self aspirations as a luxury and dream, not a reality. The expectation is to contribute to the wider family and community needs. (PPWC, p.16).

Overall the career practitioners and youth workers felt that it was more important to create spaces for youth to have courageous conversations than to ponder the hindrance of social norms. It was crucial first to build relationships of trust and then extend the conversation for youth to approach any barriers. In addition, to also be prepared to put aside the career conversation and address immediate urgent challenges such as finding employment.

Cultural responsiveness is about seeing and understanding the youth's worldview and how to navigate the career process from the collective perspective (Thomson & Inkson, 2017). Whether the social norms that Pacific youth are accustomed to hinder or improve a career pathway, the most important aspect agreed upon by the career practitioners is understanding the community, the circle of influence that is important to the youths.

This Pacific concept of being duty-bound is a display of loyalty and expectation commonly seen in the practice of fa'alavelave, a Samoan term that Matua explains as a disruption to the flow of everyday life. A social construct of Pacific families supporting financially to ease the burden of the individual to help the collective (Thomsen, Tavita, & Levi-Teu, 2018). Parents in this research have not enforced this practice on their children. They do, however, encourage the values of reciprocity, support, stability and a sense of belonging found in times of a fa'alavelave.

My data supports the broader definition of faith regarding religious affiliation; and what faith means from a Pacific lens. Two schools of thought regarding faith emerged. One group saw faith reflected as an extrinsic motivation of respect and loyalty to parents by attending church, an act of duty—a place to socialise and congregate with like-minded peers. The second group embraced faith from an intrinsic spiritual lens, influenced by elders or grandparents who modelled Christian values. Langi described the daily prayers with her Grandmother solidified her relationship with God. These prayers became the inspiration to pursue a career path that incorporates service. As the common denominator for the youth, regardless of how faith may be embraced or interpreted individually, service was the value they all expressed as important. From an intergenerational perspective, the parent journey and experiences were similar to how faith played a role in their career decisions.

Tapasā highlighted that church obligations can provide leadership opportunities, but they can also hinder them as they may be too confining or demanding on the young person. On the other hand, the youth expressed that the Pacific and Māori have and

still operate from a spiritual foundation before colonialism, further explaining that the Pacific innately conduct themselves holistically through life and the workplace. Therefore, this concept of indigenous spirituality in village life has been transferred into a church environment, suggesting that these values profoundly etched and incubated in the Pacific narrative can be utilised fully as cultural capital in a workplace scenario or life in general.

An example of faith in practice is the karakia; I understood that karakia/lotu is an indigenous ritual that binds a group together and is now expressed through a Christian lens. From a deeper human experience, the act of karakia in the focus group environment was an intentional process to deepen relationships. As a result, the exchange of ideas and perspectives was expressed freely. It was interesting to see how faith and culture are interwoven to represent faith as part of the cultural characteristics of Pacific peoples.

There is a growing desire among Pacific young people to learn, participate and contribute to the diverse makeup of Aotearoa. Cultural identity is seen as a strength for Pacific young people. Those connected to their culture reported it was something they valued because it gave them confidence and a sense of belonging. (Lalanga Fou Report, 2018, p 44).

The focus on culture is understandable, given that the largest demographic of the Pacific population in Tāmaki Makaurau is youth and that cultural identity is a strength. Therefore, the angle of the question for culture was twofold in its purpose; firstly, what elements of culture give confidence? Secondly, identifying what Pacific ways of being would translate into cultural capital for youth to infuse in their career pathways.

If you ask a Pacific person what culture or the Pacific way is, you would get answers commonly weaving in family, faith and culture. Like a finely woven tapestry, these institutions are tightly interwoven as support systems of reciprocity and a sense of kinship (Thomsen, Tavita, & Levi-Teu, 2018).

6.4 The System

6.4.1 Schools

This underlying practice question was the catalyst behind why I endeavoured to understand why Pacific Youth in South Auckland leaving secondary school reported elements of uncertainty around career planning. South Auckland secondary schools cater for the youngest and largest Pacific population in Aotearoa; therefore, the intention was to investigate whether the Pacific worldview lens of career pathways is embedded in the career practices of career advisors/guidance counsellors/teachers. More importantly, are the strategies for career pathways culturally responsive in the schools with a large Pacific demographic.

The majority of students, inclusive of a high representation of diverse multiple ethnic groupings, reported high levels of pride in their Pacific culture and values, and placed importance on being recognised as a person from their cultural group. These findings suggest that such cultural strengths could be

augmented within school settings. This is supported by the fact that these strengths are described in the literature as having the potential to enhance resilience, empower individuals and collectives and act as protective factors against adverse behaviours.

(Pacific Adolescent Career Pathway research report, 2014, p. 42)

The conversation that ensued from this question highlighted the gap in the resources allocated to career development learning within secondary schools. However, this gap was only evident from the narrative of Langi, who went to school out of the zone to what may be considered affluent schools, when compared with Fa'afetai, who attended a local South Auckland secondary school. Thus, two different career support services were carried out, and one was delivered conventionally, the other with a culturally responsive approach.

Fa'afetai, who attended a South Auckland secondary school, described her career conversations as prescriptive. Her first experience was filling out a careers questionnaire and psychometric tests to choose which subjects were best suited for her career aspirations. Secondly, at the end of her last year at secondary school, she requested help filling out applications for further training. This experience suggests that only two opportunities concentrated on her career pathways in her entire secondary school life. This scenario supports the hypothesis that there is a gap with touchpoints in the journey of students that requires implementing robust and meaningful career development learning in pivotal moments of learning (Magnifico, 2020).

The extensive work put into implementing career strategies for the Pacific students at Langi's school was evident in her ability to converse confidently with her understanding of career management and development and articulating the reasons behind her career choices. Langi shared that the strategy of this school to address the needs of the Pacific population was when the school appointed a career advisor who had prior experience working with the Pacific students and who understood the needs and requirements of the community. Langi felt that having their new career practitioner was good because she was a career practitioner who previously worked in schools out in South Auckland. She was consistently in touch with her progress in every step of her transitioning into further education.

