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**Exploring the Role of Samoan Youth in ‘Tausi Matua’ in Aotearoa New Zealand: A  
Contribution to Culturally-Diverse Elder Care Practises.**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Health Science

in

Psychology

at Massey University, Albany campus, New Zealand.

Kotalo Leau

2024

## Dedication

*I dedicate this thesis to my beautiful Grandparents*

*Our late Grandpa Arielu and our Nana Me who I was blessed to be raised by, their alofa overflowing, everyday life an infinite array of priceless memories, hallmarks of a happy home*



&

*Grandpa Leau-Niu ma Nana Eseta our angels in Heaven who have always watched over us, guiding us from above through their legacy of aiga*



*Alofa personified*

*This is for all of you*

*I will continue to do my best to honour you all always*

## Acknowledgements

*E fa'asaga a'e o'u mata i mauga, e o'o mai ai lo'u fesoasoani. O lo'u fesoasoani mai i le Ali'i lea, o lē na faia le lagi 'atoa ma le lalolagi*

*Salamo 121: 1 – 2*

*I lift up my eyes to the mountains— where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth*

*Psalms 121: 1 – 2*

E muamua lava ona sii le viiga ma le faafetai i Le Atua ona o lona alofa, lona agalelei ma lana tausiga.

Firstly, all honour and praise to God. Truly, this Masters journey brought me to my knees. But God. Despite the depths I found myself, behold you were there. A constant support and reassurance, faithful no matter how unfaithful I was. All glory and honour to you God because you redeemed, sustained and carried me, opening my eyes again and again to your love and goodness!

Everything I know about matua and tausi matua is through life with Nana and Grandpa. Nana ma Grandpa, faafetai mo lo oulua alofa, faafetai mo talosaga, faafetai mo upu timai mo matou le fanau.

To my many bonus Grandparents and elders from our in-laws, Mums side, Dads side and our churches Manurewa EFKS, Papakura PIPC and Piu EFKS, thank you for your example of true servant leadership, paving the way for us today.

Mum and Dad Reupena ma Italia Leau, my backbone and moral compass, thank you! I am so blessed to have you as my parents, my Professors of life! Dad your knowledge, wisdom and creativity and Mum your 'common sense' and practical real-world grounding are the perfect combination.

The loving hands that supported me all throughout my educational journey and in life, my village of my parents' siblings. Aunty Pea, Aunty Neta, Aunty Sulu & Uncle Lemalu, our late Uncle Parusi, Uncle Sam, Uncle Sipu & Aunty Vi, Aunty Seka & Uncle Pastor Faafia & Mums brothers Uncle Fatu & Aunty Ana, Uncle Aleki, Uncle Tip & Aunty Site and Uncle Simi & Aunty Vicky.

Shout out to:

Uncle Sam, our family educational enforcer. You're an inspiration Uncle Sam! Thanks for being with us every day and every step of the way with our studies!

Uncle Lemalu, fa'afetai lava Uncle! Our family driver, he would drop us all to Uni and pick us up no matter how late at night it was, going from Manurewa all the way to Auckland CBD.

Uncle Aleki, fa'afetai lava Leki mo ou talosaga ma fautuaga ia manuia o matou a'oa'oga!

My brilliant 'Professor of Professors' Professor Leena Siautu Alefaio-Tugia and Professor Fiona Alpass.

Siautu, thank you for your example of being faith-led! Thank you for your infinite patience! Thank you for opening the door to Postgrad for me through your study, where as you like to say, we are simply 'writing down our everyday'. To be part of NIUPATCH seeing you shine the light on the beauty of our Samoan and Pacific 'everyday' in the world of Psychology, and to witness you paving the way for Pacific Indigenous Psychology has been an honour. Faafetai, faafetai, faafetai tele lava!

Fiona, thanks to you and Professor Chris for exposing me to the ageing space in academia through the scholarship to attend the IAGG Asia-Pacific conference in Taiwan. I will always be grateful to you both as that kept the fire burning in me to share our Pacific view of elders, our 'everyday' as Siautu says. Also faafetai tele lava for tagging on to be my Supervisor!

To all the friends who have become family that pulled/dragged me through this journey

Petra JOY my additional supervisor, counsellor/therapist, friendly neighbourhood CBA, Team NIUPATCH, us for life! Thank you Petra Joy for your unwavering support throughout this journey. Your future students will be so blessed by you from your pure heart and passion.

Faith Accord crew, our Drs Sesimani, Rochelle, Velonika, Taulaga, Petra, Malcolm, Matt and our Masters team Alosina, Eirenei and Gloria. Thanks for the laughs and know we will always be in each other's corners for life.

Level 4 libz girls Sela, Fue my Health Science friends Gomathi, Monica, Kitty, Punam, Mele, my MH crew Tui, Azhar, Amrita who are all beyond sick of my updates for the past 4.5 years of Masters lol. Thank you! I promise I'll get better work stories.

My three churches

Rev Elder Talia ma Feiloaiga Tapaleao ma Manurewa EFKS – Thank you Tamā for your prayers and for your heart for youth, giving us opportunities to grow and for your advice and encouragement along the way

- Manurewa EFKS Junior Youth past and present – Thank you all. You don't know how much Fellowships, aogamea and our many many hours at church together sharing our struggles helped me. I will always appreciate you all, thank you!

Retired Rev Simatavai and the late Matautu Alefaio and Papakura PIPC – Faafetai lava mo talosaga ma upu apoapoi mo matou le fanau!

Rev Vavatau ma Roina Taufao and PIU EFKS – Fa'afetai lava **Pi**utiful mo tapuaiga e le muta ia manuia a'oaoga a alo ma tamafanau a si o tatou nuu!

My Leau-Niu cuddies Tom, Pale, Niu, Rusi, Gordo, Fue, Edo, Rhema, Roseta, Victoria, Tiara, Nikola & my Tipelu cuddies Magz, Michael, Nuku, Nepa, Lemi, Tohe, Sii, Legi, Feuz, Tarhz, Salz, Meti, Sua, Me, all our inlaws and Gen 3s & my Piu sister Lisi and siblings Eseta, Susana, and RJ. There is no me without all of you. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Last and most importantly, our study participants – the amazing youth from PIPC Papakura and EFKS Papakura and all of your elders. Thank you for sharing your hearts so openly, your experiences so heartfelt in caring for your matua. Our up and coming academics, health professionals, Prime Ministers and more, ia faamanuia Le Atua ia te outou uma!

## Abstract

Elders are held in high esteem and hold many roles in Samoan society. They are guardians of *faasamoa* [the Samoan way], way finders and prayer warriors for their family, village, and wider community. Youth in turn reciprocate values of *faasamoa* as they *Tausi matua* [care for elders]. Today Samoan youth living in the diaspora continue to *Tausi matua* despite challenges which stem from being away from their homelands. In doing so they resiliently bridge the divides between their elders and the Western world, focussed on finding the best care for their elders.

This study is part of a wider project funded by the Health Research Council of New Zealand (HRC) entitled ‘Caring for our Pacific Wisdom Bearers,’ and focuses specifically on Samoan youth carers’ experiences of caring for elders. It contributes to the paucity of research exploring relationships between youth and elders, particularly the experiences of youth caring for elders while living as diaspora.

*Fa’afaletui* [a Samoan metaphorical way of searching for wisdom] was undertaken with youth from two Samoan church congregations and revealed Samoan youth caregiving is grounded in *faasamoa*, which is enacted as *Tausi matua*. This is a cultural practice and way of being born out of their *faasinomaga* [essence of identity] with the belief that this results in *faamanuiga* [blessings] from elders that the youth can never repay.

The results revealed Samoan youth as intergenerational carers, highlighting the Samoan proverb: *E sui faiga ae tumau faavae* [Practises may change, but the foundations remain]. Challenging the perpetuated narratives of elders as “burdens” and youth as absent in care, this research adds to a gap in literature from a youth carer and Pacific diasporic experience. Elders from the Samoan worldview are centred as Wisdom Bearers: beacons of traditional knowledge, care, and love and Samoan youth are present and active in the *aiga* [family] cycle of care that evolves *seia i’u lau tausiga* [until your duty of care is fulfilled].

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*This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher named in this document is responsible for the ethical conduct of this research. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you want to raise with someone other than the researcher, please contact Professor Craig Johnson, Director (Research Ethics), email [humanethics@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethics@massey.ac.nz).*

### Glossary of Terms

Aiga	Family
Alofa	Love
Ekalesia	Church
Faaaloalo	Respect
Fa'afaletui	A Samoan metaphorical way of searching for wisdom
Faalavelave	Cultural obligations
Faasamoa	The Samoan way
Faasinomaga	Essence of identity
Faamanuiga	Blessings
Lotu	Devotion
Matua	Elder
Matua tausī	Care for elders
Meaalofa	Gift
Nuu	Village
Soifua maloloina atoatoa	Total wellbeing
Talanoa	Pacific method of data collection
Tatalo	Prayer
Tausi matua	Elders being cared for by their families
Tautua	Service
Vā fealoaloai	Concept of relational space: Everyday interactions
Vā tapuia	Concept of relational space: Sacred interactions

## Chapter 1 | Introduction

This chapter outlines how my worldview was shaped, being born in Aotearoa New Zealand (NZ) and raised by my maternal grandparents, the late Rev Arielu Tipelu, from Tuvalu, and Me Tipelu, from Samoa. It includes insights into the realities of what life is like for many Samoan youth growing up in Aotearoa NZ.

### Positionality

Though many of us '90s Pacific children were born in the diaspora, our ways of being are deeply rooted within the values of our homelands. The way I ground myself has always been from within the context of my *aiga* [family], my self being connected and collective. Memories of a young me being introduced to people would follow a similar script, moving from “*O ai lou igoa?*” [“What is your name?”] to “*Kotalo, le tama a ai?*” [“Kotalo, the child of who?”] A social marker invisibly connecting me to my *faasinomaga* [essence of identity].

### *Who am I Connected to?*

My *aiga* of grandparents, aunties and uncles would have a standard reply, “*O si o’u tama lea*” [“she is ours”] or because I was living with my grandparents it would be, “*o le tama a si toeaina ma si lo’omatua, le tama a Arielu ma Me, o ona matua e nonofo i Samoa.*” [“She is the child of her grandparents, the grandchild of Arielu and Me, her parents live in Samoa”]. An answer that could be complicated from a Western perspective, yet totally natural within our Samoan worldview. The comfort, assurance and security it brought to a young kid - priceless, that despite growing up away from her parents, in the embrace of her *aiga* she was always home.

### *Defining “Home”: Aiga*

Growing up I knew that my home was definitely not what the cartoons portrayed, which was typically a family of four consisting of a mum, dad and children (usually a girl and a boy). This was further confirmed by being asked to draw my family at school one year for

Father's Day. A puzzling experience for someone whose idea of family is layered and holistic. I ended up drawing a picture of my household at the time; myself with my grandparents and my uncle. An incomplete home as I could not figure out how to include my parents and siblings in Samoa, the cousins I grew up with, or my aunties and uncles from both sides that helped raise me. This reflects the word *aiga*. The reality is many of us Pacific children do not know life without the intertwining of generations. Living intergenerationally is a norm, and it is fluid, like my *aiga* that stretches not only across multiple households, but over oceans.

### *Aiga is Collective*

With our parents being in Samoa for church ministry most of our lives, my siblings and I are examples of being raised within a collective *aiga* which spanned across Samoa and Aotearoa NZ. This transnational way of living was not unusual to us, and we are living testimonies to the strength and support of our grandparents and parents' siblings who raised us together here in Aotearoa NZ, and the love and guidance of our parents from Samoa. This collective way of being cared for across two countries has directly influenced how I naturally reciprocate this care for my grandparents and parents in Aotearoa NZ and Samoa.

Dad emigrated from Samoa to Auckland, Aotearoa NZ in 1982, initially on a visa to settle his under-age brothers. Like so many migrant *aiga* he stayed on and gained permanent residency to work and provide for his *aiga* in Aotearoa NZ and back home in Samoa. Mum was also born in Samoa, moving to Auckland as a child with her siblings and Nana, staying with Nana's older brothers and their families before moving into their first house in Otara. They followed Grandpa who came ahead in 1960s through a work visa he got from Nana's brother, Uncle Laufale Toa'i. By the time I was born, my dad's parents were already our guardian angels in Heaven, my late grandpa Leau-Niu only seeing the eldest of us grandchildren, my cousin Tom. On Mum's side, the year I was born coincided with my

grandparents last year of ministry at Ekalesia Faapotopotoga Kerisiano Samoa (EFKS) Manurewa, before retirement and ironically, was the year my dad applied for entry into Malua Theological College to become a Church Minister.

Dad was accepted into Malua in 1996 and together with Mum, moved my older sister Eseta and I over to Samoa with them. My stay in Samoa was short-lived, being *ma'ima'ia* [sickly] leading my parents to decide that my dad's oldest sister, my Aunty Pea would go over to bring me back to Aotearoa NZ for treatment. My dad's sisters brought me to Nana and Grandpa and told them they would look after me, worrying about the strain a sick one-year-old would put on elders who had just retired. Nana would not accept this though, telling them that she was still strong, not to worry, and to leave me with them.

From then on, I have been with my Grandparents, besides a few years in Samoa joining my parents when they were first called to the 'PIUtiful' village of Piu Falealili to serve as *Faifeau* [church minister] and *Faletua* [church minister's wife].

### ***Matua – A Love With no Bounds***

The heart of a grandparent that I experienced, is a love that has no bounds. The amount of *alofa* [love] my grandparents nurtured me with is a gift that to this day is impossible to measure, irreplaceable.

Nana and Grandpa were my first teachers, instilling two of the foundational pillars in my life: Faith in God and *faasamoa* [the Samoan way]. This was more through actions than words, my earliest memories capturing them both in the daily routine of *lotu* [devotion] in our house every morning and evening. Lotu was a *pese* [song], *faitauga o le Tusi Paia* [reading of the Bible] and *tatalo* [prayer] that we continue to this day. Immersed in the Samoan language at home, I grew up reading, writing and speaking in Samoan.

I would see the sacrifices they made out of *alofa* and *tautua* [service], in order to serve God and our *aiga* to the best of their ability. Nana, our bank, would budget our

shopping each fortnight, our meals simple as she would forego expensive foods such as steak, salmon and taro for cheap meats, potatoes and rice. However, our aiga was always financially ready for our usual church and family commitments, and *faalavelave* [cultural obligations] no matter how many could come up at once. I never saw my grandparents going into debt or getting loans to fund anything. It was rare to see them stressed about anything, walking in faith with an assurance that comes from a God-centred life. Nana would always encourage us to live within our means and save our money to support our church and aiga initiatives.

Though my grandparents were retired their support of me had no limits, everything they had they would freely give to ensure I was happy and flourishing. Nana and Grandpa valued education, encouraging me to dream big. Nana would say “*o le a le mea e mafai ai e isi, ae le mafai e oe? Taumafai*” [“if others can do it, why can’t you? Give it a try.”] Together with my uncle Aleki, they would do all the *feau* [chores] at home during my school years, saying that my education was more important than chores. They were very involved in my educational journey, checking over my homework, going to all my parent interviews and prizegiving’s, walking to the park to watch me compete in sports, contributing to all the school fundraisers. No matter how many times I would tell them not to worry about the non-compulsory events, it mattered because it was from school. I discussed with them my want to get a part-time job to help our aiga in high-school and they refused, saying not to worry about money but to focus on school during the year and relax and enjoy the holiday breaks.

Looking back, the “everyday” moments at home together are now the most precious memories created out of quality time. Always present, our house would eat together, watch TV together, play cards together, and pray together. Filled with their prayers uplifting, covering, and blessing our aiga and *ekalesia* [church], Nana and Grandpa created a home of love, joy and peace, a safe haven for our aiga.

### ***Tausi Matua – A Care With no Bounds***

In every Samoan setting, whether it was in our aiga, our ekalesia and even back home in our *nuu* [villages], elders held the pride of place. *Tausi matua* [care for elders] then, was a normal part of the Samoan way of life that I was immersed in. There was no clear age or moment where one becomes *Tausi matua*, each generation is part of the care in some way, from young to old, a feature of a collective culture raised by elders *alofa*.

As we all grew older, I could support my grandparents more with things I saw my parents, uncles and aunties help them with when I was younger. As a child it was helping with household chores. Living in Aotearoa NZ there were clear language and system barriers for them in accessing essential services. Thus I was their translator, advocate, and helper on their various errands of shopping, banking, paying bills, and appointments. My uncle taught me how to help them with their mail-correspondence. Learning to drive meant we were no longer reliant on public transport or my uncles and cousins, and by this time I was also old enough to take over the running of the household in terms of chores, cooking and cleaning.

Now I am at the stage where together with my aiga, I have more responsibility in ensuring Nana is well, cared for, and happy. This is by continuing the routine I have lived most of my life including our daily lotu and meals together as a family, ensuring Nana remains involved in all the church activities as she wishes, and that we keep up to date with all her appointments. It also involves incorporating new things into our routine to help with Nana's health, such as my sister doing chair yoga with her now and taking her to the pool; or video-calling with her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren overseas.

Like how a grandparent's love has no bounds, I have seen/witnessed that *Tausi matua* is a care with no bounds, where we communally are all responsible for ensuring our elders' happiness and *soifua maloloina atoatoa* [total wellbeing].

Though we cannot repay their love, Tausi matua is our expression of alofa as aiga and communities, our hearts of gratitude from the sacrifices our elders made for us. As a result of my experiences being cared for by my grandparents and then reciprocating this as a carer for them now, I became interested in the role of Samoan youth the care of elders. Specifically, here in Aotearoa NZ which is a completely different context to our homeland of Samoa, what aspects have changed and more importantly what remains the same.

### **Research Objectives**

Arising from the reflections of my own experience with Tausi matua were two key questions:

- What are the perspectives of Pacific (specifically Samoan) youth regarding elder-care in Aotearoa NZ?
- What elder-care practises and responsibilities do Samoan youth undertake in Aotearoa NZ?

Consequently, the main aims of this study are to:

1. Explore the views of Samoan youth on elder-care and their role in caring for elders, growing up in the diaspora
2. Further uncover what elder-care looks like in practise for Samoan youth in Aotearoa NZ.

This research utilises *talanoa* [a Pacific method of data collection] within *Fa'afaletui* [a Samoan metaphorical way of searching for wisdom] with Samoan youth from a wider Health Research Council (HRC) funded study: “Caring for our wisdom bearers: Pacific Matua (Elder) care; HRC ref id: 18/579” led by Professor Siautu Alefaio-Tugia. As Youth-Lead in this wider study, my role was to facilitate the talanoa within Fa'afaletui with Samoan youth from our Samoan congregations. Our wider study aimed to identify Pacific elder-care practices that contribute to the health and wellbeing of Pacific elders, carers, and families,

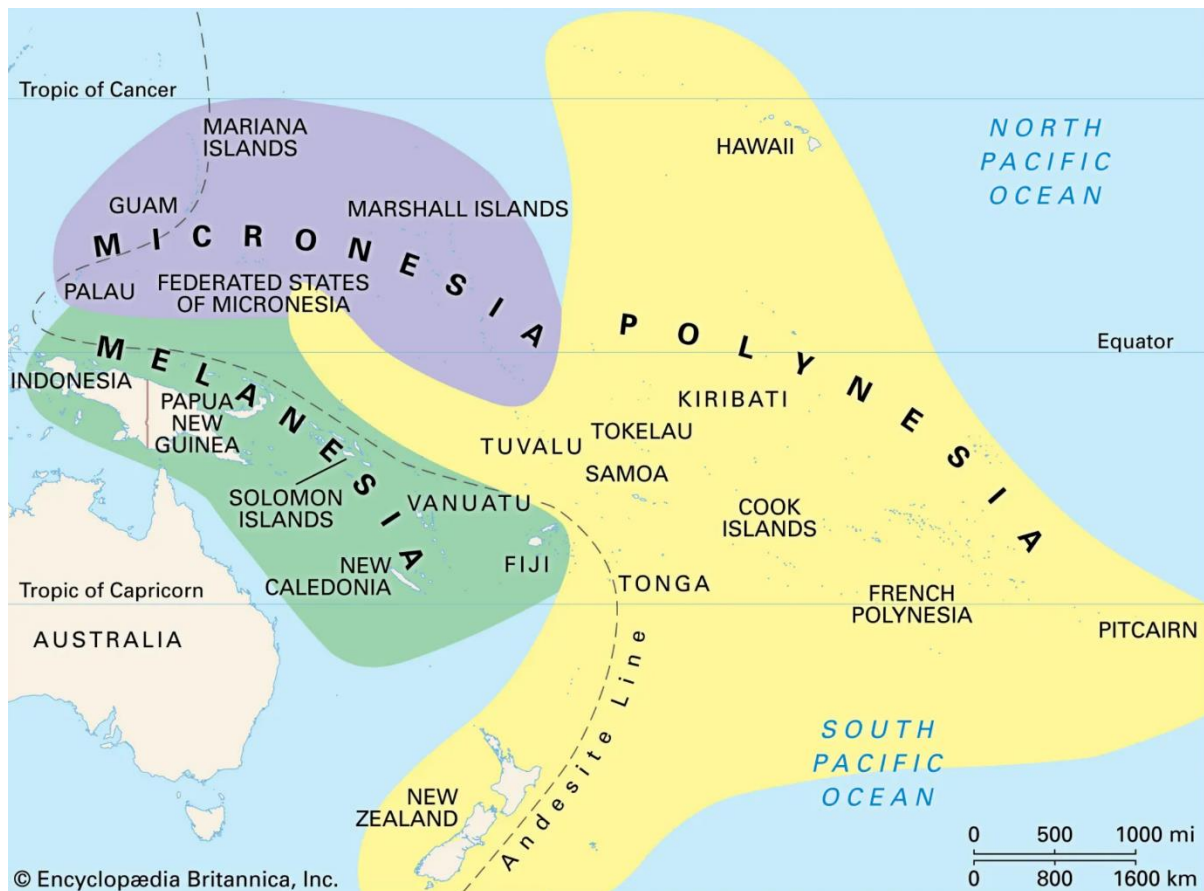
examine the impact of cultural-contextual change on Pacific *Matua* [elder] care practices and detail the socio-cultural and material supports needed to sustain Pacific care practices.

## Chapter 2 | Literature Review

### The Pacific Region

Hau'ofa (1994) describes the Pacific as a “sea of islands,” which is how he believes our ancestors viewed our home of over two thousand years (p. 153). Not as “islands in the sea”, small dots of vulnerability and dependency, but instead, encompassing our vast ocean as a central feature of our home, a sea of possibilities and connection linking us as “ocean peoples” to each other and the world (Hau'ofa, 1994, p. 153). Geographically, the “sea of islands” refers to both the Pacific Islands and the Pacific Ocean they lie within, the largest ocean in the world spanning one-third of Earth's surface (Fischer, 2017).

European “discovery” in the 1500s, marked the creation of imaginary boundary lines and conceptualisations of the Pacific, perpetuating the simplistic notion of islands in the sea. Kiste (1994) remarked “the Pacific as it is generally thought of today is an invention of the West” (p. 3). Over time this region was divided into three distinct cultural areas of Polynesia (many islands), Micronesia (small islands) and Melanesia (black islands), thought to encapsulate groups of islands that were “similar” in cultural characteristics (Fischer, 2017). At first these terms were nothing more than arbitrary labels coined by outsiders, in this case French academics and voyagers for a European audience. However, over time, these divisions seem to have become accepted and utilised by the Pacific islands themselves in their political interactions (Kiste, 1994). Figure 1 depicts how the countries of the Pacific are divided into these three regions today.

**Figure 1***The Three Ethnogeographic Regions of the Pacific*

*Note.* This map shows the countries of the Pacific Islands divided into the three ethnogeographic groups of the Pacific. From “Culture Areas of the Pacific Islands,” by Encyclopædia Britannica, 2023, (<https://www.britannica.com/place/Pacific-Islands>).

### **Pacific Diaspora**

Though the effects of globalisation are apparent in many more ways than the creation and subsequent usage of these terms in the Pacific, what has remained constant in the histories told by Pacific peoples themselves and those observed by outsiders is of continuous movement (Fischer, 2017). Fluid and mobile voyagers, Pacific peoples navigated the seas around them criss-crossing the Pacific Ocean on waves of migration that have continued today (Hau’ofa, 1994).

In the past the term diaspora was used to describe the ancient movements of the Israelites after the exile to Babylon but now refer to groups of people who have been

displaced or scattered with a longing to one day return to their homelands (Alefaio, 2009). Pacific Diaspora therefore is described as “a way of understanding the movements or scattering of people through the Pacific region” (Alefaio, 2009, p. 171). Movements that are not new but have increased in both size and distance in the past few decades to countries such as Aotearoa NZ, Australia and the United States of America towards economic opportunities that will provide for families (Alefaio, 2021).

### **Pacific Migration**

Pacific peoples were slowly moving to Aotearoa NZ in the early 1900s, but the economic boom post-World War II in the 1940s led to wide-scale migration of Pacific people. Those from the Cook Islands, Tokelau and Niue had automatic Aotearoa NZ citizenship from their constitutional ties with Aotearoa NZ (Wright & Hornblow, 2010). Other Pacific groups came through alternative routes such as quotas for Samoa and skills schemes for Tonga and Fiji (Wright & Hornblow, 2010). These policies together with a relaxed stance on immigration laws encouraged Pacific migration as “cheap” labour for Aotearoa NZ that could help plug the holes in their thriving blue-collar economy (Abuse in Care Royal Commission of Inquiry, 2024). For Pacific peoples, they saw life in Aotearoa NZ as the land of milk and honey, providing work, incomes and education for their children that would lead to future success for their whole families (Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2023).

However, the economic downturn in Aotearoa NZ in the 1970s signalled a change in the reception of Pacific Islanders (Cook et al., 2001). They quickly went from being valued and needed, to becoming scapegoats; targets of vicious and deliberately racist campaigns painting them as to blame for the deteriorating social and economic conditions Aotearoa NZ was now in (Salesa, 2017). The later Dawn Raids focussed on sending overstayers back to their homelands through not only random raids of homes, often at dawn, but also workplaces,

churches, and other public areas and venues (Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2023).

Exposing a dark undercurrent of racial profiling in Aotearoa NZ, Pacific peoples made up over 80% of arrests, despite more than two-thirds of overstayers being from Western countries (Fepuleai, 2005).

Pacific peoples quickly learnt that these new lands brought challenges amid opportunities. Moving to be close to jobs in the blue-collar economy has led to Pacific families being overrepresented in urban areas that are highly deprived, with more than half living in the poorest areas of Aotearoa NZ (Ryan et al., 2019). They are also more likely to live on lower incomes or unemployed when compared to other ethnic groups and more likely to live in overcrowded homes that they are renting rather than owning. Pacific peoples are also more likely to report living in damp, cold and mouldy housing (Ryan et al., 2019).

Education, seen as the key to future success has been improving for Pacific learners over time (Ministry of Education [MOE], 2019). However, in 2018, Pacific youth were still less likely to have their NCEA Level 2 at 18 years old or University Entrance when compared to other ethnic groups. These qualifications are markers for employment prospects, health and well-being and living standards (MOE, 2019).

Though Pacific peoples are likely to report their health and wellbeing as high, the statistics show major ethnic gaps in health that are not only unequal but are avoidable and unfair thus are inequities that are persisting over time. Pacific people have a lower life expectancy than non-Māori and non-Pacific people (Ryan et al., 2019). They are also more likely to have higher rates of long-term health conditions than non-Māori, and Pacific groups are most likely to live with two or more chronic health conditions, known as multimorbidity. Access barriers to quality healthcare including costs and communication issues are common for Pacific patients (Ryan et al., 2019).

Despite coming from diverse homelands, moving to Western countries such as Aotearoa NZ, meant often being grouped as one homogenous group of Pacific peoples that were further classed as minorities. Alefaio-Tugia (2022) clarifies the distinct cultures that exist under the umbrella term of “Pacific”:

The homogeneous term “Pacific” is often used to describe a group of island nations from Oceania, including, though not exclusive to, Samoa, Cook Islands, Tonga, Niue, Tokelau, Tuvalu, and Fiji. Recognizing and honoring the differences of each Pacific nation is vital, especially as language, culture, status, authority, tradition, obligations, and power structures are different for each. Variations of the term “Pacific” have proliferated over time, starting with “Pacific Islanders,” which is still commonly used in the United States, and continuing with “Pasefika,” “Pasifika,” and “Pacific peoples,” which are used mostly in the Global South. (p. 286)

Since the bigger wave of migration in the 1940s, Aotearoa NZ has become home for an increasing number of Pacific peoples. Articulated by Macpherson et al. (2001) “while they remained attached to the islands from which they had migrated, they were also increasingly committed to the distinctive society which they were building for themselves, their children and grandchildren in Aotearoa” (p. 12). Pacific migrants created community hubs that are now deeply rooted places of connection highlighting the importance of faith, family and community. These included churches, as Christianity is deeply embedded in Pacific cultures with almost 95% of Pacific peoples in Aotearoa NZ affiliated with some form of Christianity in 2018 (Ministry for Pacific Peoples [MPP], 2021). As stated by Alefaio-Tugia (2022) “for most Pasifika, quality of life is centred around community” (p. 8). Migration was also further afield than Aotearoa NZ connecting Pacific homelands to a wider array of places and thus resources (Macpherson et al., 2001).

By 2018, almost one in every ten people in Aotearoa NZ were Pacific (StatsNZ, n.d.). Pacific peoples are the youngest population group in Aotearoa NZ, with a median age of 23 years old (MPP, 2021). Samoans are the largest group (48%), followed by Tongans (22%), Cook Island Māori (21%) and Niueans (8%) (Stats NZ, n.d.). For some of these island groups, there are now more people living in Aotearoa NZ, than back in the homelands (Auckland Council, 2018). Most of the Pacific people living in Aotearoa NZ now are Aotearoa NZ-born (Stats NZ, 2023). Salesa (2017) commented that “these days, the chief ports of entry for Pacific peoples are the country’s maternity wards” (p.1). For those that were not born in Aotearoa NZ, almost half have lived in Aotearoa NZ for at least 20 years (MPP, 2021). Today there is much more cultural diversity in Aotearoa NZ with almost half of the Pacific population being more than one ethnicity (Stats NZ, 2023). Though the amount of bilingual and trilingual speakers has decreased over time, more than a third of Pacific peoples are bilingual (MPP, 2021). The population of Seniors (65 years and older) are keeping their mother-tongues alive, with the majority being fluent in their mother-tongue and a smaller group being bilingual with English (MPP, 2021). Reflecting on the effects of migration, Macpherson et al. (2001) noted that “this process has resulted in the growth of both ‘transnational corporations of kin’ and ‘transnational island societies’, which include people who have never been out of the home islands and others who have never been in them” (p. 13).

Narrowing in on the Samoan population, unsurprisingly due to their numbers they follow the trends of the Pacific group overall. Most Samoans in Aotearoa NZ are born in Aotearoa NZ and are youth-aged (Stats NZ, n.d.). More than two-thirds are Christian, and more than half of their population speak Samoan, though both of these traits have decreased over time. However, the Samoan language is still being retained in the elder population who were far more likely to be bilingual than the youth (MPP, 2021). While less than 10% of

Samoans are unemployed, they are more likely to be in jobs that are in the lower income bands (Stats NZ, n.d.).

### **Pacific Worldviews and Values**

Though all Pacific cultures are unique and diverse, there are shared overarching values that link them as *Tagata o le Moana* [people of the Pacific Ocean]. These shared Pacific worldviews highlight a connected world, where “all things are perceived as existing in a state of relatedness” (Teariki & Leau, 2023, p. 15). Other shared views include the notion of the “self” as holistic, bound within respectful relationships to others; God, people, and the wider environment. Relationships to others also transcend time including the past, present and future (Teariki & Leau, 2023). Being “others-focussed” is apparent with common Pacific values including the importance of family, collectivism, consensus, reciprocity, respect, spirituality and love (MPP, 2022).

#### ***Family***

Family is the base unit of identity and belonging within Pacific cultures (Mulatilo et al., 2000). The definition of family is wide, encompassing all extended relations (Ofahengaue et al., 2008). Each family member has a role with duties and responsibilities to the collective at every stage of the life cycle (Ihara & Vakalahi, 2011).

Elders are the most respected and revered members of Pacific families and communities (Tamasese et al., 2014). Although there are nuances in how different Pacific cultures define “elder” in terms of factors such as age-range and maturity (Tamasese et al., 2014), across Pacific worldviews they serve as the living links to ancestors that have passed on (Ledoux-Taau’aletoa, 2013). As the leaders of their families, elders have insight, discernment, and a forward focus, looked upon to navigate their people skilfully and successfully through any challenge. For their children they pass on knowledge of land and genealogy (Tamasese et al., 2014). To younger generations they uphold and impart forward

wisdom, cultural values, and traditions, continuing the collective legacies of their families and wider communities (Ihara & Vakalahi, 2011). Within the entire family and community, they have the authority and respect to resolve any problems that may arise, with the aim always being to reach an agreement that promotes peace and harmony (Tamasese et al., 2014).

Respecting elders is a core value in relations within Pacific cultures, with all other relationships orienting around this belief, where the elders are the focal point, and the role of all the generations below them is to care for them and carry out their wishes (Ledoux-Taua'aletoa, 2013). As physical abilities decrease, care from the family as a collective, increases. Traditionally the adult children would coordinate the care of elders, made easier by the traditional communal life in the Pacific Islands with open-style homes and multiple generations living within them (Tamasese et al., 2014). With families usually high in physical numbers and the islands rich and bountiful in food supply, some family members would go out to work to support the family whereas others would stay back and care for the elders and children (Fa'aea & Enari, 2021).

For Samoan families, the role of children and youth is to observe, listen and action the examples their parents set in serving their elders (Fa'aea & Enari, 2021). They then serve all the generations above them, doing what they can to help care for their elders, such as running errands (Ledoux-Taua'aletoa, 2013).

Serving family and community looks different at each part of life but the common thread with each role is that all throughout life there is an interdependence on one another, everyone has a responsibility to serve each other (Fa'aea & Enari, 2021).

### ***Wellbeing***

For Pacific peoples, health is more than “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” (World Health

Organization [WHO], n.d., Constitution section). In Pacific worldviews, wellness is balance and harmony with God, people, and the environment (Ihara & Vakalahi, 2011). Health has a spiritual aspect where a spiritual imbalance can manifest in issues impacting other facets of health such as mental and physical. Health and wellbeing is also collective, where an individual's health is strongly connected to family and community (Ioane & Tudor, 2023).

Reflecting these Pacific indigenous ways of being, over time, Pacific scholars have created Pacific Models of Health that are (or should be more) utilised within Aotearoa NZ healthcare practise and policy. This includes Fuimaono Karl Pulotu-Endemann's Fonofale model, created in the 1980s based on workshops with different Pacific groups, depicting a holistic view of Pacific wellbeing as a *fale* [house] (Ioane & Tudor, 2017). In the Fonofale model family is the foundation; culture is the roof and shelter; and the different facets of wellbeing, including spirituality and other markers of identity such as age and socioeconomic status, are the *pou* [pillars] holding up the fale. The fale is also encapsulated within the cocoon of time, context and environment (Pulotu-Endemann, 2009). Each facet of the Fonofale model is visually presented in Figure 2 below.

**Figure 2**

*Fonofale Model by Karl Pulotu-Endemann*



*Note.* This model shows the facets of wellbeing from a Samoan worldview. From “Fonofale model of health” [Paper presentation] by F.K. Endemann in *Workshop on Pacific Models for Health Promotion*, Massey University, Wellington, New Zealand. <https://tinyurl.com/fonofale2001> (Original work created 2001.).

### **Samoa Worldview – Faasamoa**

Faasamoa is the “Samoan indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing” or the Samoan way (Faaleava & Alefaio, 2021, p.59). Alefaio-Tugia (2022) shares an overarching concept of faasamoa, referring to it as *faasinomaga*:

Fa’asinomaga is our inheritance designated by the designator – God. This designation is located in the heart, mind, and soul of a person – essentially our spirit. It is what gives us meaning and belonging. It is what defines relationships (*vā fealoaloa’i*) and boundaries (*tua’oi*) between ourselves and others, us and the environment, us and the cosmos, and us and God (p. 3).

faasinomaga gives direction and purpose to all Samoans, with values such as *faaloalo* [respect] and tautua flowing from this spring.

### ***Fa'aaloalo (Respect)***

Faasamoa is centred around the appropriate ways of relating to one another, and thus, is bound by the interconnected layers of faaloalo. There is a hierarchy of faaloalo that moves up from young to old, with elders revered as the leaders of their aiga whether they hold formal chiefly titles or not (Fa'aea & Enari, 2021). In faasamoa, people navigate their relationships to others by nurturing the different forms of *Vā* [social boundaries] including *Vā fealoaloai* and *Vā tapuia*. *Vā fealoaloai* is reciprocal faaloalo in everyday interactions. Everyone is faaloalo to each other no matter who they are. *Vā tapuia* is the *Vā* that is *tapu* [sacred]. This *Vā* embodies a different and additional layer of faaloalo where certain relationships have clear boundaries that are forbidden to cross, to ensure the honour of those involved remains intact and to safeguard society. Honouring the different forms of *Vā* interactions ensure that people are honoured appropriately in every situation with faaloalo. Though there is a hierarchy of respect, when issues arise in families, generations come together to dialogue, and problem solve as a collective (Vakalahi et al., 2013).