The narratives of Langi and Fa'afetai highlighted the different approaches to career development in their schools. Langi's school situated in Central Auckland seemed to have embedded cultural practices that involved the three intrinsic elements of the Pacific community of faith, family and culture. In addition, Langi's school carried out activities and supplied resources that included parents by framing the conversations with Pacific frameworks to help guide the career conversation. In comparison, the South Auckland school attended by Fa'afetai suggests a lack of career development strategies that reflected the student population, considering that the school has a high population of Pacific students.

My one-on-one interview with Rongo, the non-Pacific career practitioner, displayed an in-depth understanding of the Pacific community drawn from her many years working in a South Auckland secondary school. Rongo expressed that there needs

to be a broader structural change in the South Auckland secondary schools she had worked with regarding culturally responsive practices. When suggesting innovative culturally responsive methods that include the student's voice, she says that teachers have elements of deficit theorising regarding career management. Common responses from the teaching staff to rejecting a co-design approach is to 'stick to how we have always done it.'

The Career Development Benchmark for Secondary Schools produced by Careers New Zealand in 2016 advises that 'the success of the implementation depends largely on the commitment school leaders show the process...[including] assigning a champion from the senior leadership team to steer the implementation process ' (p. 5). The data from this research implies that the above advice is not consistently carried out. It seems that the career advisors' knowledge and skill base are underutilised in career management strategies in Rongo's South Auckland school. However, this knowledge base can be used effectively in South Auckland schools to generate the desired outcomes of transitioning students into further training or employment, as proposed by 'The Career Development Benchmark for Secondary Schools' and exemplified by Langi's school and career advisor.

Langi is an example of the potency of students who are well versed in career competencies and translate this knowledge as a driver for educational success. Yet, although Langi had positive outcomes, it was underpinned by the robust approach of the school and career advisors who understood their students' profile and incorporated cultural responsiveness frameworks.

The experiences of youth and career practitioners portrayed in the research results may support my hypothesis of the perceived lack of commitment to implementing career strategies in South Auckland's schools. However, skilled career advisors such as Rongo are willing to impart their knowledge, and support is not questioned. However, the lack of understanding of the importance of career education in the overall broader structure resulted in ineffective delivery and outcomes for Fa'afetai. Furthermore, a misguided approach to careers education from some teaching staff may not realise that support from a career advisor can be highly effective for their students' NCEA results, as suggested by Rongo and Tapasā.

I recently attended a MOE (Ministry of Education) vocational pathways conversation as an advisor with a Pacific lens, where the topic of how important the role of a career advisor was discussed. The dialogue identified that the transitioning programme and the implementation of scalable career development programmes are not necessarily prioritised or supported by some of the leadership of secondary schools. A recent international article titled 'Making Career Development Stick' suggests that any effort will ultimately miss the mark without the school administration recognising career development as a priority (2021). The article further advised that creating champions of career development learning frameworks embedded into the curriculum and not compartmentalising career development is a good place to start producing confident and prepared students for the world of work and higher education. Therefore there needs to be a buy-in from all teachers and school administrators.

An important factor of any career development strategy to work, especially in South Auckland, is the family and the wider community. Australian research highlights that the strongest influence in students' career decisions for low socioeconomic status backgrounds lies in the social circles and surrounding members of their communities (Austin et al., 2020). The Southern Initiative, an organisation that champions social and community innovation in South Auckland, is a strong example of how co-designed frameworks reflecting indigenous-centric approaches can produce impactful outcomes for the South Auckland community. Therefore, in my professional opinion, we have ample evidence that supports the importance of a strong, scalable career development programme. And importantly, the secret weapon is the involvement of the surrounding communities and families, utilising a co-design framework reflecting the social context of the community, in this case, the South Auckland community.

6.4.2 Organisations

- *What does cultural bias look like to you, and what do you do to address any biases?*

The complexity of the question generated a potent conversation amongst the research participants. Nevertheless, unfortunately, the individual experiences of being discriminated against within working environments and professional settings were the basis of understanding what cultural biases look like first-hand in organisations. Thus, as a focus group, we explored the journey of how we wrapped our heads around cultural biases and systemic racism and then shared individual narratives of how the group built the courage to address cultural bias within the organisations from their working colleagues and the community at large.

Many narratives in the focus group and the one-on-one interviews discuss the complexity and importance of cultural responsiveness. However, there is unanimous agreement to push for broader structural changes from the career development management sector (Magnifico, 2020), for example, to address Te Tiriti's bicultural partnership in the industry. Such changes generate an opportunity for flow-on discussion that rigorously addresses cultural responsiveness by co-designing with career practitioners who are *mana whenua* (Reid, 2010) and representatives of the diverse community of Tāmaki Makaurau to drive and inform future career strategies with the appropriate establishments.

Tapasā and Felēni pointed out the lack of consultation from government organisations and governing bodies regarding career and employment initiatives within the Pacific community. A common practice is appointing career consultants who are ill equipped, not Pacific, have no prior knowledge of the South Auckland community, and yet are expected to address the community's employment and career needs. Yet, there are Pacific and Māori career practitioners with the skill set, knowledge, and the advantage of having the capacity and competency to address the social inequities and the accompanying challenges associated with South Auckland. Unfortunately, these local career advisors do not have the means and resources to tender for contracts and meet other prescribed criteria. Yet, their lived experiences provide an invaluable mix of local cultural context knowledge and professional expertise that needs stronger recognition and voice in shaping solutions.

6.5 Conclusion

I have noticed in my current work as a community engagement advisor in Tāmaki Makaurau the rise of employment and career initiatives from grassroots NGO's and social enterprises within South Auckland run by community focused advocates for change and growth in their community. These local 'context experts' (Attyygalle, 2017) are taking matters into their own hands. I am referring here to individuals and groups that are not affiliated in any way to the concept of career development, let alone connected to a professional body. The majority of these individuals focus on helping the community with employment readiness and preparedness for job opportunities. These champions need the resources and support to sustain their programmes. Hence, I believe the time is ripe to create a strong network of Pacific and Māori Career Practitioners, Employment Consultants, Mentors, and Transformation coaches to generate initiatives and research opportunities to work collectively and cohesively, opening opportunities for both professional and context experts to represent, support and grow the voice of the Pacific and Māori communities.