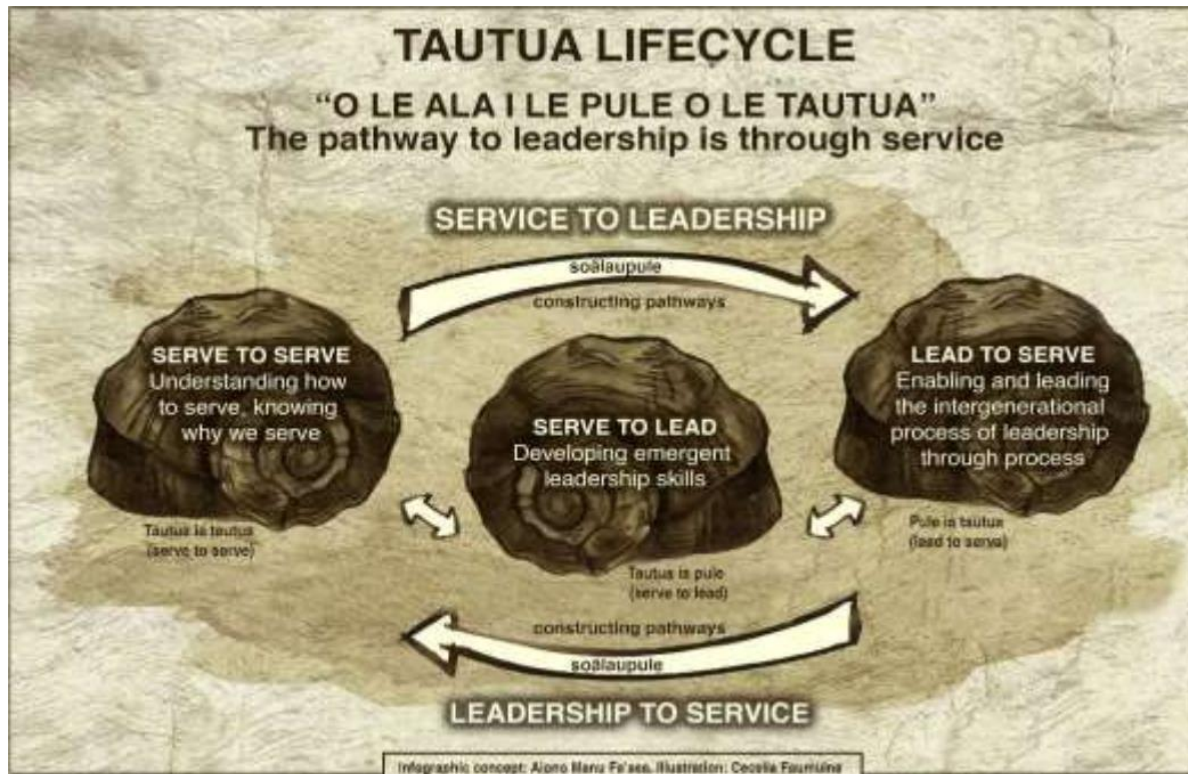
### ***Tautua (Service)***

Traditionally, tautua is shown in the way you honour, respect and obey God, your family, your village, and your homeland (Fa'aea & Enari, 2021). Children are to serve their elders and observe tautua in the family and community context. The parent generation are serving the elders while teaching the children. At this stage they have a bigger role in the wider family and community, contributing to communal efforts. Elders focus is on imparting their wisdom. Tautua is essential for any and every Samoan, whether you live in Samoa or not as you can serve your family, village and church from afar. It is thought that tautua is a way to *faaeaina* [elevate] the position of one's family within the community (Fa'aea & Enari,

2021). Fa'aea and Enari (2021) coined the term, “intergenerational sphere of service” in faasamoa, made up of three components that are interrelated, as shown in Figure 3.

**Figure 3**

*Tautua Lifecycle – Intergenerational Sphere of Service*



*Note.* This model shows the Tautua lifecycle and the interconnections. From “The pathway to leadership is through service: Exploring the Samoan tautua lifecycle” by A. M. Faaea & D. Enari (2021) in *Pacific Dynamics: Journal of Interdisciplinary Research*, 5(1), 93-100. <https://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10092/101592/7%20Tautua-final.pdf?sequence=5>

### **Tautua ia Tautua [Serve to Serve].**

This applies to the third generation downwards, children are expected to listen, “*vaai i le faatino*” [observe and then do]. They serve anyone older than them in all social spheres that their family is a part of such as their wider aiga, church, and community. They are also taught the value of tautua as it shows core values in faasamoa of faaaloalo and alofa (Fa'aea & Enari, 2021).

### **Tautua ia Pule [Serve to Rule].**

This is the second generation or the in-between group. They tautua the older generations and teach and advise the younger generations. They are also at the stage where they can fund and resource the needs of their aiga (Fa'aea & Enari, 2021).

### **Pule ia Tautua [Rule to Serve].**

The role of the oldest generation is to help build upon their family's collective legacy, passing on their wealth of knowledge and experience to their next generations. Elders engage in decision making with the generation just below them. They also learn from the generations below ways to navigate changes that occur over time including new technologies (Fa'aea & Enari, 2021).

Another form of tautua is *tautua mamao*, which loosely translates to describe a type of service from afar. It was originally used to describe *matai* [chiefs], or people who were no longer serving at the coalface of family, village, and church affairs. Now tautua mamao includes people who have left their village and the everyday, face-to-face tautua, and have moved to Apia (Samoa's capital) for work and send contributions back to their villages. This term also incorporates those who have migrated out of Samoa yet continue to serve families and communities in the islands via remittances and resources (Fa'aea & Enari, 2021).

### ***Tausi Matua (Caring for Elders)***

Children are fostered to have a sense of giving back to their parents and their aiga who raised them and cared for them (Yeh et al., 2014). There is belief in faasamoa, that those who care for their elders are blessed; a concept rooted in Samoa's predominantly Christian faith. Those who neglect, hurt, or overall disrespect their elders are *faamalaia* [cursed], and bring shame to themselves and their families (Ledoux-Taua'aletoa, 2013). Caring for elders is seen as a blessing for both the elder and the carer. Elders are inherently blessed by who they are and their role in the community, whereas for carers, the opportunity to care for elders is

seen as a blessing in itself, and the act of caring also brings about blessings. The reciprocal nature of caring enriches and fulfils both the elders and their carers spiritually and culturally.

### ***Church and Spirituality***

The motto for Samoa is “*E Faavae i Le Atua Samoa*,” [Samoa is founded on God](Amosa, 2014). Samoans held spiritual beliefs long before the arrival of Christianity which included *Tagaloaalagi* [the supreme God], and minor Gods such as *Nafanua*, a fearless and powerful warrior-goddess (Amosa, 2014). It is believed that Christianity was quickly accepted in Samoa as it was a fulfilment of Nafanua’s prophecy that a God would come from the Heavens who would rule over Samoa (Meleisea, 1987). John Williams of the London Missionary Society (LMS) is credited with bringing the “good news” of Jesus Christ to Samoa in 1830, however this is disputed by other denominations in Samoa, with the Samoan Methodist church crediting Tongan missionaries two years earlier in 1828 (Palenapa, 1993).

Pacific peoples carried their faith with them to Aotearoa NZ, elders of today in the diaspora laid the foundations of churches that became community spaces for migrants, a village away from the islands, and a safe space of spiritual and cultural support. These churches offered familiarity in the new, unfamiliar world that they were trying to navigate. The first Pacific church was established in 1947 under Pacific Islanders’ Congregational Church (PICC) in Newton Auckland. It later became the multi-ethnic Pacific Island Presbyterian Church (PIPC) (Macpherson, 2018). In the late 1960s, members from the PICC group wanted to anchor their worship within faasamoa, so they began to form the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa (CCCS) or EFKS churches in Aotearoa NZ (Macpherson, 2018). In Aotearoa NZ, CCCS and PIPC churches tend to incorporate more faasamoa into their way of worship and are therefore referred to as “traditional Samoan churches”. Youth in these churches are most likely to be Aotearoa NZ born children of migrants who had moved over. Churches in the diaspora became a slice of the islands,

avenues wherein language, attire, dance, songs, sports that were an everyday part of life in Samoa could be maintained (Palenapa, 1993). Churches in the diaspora now also function as cultural hubs where faasamoa is taught and enacted, and Aotearoa NZ born Samoans learn about history, language, dance and songs (Yeh et al., 2014).

## **Caring for Elders**

### ***Global Perspectives in Caring***

The world population is living longer, leading to a growing population of older people. It is expected that by 2030, 1 in 6 people will be 60 years or older (WHO, 2022). Further, the number of older people is increasing faster than the amount of the age groups below (United Nations, n.d.). With these trends, there is growing concern on what has been labelled as the “burden of the ageing population”. This argument predicts that older people will put increasing strain on global health systems and economies, burdening society overall with the risk of multiple health issues and higher, more complex care needs (Tang et al., 2022).

There are differing cultural views on elders affecting where responsibility is placed in terms of their care. Dominant Western culture prioritises individual responsibility and independence and thus ageing is framed from a negative lens of increasing frailty and dependency (WHO, 2015). Being interdependent, collectivist cultures view ageing as a shared responsibility for the family and thus, care for elders as the norm; a concept coined by Alefaio-Tugia (2022) as being “others-centred”. What is more, women shoulder the bulk of caregiving as daughters or as daughters-in-law (Pharr et al., 2014; Zarzycki et al., 2023).

### ***Importance of Caring for Pacific Elders***

Ageing, from a Pacific lens, is a blessing and an honour, apparent in the view of elders as the most respected and revered members of Pacific societies (Fa’aea & Enari, 2021). Being an elder is therefore the most important stage of life, due to having the most

responsibility within the collective, thus, elders also receive the most respect. Responsibilities include keeping their finger on the pulse of the relational wellbeing of their families and communities, helping to heal rifts that arise (Tamasese et al., 2014). There are different layers to who is considered an elder, with being an elder determined not only by age and leadership, but also as maturity or the ability to judge with wisdom, known as *Moe o le Tofa* (Tamasese et al., 2014).

Talanoa with Samoan elders revealed different roles they hold in Samoan society. *Olomatua* [defence post], is a name given to elder women of the aiga and *Toeaina* [elder man] is used to refer to men (Tamasese et al., 2014). This group is said to differ to the group who are *Matua Tausi* [elders being cared for by their families] as *Olomatua* and *Toeaina* are still actively involved in the operations of their communities as engaged leaders. Comparatively *Matua Tausi* are in the life stage where they are involved in the higher-level decision-making processes, while other family members carry out the instructions they provide. Each group continues to contribute to their families, church and villages by imparting wisdom and navigating younger generations through life, and this does not end with retirement.

Throughout the diaspora, as the elders move more into an advisory role of directing their children, the children will resource their elders' contributions for family and community matters (Ledoux-Ta'ua'aletoa, 2013). These contributions of finances and other resources are not only for commitments in the diaspora but also in Samoa, and include remittances helping to fund family, church and village commitments. Children also financially assist elders in everyday living in the diaspora (Fa'aea & Enari, 2021).

### *Tausi Matua in the Diaspora*

#### **Intergenerational Reciprocity in Care.**

Ledoux-Taua'aletoa (2013) explains that for Pacific children in Aotearoa NZ their parents are often working, and so it is usual for them to be primarily cared for by their grandparents. The grandparents provide practical support that can include meals, bathing, transport to school, and other various activities. They are involved in all areas of a child's growth especially in terms of passing down spiritual guidance and cultural knowledge and practises such as language and culture. Elders can also be the link for children born in the diaspora, to health practises such as traditional healing. Importantly, they continue to support the parents (their children) with guidance and advice. Furthering the importance of this role, the grandparent-grandchild relationship differs to that of the parent-child, characterised by the ability of grandparents to spoil their grandchildren and the authority to protect them from their parents, given their status as elders (Ledoux-Taua'aletoa, 2013).

For younger generations, honouring elders' contributions to their lives and love for them tends to be reciprocated by children as they age, giving back the care they received from their elders (Tamasese et al., 2014). In the diaspora this could include helping grandparents in their interactions with the Western world such as entitlements, bridging the digital divide, and translations. Grandchildren support their elders with everyday tasks including household chores and driving. Elders' different appointments (medical and otherwise) are also prioritised within the family, with households arranging schedules in a way that allows someone to accompany the elder to ensure they are well looked after (Ledoux-Taua'aletoa, 2013).

Tamasese et al. (2014) explains that the carer role is a shared responsibility that transcends individual households, extending across multiple generations and even geographic regions. These responsibilities involve tasks which are divided between the different age-

groups. Younger children may take on practical tasks that bring elders comfort or entertainment, for example, massaging their feet. Youth may physically provide for elders with tasks such as fishing for their meals. With their age and availability, youth may also help with bathing, cooking, and transport. Adults will take on actioning elders' instructions in regard to their social role in the family and community (Tamasese et al., 2014).

### **Difficulties of Care in the Diaspora.**

Tautua is not easy for Samoan youth in the diaspora who must balance multiple demands on their time including family, work and study (Fa'aea & Enari, 2021). In Aotearoa NZ, the younger generation of carers need to work to sustain the cost of living. This can negatively impact the quality of life for elders who may be at home alone while the household works. However, there is often a collective organising of the family around the elder with other family members stepping in to help care for the elder when the main carer is unable to for any reason. Additionally, this collective support and responsibility is not limited to the household or local family but extends to include family members overseas (Tamasese et al., 2014). With family all over the world, Pacific families continue to sustain their familial ties including supporting family in the homeland via remittances as they are not always able to contribute in person (Vakalahi et al., 2013).

Despite the dispersal of Samoan families across the diaspora and in Samoa, where values of faaaloalo and tautua are shared, cultural disparities exist between regions. Youth find it hard to balance navigating both the Western and Samoan worlds as the core value of individualism persists in predominantly European countries such as Aotearoa NZ, and opposes the interdependency of faasamoa (Yeh et al., 2014). A clear example is illustrated through Samoan youth living in the United States who spoke of home being a place where family is prioritised over the self, emphasising their role to obey their elders. They then contrast these ideas at school where the self is the priority, and the individual must make their

own decisions (Yeh et al., 2014). These youth of the Samoan diaspora in the United States, shared examples of missing school to fulfil family obligations such as caring for elders and attending family and community functions like funerals. Juggling these multiple roles is often invisible to mainstream society and so the perception of these students at schools is that they are rebellious, truants or students who have a disregard of education (Yeh et al., 2014).

Shame can be associated with not caring for elders or caring for elders in a way that is frowned upon within Pacific cultures. The perception of residential care within Pacific cultures is very negative, it is commonly seen as neglect or abandonment of elders by heartless children (Tamasese et al., 2014). The belief is that in handing over their care to strangers, these children have not only missed out on opportunities for blessings but are also cursed. However, there seems to be exceptions with more understanding and sympathy for families of elders with “new” diseases, such as dementia (Tamasese et al., 2014).

There can be difficulties in navigating multiple generations within a household, particularly as roles evolve. As children become parents they must establish and enforce boundaries for their own children, while elders move into an advisory role in the family (Ledoux-Taua’aletoa, 2013). Other issues such as elder abuse can occur in these living arrangements, in part due to carers not having adequate support. This also seems to be the case when abuse occurs in institutional settings such as hospitals and residential services (Tamasese et al., 2014). There is less support for carers finding suitable and sustainable work to support them while caring for elders, as well as for elders that may want to continue working for an income (Thaggard et al., 2020).

For Samoan elders, living away from their homelands may lead them to depend more on children and grandchildren due to language barriers and the accessibility of resources, and some elders may not be eligible for government supports (Thaggard et al., 2020). Though elder abuse may be more hidden in Pacific cultures as it is deeply shameful for elders and

families, it does happen to Pacific elders living in Western societies. However, it may manifest in ways that are not captured by current Western definitions of elder abuse (Thaggard et al., 2020). In conversations with Pacific elders in Aotearoa NZ, Thaggard et al. (2020) showed that cultural, financial, physical, social and spiritual elder abuse occurred. Some elders also believed core values such as respect may have diminished over time, some stating youth are more disobedient now than previous generations. This was emphasised further by Pacific elders also disclosing physical abuse from family members and fearing their children; contrasting with the value of respect, contributing to the stigma, shame, and silence. Others stated that fundamental beliefs, such as the blessings that come from above for those that genuinely care for their elders, is not taught to children today, claiming they have the sense that young people today can be indifferent to these teachings.

Elders also said that the gradual decline of the Samoan language in newer generations, meant they too, were also less immersed in the Samoan language, a major link to the Samoan world, affecting their mental health, memory retention and overall joy in life (Thaggard et al., 2020). Living in Western societies could also mean children taking their elders' money and assets without their consent especially as elders may be less aware of the systems and processes and their rights. Other elders mentioned that their children taking advantage of them for childcare could also be a form of elder abuse. This is due to what elders perceived as a lack of consideration for the physical strain of childcare on elders, and how the presence of grandchildren could affect elders' ability to attend to their social duties such as faalavelave. Spiritual abuse can also occur when elders are not taken to church or religious activities that are important to them. This issue is compounded by a reliance on newer generations for transport, and less apparent in the islands with churches mostly located within walking distance in the village (Thaggard et al., 2020).

In contrast, the islands rely less on finances for everyday needs, with majority of the population living on family land, meaning no cost for food and housing (Vakalahi et al., 2013). Consistent social support is also more feasible living communally as part of a wider aiga, with some people able to stay home and care for elders. Living more commonly as collectives can also allow elders to rest as there are enough people to look after children and take on duties that finances may not allow for in Aotearoa NZ (Thaggard et al., 2020).

### **Formal Supports Available in Aotearoa NZ.**

For carers and Seniors in Aotearoa NZ, there is limited financial and material assistance available. Through Work and Income New Zealand (WINZ), carers can apply for a Supported Living payment, a weekly payment for a full-time carer of someone with a serious health condition that includes elders who would otherwise require residential care (Ministry of Social Development [MSD], 2021). This payment does little to relieve financial pressure for families as it is far below minimum wage and has constraints on the number of hours that carers can work whilst on this benefit. For elders who have been Aotearoa NZ residents for at least 10 years, from 65 years of age, they are eligible for the New Zealand Superannuation payment. There is also financial support and subsidies available to support with medical costs and housing (MSD, 2021). With the rising costs of living, these supports do not go as far as they did in the past. Equipment to support mobility and modification of housing to suit mobility needs are also available through the Ministry of Health (MSD, 2021). In reality, there are strict criteria and significant delays in assessments and from assessment to actual modifications, with many families waiting years to receive modifications to their homes.

### **Conclusion**

This overview of relevant literature provides insight into the realities of Pacific people, rich in culture and identity, that at the core challenges the notion of independence by being others-centred. These beliefs spurring them on to traverse the seas seeking new waves

of opportunity for their families and communities. There is a substantial amount of literature on how Pacific people have continued to navigate new contexts of the diaspora, highlighting changes in the way Pacific worldviews are enacted while holding on to the values that guide them. However, in the context of faasamoa [The Samoan way] and Tausi matua [Elder care], a practise that has carried on within the diaspora, there is little research on this area.

Completely absent in the literature are voices of Samoan youth and how they view Tausi matua, as well as the challenges and barriers that families experience with Tausi matua in the diaspora. This research aims to fill this gap in literature through exploring the role of youth carers in the aiga and highlighting Pacific worldviews in elder care such as Tausi matua.

Importantly, from a healthcare lens it provides further research on the strengths and resilience of Samoan aiga to care for their elders and how to rectify the barriers to enacting Tausi matua as it benefits aiga and the healthcare system. Contributing to Pacific-indigenous ways of being as the way forward for Pacific people in diaspora, penned beautifully by Alefaio-Tugia (p. vii, 2022) as “a return to Oceania where exist ancient Indigenous ways of being, knowing and doing, which have sustained Pacific peoples for generations”.

## Chapter 3 | Methodology and Methods

### Pacific Methodology

This study draws from a wider HRC research project called “Caring for our wisdom bearers: Pacific Matua (Elder) care” led by Professor Siautu Alefaio-Tugia between 2021 and 2022. This research project was approved by the Massey University Ethics Committee Application 4000023020. We conducted this research together with three Pacific churches, two Samoan congregations in Auckland and one Tongan congregation in Palmerston North. The broad aims of this wider HRC study were to:

- a. Identify elder-care practises that contribute to the health and wellbeing of Pacific elders and carers
- b. Examine the impact of cultural-contextual change on Pacific Matua care practises
- c. Detail the socio-cultural and material supports needed to sustain Pacific care practises

As mentioned previously, my role as youth lead in the HRC project and interactions with the Samoan congregations, together with my own reflections on Tausi matua, have contributed to my master’s research and its aims. These aims align with the broader HRC project, while focusing specifically on understanding the perceptions held by youth carers and to shed light on the realities of caring for elders by Samoan youth here in Aotearoa NZ.

It was crucial to employ Pacific approaches to both data collection and analysis to ensure this research, which is done by, and for Pacific peoples, is handled in a culturally appropriate way and reflects the Pacific worldviews captured.

Vaiolleti (2006) explains that epistemology, the way knowledge is created, produced, and subsequently justified as truth, is often assumed from a western lens to have the same origins, affecting the positions research is oriented from. However, these Eurocentric assumptions discount how Pacific peoples have had their own ways of being, knowing and doing that have existed long before contact with the outside world and continue to colour

their realities today. A researchers' ontology, or what exists from their worldview, undoubtedly affects the research process and should therefore be acknowledged. It affects the lens from which they approach the research as well as how they interact with the participants and the sense they make from these interactions.

This is why my role, as an insider researcher, is crucial to the research process. I am an insider of the culture and language of faasamoa, as well as of the experiences of being born in Aotearoa NZ, being a carer, and attending the same church denominations as outlined in my introduction. These points place me in a position to navigate complex cultural nuances, promoting a deeper engagement with participants due to built-in trust, and an assurance their ontologies are represented and honoured throughout this research.

The research design of this study acknowledges these considerations and draws on Pacific methodologies that are similar to "participatory action-oriented" research methods, but are designed from Pacific ways of knowing, being and doing.

### ***Talanoa & Fa'afaletui***

Talanoa is an existing concept that occurs naturally in both faasamoa and *Angafakatonga* [the Tongan way], and is therefore much more suitable than the Western qualitative method of interviewing (Vaiioleti, 2006). Talanoa allows the everyday worlds of participants, worldviews often marginalised by Western research, to be front and centre. The approach is attributed to Tongan authors where the word, in Tongan, brings together the concepts of *tala* [to inform] and *noa* [ordinary] to equal a concept that is more than the sum of its parts (Suaalii-Sauni & Fulu-Aiolupotea, 2014; Vaiioleti, 2006). It is circular conversations steeped in cultural protocol and worldview that can go further than the conversation itself, to the way these take place, the analysis and dissemination of these rich forms of knowledge (Suaalii-Sauni & Fulu-Aiolupotea, 2014).

Within this Samoan context, talanoa was used within the Pacific methodological approach of Fa'afaletui which is the weaving together of knowledge from different collective houses of wisdom (Tamasese et al., 2005). This is important as it comes from the cultural context of faasamoa (Alefaio, 2022). It presumes collective validation of knowledge from each of these houses and leads to the sharing of responsibilities towards solutions (Tamasese et al., 2005). The approach of Fa'afaletui as a process of weaving information together, is a purposeful approach (Alefaio, 2022). It was utilised in this study given the Samoan groups that participated and dictated the cultural protocols of the whole research process. Fa'afaletui-dialectical analysis follows on from Fa'afaletui, and was utilised to analyse the results for Samoan churches as it hones in on the cultural meaning and sense-making behind what Alefaio-Tugia (2022) states is "meaningful translation" that "opens up an analysis from both cultural trajectories" (p. 88). It is similar to, but not the same as, thematic analysis as it provides the depth of understanding required to capture the rich nuances of the two languages used by the participants.

### **Method**

The following is an outline of the data collection process, detailed from my perspective as an insider-researcher. From the wider HRC study involving three Pacific churches, this study focused specifically on the two Samoan churches, delving into talanoa with both youth groups to explore Samoan youths' perspective on caregiving in Aotearoa NZ and what caregiving practises they engage in. Before the wider study commenced, a Tokelauan family contacted our Lead-Researcher, offering involvement in the study after hearing her discuss securing HRC funding and study details on the 531PI radio station as shown in Figure 4. This family then served as the pilot family for the study protocols that would be later utilised for the full wider study. Talanoa were divided into three generations: Matua-elders, their children, and their grandchildren. In the pilot study my role involved

conducting talanoa with the eldest grandchild and her husband, who were part of the care system for her grandmother.

#### Figure 4

*Interview of Professor Siautu Alefaio-Tugia on 531AM to Discuss her Successful HRC Grant*



*Note.* This led to the Pilot family reaching out to be involved in research

#### *Engagement With Samoan Churches*

As the research team ourselves are Pacific children of the diaspora, we are inherently embedded in the fold of our Pacific communities; our aiga and our villages away from the islands which are our churches. In deciding which of our community groups and organisations to engage, we were supported by a Pacific Elder Advisory Panel (PEAP), made up of Elder Reverend Ministers, community leaders and pioneers of Pacific community development. Our engagement with PEAP ensured access and direct connections with Pacific communities was strengthened and enhanced. The Samoan members of the PEAP, alongside a neighbouring Samoan church Minister, attended a community meeting shown in Figure 5 which brought elders together with local Ministers of Parliament to discuss any issues requiring support.

#### Figure 5

*Community Meeting Where Two Samoan Congregations Were Engaged for Research Project*



**Participant Recruitment.**

After this meeting, the research team met and extended invitations to the neighbouring Samoan church Minister and his wife, thus enabling us to involve both local church communities via their leaders to become part of the project. Upon the leaders' agreement, the PEAP were guided by the church leaders on the most effective method to engage their congregations. This established a two-part process:

1. The research team created information sheets to inform congregation members of the study.
2. The PEAP took these over to a Sunday service where they would be given time to speak further about the project, before inviting the congregation to attend the session that would be held a few weeks later on a Sunday afternoon.

Concerning consent, the Reverends made the decision that they would sign the community consent form on behalf of the congregation, as the members would demonstrate their consent by attending the session.

**Talanoa – Data Collection.**

Our research team went together with our Samoan PEAP to both church sessions, Figure 6 showing one of the sessions. The sessions began with a welcome from the Church

Minister to the research team and a prayer. The research team was then offered a chance to speak. With elders' place in Samoan society as the highly respected cultural wisdom-bearers, the PEAP members spoke first, thanking the Church Minister and congregation for accepting the invitation and reiterating the heart of the project. The Lead-Researcher then outlined the logistics of the session, explaining that attendees would be divided into three groups: one facilitated by me, one facilitated by her, and one facilitated by our two Samoan PEAP members.

### Figure 6

*Talanoa Occurring at Samoan Church in Auckland*



Following the breakout sessions all the groups reconvened to present an A1 poster summary of their discussion. The research team, together with the Church Minister and congregation, came to an agreement on how to split into three groups. Papakura EFKS preferred to be split into three groups: *Matua Tausi* [elders], *Au Tausi Matua* [carers] and *Tupulaga* [youth]. Alternatively, PIPC Papakura, with a slightly younger demographic, opted for groups of *Tamā* [fathers], *Tinā* [mothers] and *Tupulaga* [youth]. There was a total of 20 youth that participated from the EFKS church, and 22 youth from the PIPC church.

### Figure 7

*Youth Talanoa at Samoan Churches in Auckland*



In my role of facilitating Fa’afaletui with the two groups of tupulaga, I followed the following process:

Firstly, I began by asking for verbal consent to audio-record, which was given by all. *talanoaga* [conversation] started by introducing ourselves to one another, with immediate relational and cultural engagement due to being an inside-researcher with historic connections to both churches. Papakura EFKS is in the same syndicate as my home church (Manurewa EFKS) that my mum’s side of the family attend, and PIPC Papakura is my other family church, that my dad’s side of the family attend.

Next, we were able to move into the main topic of discussion. I spoke and shared from my own experience as a caregiver to help start conversation on their views of caregiving, otherwise I let them share freely, not only with me but with each other too. Interestingly for both youth groups they would mainly converse in Samoan with the occasional switch between Samoan and English.

Finally, our Fa’afaletui session ended when the tupulaga were happy with what they shared, they each had nothing more to add, and I was confident that the questions in our guide had been covered. After reconvening with the wider group, the youth completed their summary poster and picked one person to present with Figure 8 showing one of the youth presentations.

## Figure 8

### *Youth Representative Sharing Summary From Youth Talanoa to the Groups of Mothers and Fathers*



Both youth Fa'afaletui audio recordings were transcribed by a Samoan research assistant as most of the talanoa was conducted in Samoan. We did not translate it back to English at this stage as we did not want to lose the richness within the Samoan language used by participants, as it is difficult to articulate in English and thus would negatively impact the analysis stage.

### **Pacific Cultural Ethics.**

After all the group summary presentations, the PEAP thanked each congregation for their time and a *meaalofa* [gift] was given to each church as a cultural acknowledgment of respect and reciprocity. This illustrates the value and importance of knowing and enacting Pacific cultural ethics. This acknowledgement of the participants shows how appreciation and gratitude for the depth of rich experiences was shared by all. Reciprocally, EFKS Papakura extended an invitation to share a meal with them after Fa'afaletui and they enacted a cultural exchange based on *meaalofa*. This is where a gift of food hampers was given to each of us in the research team. With PIPC Papakura, as the session was straight after the church service, a

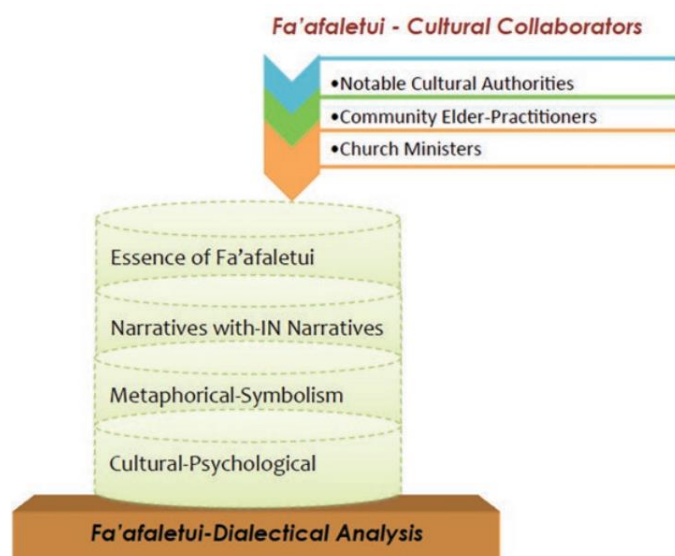
light meal was provided for everyone to break bread together before talanoa began. The sessions concluded with a final prayer.

### **Fa'afaletui-Dialectical Analysis**

Fa'afaletui-dialectical analysis, shown in Figure 9 was termed by Alefaio-Tugia (2022) and “flips the script” on traditional thematic analysis, “due to language and the embedded cultural meanings of language” (p. 87). It allows for the rich nuances in language and culture to be gathered into the analysis rather than being lost in translation. For this type of analysis, just as the participants bring their whole selves to the Talanoa, so too does the researcher with their interactions crucial to genuine engagement. “Therefore, a greater ethical responsibility to ‘care for the knowledge being shared is carried, because the narratives of knowledge are not just pieces of information to be dissected analysed and sieved through the lens of a Western cultural framework” (Alefaio-Tugia, 2022, p. 90).

### **Figure 9**

*Model of Fa'afaletui-Dialectical Analysis (Alefaio-Tugia, 2022, p. 87)*



Fa'afaletui-dialectical analysis was conducted for each youth group, with a sample of each of these found in Appendix G. The full table of the essence of Fa'afaletui-dialectical analysis was then created bringing these youth groups narratives-within narratives together, consisting of 68 pages, with a sample of this shown in Appendix H.

The first layer of the essence of the Fa'afaletui, is what Alefaio-Tugia (2022) terms the “initial reflective interaction with data” (p. 88), which was an active process of reflection of the transcripts between myself and her as a cultural collaborator.

Within each essence of Fa'afaletui lays narratives within narratives where participants stories and experiences are used to highlight “issues relevant to the discussion or pointed toward a critical shortcoming in the issues discussed” (Alefaio-Tugia, p.89, 2022).

To conduct data analysis using Fa'afaletui-dialectical analysis the following process was used:

1. I transcribed both youth transcripts verbatim. As both youth groups led the Fa'afaletui in mostly Samoan with small parts in English this was how they were transcribed.
2. My academic Supervisor (an expert in Fa'afaletui-dialectical analysis) and I reviewed the youth transcripts in Samoan, highlighting the Samoan concepts that youth were expressing.
3. We then went back to these highlighted Samoan concepts to further unpacked and hone in on the essence of their Fa'afaletui from a Samoan worldview. This is why it was important to keep the transcripts in Samoan, as the language is illustrative and metaphorical.
4. Bringing these reflections together with our own experiences and knowledge of the terms, we noted down our immediate response on the essence of Fa'afaletui. This also included any reflections that I had during the talanoa that may not be captured by the transcript but was an important feature that occurred in the face-to-face interaction.

5. I then back-translated the highlighted quotes to English
6. I created one table per church with three categories which consisted of: 1) the excerpt from original transcript, 2) back-translation, and 3) the essence of Fa'afaletui.
7. The decision was made to keep the data extracts in Samoan with an English translation to honour the essence of Fa'afaletui as expressed in the transcripts (data).
8. Finally, using my position as an insider-researcher and reflecting on the Fa'afaletui I categorised the themes into two categories. These themes and categories are presented in the following results section.

## Chapter 4 | Results

This chapter presents overall results through delving into the themes and key concepts which emerged from the Fa'afaletui-dialectical analysis. The essence of Fa'afaletui were expressed through two main areas, with six core themes as underlying narratives within narratives shown in Table 1.

The essence of Fa'afaletui:

1. Perspectives of Samoan youth on elder care
2. Practices of Tausi matua

The six themes of underlying narratives within narratives were:

1. Tausi matua [Samoan way of caring for elders]
2. Faasinomaga [essence of identity]
3. Legacy impact of *faamatua* [being an elder]
4. Differences in care across Aotearoa NZ and Samoa
5. COVID-19 impact
6. Carer informed and designed solutions

**Table 1***Overall Results of Fa'afaletui-Dialectical Analysis*

	Perspectives of Samoan Youth on Elder Care			Practices of Tausi Matua		
	Tausi Matua [Samoan way of caring for elders]	Faasinomaga [Essence of identity]	Legacy Impact of Faamatua [Being an elder]	Differences in care across Aotearoa NZ and Samoa	COVID-19 impact	Carer informed and designed solutions
<b>Essence of Fa'afaletui</b>	Tausi matua – The 'aiga' cycle of life <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• O le vaai ma le faalogo [Observation and listening]</li> <li>• O le Faatino [Action]</li> <li>• O le Faatonu [Coordinate and direct]</li> <li>• O le Matua Tausi [Elder being cared for]</li> </ul>	Aiga Collectiveness	Samoan elders as the bridge to the Samoan world <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gagana [Language]</li> <li>• Fofō faafitauli [To massage and heal rifts]</li> </ul>	Daily living expenses	Role of youth	Resources to support aiga <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finances</li> <li>• Education, information, training</li> <li>• Pathways for youth carers</li> </ul>
	O le Tausi matua e iloa ai/faatino ai le ola Tautua ma le Fa'aaloalo <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tautuanofotuavae ma le Tautua Aitaumalele [Practical tasks]</li> <li>• Faalogo ma usitai [Listen and obey]</li> </ul>	Vā tapuia/Vā fealoaloai [Concept of relational space]	Samoan elders care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faufautua ma Tapuai [Advise and Uplift]</li> <li>• Reciprocity</li> </ul>	Face to face care	Quality time of faith and family	
<b>Dialectical Analysis</b>	Tausi matua requires sacrifice			Tausi matua across borders		
	O le Tausi matua e puna mai ai Faamanuiaga [From Tausi matua springs blessings]			Tupulaga Samoa as the bridge in the diaspora		

## Perspectives of Samoan Youth on Elder Care

### *O le Tausi Matua*

Tausi matua translates to taking care of elders, with Tausi meaning to take care of, and matua meaning elders. For the Samoan youth in this talanoa it emphasised that Tausi matua is the Samoan way of life, it highlights faaaloalo, it is the source of blessings and requires sacrifice.

### **Tausi Matua – The Aiga Cycle of Life.**

For Samoan youth in the study, their families were collective aiga, a much broader view of family than its conventional meaning in the West, including their wider extended families:

*“Do you think the palagi’s perspective is like this. That it’s just them and their parents and then us ... It’s like us, mum and dad, grandparents, and then aunties, uncles, community”*

Living collectively and intergenerationally in this way, they described Tausi matua as part of the Samoan way of life, families orienting around caring for elders. Youth highlighted that Tausi matua is a responsibility and duty that is neither questioned nor shirked, but embraced as part of the fabric of their lives as Samoans,

*“Auā e iai le ituaiga mafaufau na tatou Samoa foi na le e tusa o le mea lea o le tausī matua, e eseese ma mafaufau o isi tagata mai isi atunuu, tusa foi na le, pe a matutua, e pule a latou pe tausī. A o tatou Samoa, pei e le mafai ona tatou ‘alo mai ai, pei o se responsibility a tatou.” [“Because there is a specific notion in Samoa of Tausi Matua that is different from the thinking of people from other countries that is like, when they grow up, it’s up to them if they want to care for their elders or not. But us Samoans, it’s like we can’t dodge/avoid it, it is our responsibility.”]*

From Fa‘afaletui it was evident that Tausi matua is a practise that occurs across the lifetime, with a different role at each stage of life.