CHAPTER 7: NEW EMERGENT FRAMEWORK OF PRACTICE

If you have the instinct, you can hire the intellect - (Jakes, 2014).

7.1 Introduction

Normally this opening paragraph would be reserved for the critical reflection section of a thesis; however, I felt it pertinent to set the tone and depth of this chapter—a chapter of profound gratitude for wisdom, insight and knowledge on my behalf. The process of pursuing my Master of Professional Practice (MPP) qualification has morphed organically into playing the role of my personal life coach, therapist, educator, counsellor, and business mentor, to bring meaning and clarity to my instincts as the above quote from TD. Jakes suggests.

The overarching purpose of this research process was to establish clarity as to what it meant for BrownTale as a social enterprise to be a values-based organisation. The research outcome needed to clarify core principles and beliefs that identify BrownTales' purpose and reflect what is important as a career development practice catering to the Pacific community's needs in Tamaki Makaurau. This chapter will therefore explain how the findings have influenced the new emergent framework of practice and how the core principles of BrownTale is woven and embedded in The Niu.

Although BrownTale is at a conceptual phase yet to be registered as a legal entity, this study is an opportunity to build a clear social mission and purpose to generate a business model to advance the aims of equitable career pathways for the Pacific community. I volunteer as a mentor and career advisor to individual Pacific leaders and community groups. I am consciously building on relationships by intentionally practising Pacific indigenous ways, drawing on the concepts of the Talanoa (Vaiotei, 2006), O le Vā (Anae, Mila-Schaff, Coxon, Mara, & Sanga, 2010) and Kakala (Johnson, 2014) frameworks. In building my practice as a culturally responsive career practitioner, I have developed various tools, resources and activities to explore and create The Niu framework to resonate with Pacific Indigeneity as a key priority. Elements of The Niu framework have been fully tested throughout my PTE tenure as a career practitioner.

As a volunteer, I currently embed the activities from my career resource practice and implement these activities into the mentoring process with Pacific leaders. However, I only had the skeleton of a whole career counselling framework conceptualised as my framework of practice after my Bachelor of Social Services. Therefore, one of the aims of the MPP was to build the overall structure and content to strengthen the fluidity, rigour, and alignment to a core purpose as a career development framework.

As with all things deeply rooted in my way of being, I like to have a set of drivers and values to help me navigate the journey ahead. Thus, at the outset of this initial journey of the MPP, I drew from Edgar Schein's career anchors questionnaire, a survey that I took to establish my career motives and values that are my non-negotiables that represent my true self (Carpenter, 2010). As you can see below in the matrix, it closely reflects my purpose of servitude through a social enterprise that defines my freedom of expression as a career practitioner.

Anchors	Characteristics
Service dedication to a cause	Service to others is high among your values, and you want work that reflects this ethic
Entrepreneurial creativity	You want the ability to create new products or processes, to be innovative and recognised for your work
Autonomy/Independence	You want the freedom to define yourself and your work, to work in the ways that suit you

Table 3. Profile of Career Practitioners & Youth Workers.

This chapter will cover three areas of servitude where the research process has impacted the most:

- BrownTale - My social enterprise
- The Niu - My careers framework
- The Network - My contribution to the field of career development

7.2 BrownTale

A core aim of this study as a research vehicle was to give validity and substance to the service offerings and products of BrownTale in terms of the model of practice. In defining what family, faith and culture meant to the research, participants all expressed the importance of working together as a collective. An example of *loto gatasi* (one heart), a Pacific way of being when working together, spoke to me at a personal level. At times it deeply affected me as it reminded me of my career pathway and why I do what I do as a career choice. This understanding helped shape the core principles and the description of my practice I can now articulate. It was and is an authentic practice that comes from deep spiritual space.

The Core Principles	Description of Practice	Origin
Collective	Honouring Collaborative Relationships	Family
Spiritual	Operating with Wisdom & Compassion	Faith
Indigenity	Unearth the Origin of your Story	Culture

Table 5. BrownTale's Core Principles

As the findings supported, family, faith and culture are intricately woven into the Pacific youth and community (Tamasese et al., 2010). Therefore, they are pivotal to the career pathway decision-making process. I have chosen to express these principles using indigenous phrases and proverbs identifying my Pacificness and *Te Ao Māori whakatauki*, acknowledging the shared ancestral links of *whanaunga* (family ties) as *Tagata o le Moana* (People of the Ocean). Therefore, the indigenous proverbs and phrases are metaphorical expressions to illustrate the core principles of BrownTale's service delivery and the spiritual depth and significance to teach, inspire, and call to action.

7.2.1. The Collective

- *O le tagata ma lona aiga, o le tagata ma lona fa'asinomaga* - Every person belongs to an aiga, and every aiga belongs to a person (Aiono, 1997).
- *Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, ēngari taku toa he toa takatini* - Success is not the work of one but the work of many (Mō Te Puni Kōkiri, n.d).

The Collective evokes a spirit synonymous with solidarity and working together for the common cause. This principle draws from the co-design framework prioritising relationships (McKercher, 2020) as fundamental in collectivist communities of the Pacific diaspora in Aotearoa. Relationships are important to build trust between BrownTale and the wider community it serves. Moreover, participatory practices are a means to share power that harnesses capacity and capability for Pacific peoples' career development and management.

7.2.2 Spirituality

- Mehemea ka moemoeā ahau ko ahau anake. Mehemea ka moemoea a tātou, ka taea tātou - If I dream, it's just me; if we dream, we can do it! Together, great things are possible. (Herangi, 2020)

Cindy Wigglesworth, a thought leader in Spiritual Intelligence, describes this concept 'as the ability to behave with wisdom and compassion while maintaining inner and outer peace regardless of the situation (Wigglesworth, 2012). Pacific peoples best describe such a place traditionally as Le Vā, the sacred space between two entities, be it people, communities, environment and ancestors, a meeting space devoid of judgement but a place of authentic dialogue (Anae et al., 2016). Victor Frankl, Austrian neurologist, psychologist and Holocaust survivor, theorises - "Between stimulus and response, there is a space. In that, space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom" (Covey, 1989 p. 68). BrownTale's continuous growth and freedom lie in honouring the sacred space and commitment to upholding relationships through the indigenous practice of Le Vā (Anae et al., 2016). Vulnerability, creativity, and innovation exist in this space (Brown, 2012), a spiritual way of being that informs the philosophy of BrownTale's servitude.