***O le Vaai ma le Faalogo [Observation and Listening].***

When the youth described Tausi matua, many understood it through first seeing it in action within the collective folds of their own families. They acknowledged that observation is a key part of learning in the Samoan worldview, the belief being that children learn by watching, listening and then doing. The youth explained that even as children they were watching and listening with the inherent belief that they will take on the role of Tausi matua in the future:

*“So I think ... it’s coming from us witnessing our parents do it. When they took care of their parents and now it’s our turn to help take care of them.”*

*“Sa ou vaai iai i le taimi lea na tausi ai e ou aunties ma ou uncles ia latou matua”*

*[“I saw the time my Aunties and Uncles cared for their parents!”]*

*“Ou te lei tausia matua o ou matua but na ou vaai iai, cos o taimi na la e outou te laititi. E maliliu ou grandparents la e ou te laititi. Ou te lei faia le tausi matua foi na le, but, to my parents now, oo lo’u faia le galuega lea, o le tausi matua ... i totonu o le matou aiga.” [I didn’t care for my Grandparents, but I saw it being actioned because at that time I was young. My Grandparents passed away and I was still young. I didn’t action Tausi Matua per se but now to my parents, this is my role, to tausi matua within our family.]*

*“I never grew up with my grandparents but my sisters like i have seen how my sister takes care of them.”*

***O le Faatino [Action].***

The youth described the different roles carried out by each member of the family. Children are vae mo'emo'e [runners] and so run errands and do all the small tasks and chores that the elders may need support for:

*“Especially the older ones like e tausī ia matua ae mo tamai tamaiti, [they look after elders but for the young ones] I think the only thing they can do is do the feaus [chores], run around”*

There are also nuances with birth order, with two participants who are the youngest in their families saying they play a bigger role in Tausi matua because of their position in the birth order:

*“if they need help... I go because I'm the youngest”*

As children move into the youth age-group, they start to take on a bigger role in actioning the care of their elders. Learning through growing up being immersed in their care, they are better equipped to care for their elders:

*“Growing up with ... one grandparent that couldn't walk. I had to grow up and watch, how to take care of him. So now that I'm full-on taking care of him, there are some things that I thought I couldn't do, that I can do now.”*

***O le Faatonu [Coordinate and Direct].***

In most families, the parent generation moves into a dual role of care. They continue to action the care but being in between both generations, also orient into coordinating and directing the family around covering different aspects of the care in accordance with the elders wishes:

*“Ia o lou ia manatu iai, a fai atu matua matutua i tama sasa'o ga, tasi a le tala. O ma le ma'ika'i gale o le maikai gale”[“Yeah so my thoughts on it is if the elders tell the parents, one word. You go with her, go with her.”]*

***O le Matua Tausi [Elder Being Cared For].***

In terms of when someone becomes the recipient of Tausi matua, it was quite nuanced with there being no set rule or boundary. Some discussed their parents being over a certain age meant that they were at this stage, with usage of words such as ‘old’ and ‘elderly’ as markers:

*“Like cause my parents are old and I am the youngest and so I consider them, because they are really elderly”*

For others, they considered factors such as current physical ability of the elders in their lives,

*“Ae maise foi se faataitaiga pei o matou i le taimi nei. E moi a, ae la e faigaluega lo’u tamā, lo’u tina e lei oo foi na le i le tulaga e oo atu ai i le mea o le tausī matua.” [“Because for example our family at the moment. My parents are working and haven’t gotten to a stage of Tausi matua, they’re strong right now.”]*

**O le Tausi Matua e Faatino ai le ola Tautua ma le Fa’aaloalo [Tausi Matua is the way one Puts Into Practise a Life of Service and Respect].**

Tausi matua is such an engrained norm that the depth of what it entails was difficult for many of the youth to articulate, being their everyday life:

*“E te fia manao la matou te fetagofi e ta’u uma atu ia matou feau o fai?” [“So then do you want us to try and list every single chore we do?”]*

Not only is daily life oriented around Tausi matua, but it shapes the broader family dynamics as the entire family coordinates life so that they are mobile and fluid to respond to the needs of the elders. This ensures the best possible care for their elders:

*“So my older sisters they had to take my Grandma to Hawaii e fai ia ana taotoga [to do her surgeries] so, I think o lou vaai i ai i le tausiga o laua o lou Grandma [my view of their care of my Grandma] its so I don’t know the word but Tausi matua.”*

Tausi matua thus involves an array of care practises for these youth, that are holistic and all-encompassing, supporting elders' wellness in all aspects of their *soifua maloloina*:

*“But we also have a worry, for carers to come, I think to us, we have a mentality like .. its not the same love... It's a job to them, but for us it's not a job it's a natural feeling foi na le ia tatou [you know for us] as kids taking care of our parents.”*

***Tautuanofotuavae ma le Tautuamatavela [Practical Tasks].***

Practically, youth action Tausi matua by taking on daily household tasks such as cooking, cleaning, laundry and other chores. A few of the youth described their elders requiring additional physical support and spoke of assisting them with tasks such as toileting, showering and taking them to access healthcare:

*“E tatau foi ona o ta alu e faataele, fai ofu, tatau fo'i ona alu e ave i le falemai auā o la e ma'i” [“I should also go and shower them, help them dress, I should also go and take them to the hospital if they're sick.”]*

*“I take him for his showers, when he wants to go toilet, cause I reckon there is a difference how we take care of our parents than how palagis take care of their parents cause us Samoans we don't want other people to come to do our own stuff.”*

Even in these everyday tasks, youth emphasised a care that is beyond the call of duty of health professionals or carers, their motivation not being financial but a genuine love and respect for their elders:

*“I think, from my experience, even my mum and them are in the hospital and stuff like that, you can tell the difference. Between them and the doctors, like if it's something that we are able to do, we step up and do it. Yeah, even when nurses come in, stuff like that, we try and step up and do it.”*

There is no limit to the care they are willing to provide, even supporting the health professionals to ensure their elders receive the best quality of care.

***Faalogo ma Usitai [Listen and Obey].***

Tupulaga also touched on Tausi matua involving care-practises honouring their elders' wishes. This is through Faalogo ma usitai, listening to what is important to their parents and elders then with this knowledge, obeying them by carrying it out. This included family fluidity, providing for parents' financial needs and success through education:

*“Like i le taimi lea na aumai ai le sister o lo’u tina iinei [Like the time my Mums sister was brought over to New Zealand]. Like she had dialysis, and also her leg was cut off. So, my mum was like her main carer.”*

Families were not bound by physical environment, with elders not only moving between family houses locally but also traversing countries. Families then coordinated care-support to accommodate these movements:

*“We took turns as a family like he would be with my sister or he would be with ... but he was always staying at our house”*

*“Just my Grandpa so we tausi-ed him in Sa and then came here, and then he came after us. Then he went to [Samoa] cause he wanted to die there so that's why he left”*

Youth also described their role in supporting their parents' monetary needs and contributions through their work salaries. What is important to the Matua in turn becomes important to their children. Thus, part of their care becomes honouring their parents' commitments by providing the needed financial resources:

*“I think pretty much everyone goes to work and gets them the money they need.”*

This type of care practise is assumed by youth to be a given in the Samoan culture:

*“Ao tatou ia [Samoans] I don't think it works like that. Ia matua loa oe, so you have to go to work fai mea o lai fai mai ai lou Tama mea o le lotu especially church stuff cause yeah thats where most of the money goes.” [“But us I don't think it works like*

*that. Once you're old, so you have to go to work do what your Dad tells you especially church stuff cause yeah that's where most of the money goes.”]*

Youth continued to acknowledge the power of their parents' advice in encouraging them to build off the foundations their families have laid and making the most of opportunities in Aotearoa NZ:

*“I think another way that ... ways of taking care of our parents is following what they would like for us to ... like for example, my niece and nephew from Samoa, even though they were the only kids that their parents have, they came because their parents wanted them to do school here, you know, do better. So I think, with that, that is another way you can take care of your parents is just by doing the best that you can with what you have and then having results at the end”*

Caring in this way is future-focussed, with education allowing them to better provide for their elders and elevate their families.

### **Tausi Matua Requires Sacrifice.**

Though the heart of Tausi matua is accepted and cherished, youth recognised that care came with personal and familial sacrifices. This is because Tausi matua requires people and resources.

People wise, youth being the direct carers affects their whole lives, prioritising the care for their elders over any of their own personal endeavours. This is a willing, yet difficult sacrifice. These families willingly sacrifice extra income to ensure their elders daily needs are taken care of at home. Tupulaga readily take on supporting their elders' care day to day, working reduced hours and putting studies on hold.

*“but i think mo le tupulaga e [for the youth], if they need to stay and tausi their parents they have to stop everything like they don't go to school they don't work so apparently la ua kaofi uma lou olaga e kali ai le tausi o ou matua [you will now put*

*your whole life on hold to take on the calling of caring for your parents] but no one is complaining.*

*But in a way it's hard cause sometimes... but in a way it's like yeah it's good for us to tausi our parents and our Grandparents cause yeah they are old. But it's also hard for us to try and live the life that we want to set for ourselves like they could get sick and then we would take off school... I am not blaming our grandparents or anything but i think that that's, there is pros and cons to it. Yeah*

*I feel like, pe afai [if] if it's on someone full-time, and then like, you get involved and then the kid gets taken away from social activities, like, if you want to go somewhere and your mum is like, "Leai, nofo e fai le a ma a ma a..." ["No, stay and do this and that..."] you know, like, "tausi our mum" if it comes to things like that. So, may be like a burden to young or something like that? I'm not saying it's a burden, but, you might, some kids might feel like that."*

Youth explained that for matua with complex health issues, it is expected that families will come together to both action and finance the care. However, youth forego work to care for matua and so it becomes a stressor for families, figuring out where they can receive financial support for healthcare on top of the expenses of daily living:

*"I think like everyone makes it sound like it's a nice thing that, 'Oh we do it because we have to do it', but we do want to do it, we're born to do it. But, sometimes it's hard, like, we just need to be honest, like... We don't even ... like, not all our parents, not all our families ... are lawyers and doctors, they don't make enough money to afford all of that... and want to provide."*

## **O le Tausi Matua e Puna mai ai Faamanuiaga/ From Tausi Matua Springs**

### **Blessings.**

Many youth spoke of the Samoan belief that a genuine heart and service of Tausi matua springs blessings from God, for the carers. This is an idea that is passed down from generations above and even upheld by the youth themselves. For youth that felt that they were not as involved in the practise of actioning Tausi matua, they spoke about reiterating this idea to their family members who were carers, how blessed they are to have been Tausi matua:

*“Pei a na ou faalogo i tala a tagata matutua foi e fai mai e maua mai lou manuia so o lai toe totogi e tatou ia latou galuega lelei na fai” [“I think I heard the elders say you receive blessings so we are paying back our elders for their good works in us.”]*

*“I think e faamanuia a le Alii i tagata la e tausī matua.” [“I think God blesses those who tausī matua.”]*

*“Ona matou o atu loa la ia i le maliu o lo matou loomatua, o la’u ia a tala na fai i o’u kaseni ia ... ia amuia latou ua iai so latou tausiga foi a na le i matua o matou matua, auā e lei faia e matou.” [“Then when we all went to our Grandmother’s funeral, what I said to my cousins was, they are so blessed that they were able to care for our Grandparents, because we didn’t do it.”]*

### **Faasinomaga [Essence of Identity]**

Tausi matua has been highlighted as a Samoan cycle of life, these practises not occurring in isolation, but embedded within the deeper folds of the Samoan identity, known as faasinomaga. For these Samoan youth, faasinomaga is a rich and nuanced concept that speaks to the core values within the Samoan worldview that provide direction for one’s life. It is the source of wisdom and belonging as a Samoan. The youth spoke about how faasinomaga is expressed - o le tu, tautala ma le savali (the way they conduct themselves) and the roles

and responsibilities that they hold and carry anchored in their alofa for their aiga, nuu and ekalesia. Centred in the Samoan worldview, for these tupulaga Samoa, a core value of faasinomaga orients elders as the most respected members of society and thus cared for as such:

*“O le tausī matua a ia faa-Samoa, ia o tatou e ola mai a ua totō i totonu o tatou loto, o lou fa’asinomaga e te tausīa ou matua pe a ... ae o le faatinoina, o le na ua amata ona, pei foi le na”* [“To me, caring for elders in Fa’aSamoa, it’s bred in us, it’s a seed planted in our hearts/soul, it’s our identity, it’s who we are as Samoans to care for our elders.”]

### **Aiga Collectiveness.**

A fundamental pillar of faasinomaga normalised in the talanoa with Samoan tupulaga was the collectivistic nature of their aiga. All Samoan tupulaga spoke from the perspective of their aiga being the foundational base of their identity. This emphasises a core difference in worldviews from the Western perspective, with Samoan tupulaga identifying themselves first and foremost not as individuals but through belonging to their aiga. The idea of aiga included a much wider network of relations than just their nuclear family:

*“Palagi’s perspective is like this, that it’s just them and their parents and then us... It’s like us, mum and dad, grandparents, and then aunties, uncles, community”*  
*“Ae sa ou vaai iai i le taimi lea na tausī ai e ou aunties ma ou uncles ia latou matua ona o lea e toatele”* [“I saw the time my Aunties and Uncles care for their parents because there’s many of them.”]

For them the aiga is collective, serving as the foundational system of support for one another. It is assumed that everyone falls back on their family to help with anything and everything. These social connections are tightly intertwined, reiterating the nature of Samoan people to be outward-facing and others-centred:

*“Tatou i Samoa foi na le, pei e help around uma tagata. Tusa a faapea ua e le mafai, e iai ou aiga e te faamoemoe ma e taunapa iai se fesoasoani auā ou matua” [“Us in Samoa everyone helps around. If for example you can’t, you have family you will rely on and reach out for help for your parents.”]*

The duty to care for elders was described as one that is innate and is a responsibility shared by everyone in the aiga, in the reciprocal cycle of life. The aiga is relied upon to come together as a collective to care for elders as a primary responsibility so there is little expectation or reliance on outside support, unless this is brought in through the aiga. Within the collective cycle of life, the youth placed themselves in the transitioning role from cared for as children, to taking on more care responsibilities as young adults. For these Samoan youth, this cycle emphasised the reciprocity that exists in Samoan aiga, youth showing their gratitude to their elders that cared for them, by giving back in any way possible through their care for their elders today. This cycle as Tausi matua speaks to how one shows alofa, the value that binds the collectiveness of the aiga:

*“Ia ua tatou tutupu a’e mai a, e iai a o tatou mafaufau foi na le, e tausi a e tatou, pei o ai e sau e fai? E leai seisi. O le mafaufau a le na o tatou Samoa, e fofoa mai a o tatou aiga Samoa, o le mafaufau na ina e ola a’e tausi ou matua, tausi ma matua o ou matua pe a leai seisi e tausia. Ia uma a’e ou matua tausi, tausi e oe ou matua. Pei o le aganuu a le na a tatou faa-Samoa pei e fesoasoani leisi i leisi.” [Because there is a notion in Samoa of tausi matua that is different from the thinking of people from other countries that is like, when grown, they decide if they want to care for their elders or not. But us Samoans, its like we cant dodge/avoid it, its like our responsibility. So now we’ve grown up and carry this thinking that we will care for our elders, like who will come and do it? Noone. That is the thinking of us as Samoans, nurtured within our families, that thinking where you will grow up and care for your parents and your*

*Grandparents, if there is no one to care for them. After your elders, you will care for your parents. That is the Samoan culture where people help each other.]*

However, some Samoan youth also spoke of the difficulties in navigating the dynamics within aiga, conscious that though these values exist, are ideal and assumed as the norm in Samoan society, the realities may differ. One spoke about care and how families caring for elders is a symbol of alofa, they also challenged that the concept of alofa could also mean support outside the aiga, that the best quality care may not always be found within the hands of the aiga:

*“... o le eseesege le na o le tausiga a tatou ma le tausiga a palagi. Ae o le mea tonu a lea e aumai e K, foi na le. You have to be realistic i le taimi e tupu ai le mea lea ia oe. Ona e le mafai ona e talia i le taimi nei, because you can say now, ‘A’e, I’ll never do that, it’s in me to tausi my parents’ but e le o iloa e oe le situation i le taimi e tupu ai. E iai la le taimi e tupu ai, ona, you have to put that pride aside foi na le, to give better care mo ou matua.” [...this is the difference in the way we care and the way palagi/European care. That is also exactly what K referred to. You have to be realistic at the time this happens to you. Because you can’t accept it right now, because you can say now, No, I’ll never do that, it’s in me to tausi my parents’ but you don’t know what will happen until you are in that situation. There could be a time that this happens, then you have to put that pride aside... to give better care for your parents.]*

Other challenges also included blended aiga or branches of the aiga that had a bigger bulk of the caring responsibilities than others. These aiga breakdowns can then undoubtedly affect the care of the elder, by weakening the ties of the collective:

*“e tausi e lou tina le tina o lana tama [my Mum cares for her paternal Grandmother] and it goes and goes and she goes downhill and there is always people wondering,*

*why is she still wearing the same clothes. Whatever, they'll always have something to say but they are not the ones paying for it and that is what causes the problems and then once they get the chance to take care of her, then they know how hard it is ... sometimes there is reasoning, and they come back together, and they all do what we need to do."*

Interestingly, not many Samoan youth brought up these family dynamics, with many stressing the importance of keeping issues within their aiga.

### **Vā tapuia/Vā fealoaloi [Concept of Relational Space].**

For these youth, they saw these different Vā interactions as boundaries that are not crossed to show faaaloalo and honour the other person appropriately. They mostly spoke around gendered care, especially with intimate care practises such as showering, that these were done by a family member of the same sex. The elder was seen to determine who was appropriate. In some aiga, grandchildren were able to take on this part of the carer role whereas for other youth, their elders preferred their children rather than their grandchildren supporting them:

*"Pei la [for example], my dad's dad... when I was little, a faapea e ave e faataele foi na le [if someone takes him to shower] ... he won't like his girls doing it ae valaau tama [he will call for the guys]. I think, o le Vā [there is that Vā] ... like, you know, ae faapea [but if]... dad will go and faataele [shower] him and he will be very comfortable. A faapea e alu atu seisi e laititi ia [if someone of a younger generation than] dad he will be like, there's that boundary."*

Two youth brought up different contexts and family structures that make enacting these Samoan values in the "normal way" very difficult. One youth said his family only had himself and his brother and so for them, as their parents age they are navigating what this will mean for the care of their mother especially. For another youth member, she is an only child,

yet for her she will take on these aspects of care despite these values because for her, this is her duty as their child:

*“but I think for us growing up, o le natural feeling foi na le like, ohh I’ll just go and faataele my dad or I’ll faataele my mum and I’m talking from my experience having, e leai ni ou brothers, e leai ni ou sisters, so you have that thinking, a o ai e faia? So, to us it’s like, we’ll just go and do it ourselves.” [“But I think for us growing up, it’s a natural feeling you know like, ohh I’ll just go and shower my dad or I’ll shower my mum and I’m talking from my experience having, no brothers, no sisters, so you have that thinking, so who will do it? So, to us its like, we’ll just go and do it ourselves.”]*

Another youth member, though she could not articulate why, understood Vā tapuia in terms of her relation to her grandpa, that raising one's voice or yelling violates this relationship as it is *le faaaloalo* [disrespectful] to their elder. However, her grandpa has a medical condition that requires them to raise their voice for him to hear properly:

*“The embarrassing thing was that we had to yell at... like our grandpa and it felt wrong? ... but it was because he was really, really deaf ma’i (sick)”*

This seems to reflect the changing context Samoans are living in, not only being in Aotearoa NZ with less communal family support, but also families with fewer children and an array of new and co-morbid health conditions.

### ***Legacy Impact of Faamatua***

For these Samoan youth, not only was it their faasinomaga to care for their elders, but they all shared stories of what their elders meant to them, a bridge to the Samoan world and more importantly as cheerleaders and champions, who showered them with blessings. Their gratitude and alofa for the legacy impact of their elders pushing youth to try their best to reciprocate and show this in their care of them today.

## **Samoaan Elders as the Bridge to the Samoaan World.**

### ***Gagana [Language].***

Elders helped to keep the Samoaan language alive for most of the youth participants, conversing with them in Samoaan and teaching them the different aspects of the *gagana* [language]. For one youth, their grandpa taught all the children in the family how to speak Samoaan, which was especially important as they were raised in Aotearoa NZ. For another, living with their elder allowed them to receive help with their homework, especially when it came to *gagana Samoa*:

*“E taua tele matua auā faapea la o tamaiti lea o loo ola iinei ua le iloa FaaSamoa, e o mai e a’o uma e lata toeaina.”* [“Elders are so important because for instance the kids that grew up here that can’t speak Samoaan, they all come to learn from my old man.”]

### ***Fofō Faafitauli [to Massage and Heal Rifts].***

From observing their elders, some youth commented on how they were the people they looked to e fofō faafitauli [to massage and heal rifts]. Some would say how their grandparents would bring an end to their parents’ arguments, something that they, as children, were unable to do. Many also described their elders as the steadfast anchor for the aiga, not just for their children but for their wider family. Other youth went further to include villages and churches also, where elders hold the authority, wisdom and lived experience in all these contexts to smooth out issues and guide communities well. These youth acknowledged that this role was unique to elders, and that this was a role that younger generations were not at the life-stage to carry:

*“Tasi le mea o tagata matutua uma le ga e fofōoa faafitauli i totonu o aiga, nuu ma le ekalesia. E leai a nisi o le vaega ia e mafai ona fofōoa, sei vagana o tatou matua matutua auā o la e latou iloa le mea e tatau ona fai e aua ai ona toe tupu mai*

*faafitauli lea na tutupu i le olaga e mafai ona taofi uma e le vaega lea ia aua nei toe faia auā o la e faalogo latou i o latou matua.” [“Essentially, all elders smooth out the problems within the family, village, and church. None of this generation [parents] can do this, only the elders because they know what to do to prevent these issues from happening again... They can help the parents from doing this again because the parents will listen to their parents.”]*

Therefore, elders were bridging the gap and passing down faasamoa to their next generations in the way they lived.

**Samoan Elders Care. *Faufautua ma Tapuai [Advise and Uplift].***

Most of the youth talked about how their elders were a present support throughout their lives. Matua serve as a source of wisdom and advice for youth not only in terms of daily life, but also in affirming their identity as Samoans, and encouraging them for their future. Youth commented on the differences between their parents and elders, describing that unlike their parents, who discipline them, youth felt spoiled in ways by their elders, who uplift them and are seen to be more able to listen to them without judgement:

*“Ou te iloa nao ou matua matutua e tatau ona ou tausia aua pe sili atu lou talanoa i matua o ou matua i le talanoa i tama sasao ia aua e lelei atu e moi a e le fuea taita ia na o le oke a... [“I think I should only care for my Grandparents because I talk with my Grandparents more than my parents because it’s good because even though they threaten to give me a hiding they don’t they only lecture...”]*

These Samoan youth implied they were being blessed to be in their elder’s company. One youth shared how she misses her grandparents reminders to do the chores, now they have returned to Samoa. For her, their love was shown in their comforting presence and love by continuing to teach her for her betterment. Others spoke about mundane moments of silence with their elders, or times listening to their memories from the past. For many of these

Samoaan youth, with parents working, it was their elders that were at home taking care of them as children:

*“I only sat with him when he had his smokes outside. That was about it... I don’t know why that came out... but that’s what happened”*

Youth also spoke about their profound gratitude towards their elders for their prayers of blessings over their lives, deeds youth could never repay:

*“E tele a o taimi ou te faalogo i matua o matua e fai mai tala ia, ia tou manuia... na o le loomatua ma le toaiina e fai mai faafetai a i le tou tausiga o maua, pe a tuu foi maua i le eleele e avatu uma faamanuiaga ia outou”* [“So many times, I hear my Grandparents say these words, may you be blessed... only our elders tell us thank you for taking care of us, once we are below ground, we give you all our blessings”]

### ***Reciprocity.***

The depth of their appreciation for their elders and their impact on their lives was apparent in the way that youth care for their elders now:

*“We pay attention to what the nurse is saying and it’s just because of the love and the respect that we have for our parents because we know that they raised us the best way they could and now. We know now that we are older, it’s our turn. So we do our best.”*

## **Practices of Tausi Matua**

### ***Differences in Care Across Aotearoa NZ and Samoa***

To these Samoaan youth, there are differences between Samoa and Aotearoa NZ with Tausi matua due to the types of resources available to aiga.

#### **Daily Living Expenses.**

Overall, participating Samoaan youth expressed their belief that living in Samoa is easier for Tausi matua than living in Aotearoa NZ. In Samoa, they emphasised there is less

financial strain, with family land ownership meaning their aiga do not need to worry about housing costs. They also have access to the abundance of natural resources on land such as *ma'umaga* [plantations] and water sources such as the *sami* [sea] for food:

*“I Samoa e faigofie a, e kusa pe ka mai le au fai e faigofie a Samoa i loo i nei.” [“In Samoa its easier you could even just [go outside and] cut down a bunch of bananas Samoa is much easier than here (NZ).”]*

In direct contrast, these youth found Aotearoa NZ more difficult for Tausi matua because of the cost of living:

*["A o nei a ia i lo'u iloa, o le faigata o iinei, ona o le tupe a mea uma. E le faapea foi na le e mafai ona totō se mea... auā e oo lava i le mea e te nofo ai, e totogi."][“But here in NZ to my knowledge, it’s really hard here, because money is everything. It’s not like you can grow something... even your house you pay for.”]*

However, Aotearoa NZ is the land of milk and honey for most Samoan families, offering many varied opportunities for education and employment and incomes that far exceed those found in Samoa. This was outlined by two sisters, who for them, coming to Aotearoa NZ and finding work has allowed them to Tausi their matua in Samoa, through financially resourcing their needs:

*“Telē le eseeseega, ua move mai i nei atunuu. Tausiga o matua foi i o sa le mafai ona tatou help out i tupe, ma mea e faaaoga foi na le e tausii ai tatou matua i Samoa, a o iinei, tele a suiiga foi na le lea ua mafai ona fesoasoani i mea tau tupe, mafai ona help out i soo se ituaiga mea e manaomia e tatou matua.” [“Vast differences, coming here to this country. Caring for parents there we couldn’t help out with money and resources needed to care for our parents in Samoa. But here, many changes as now we are able to help with financial matters and can help out with any type of support needed by our parents.”]*

### **Face-to-Face Care.**

In terms of living arrangements, these youth stated that their aiga tended to live together in Samoa. Their aiga were also organised to have people who stayed back to care for elders while others went out to source their communal meals:

*“Ae o la’u ia vaai iai i le taimi sa ou iai i Samoa, i totonu a ia o aiga, e... o le faigofie ia, ona o le toatele. Pei e toatele foi na le, e seasea na o outou ma le tamā i se aiga, ou aunties, ou uncles. Ia fai faatasi a la le ... e oo foi i le au matutua e o e fai le maumaga, auā e tausia ai aiga.”* [“But my view of the time I was in Samoa, in my family, it was very easy because of the huge amount. Like it’s very collective, you would hardly be with just your nuclear family, it’s your Aunties your Uncles. So things are done together... even for the older members going to do the maumaga (plantation), because this provides for the family.”]

One youth reiterated the importance of face-to-face care of parents and elders, showing how youth did not take their role lightly of staying home to care for elders:

*“Faigofie foi ai le tausia matua i Samoa nai loo i nei aua ... e moi e iai galuega ae e seasea iai aua lae e te nofo lava i autafa o lou Tama ma lou Tina ma fai feau.”*  
[“Another reason I know that Samoa may be easier to care for our elders than here is ... even though there is work it’s not as big of a deal because you are sitting beside your Dad and Mum doing their chores.”]

Living in a context with a total reliance on money to pay for basic living necessities and being unable to live communally, inevitably changes how Tausia matua is carried out in Aotearoa NZ:

*“Aua o nei e sei loga e faigaluega faatoa maua se tupe e tausia ai ou matua.”*  
[“Because here, you must work to get money to care for your elders.”]

There is a seemingly catch-22 situation for Samoan aiga, needing to work to Tausi matua, yet having family members at work or school means less options on who can be at home to care for the elders:

*“o nei e faigaluega isi, aoga isi, so e leai la se taimi e te nofo ai i le fale e tausii ia ou matua so la ua tuu a ia ou matua ia ae e alu e faigaluega.” [“...here some family members work, others study and so you have no time to stay home to care for your elders, so you have no choice but to leave your elders by themselves and go to work.”]*

One youth also brought up the alternative option, some aiga are taking, of placing elders in rest-homes here in Aotearoa NZ. For him, he acknowledges how it can be seen to go against one of the pillars of Tausi matua of aiga to care for our own. However, he argues for a broadening of perspectives on what care means. It cannot be a one-size fits all approach when aiga today have situations especially in the diaspora that cannot be supported in the same way they would be in Samoa:

*“Ae, ia o le tulaga le na .... ae ia pei a o le mea na i nai tagata na ua o ave ia tagata i fale o tagata matutua. E iai le mafaufau o tatou tagata Samoa, ‘Ou te ofo’ Tausi, tausii ua ... ae o le faigata le na ona e te le iloa tele pe a faapea e te lei oo iai. Ona e te oo loa i se tulaga foi na le e manaomia ona e faigaluega, ae manaomia ona vaai ou matua, ia, ona faigata loa la ia o lau faaiuga e fai. [“But like for example, people who have taken elders to rest-homes. There is a thinking for us as Samoans, “I can’t believe it, they cared for them and now”... but this is the difficulty because you don’t know if you aren’t in this situation. Once you are in a type of situation like you need to work but also need to care for your elders, your decision then becomes very difficult”]*

### **Tausi Matua Across Borders.**

In terms of physical health, youth agree that Aotearoa NZ has a higher quality of Western healthcare, in comparison to Samoa. One tupulaga spoke about the support and information available to their aiga on Alzheimer's in Aotearoa NZ, touching on wider supports such as training for toileting and showering. One youth shared the tension between her wants to bring her parents over from Samoa, believing there is better quality healthcare available in Aotearoa NZ, versus her parents' wants to stay in Samoa. She therefore worries that she is not providing her parents the best possible care:

*“O le mea le e faigata ia kaika le nofo mai i Samoa ou matua ae sa'o le aumai i nei e tausī... o ma matua e le fia sitiseni... o lai fia o mai ae le fia nofomau e toe fia o i Samoa.” [“That's why it's hard for me that my parents are over in Samoa because the right thing to do is to bring them here to be looked after... my parents don't want to be citizens, they want to come but don't want to be here permanently, they want to go back to Samoa.”]*

Other Samoan youth also spoke about their parents' longing to be in Samoa for their overall wellbeing and happiness, despite issues such as healthcare and income. One youth said how he views parents and elders moving to Aotearoa NZ as a sacrifice of their own sense of familiarity, comfort, and home, in pursuit of a better future for their children. Though they make this sacrifice willingly, their hearts remain in Samoa:

*“They grew up there they came here because it was better living for us so, the sacrifices that they make they have to leave their home their roots just so that, like yeah they embedded it into us to but they do miss the environment that they used to didn't work had their friends. It's where they grew up its their childhood”*

Tupulaga maintained that Tausi matua means to put our parents first, though we can never fully reciprocate the sacrifices they made, we are able to support their wishes now by

resourcing them. It also highlights the fluidity of aiga, with youth normalising Tausi matua across country borders:

*“Ia e lelei a le toe foi i auā i le olaga what do you call it mea e maua ai tupe e lelei a Niu Sila e mafai o na tausiliga i Samoa but e lelei a i matua ia o la e fia nonofo ia latou i Samoa cause they are used to it but o tatou ia e o ma omai i nei e tausiliga ai ia matua i Samoa.” [“Yup it’s still good to go back because like what do you call it in terms of money NZ is better so we can care for our families in Samoa but for the parents Samoa is still better because they are used to it. But for us we go and come here [NZ] in order to care for our parents.”]*

### **Tupulaga Samoa as Bridge in the Diaspora.**

Youth appear to hold a unique role in the diaspora, helping to bridge the gap between their elders and the Western systems, whilst providing both practical and emotional support.

Though many elders have lived in Aotearoa NZ for years, communicating in English and trying to navigate the different systems in place can be difficult and overwhelming.

Youth recounted supporting their elders with these issues. They physically accompany elders to various appointments as their translators to communicate their elders needs. In doing so they are also able to advocate on their elders’ behalf for services they may be entitled to:

*“E sa’o lelei, auā e tele a o matua faatoa o mai mai Samoa e faigata a lakou ona faaigilisi. A faapea foi e alu i le falema’i ae le mafai ona gagu ... E fesili mai ia, E mafai ona ta o e ave a’u i le falema’i? Ona o le mea la le na, ina tei ua fesili atu le foma’i ae le malamalama ona ia fesili loa lea i le tagata, e lelei le tagata lea la te o, ona ota fai sa’o a lea i le foma’i o la e fai mai lo ta Tina o la ia e a ma a. [“It’s so true, because many of our parents have just come from Samoa so it’s hard for them to speak English. If they go to the hospital then and can’t speak English they’ll ask, can you take me to the hospital? Then we’ll go in case they don’t understand the Dr’s*

*instructions/questions so then they can ask the person they went with, if it's me then I'll speak directly to the Dr as to my Mums needs for instance.”]*

By being present together, they may also help relieve anxieties their parents may have of these contexts, providing emotional and moral support:

*“For me, if I take my mum, I have to go with her every time not only that I have to translate but sometimes she will ask me, Fai iai e iai le mea la e kiga [Tell them there is something here that hurts]. Like she doesn't know how to explain... so at one point I am pretty much, the translator really trying to explain what's wrong with my mum. So I think like... why my mum wants me to come with her”*

*“Tele o isi taimi e pei e fefefe foi a gale, auā la e ese foi o latou vaai i isi tagata.”*  
*[“Many times they are also anxious, because of their view of others.”]*

In physically accompanying their elders they also help to ensure their safety at all times:

*“O leisi mea e te le iloa mea e tutupu, tei ua alualu a sulu i luma o le auala ae la e alu na o na ia, so e taua a le o faatasi ma matua, auā a leai oe ... e le sefe mai luga o mea la e o ai” [“Another thing is you never know what may happen, they may go by themselves and trip or fall so it's important that we go with our parents because without us ... they may not be safe where they go”]*

In addition to translation, youth also help with transporting elders to and from appointments. Though some youth disclosed they drive unlicensed, they choose to drive their elders, rather than have them use public transport:

*“O le faafeaveaiga o matua, auā e pei e sili lou ... tou o ma tou matua i le taavale, gai lo tou o i pasi .... ma o leisi mea o fea le mea o le a totogi ai pasi. Auā a tou o i pasi e totogi tupe, o train e totogi foi tupe so e sefe foi le tou o ile taavale, gai lo tou o i pasi ma mea faapena. Auā e sili foi le tou o i taavale e mafai ona tapena mea e fai ai meaai, ma wheelchair e feaveai ai. E sili a ia ta ita lo ta alu ma ave la ta taavale”*

*[“Taking parents, it’s better to... take your parents in the car than the bus, because another thing is where is the money to pay the bus. Because if you go in the bus you need money, train needs money too so it’s better to go in the car than going on the bus and other forms of transport. The car is also better because you can take things to make meals, fit wheelchairs etc.”]*

### **COVID-19 Impact**

As the Fa’afaletui-dialectical analysis and talanoa occurred amid the COVID-19 pandemic, EFKS Papakura youth also discussed the impact of COVID-19 on their aiga and what it meant for Tausi Matua.

#### **Role of Youth.**

Job cuts were common during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the youth shared how their families were impacted. Some youth had family who had just graduated for roles in the aviation sector who were made redundant. Some aiga had multiple family members lose their jobs, directly affecting their ability to tausi matua in Aotearoa NZ, because of the loss of income streams:

*“I think for some families ga kele ia kagaka ole aiga ga leai gi lakou galuega, so, o le faafaigaka foi ga le kausiga o makua. Leai se galuega, leai se kupe e kausi ai makua. I think o le faigaka foi le ga i le kaimi o le koviki, kele kagaka ua leai gi lakou galuega e kausi ai makua.” [“I think for some families there lots of family members that lost their jobs thus it was harder to care for their elders. No jobs means no money to care for elders. I think that was the difficulty in Covid, lots of people lost their jobs that helped with caring for their elders.”]*

For some youth, losing their jobs meant re-orienting into jobs that were essential such as the supermarkets and supply-chain roles. Other youth were already working in these areas prior to the pandemic. Youth were also the “external support” for their family, taking on the

outside contact to do the shopping and run errands for the family, in order to protect their elders that were more vulnerable to contracting COVID-19:

*“I saw, that us young kids had a good immune system... yeah it’s hard for us to catch it cause it’s like we’re young. But for our oldies, it’s easier for them to get it... yeah I was always the one to get the faakau [shopping] and stuff ... cause I know how to drive”*

Within the household, youth also took on the role of keeping up the morale of the aiga during lockdown, organising entertainment for the family to enjoy together:

*“Ia e makuai kele a o galuega ... o faigalotu o afiafi and sing songs [Yeah so there is a huge variety of roles/jobs (we do in the family) ... evening lotu]. Well we don’t have nice voices but we just sing songs... movie nights... games”*

They were also responsible for ensuring their parents and elders were still connected to their aiga and ekalesia during lockdown. This was done through connecting them to social media and turning on the weekly church services that were available either through Zoom or Facebook:

*“my parents don’t have Facebook but... like their parents would add us on Facebook... we always have to set it up [church services]”*

Youth also shared that a positive aspect of the COVID-19 lockdowns was a reprieve from their usual role of serving guests, as during lockdowns guests were not allowed to come over. They enjoyed and appreciated the chance to rest from these chores:

*“I le taimi na o le faamai o leisi mea o le faikeke a le feoai ... ma i le taimi o le faamai e sa le alu ese ... leisi mea taua o le faamai ua nofo a le tagata ia i lona fale... aua nei ‘ai fua nisi i fale o isi ma le tele o mea fufulu ... alu le tagata ia e ‘ai i loga fale.” [“Another good thing about Covid is that people were staying in their own*

*homes...Not allowed to eat at each other's houses... Good, save us from washing so many dishes, everyone goes to eat at their own house.”]*

### **Quality Time of Faith and Family.**

Youth also chose to see the era of COVID-19 lockdowns as a blessing, giving them quality time to nurture quality relationships with God and each other. They appreciated the family being present together at home to pray and worship together, which was normally unusual due to different schedules of work and school:

*“Ana leai le faamai e le nofo mai i le fale, e le fai lotu faatasi, e le nonofo faatasi, e le fiafia faatasi. Auā o taimi na ae lei pesi le faamai e moi a, ae taape solo le aiga, e tofu a le tamaitiiti ma le mea e alu iai. E le matamata faatasi le tv, e le toē faatasi. Ae o le taimi la nei la ua faasaga leisi ia leisi (laughter).” [“Without Covid they wouldn't stay home, wouldn't have lotu together, wouldn't be home together, being happy together. Because back before Covid, the family was very scattered, everyone has their own schedules. We didn't watch tv together, laugh together. But now that we have to face each other (laughter).”]*

*“I le taimi o le faamai... o le anapogi, tatalo i le faamai ua sau i luga o le tatou atunuu” [“During Covid lockdowns... it was fasting, praying for our country as Covid was upon us”]*

They also witnessed for their parents, that it seemed like a faith inspired time of reflection and reprioritisation of what is important to them, especially during a time that other activities were not an option. Youth also highlighted how lotu became daily and consistent during lockdowns:

*“E le nonofo mai ota matua pei o le tele o isi matua e ta loa taimi o faigalotu, ae laalaa i tua i le potu ... e amata atu le lotu ae faapea, sei ou alu atu ii i la'u feau, ae o le mea la lea na iai i le faamai, ua tilotilo atu la ua saofai mai ... ana leai a le faamai*

*e le saofai mai i le lotu ... o leisi mea na ... ana leai le faamai e taa bingo.”*

*[“Another thing with Covid, unlike a lot of other parents who are present during lotu, they’ll go to the room... lotu will start and they’ll say I’m just going out for an errand”, but now with Covid, I see them and they’re here... Without Covid they wouldn’t be present at our lotu. without Covid they’d be going to bingo.”]*

*“Tele o tama na o lelei e fai iguga, ae taimi la nei ua pesi le faamai, leai ma se iguga e fai, o la ua nofo mai, fai le lotu, ae le misi ai foi ma le lotu i aso uma, ae le pei o le mea na iai, misi le lotu, fai le lotu.” [“Many would go and drink but now that Covid is widespread, no drink-ups, now they’re staying home, doing lotu and now lotu is consistent, daily not like before where we’d miss lotu then do it.”]*

Youth also appreciated just being in each other’s company, a time of connection and re-connection and creating lasting memories, one youth described COVID-19 as:

*“a good time for us to spend with our grandparents and our parents now. We see them get up early to go to work, we see them at night-time when it’s dinner time but you’re just too tired. So I think, in a good way it was for us to like, who knows like everyone references to the bible tomorrow is not promised. It’s good that we got that time, even though it was a bit annoying but those memories... you can’t... so it’ll come down to, you’ll just remember covid as, it was a time that we spent your days with your parents, grandparents, others.”*

### ***Carer Informed and Designed Solutions***

As youth carers, these tupulaga Samoa were very articulate in voicing the resources that they need to better support their matua, aiga, and themselves and their futures.