7.2.3 Indigeneity

- E fofo le alamea le alamea - The solutions lie within our communities (Taylor, 2016)
- Kia mau koe ki nga kupu o ou tupuna - Hold to the words of your ancestors (Whakataukī, n.d.)

At the core definition of indigeneity is the "origin", the point or place where something begins or is derived (Oxford, n.d.). The principle of indigeneity for BrownTale is honouring the origin story of the Pacific diaspora; we are inheritors of a unique culture, a philosophy and a way of life anchored in the relationship between the environment, ancestors and people. The brand of BrownTale is retelling our stories through our indigenous lens, unearthing the origin story of each individual as a platform to begin a dialogue of discovery. Discovery aims for the individual client to identify that their Pacific ways of being and nuances are seen as strengths and skills instead of a deficit. Mila-Schaff describes these mana strengthening skills as polycultural capital:

Polycultural capital was coined to describe the ability to accumulate culturally diverse symbolic resources, negotiate between them and strategically deploy

different cultural resources in contextually specific and advantageous ways (Mila-Schaff, 2010).

An old saying is that some conflicts are so difficult that they can only be healed by a story (Ury, 2010); BrownTale is committed to creating safe spaces for narratives to be told. There is an opportunity for epiphanies, self-discovery, and finding purpose in the career decision process through indigenous Pacific frameworks such as Talanoa, Fonofale, Tivaevae, Kakala and The Niu. A mana-enhancing approach uplifts the culture and acts as an antidote to cultural biases and deficit theorising.

7.2.4 The Strands

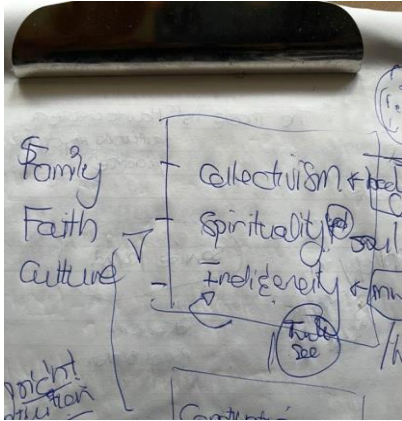
BrownTale's principles are the foundations for relationships to foster insight inspired by intuition. They create authentic building blocks of inner knowledge to guide purposeful career conversations. The kaupapa is strengthened when the strands and principles are woven together to retell the career narrative.

The Strands	Characteristics
Insight	The capacity to gain an authentic understanding of the purpose
Intuition	The ability to be guided intuitively, trusting the inner compass
Inspire	The courage to put purpose into action

Table 6. BrownTale Strands

7.3 The Niu - Career Framework

In my search for existing career development research or career decision theories for Pacific communities, there was relatively little information on career decision-making theories that focus on cultural backgrounds (Schaff, 2006). The epiphany then came to me when I read the words "the way individuals see the world" (Schaff, 2006 p. 253). I unpacked the meaning behind the phrase by exploring the theory attached to this quote. When I learned about the personal construct counselling based on George Kelly's construct theory, I had my eureka moment (Schaff, 2006, p. 264). Describing Kelly's approach to 'understanding ways in which clients view their reality, particularly as it applies to occupational selection' (p.264). It became clear that a deeper spiritual knowingness interpreted through the indigenous cultural ways of a Pacific world lens described how I saw the world, the importance of the collective and the interconnectedness of relationships and how that is encompassed in my practice. This realisation gave meaning to my practice. It helped unearth what I subconsciously already knew; my Pacific ways of being are the uniqueness I bring to my practice.



The Niu lends itself to a constructivist and narrative approach to career development that emphasises understanding clients' values or constructs of seeing the world (Schaff, 2006). In dissecting this concept, I had my moment of great revelation and how I see the world. First, I drew a table with the words family, faith and culture, and next to each word, I married this with the themes that emerged from the findings.

Figure 3. Image of conceptual BrownTale Core Principles (own photo)

The following matrix describes the partnership of indigenous knowledge and modern approaches to support the career conversation. The cornerstone principles 'The Collective, Spirituality and Indigeneity' naturally support The Niu Framework's underpinning the structure.

STAGES	STRANDS	PURPOSE	ACTIVITY	PRINCIPLE
I AM - My Identity	Insight	Developing self-awareness	10 th Power/Value Card Sort	Collective
I CAN - My Journey	Intuition	Exploring opportunities	Fagogo - Storytelling	Spiritual
I WILL - My Gift	Inspire	Courage to decide and act	Vision Boards	Indigeneity

Table 7. Framework stages of The Niu



In many indigenous cultures, the environmental surroundings explain the connection between the spiritual, mental and physical realms. Therefore, developing the Niu framework was crucial to developing an indigenous model that reflected the Pacific; the humble coconut became the symbol with its many uses. Niu is the Samoan translation of a young coconut – it has an outer husk and gelatinous inner meat and the juice of the young coconut, which is highly prized. It is a framework or process that engages the client to construct a narrative by participating in activities based on Pacific indigenous knowledge. A collaborative relationship provides ahurutanga/safe spaces (Pohatu, 2003) to make sense of what matters and to self-reflect to re-construct a career narrative that is purposeful and hopefully aspirational (Savickas, 2015).

The framework structure is based on the three layers of the coconut. The outer layer - **I am**, the identity of the self is the initial introduction between the career practitioner and the client. When meeting for the first time, a common practice amongst Pacific peoples, protocol demands honouring family and ancestral ties and your village. Samoans term for this practice is feiloaiga in this context; it establishes and consolidates connectedness and relationships. Therefore, part of the feiloaiga is The Niu's introductory process for both parties to greet and share, a common practice similar in Te Ao Māori called whanaungatanga. Next, the ' Pacific Value Card Sorts' two activities help explore the individual core values and aspirations to establish identity and purpose. Secondly, a genealogy (gafa, whakapapa) activity called 'The Tenth Power' speaks to the values and mana of the collective who inspire the individual. The activities are tools to stimulate a talanoa session to create trust and hopefully ascertain the individual worldview lens and the core values that guide them.

Figure 4. The Niu Framework (2021).

The second layer - ***I can***, my journey is the exploration stage which utilises the findings of the ***I am*** activities to create questions to guide the narrative where the client directs the process of their Fagogo. Fagogo is the art of Samoan storytelling. Impromptu, made-up stories are commonly used as bedtime stories or when an elder needs to explain real-life events through stories emphasising the essence or message to be told. Another form of Fagogo is a co-design element where the listener asks questions to prompt the story's direction. Specific questions in the Niu framework act as scaffoldings to extrapolate retrospective reflections from the storytelling to reveal their current understanding of their situation. From the Life-Design Counselling Manual, I have drawn the importance of intentional and mindful questioning techniques to help guide a meaningful experience for the client. The objective of this exercise is for the client to arrive at their self-discovery and reflections to make changes or enhance their current career pathway (Savickas, 2015). The second layer is metaphorically described as the gelatinous meat of the coconut, which refers to the gravity and substance of knowledge revealed, aptly described colloquially as 'the guts of it all.'

Central to the design of The Niu is to build career development competencies so that the individual can manage their career pathway, have a sense of self and carry themselves and speak confidently and purposefully. Therefore, in the third layer, ***I will*** wrap up the collaborative process and identify the outcomes, the new rich narrative, a sense of self, the juice, the elixir, the brand, and a future plan.

As the collective is an important aspect of Pacific communities, there is an opportunity to invite a support person to participate; this is established before the initial session. They may be a family member, mentor, a person of trust who has their best interest at heart and can support the career pathway. The three holes on the coconut symbolise the collective (family), spirituality (faith) and indigeneity (culture), where individuals can draw a representative from these areas.

The Niu is a co-design process to construct a tailor-made narrative, utilising various Pacific indigenous ways of being, coupled with career constructivist and narrative theories. A bi-product of The Niu has afforded a journey of further discovery into the benefits of indigenous ways of being, giving substance to a culturally responsive practice in other fields, including the work that I am currently doing in the community engagement space when working with Pacific communities. The learnings and experience from this process have fed into community engagement opportunities based on the principles of The Niu. The MPP has grounded a solid practice and sense of confidence built through the research process. I had a conceptualised skeleton framework with potential, which is now a framework that I can deliver future resources on, creating a culturally responsive practice for others.

7.4 CONCLUSION - Future Focus

As a direct result of the MPP study, I have been fortunate to be included in projects and invited onto advisory committees offering a Pacific lens regarding culturally responsive frameworks and practices.

As a Community Engagement Advisor, I was called upon to create a Pacific framework to guide the community project with the Tongan community (see

appendix D for Kakala Framework). The learnings and research have afforded me the knowledge to apply a co-design framework based on the Kakala methodology, a Tongan process of working cohesively together to attain a common shared goal that benefits the community at large. This work was pivotal as this organisation adopted a culturally responsive approach to reflect their community. It was a watershed moment for me to witness and support a community-led project in action, with a favourable outcome for the Tongan community.

A Christchurch based education establishment has asked me to be a member of a high-level advisory group as a cultural advisor in the consultation process that supports the implementation of the Tapasa curriculum framework in ECE (Early Childhood Education) schools in 2022?.

MOE (Ministry of Education) invited me earlier in 2021 to be a member of the Pathway Advisory Group due to prior involvement with the Pacific community and the current work I am pursuing in culturally responsive practices in career management. The Pathways Advisory Group has existed since 2011. The group was a key co-design partner for MOE in designing the Vocational Pathways (Korero Matauranga, 2020).

As a direct conversation with Pacific leaders in career development, I have been able to recently participate in a dialogue with Pacific and Maori Career Practitioners based in Tāmaki Makaurau. We have discussed the Pacific and Maori presence in the field of careers and how we can best support and promote the visibility of our services in our communities and have a unified voice in establishing research opportunities that feed into policies and initiatives focused on the Pacific. They have, in turn, become a wealth of knowledge and are a place to share insights into my studies. I am conscious of the mana that lies with this group, adding significant value to the momentum of my aspirations to launch BrownTale.

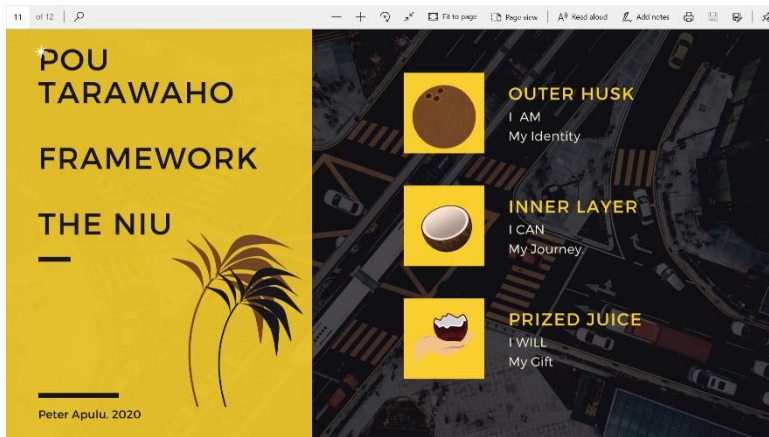


Figure 5. The Niu Framework (2019)

These graphics illustrate the growth of The Niu framework, from a conceptualise idea to the crafted framework through the MPP process.



Figure 6. The Niu Framework (2021)

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION AND CRITICAL REFLECTION, RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Introduction

This chapter captures my critical reflections describing scaffoldings of learnings along the way in the research process, my emerging framework, and the foundational structure to BrownTale with a view to the future.