## **Resources to Support Aiga.**

### ***Finances.***

Tupulaga Samoa spoke about an array of resources the government could provide to better support them as youth carers, and their aiga. A major point youth brought up was finances. Youth campaigned for free healthcare for their matua as they felt most of their elders' pensions going towards healthcare costs was unfair:

*“Do you get charged for medical bills eh? Yeah, see so some of us can't ... work ...for us to work long hours to pay it off for them. Another way that government can change, if they can't afford medical bills it should be free to them... It's ok for us kids to pay cause we can work but for them to come up with it from benefit money which is supposed to help them as they get older, it's basically giving money back to the government.”*

Youth also advocated for higher pension amounts for elders and thought about how receiving them weekly could better help with budgeting for expenses:

*“They get their money every two weeks. They need the money regularly, they can't ... the money alone is not enough for them. To budget it out for 2 weeks is hard, cause if Covid hits again... I think that's a struggle.”*

The constant struggle to balance staying home to Tausi matua and going to work or study to survive was difficult for the youth as carers and to witness their families undertake. They also felt it was hard on their matua too. Youth were clear that Tausi matua is a job that should be paid, especially for those that stay to care for elders at home:

*“If someone is taking care of our elders like... pay someone full-time, something like that. Like, fund it, cause it's financially straining on families.”*

Being home to care for their elders whilst receiving an income would not only help their aiga with everyday living expenses, but to youth, it would also help alleviate their worries of matua being home alone, or not being looked after properly by services external to the aiga:

*“It’s just like possibly having, some type of like... a person like us... so we can like work from home or whatever and take care of our tamā [Father] or tinā [Mother], and not have to worry about not getting the right care.”*

Youth also advocated for additional financial assistance for matua themselves, and leave allowances for matua that were still working:

*“at the end of the day, we still have to help our parents even if we’re not working and then if our parents get sick and we want to stay home and take care of them or go to the hospital and take care of them, who is going to take care of the bills? Who is going to take care of the house? So, not only do we need the funding, but it will be good for our parents to have funding too. Especially if they don’t have sick leave or annual leave, or any of that.”*

One youth talked about difficulties with limited supports currently available, such as the Supported Living Payment under Work and Income New Zealand. She was not eligible for the payments to care for her mother as she worked full-time but could not afford to switch as it would not cover even essential living expenses. She also talked about the stringent and rigid criteria that she felt does not consider applicants’ wider contexts. This led to discussion around who makes these high-level decisions on criteria and payment amounts and questioning the evidence these initiatives are based off:

*“See, that’s the other thing is who decides, if it’s enough. So like with her applying for the benefit to help out her mum, but, that’s what I mean is, who decides how much you get.”*

***Education, Information, Training.***

Youth showed great initiative in suggesting opportunities to be better educated, informed, and trained, to better support their matua. One youth spoke about the need for aiga to be better educated if their matua has a disability or illness. To her, more education and information allows aiga to better adjust to the new norms of life caring for loved ones with these illnesses:

*“personally, e iai la’u faafitauli i le tausiga o [I have a difficulty in the care of] my mum, only because of her condition... I’m not well educated i lona faamai la e maua ai [with the illness she has]. So the difficulty that I have with a mum with Alzheimers is trying to find things around my house and my dad in the beginning e le o se tagata foi na le e [he is not someone that is especially] patient. So, every time my mum would be like, repeating stuff, my dad would be like, ‘E, faatoa e fai mai nei a ..’ [you’ve just asked me that you know, and then sometimes I have to pull my dad aside and be like ‘Dad it’s her condition].”*

Youth also suggested workshops where health professionals come into Samoan communities to raise awareness on the different health services available and how to access them. This came about in the PIPC youth Fa’afaletui as some youth only became aware of services such as Meals on Wheels and the Supported Living Payment from this talanoa:

*“Like how L mentioned, there is a benefit. I’m sure most if not all of us didn’t even know that. So that’s where it’s good to have workshops where we can be informed on things that can help us. That can help our family. That can help our people, because, if we don’t know this, they’re not going to tell us. Nine times out of ten that they won’t inform us on things that could help us out. Usually like if we go and it’s a palagi person helping us or if it’s someone else outside of our culture they’ll just go through the process and follow the steps. But if it’s someone that’s Samoan or something, cos*

*like, I've been through it with doctors or whatever. They go the extra mile, and they tell us what's available."*

Additionally, workshops would bring health professionals together with care providers and the community. To youth, these forums would be useful to learn from each other, thus increasing the standard of care being provided, especially by the official health services:

*"e taumafai le Malo e ... fai ni workshop mo tagata Pasefika, foi na le, e aumai ai tagata specialist ma tagata foi na le e telē le malamalamaaga foi na le i le vaaiga o tagata matutua ma ituaiga conditions a latou la ua iai, e manaomia ai le faamuamua, mea faapena. Foi na le aged care ai tagata ia ua feagai ma ia mea, ina ia lelei latou i le tausiga. Auā o isi tagata o la e o e fai, faatoa leiloa a, ae na o le faataunuu." [“If the government could run workshops for Pacific people, so like specialists and people with expertise in caring for elders with different conditions can come, these sorts of things should be prioritized. Together with aged care workers, so that the care they provide is of good standard. Because some people who do this job just do it without much thought, just to get the job done.”]*

In terms of where these workshops should take place, these youth felt health professionals need to go out to Samoan communities, specifically the churches where a huge number of the Samoan population, young and old, are present. However, they also expressed that these health services should come as partners, engaging and interacting with respect

*"I think some of them are like, palagi they come to us but I don't think they have that 'respect' as a Pasefika coming into a Pasefika community to liaise with us, i mea tau [in activities to do with] workshop."*

For matua that are unable to move independently, youth discussed how their aiga physically assists them with manoeuvres such as lifting. Youth stressed the need for more practical training, techniques and equipment to help carers perform these activities in safer

ways. In addition, the equipment some matua had received, such as commodes and wheelchairs, took months to receive and were too small. Thus, youth thought about the need to either custom make equipment or ensure there are a variety of sizes and not just one set standard size. They also enquired around funding available for housing modification for disabled matua. Those that knew of it, urged for a far quicker turnaround of modifications and an easier application process.

Regarding meals, youth encouraged each other to attend programmes that promote soifua maloloina, to ensure that as carers, youth are well informed and up to date on any information that can help their matua:

*“Ou te iloa o loo tele a Polokalame i Samoa faapea foi iinei i Niu Sila, faataitaiga, o meaa i lea e tausi ai matua matutua, so e tatau a ia oe ona fai faalelei meaa i lea e tausi ai tagata matutua tei ua maua i se faamai ia palegi le masima... e tupu foi faalavelave pe a le lelei le tausiga... e pei foi ona faalogo i Samoa le taua o le soifua maloloina ... fai faalelei o latou ofu.” [I know there are lots of programmes in Samoa as well as here in New Zealand, for example food that will care for our elders, their food needs to be prepared well in case they get sick, the salt needs to be balanced... issues occur when they aren't cared for properly... just like we hear in Samoa the importance of 'soifua maloloina' ... they're dressed properly [warm]*

*“But then in saying that, it's also us too. We have to take the opportunity when we can. If the chance is there, I don't see why we don't try.”]*

At a more macro level, youth reiterated the calling as a Samoan to care for our elders, not just parents and grandparents, but extended aiga, such as aunties and uncles too. These definitions of family and care therefore need to be acknowledged at a policy level:

*“Pei o leisi tulaga lea e tatau ona tilotilo iai le Malo NZ, ina ia mafai ona faalauaitele le latou tilotilo i le tatou aganuu foi na le, ona o tatou e le na o tatou, foi*

*na le ... e iai taimi, ina tei ua faapea atu o lea e tausí le ... e seasea tilotilo latou i lea tulaga foi a na le ... o leisi mea taua e tatau ona iloa e le Malo. Tatou tagata Samoa e le na o tatou matua e tausí, e lavea i le mea lea. E iai foi o tatou aunties, uncles e manaomia le tausíga. E tatau a ona tausí, o le tofiga a ia o le tausí.” [“This is another area the NZ government should look at, to be able to look deeper into our culture, because we are not individuals, there are times that we will care for others e.g. Aunties – extended family, this is an important point the govt should know. Us Samoans don’t only care for our parents, we also have Aunties, Uncles that need care. We should care for them, it is our calling to look after them.”]*

Widening these definitions then allows for aiga to access different types of services that currently may only be available for ‘immediate family.’ Moreover, the government could look to creating services that support the realities of Tausí matua as communal care:

*“E tatau a i le Malo ona amanaia le eseese o le tatou tu ma aga foi na le faapea e le taugofie e fai foi si taugata o le tausí matua i le tatou faa-Samoa foi na le. Ae o le mea na ia e faigofie a, ae o le faafitauli na o le apalai atu, e tilotilo mai latou i le itu faa-palagi ae le o malamalama foi na le i le itu faa-Samoa.” [“The government should strongly consider the differences in our customs and traditions/way of life in terms of how expensive it is for us to care for our elders/parents in the fa’a-Samoa. But that in itself is easy, what is hard is when we apply, they see it from a Palagi lens and don’t understand it from the side of fa’a-Samoa.”]*

### ***Pathways for Youth Carers.***

Youth expressed their struggles in trying to maintain an education whilst caring for their matua. As the role of caring for matua is unpaid and time-intensive, many of the youth wanted to carry on with their education, but did not have the time or money to do so.

Therefore, they opted to juggle paid work with caring for their elders. Furthermore, from both

youth groups, only one member said her work allowed her the option of working from home, at least during the COVID-19 pandemic:

*“Even with Study Link, like we try and go and study, cause that’s what our parents want, but then StudyLink tells us whether or not we get Student Allowance or Living Costs and how much we can get.”*

*“So they could need surgery so we take months off school just to tausi, so then you don’t want to pick and choose which one is right for you cause that can also cause a major setback.”*

To be given windows of opportunity to study whilst being paid to care for their elders at home would be an ideal option for most youth. The majority spoke about their parents’ dreams for them to prosper, with many parents seeing education as the way forward for their families. In one youths’ memories of her elders, she talked about their advice that included that she remained diligent in her studies:

*“...ou te manatuaina i na le tele o matua na maliliu i le la faaiuga mo taita ... ma la faamanuiga ia teine lelei, toaga i le aoga, faigaluega ma tausi ia ou matua.” [“I’ll remember there my parents who’ve passed and their decision for me, caring for me, blessing me, advising me to be a good girl, be diligent in school, work and care for my parents.”]*

Overall, the results of this study have found six main themes for the perspectives of Samoan youth, in Aotearoa NZ, on elder-care and elder-care practises: Tausi matua, faasinomaga, legacy impact of faamatua, differences in care across Samoa and Aotearoa NZ, COVID-19 impact and carer informed and designed solutions. The next chapter will discuss these findings in relation to the main research aims.

## Chapter 5 | Discussion

This final chapter will discuss the role of Samoan youth in Tausi matua, drawing specific focus to this as a culturally-diverse contribution to elder care practices. Overall results from this study have revealed two overarching core areas expressed through six themes. These are discussed in relation to research and literature reviewed, and divided into two sections that directly answer the overall questions and aims of this study: to explore the perspectives and practises of elder-care for Samoan youth in Aotearoa NZ.

The first section explores the perspectives of Samoan youth regarding elder-care in Aotearoa NZ. The results highlight that Samoan youth perceive elder-care through the lens of the Samoan indigenous practise of Tausi matua. These are actions born out of their faasinomaga, leading to blessings as part of the legacy impact of faamatua. The second section will discuss the elder-care practises and responsibilities Samoan youth undertake in Aotearoa NZ. There are differences in care across Samoa and Aotearoa NZ, due to the different supports available in each context. The COVID-19 impact revealed unique ways in which youth supported their aiga. Lastly, Samoan youth advocated for carer informed and designed solutions to support their roles as carers for their matua.

### Section 1. Perspectives of Samoan Youth on Elder Care

Samoan youth in Aotearoa NZ view elder-care through the cultural lens of faasamoa, embodied in the concept of Tausi matua that can be divided into three parts. Figure 10 shows how the everyday actions of Tausi matua are born out of the deeper core values of faasinomaga, that it is within one's identity to care for their elders. Finally, the outcomes of Tausi matua are blessings from elders as part of the legacy impact of faamatua, but for Samoan youth, elders themselves are regarded as the most valued blessing. These results challenge the negative views of ageing that is pervasive in Western literature (WHO, 2015).

**Figure 10***Overview of the Three Parts of Tausi Matua****Tausi Matua***

Nestled within the worldview of faasamoa is a core understanding that matua serve as the wisdom bearers and leaders of aiga and communities, and therefore matua are honoured with the utmost respect and care. These results reiterate the depiction of Samoan elders in the literature (Fa'aea & Enari, 2021). The term matua, or elders, primarily means parents and grandparents but is certainly a loose term, including any other extended relation that is one or more generations above oneself. As relationships in faasamoa are interconnected by reciprocity, matua bless their families and communities with wisdom, knowledge and love. Tausi matua is therefore one's duty to care for one's elders, an honour and privilege that comes with willing and worthy sacrifices that is a source of blessings.

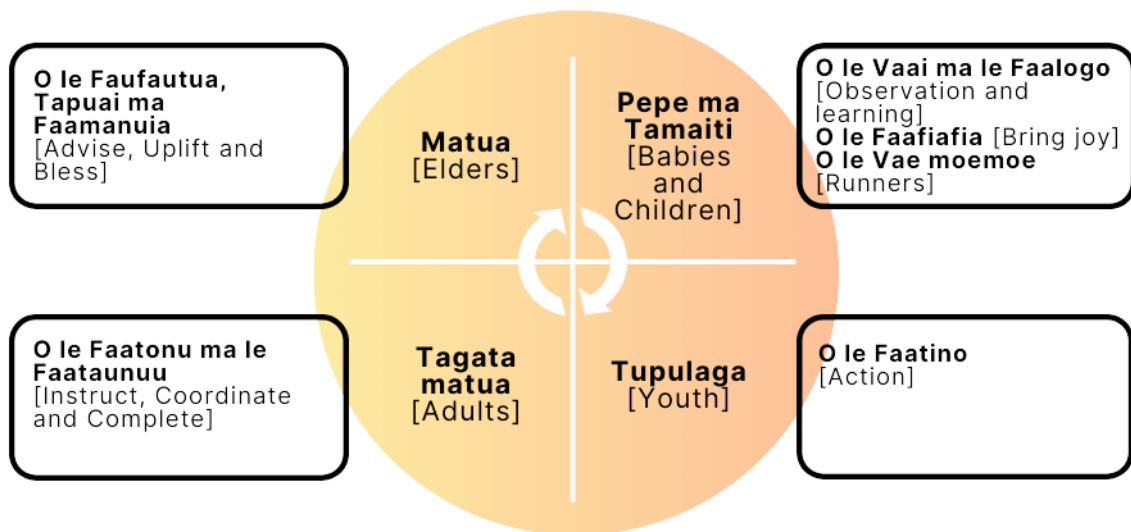
Tausi, in this context, is a type of care that knows no bounds, with the aim being to tautua, or serve matua, to the best of one's ability with a genuine and sincere heart. In doing so, helping to promote and maintain the soifua maloloina atoatoa of elders. Far from being unattainable or aspirational, this care is seen not only as possible, but completely inherent and intuitive. This is partly due to the shared nature of this responsibility among the collective aiga and wider waves of society. This care also exists due to the value matua hold in Samoan society.

Tausi matua is woven into the fabric of the Samoan cycle of life, shown by the different roles of care held within the collective at each stage of life. At every stage of life,

including babies, children, youth, adults and elders, every age group plays a significant role in Tausi matua. This is illustrated by Figure 11 and detailed in future paragraphs.

**Figure 11**

*Overview of the Samoa Tausi Matua Aiga Cycle of Care*



**Pepe ma Tamaiti [Babies and Children].**

*O le Vaai ma le Faalogo.*

*O le tama a le tagata e fafaga i upu ma tala, a o le tama a le manu e fafaga i fuga o laau.* [The offspring of men are fed with words but the offspring of birds are fed with seeds].

In the Samoan world, children grow up in and around the practice and respect for the care of elders, and are expected to learn this by first watching and listening to this care taking place at home. Through witnessing their family carrying out care practises in their everyday life, Tausi matua is natural and normalised for children. Their parents and elders also feed them the values of faasamoa, including faaloalo, that emphasises their position as a child to respect and obey the instructions of anyone older than them, especially elders.

***O le Faafiafia.***

Children are a source of joy for the family and therefore play a crucial role in keeping up the energy of the family. They especially contribute to the wellbeing of matua as it is usual for children to spend a large amount of time with matua while their parents are working, and older children are at school.

***O le vae Moemoe.***

*“A’oa’o ia i le tama e tusa ma lona ala; a oo ina toeaina lava o ia, e le te’a ese ai.”*  
(*Faataoto 22:6*). [Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it (*Proverbs 22:6*)].