8.2 Personal Reflection

Two polarising personas have accompanied me in this pursuit as a novice researcher, the inner-critic versus the inner coach (McDermott, 2004). Both have been great allies along with the way and conversely exhausting companions. The internal coach spoke when I felt I had achieved success in my writing or had moments of epiphanies, versus the inner critic that would appear when I could not find inspiration, which triggered the imposter in me. Fortunately, I was reminded of a sentence the reviewer had written in my MPP learning agreement assessment stating:

This is an eloquent sentence, which sums up your practice intent; *"I have subconsciously built scaffolding of gratitude and grace to create safe places to have courageous conversations."* (Apulu, 2021).

The MPP has given me many moments to flex my muscle called grace to find that place of equilibrium, present and centred. I often failed, evaluated, and applied tools and techniques to keep me on track. I drew inspiration from this statement and a deeper appreciation of the journey when I gave grace to myself. Although I am continuously conscious of my purpose in serving my community, I needed to build scaffoldings of grace and gratitude for myself. In these moments of challenge, I would create safe spaces to have courageous, compassionate conversations with myself to carry on.

As one redeeming feature in the early stages of the study, I was gifted a gratitude journal in September of 2020 for my birthday. Unfortunately, I did not start journaling until February 2021, the beginning of the last leg of the MPP, which I believe was serendipitous and timed well when I reflected. The gratitude journal became a gift for me, pulling me through a year of extreme challenges, both professionally and personally. The act of religiously journaling early every morning gave me the humility and understanding that my strength lies in grace.

8.3 The Research Process

The research process revealed the many layers surrounding my theoretical consideration based on the hypothesis that there are gaps in the cultural competencies and responsiveness of career development strategies in schools and organisations. At the start of the MMP, when I wrote my review of learning, to tackle the research aim, I applied my version of a matrix with four components:

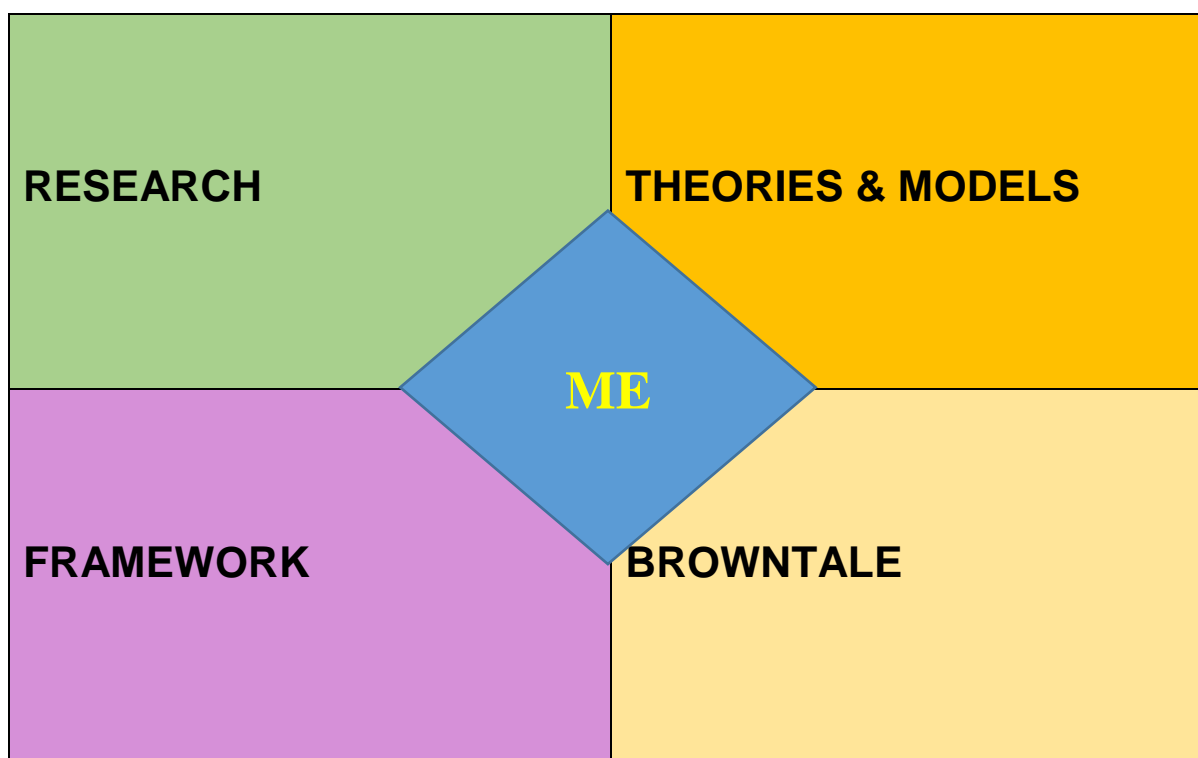


Table 8. The Research Project Matrix.

Research			
Strategic Outcome - <i>To learn and immerse oneself into the mind of a researcher</i>			
Priorities	Description – Deliverable/Programme/Project	Timeframe	Expected Outcome
Readings	Map out the 6 recommended readings in research	WIP	To have read and documented and evidence-based learnings, including the reflective journal
Research Methodology	Discuss and solidify research approaches best suited for study with Academic Mentor	13 th May 2020	Understanding of disciplines and methodologies to carry out research
Pacific Research Methodologies	Find a mentor in Pacific Frameworks of research	20 th May 2020	Knowledge of Pacific Frameworks and a mentor in Pacific Research
Flexibility & Fluidity	Through organic dialogue, one is prepared to pivot to new learning and understanding	Ongoing	To always be prepared to learn, implement and reflect. Journaling

Table 9. The Research Tasks

By nature, I have an inquisitive mind and the heart of a learner to seek. However, I did not possess the theoretical understanding of research concepts in terms of methodology, ontology, and epistemology, all foreign words. Therefore, at the start, I rigorously read and explored new ideas and concepts, but when I reflect on this focus, I believe it was in some small way an act of dislodging the imposter in me. What I found difficult though and wrestled continuously throughout the MPP is defining the differences between the narrative inquiry and the phenomenological methodology. I read many papers and views of academics, varying definitions, and

the lack of consensus between the methodologies frustrated me. However, I had to be pragmatic and pick the discipline that best suited the essence of the study. Therefore, the narrative inquiry was chosen as the preferred methodology to capture the heart of the research aims.

8.4 The Research Participants

I found the recruitment stage of the process advantageous to my skill set; I naturally felt at ease performing this task and enjoyed the relationship building, facilitating the focus groups, and conducting the semi-structured interviews. However, my naivety with the research revealed what I now perceive as a lack of depth to the Pacific community's demographic representation. I did not consider the full spectrum of social indexes in terms of income and the level of education. For example, when I cast my net out into my networks for research participants, my main objective concentrated on Pacific ethnicity and South Auckland residency only. I did not consider the network profile, which consisted of youth and parents from similar income and education brackets. In hindsight, it would have been conducive to the research in the recruitment process to ensure a more rigorous study by providing representation of all demographics of the South Auckland Pacific communities, which included youth from low-income families.

I have touched on earlier in the methodology chapter the sourcing of the parent's involvement in the research process. Upon exploring the literature review in the learning agreement, it dawned on me to introduce one more group to the research participants 'the parent'. I have mentioned earlier the importance of family in the career decisions of the Pacific youth that it made sense to involve parents to add another dimension to the research that would also solicit intergenerational dynamics and learnings to the study. This influenced the direction of my framework, *The Niu*, in which I introduced the *aiga*, *whanau* in the career conversation. Without a doubt, each youth who participated in the study has had robust discussions with parents and trusted mentors. It was evident in their approach to their career management regardless of the challenges they have experienced and enabled them to contribute effectively in the focus groups and interviews. The takeaway for me is the youth who have foundational support from their social circles, albeit their parents or guardians and supported by educational establishments, plays a significant part in their wellbeing and career path. Hence the important role of families and community at the introductory stage of 'The Niu' framework.

I will forever be indebted to the participating career practitioners and those who have worked with youth in South Auckland. I was extremely privileged to have had the opportunity to explore the depth and experience they brought to the focus group with this cohort. The predominant misconception or assumption from my hypothesis regarding the gap of culturally responsive practices in South Auckland schools included my perceptions of career practitioners that may lack cultural insight, given that they are at the coalface working with youth. However, the research data revealed that my assumption was far from the truth. Similar patterns emerged, giving me critical insights into the broader structural systems governing schools that career practitioners are operating within. The findings emphasised that career development is intermittent or scattered in its approach gauging from youth and career practitioner conversations within South Auckland schools that the research participants attended.

There is a definite disparity in resources and structure allocated to career learning development in schools in South Auckland versus schools within Central Auckland. This is evident in the feedback from the youth Langi and Fa'afetai, who had two contrasting experiences. From this analysis, a supposition can be made that the current approaches to career strategies in schools are inadequate to meet the needs of Pacific students in South Auckland. Here is a prime opportunity for school decision-makers to infuse systemic career development programmes into the curriculum instead of being treated as an elective. There are existing structured workplace learning programmes integrated into school, such as Gateway, which caters to a specific group of students but does not cater for all. There is a need to have effective, scalable curriculum career programmes that foster an aspirational element to students' learning—creating spaces for students to have thoughtful and reflective conversations around their studies to generate purposeful vocational pathways.

My concern for the Pacific youth of South Auckland is that the current and future climate for work realities has changed dramatically and will continue to do so if we take into consideration the impacts of COVID-19 and technology. There needs to be an emphasis on creating sound career education for students to prepare for the transitioning period into higher education and employment.

8.5 Cultural Biases

The question 'what are your thoughts on cultural responsiveness' garnered a reply from the focus group that triggered me to ponder on the impacts of colonialism.

'The only reason we discuss cultural responsiveness is because of our colonial history. Cultural responsiveness is needed to try to readdress societal inequality. But is yet another compartmentalised way of addressing inequity.'

I admit that the issue surrounding colonialism weighed heavily on me throughout this study regarding the impacts of inequity that have metastasised throughout the Pacific community. As a result, the topic of decolonisation became a necessary element in my process of defining cultural responsiveness. I purposefully mulled over the many issues that indirectly feed into the negative impacts of colonialism, such as tokenism, systemic racism and cultural biases from the data collection process. However, as noted in the motivation chapter, I did not waiver from the topic because it is important to address the issue head-on by applying a root cause analysis, a clinical process to problem-solving. I found my answer in the definition of colonialism:

the policy or practice of **acquiring full** or partial political **control** over another country, **occupy**ing it with settlers, and exploiting it economically (Oxford Dictionary, 2021)

In my pursuit to handle the process of gathering, compiling and interpreting the research data without harbouring contempt and judgement, I surrendered by occupying this space with grace and gratitude. I took control of the situation by acquiring an indigenous lens of the talanoa method based on a relational dialogue, enabling me to build platforms to have courageous conversations with the research

participants and those I have communicated with along the way. Ironically, I had one of my epiphanies writing this chapter concerning the idiom 'them and us' (The Free Dictionary, n.d.) – “the perception of an antagonistic or fraught relationship between two groups, especially those with unequal power, influence, privileges”. Finally, I realised there is no ‘them and us’ in the resolution process. Only a collective that involves all the unique communities that makeup Aotearoa can go forward. My take on decolonisation or the retelling of the narrative is drawn from a mana-enhancing standpoint, found in the indigenous proverbs describing BrownTale’s principle of the collective:

- O le tagata ma lona aiga, o le tagata ma lona fa'asinomaga - Every person belongs to an aiga, and every aiga belongs to a person (Aiono, 1997).
- Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, ēngari taku toa he toa takatini - Success is not the work of one but the work of many (Mō Te Puni Kōkiri, n.d).

The aiga, and the many, consists of the bicultural relationship between mana whenua and the crown, tagata o le moana - multi Pacific peoples and multicultural communities all feeding into the broader narrative as a collective (Teachers Council of Aotearoa, New Zealand, n.d.). Tackling the provocative topic of colonialism and its impact on the Pacific communities gave me insight into how deeply rooted the hegemonic ideologies are entangled in our ways of being as a diaspora. Through this study, I know with certainty and attest to the power of the collective; that we can only retell the narrative by including all in the conversation. The impact in my professional practice is a change maker for me; the opportunity to incorporate the individuals' collective community into their career learning development can only be good when facilitated with intention and integrity. The activities and resources are based on the power of the collective. On a personal note, the underpinning value I have practised is compassion; this helped me surrender and, to an extent, forgive, which in itself has been liberating.

8.6 Emerging Framework

At the beginning of this study, I was filled with doubt about the validity of my Niu framework, as I have not been actively practising as a professional career practitioner for three years. It has only been used in the form of my voluntary coaching, mentoring Pacific leaders with career counselling, and running community workshops. Aspects of my management experience required the professional development of staff, which had elements of career development. I understood that this approach produced the needed outcomes, but it was insufficient for me in terms of best practice. 'The Niu' was a conceptual framework without efficacy, requiring a deeper exploration to unearth the purpose of being considered a viable career tool. As a concept, it was rudimentary, without concrete theoretical references supporting career theories nor substance in terms of the Pacific Indigenous lens.

The purpose of BrownTale organically came to fruition: from the scribbling down of notes around the three core themes of family, faith and culture and then alongside them the topics in the discussion chapter, the collective, spirituality and indigeneity, to my eureka moment of cementing the guiding principles of BrownTale. The process opened the floodgates to formulating the career framework 'The Niu' when I put the themes and topics side by side and then defined what that meant.

It was liberating to fully embrace the principles and speak to BrownTale and 'The Niu' from an authentic, grounded space. Although I have unconsciously applied the core values throughout my work history and coaching pragmatically, BrownTale has captured and revealed the core principles. As a result, I can take ownership with clarity and confidence in delivering my career practice.

The exploration process of researching several career theories aided in seeking a theoretically informed academic approach; that considered clients' cultural context. As a result, Mark Savickas' work, 'Life-Design Counselling Manual,' (2015) became the discourse that I familiarised myself with as it had components of constructivism that resonated with me. The concept of constructing narratives appealed to my younger self; I was blessed to have experienced the art of fagogo or roughly translated as fairy tales told by my favourite grandaunt at the time and my mother, who has since passed on. I remember the anticipation of waiting for a fagogo when my grandaunt would say, "la, o le a fai le fagogo" time for a story. It was in my search for indigenous frameworks and ways of being that I came across a description of fagogo by prominent academic and statesman of Samoa:

Mama is a metaphor that connects with the ritual of the "fagogo", which also has the power to impart spiritual, emotional, physical, mental and cultural nurturance. A rough translation of "fagogo" is a fairy tale told by the elderly to the young by which the young are soothed to sleep at night. On the face of it, it seems simple. But it is not because its value to the Samoan culture is deep. Because it is the process of weaning, nurturing, sharing stories, values, rituals, beliefs, practices, and language. It helped to sustain and could still sustain a nation. (Tamasese, 2003).

This description of the fagogo moved me. It affirmed the brevity and importance of indigenous practices and gave me a new understanding as an adult of the purpose of the fagogo. Although, as a child, it was a fairy tale, as an adult, it is as Tamasese had written it is the process of weaning, nurturing, sharing stories, values, rituals, beliefs, practices and language. Upon reflection, the connection to indigenous traditions has reawakened long-forgotten childhood experiences of how I viewed the world and how deeply significant they have been throughout my life.

I now understand at a cellular level why the BrownTale principles of the collective, faith and indigeneity ring true for me. However, I never really knew why these principles truly resonated with me or their purpose until the journey of the MPP. My hope in applying 'The Niu' framework is that clients tell their fagogo so that their stories have the power to impart spiritual, emotional, mental cultural nurturance to their career pathways (Tamasese, 2003).

8.7 Conclusion - Future endeavours

The MPP has added to my confidence in my chosen field as a career counsellor for my professional growth. The most fundamental transformation and profound realisation are in the simple change in how I recognise myself as a professional in career development. When I embarked on this journey of the MPP, I called myself a career practitioner, a broad title to encompass all aspects of careers. However, in this journey of research and discovery, a career counsellor's clarity was so obvious yet not recognisable. A case of the answer 'being right under my nose', I came to this awareness through a reflective moment of writing on my propensity of working alongside individuals and creating spaces to lay down opportunities to provoke self-awareness and clarity for them to come to their understanding (Carpenter, 2010 p. 7). It was this privilege of witnessing another human being having an epiphany to their career journey, the sense of awareness, hope, and the possibility that brings direction and sustainability, where I now proudly own the title of a Career Counsellor.

The opportunity to research Pacific indigenous frameworks was impactful to my framework The Niu and the learnings and journey to come to fullness of the framework. I have learned in the process opportunities of understandings to be shared with peers and other fields and disciplines. I am aware that there is more work to explore and unpack the world of indigenous practices and their holistic benefits to any practice. This will be a self-proclaimed lifelong journey of exploring indigenous traditions applied to career theories that support culturally diverse populations.

The MPP has gifted me opportunities as a trusted advisor with a Pacific lens. I was not ready for the snowball effect of being an advisor or expert, which led to my leadership mana in the kaupapa of culturally sensitive culture responsive practices. I have been surprised by my courage to assess and explore provocative issues of colonialism, systemic racism and its impacts on the Pacific community and how that has been reflected in the practices of organisations. I am now vocal of my views, as the MPP has added to my confidence, through learning and gaining an analytical mind frame and articulating my thoughts with confidence and compassion.

It is pertinent to round up this thesis with the quote from Maya Angelou "I come as one, but I stand as ten thousand" (Angelou, 1997). I now know that I bring with me the wisdom and knowledge of my indigenous forebears, which are woven into the modernity of my career-counselling framework "The Niu". The totality of the learning process, the relationships built through the fieldwork and the connections made with career professionals has created unexpected platforms of opportunity. The first focus for 2022 will be the sole purpose of embedding the new framework "The Niu" into practice with potential Pacific leaders. Participate in the strategic goals for strengthening the future focus with the newly created group of Pacific and Maori Career Practitioners in South Auckland. Create Cultural competency workshops for practitioners keen to learn frameworks to apply to their own practices. Finally, time to put aside in February and March of 2022 to complete social enterprise business plan and model for BrownTale.

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