Being immersed in Tausi matua as part of family life, children are instinctively scaffolded into actioning the care as they grow. This practical support starts with children as *vae moemoe* [runners]. At this stage of life, they are still on the receiving end of care from their elders. Despite this, children are responsible for carrying out all the small errands or chores their elders may need such as fetching their tablets, getting their *apa fafano* [wash bowl for hands after meals] or helping to *fofō* [massage] their legs. They may also be relied upon to shadow their elders at social gatherings and in public, helping with tasks such as walking, carrying bags and shopping. Being an active part of Tausi matua from a young age is crucial in the Samoan worldview as it aligns with the Christian teachings that are seen as the heart of faasamoa.

**Tupulaga (Youth).**

***O le Faatino.***

*E iloa le tama ma le teine Samoa i lana tu, savali, ma lana tautala.* [You know a Samoan by the way they stand (hold themselves), walk and speak]. By the time they are youth, they are now of age to take on the bulk of the care practises that they have watched their parents and older family members carry out growing up. Being *vae moemoe* as a child

and assisting elders with smaller tasks, this is a relatively smooth transition. Youth are then fully immersed in the season of *faatino* [actioning care], a phase that never ends, but is quite substantial at this stage of life. Youth can *faatino* as they are still young enough that they are spending most of their time at home, yet old enough to assist the family more with larger tasks such as cooking, cleaning and supporting elders with personal care or transport to appointments. There is a huge emphasis on youth to show initiative in terms of knowing what their responsibilities are. This initiative can be shown through proactively fulfilling their duties without the need for constant instructions from parents or elders. Interestingly, when reflecting on their journey of *Tausi matua*, youth spoke about how, as children, they inherently knew they would take on this duty of *Tausi matua* as part of their identity as Samoans.

### **O Matua [Parents/Adults].**

#### ***O le Faatonu ma le Faataunuu.***

The adulthood life stage is a transition into the group that sits between the generation of elders above, and youth and children below. Though this group is still very much actioning care, the main role for this generation is now *faatonu* [instruct and coordinate] of the youth and children, and *faataunuu* [complete]. *Faatonu* involves directing the everyday care by organising children and youth, as well as siblings and wider family members, around elders as needed to support. For *faataunuu*, they may be moving into coordinating and actioning their elders' wishes on a larger scale, namely their decisions concerning the running of the *aiga*. This includes internal matters of their *aiga* such as; major decisions around healthcare; logistical decisions surrounding moving to another country for health or financial reasons; overseeing financial contributions to *faalavelave faaleaiga*, *faalenuu pe faaleekalesia* [cultural obligations to family, village and church]; and any matters concerning their wider *aiga*, *nuu* and *ekalesia*.

**O Matua (Elders).**

*O le Faufautua, Tapuai ma Faamanuia.*

Though Tausi matua is centred around the elders, the elders themselves are an active and integral part of the cycle, reciprocating care downwards towards their aiga in their position as *fautua* [advisor]. Aligning with Tamasese et al. (2014), these results show elders as providing the guidance and direction to all levels of the aiga. Through their decisions and leadership, they model the legacy they want to leave behind for their aiga to continue. For their adult children they advise and uplift them as they take on bigger responsibilities in the aiga and wider community. They also commonly share the vast amounts of knowledge and wisdom they hold such as their Christian faith, their knowledge of faasamoa, and family and land ties that they want their aiga to uphold. For the younger generations they may be physically helping to care forelders and are key in sustaining their cultural identity through language, family, village genealogy, and building their faith through lotu and prayer:

*‘O faiva e tapuaia e a’e ma le manuia’ [Endeavours that are uplifted and supported are successful]*

Elders are also invaluable as they have the authority and the love to *tapuai* [uplift] and offer well wishes upon their families as they go about their everyday lives.

*“E le sili le ta’i, na i lo le tapua’i.” [Praying for successful completion of a feat is far more important than the feat itself]*

This is usually in the form of prayer, praying that their families are kept safe every day at work and school and that they are flourishing in life:

*E afua mai mauga manuia o le nuu [From the mountains come blessings for the people]*

Lastly, elders complete the aiga cycle of care by being the source of blessings for their family. They pray for their aiga and speak blessings over them for their love and care in Tausi

matua, thankful to them for fulfilling their duties as children. In faasamoa, to be blessed by elders is one of the highest honours that all elders can gift, a gift worth more than any material possession. It is taught not to doubt blessings, that God will bless those who Tausi matua with a genuine heart, a continual blessing that follows them into the next generations. It is believed that these blessings will rain down in any and all forms, ensuring future success in each family member's life.

### ***Wellbeing as More Than Physical Health***

The aiga cycle of care, as depicted in Figure 11, emphasises holistic wellbeing for Samoan families. It emphasizes the significance of family harmony, connectedness, and reciprocal care, in contributing to the collective health of the whole aiga. It also underscores the importance of holistic wellbeing, demonstrated through the roles of each age group represented in the cycle incorporating aspects of physical, mental, spiritual and emotional wellbeing. It also speaks to the importance of cultural identity for wellbeing. Pacific models of health including Pulotu-Endemann's (2009) Fonofale model, as outlined previously, reaffirms this, with the foundation of the model being the family and culture being the roof.

### ***Youth Role Highlighting Samoan Values in Action***

The results from this study confirmed that Samoan youth play a pivotal role in the Tausi matua cycle of care. Youth are a unique age group that are still being cared for by elders whilst simultaneously assuming rising responsibilities in supporting their elders in the faatino season of Tausi matua. The faatino period highlights how for youth, that Tausi matua is an outward expression of deeply rooted Samoan values such as tautua and faaaloalo. Results found the role of Tausi matua was shared by both male and female youth, though in some aiga, tasks did differ by gender. This is unlike the literature which reflected the weight of caring as falling on females (Pharr et al., 2014; Zarzycki et al., 2023).

### **Tautua.**

In the context of Tausi matua, *o le faatinoga o le tautua* [the act of service for youth] is to serve their elders to the absolute best of their ability. This equates to sparing no expense to ensure elders are well looked after, and is consistent with Pacific literature around the concept of tautua (Faaea & Enari, 2021). There are different facets of tautua that youth start to live out in this season. *Tautuanofotuavae* translates to serving from the feet of one's elders. It is the type of tautua that springs from an eager heart of humility, being on the beck and call of their elders at all times, caring for them face-to-face. Carers are trusted to be active and present in ensuring their elders daily needs are met and that they are living in a healthy and safe environment. Another aspect of tautua is *tautuamatavela*. This aspect of tautua translates to service with burning eyes, depicting a situation of cooking in the *umukuka* [outdoor kitchen] and the stinging sensation from the heat and smoke from the fire. It refers to the painful, but worthy deeds, that carers undertake to provide for the aiga. These deeds include not only the cooking of meals outside in the *umu* [traditional outdoor oven], but also fishing, hunting, going to the plantations, and tending to livestock. Further than this, the word *vela* [burning] also refers to *le tautua ua vela* [someone who has served with true alofa], who has cared for their elders until the very end *se'ia i'u lana tausiga* [when their care duties are said to be fulfilled].

### **Faaaloalo.**

*Ia e ava i lou tamā ma lou tinā, ina ia faalevaleva ai ou aso i le nuu o le afoaiina mai e le ALII lou Atua ia te oe (Esoto 20:12).* [Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you (Exodus 20:12 NIV).]

*E fa'alogo le atali 'i poto i le a'oa'o atu a lona tamā; a o lē fa'atauemu, e lē fa'alogo ia i le a'oa'ig. (Faataoto 13:1). [A wise son heeds his father's instruction, but a mocker does not respond to rebukes (Proverbs 13:1).]*

From birth, the foundational layer of faaaloalo that a child learns, is their relationship to their parents and elders and through them, to God. They are to respect, honour and obey their parents and elders. Not only is this a value in faasamoa which includes the way they speak, act and carry themselves, but it is also intertwined with the Fifth commandment in the Christian faith, and reiterated multiple times in the Bible, including King Solomon in the Book of Proverbs.

***Faalogo ma Usitai.***

Youth show the depth of their respect for their elders in the way that they Tausi matua by tautua, but also by honouring their parents and elders by listening to, and obeying their wishes, known as *faalogo ma usitai*. Instructions will flow down from elders and parents and the children will listen and action these, contributing in any way that their aiga needs them whether it be time, money, or any other resource that they may have. Whether they agree with their parents' decisions or not, youth will bring their parents and elders joy through their obedience and support, which is most important.

*Ua fai atu Samuelu, "E tusa, 'ea 'ona fiafia o le Ali'i i taulaga mū ma taulaga, i lona fiafia i le fa'alogo i le si'ufofoga o le Ali'i? Fa'auta o le fa'alogo e sili lea i le taulaga ma le usiusita'i e sili lea i le ga'o o mamoe po'a" (1 Samuelu 15:22) [But Samuel replied: "Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams" (1 Samuel 15:22)].*

In an extension of the child role to *faafiafia* [bring happiness] youth continue to bring happiness to their elders through education. For most elders and parents, their prayer is for

their children to pursue education, as it is seen as the milk and honey for new generations to seek, ensuring financial stability, security, and opportunities allowing aiga to thrive into the future. Though it may seem an indirect form of care, obeying elders wishes in this way is a genuine source of joy for elders and is one of the highest honours children can give. As shown in the Bible and a common verse elders share with their children is that obedience is prized far above other offerings.

### **Tausi Matua is an Invisible Norm.**

Tausi matua as part of life seems to be so engrained in youth that throughout the talanoa it was difficult for them to articulate what Tausi matua is and what it involves. It is part of the fabric of their everyday lives so is not questioned or even discussed but is more of an intangible and invisible concept, that is just accepted as part of who they are. Furthermore, it is so mundane, that youth were confused as to how it could be seen as extraordinary or unique. This response could have been influenced by myself being a Samoan insider-researcher and thus youth believing I would already know and share these cultural views. However, this could also have been influenced by the social stigma that comes with admitting that there are any issues in caring for one's matua, as it could insinuate that a person does not love their matua enough. This was consistent with Tamasese et al. (2014), who described shame that is associated with not caring for elders in a Pacific way. This social stigma means youth would be far less likely to share any struggles for possible fear of being misunderstood as complaining or being ungrateful, therefore portraying Tausi matua as only positive.

### ***Faasinomaga***

The difficulty in articulating these everyday actions or the further layers of Samoan values stems from their roots in the deeper notions of life purpose of Samoans, known as faasinomaga. This concept is the essence of identity, the foundations as the pillars of faasamoa laid by ancestors long ago and carried in the depths of one's soul, marking the

blueprint of life from a Samoan perspective. At its core, the Samoan worldview is others-centred, where the base self is in relation to ones aiga (Alefaio-Tugia, 2022). Additionally, faaaloalo is oriented upwards with elders revered, treasured and cherished. Tausi matua is thus a type of care born out of ones faasinomaga, being an honour to care for one's elders. Nurtured and sustained by alofa, where true alofa is sacrificial, tied also, to the actions of Jesus on the cross as the greatest example.

### **Aiga Collectiveness and Changes Over Time and Context.**

The ability to undertake Tausi matua relies on the assumption of the collective strength of the aiga coming together to provide the manpower and resources. A natural assumption as it is passed down from generation to generation that the faasinomaga of Samoans, is to care for their elders with their own hands. This is not viewed as a duty or chore but eagerly undertaken, without complaint. So much so that those who are seen as not caring for their elders themselves, are viewed as neglecting their God-given duties and throwing away their blessings.

However, moving away from the homelands of Samoa has brought with it new pressures that affect aiga ability to sustain Tausi matua in the traditional way. This includes smaller houses built for nuclear families, new diseases and costs of living that are in stark contrast to the familial land and the abundance of food sources in Samoa. These changing tides of time in the diaspora has revealed new questions that youth are grappling with, whether one can fulfil their faasinomaga if their alofa for their elder is expressed in other ways. Residential care facilities are options available, in Aotearoa NZ, that are almost unheard of in Samoa. Some families are opting for this care now for an array of reasons including safety and security, the presence of health professionals or the inability to afford a family member at home with elders. It could be seen that from their heart of alofa, aiga are continuing to seek the best quality care for their elders, even if it means the care must leave

their hands. From this standpoint, it can be argued that it is a form of Tausi matua that is expressed differently as a result of unique aiga circumstances.

Erosion in social cohesion also affects the care of elders due to breakdowns in the aiga web of care. Some groups in the aiga can experience burnout from carrying the bulk of the carer responsibilities. Issues can also arise if parts of the aiga have different approaches to Tausi matua, and elders are not in a position to state their wants for themselves, or are disrespected by being left out of these conversations. Consistent with what was found by Thaggard et al. (2020), issues within Pacific families are very sensitive, difficult to articulate and not easily disclosed by aiga and so the true scope of the problem is hard to judge. Even within this research, having an existing relationship with youth outside of the research meant rapport was enough to start conversations on aiga issues, though it was still spoken about in general terms. Youth are not naïve or ignorant to issues within aiga, but they are private about it. It could be due in part to the mentality in the Samoan worldview that struggles are kept in-house. Additionally, because of how deeply engrained Tausi matua is as part of one's life purpose, it could be a worry that speaking on struggles may be misconstrued as complaints or a lack of alofa for elders.

### **Vā Tapuia ma le Vā Fealoaloai.**

This expectation includes the relationship between a child, and their parents and elders. Faaaloalo is displayed upwards where children must not *sopo* [cross the boundary] with parents or elders, with words or actions, as their role is to listen, obey and carry out their parents' wishes. Another relationship that is tapu is the relationship between the brother and the sister, where the sister is said to be the pupil of her brothers' eye, and is therefore protected and treated with care.

There are nuances to how these are expressed by each aiga in terms of Tausi matua though the similarity is clear, with each aiga taking the lead from their matua on their wishes.

For example, for some aiga the elders prefer their children of the same sex to assist them with intimate cares such as showering and toileting. Other matua may not view this as important or may prefer daughters over sons or vice-versa. What is important for aiga though, is that the dignity of their matua continues to be upheld in all circumstances. This is difficult in Aotearoa NZ where aiga are now navigating these relationships in a totally new context, without the wider aiga, lands and seas to support with Tausi matua. Smaller family sizes and having children of one sex have reduced the choice for matua to have the assistance that they may want. Looking to the future, it is an ongoing discussion between youth and their matua on ways forward together that allow their matua the best quality care whilst maintaining their comfort. For youth, their heart appears to be, that in an environment of reduced options, though they respect the *tapu ma sa* [forbidden social boundaries], they will forego them to keep the fundamental value of alofa for their elders alive, care with no boundaries.

#### **Widening the Definitions of Samoan Indigenous Practises.**

Living in the diaspora, youth are exposed to different options of care that may not be traditional, such as residential care. As a result, they may feel more open to exploring these new possibilities and adapt it to fit the values of faasamoa they hold. They may be more likely to see these practices as fluid or that they may not always need to be rigid, that there may be other ways of expressing them while keeping their integrity and essence. This may be a generational movement. The youth expressed that for them living in Aotearoa NZ, it was important to be flexible rather than upholding a cultural practice at the expense of their elder, for example families who only had daughters or sons were willing to bend traditional cultural practices which dictate gender roles to ensure their elders were cared for.

## *Legacy Impact of Faamatua*

### **Reciprocal Alofa.**

Without an additional focus on the matua half of Tausi matua, the significance of elders in Samoan society can almost be overlooked by the selflessness and sacrificial love of carers. However, this is not the view of Samoan youth. Far from seeing themselves as somehow uniquely virtuous or self-sacrificial, their heart for Tausi matua is humility that comes from a deep sense of immense gratitude for their elders.

For Samoan youth growing up in Aotearoa NZ, their relationship with their elders is different to that with their parents. Many of their childhoods were spent under the care of their elders while parents were working. To them, their bond with their elders is treasured, seeing elders as spoiling them whereas their parents would discipline them. Being in their constant presence, being cared for, affirmed, blessed and uplifted, is a bond of alofa that is unforgettable for youth.

Elders also continue to light the way of their aiga in the diaspora, teaching youth how to keep their faasinomaga alive away from the homelands. Through their actions, youth witness the values of faasamoa, their leadership and authority in their aiga and wider Samoan society is able to provide healing and unity from division. Elders are also the link for youth back to Samoa, teaching them the language, genealogy and other aspects of the Samoan way of life. Having elders to root them back to their homelands can help keep their sense of identity strong and less affected by pressures that may exist in Western society to assimilate to dominant culture that could contrast with faasamoa customs and traditions. For youth, Tausi matua is a way to try and give back to their elders, not to gain their blessings, but because their matua are the blessing.

## **Section 2. Practices of Tausi Matua**

Results show how elder-care practises for Samoan youth in Aotearoa NZ, differ markedly from that in the homelands of Samoa. This is unsurprising seeing as how most Samoans are now born outside of Samoa, with the majority being born in Aotearoa NZ. This is outlined in the theme of differences in care across Aotearoa NZ and Samoa. The impact of a global pandemic during the data collection also offered unique insights into the elder-care practises of youth within their aiga, dealing with the COVID-19 impact. Finally, with youth being at the forefront of Tausi matua, they were able to offer carer informed and designed solutions to better support their Tausi matua practises.

### ***Differences in Care Across Samoa and Aotearoa NZ***

Living in the diaspora now, the practicalities of Tausi matua that Samoan youth are navigating, are inevitably different to Samoan youth living in Samoa. The context of Aotearoa NZ is one where every necessity has a cost including housing, food and medical care, which contrasts with Samoa where these are either free or are cheaper to access. Life in Aotearoa NZ also caters to nuclear families, with houses that are inadequate for large family sizes. These new pressures then increase the difficulty for aiga to care for matua. However, unlike the literature by Yeh et al. (2014), which highlight views of Pacific youth finding it difficult to navigate two cultural worlds of individualism and collectivism, these Samoan youths' issues were less about navigating the two different cultural worlds, but more about navigating a Western system to access resources to care for their elders effectively.

However, aiga continue to put elders first and have come up with creative solutions to ensure that they continue to Tausi matua to the best of their ability. Samoans continue to view their collective aiga as fluid, moving across oceans in order to provide their elders with the best quality care. Youth being in the stage of faatino, may move to Aotearoa NZ with their elders to seek treatment with the higher standard and resources for medical care. For aiga

living in Aotearoa NZ, youth will sacrifice opportunities for work and education in order to stay home and provide the face-to-face support and care their elders' need. There is also a movement in the next wave of youth leaving Samoa to come to Aotearoa NZ for work and education, to financially support their elders in Samoa. These practises highlight Tausi matua across borders, building on literature referring to remittances, a common form of care for Pacific families (Vakalahi et al., 2013).

In line with Ledoux-Taua'aletoa's (2013) study, this study confirmed that in Aotearoa NZ, Samoan youth are also in the unique position of being the bridge for their Matua to the Western world. For many aiga, youth speak more English than previous generations thus allowing them to navigate Western systems on behalf of their elders, through translating and advocating for them. They can also be a source of comfort, strength and support for elders who may find it difficult to express their health concerns to health professionals. Trusted as family members, youth may be more effective, than formal translation services provided by the public health system, for aiga who value keeping their healthcare needs private between their own aiga and the health professional. This could be an area where youth could be paid to translate for their aiga.

### ***COVID-19 Impact***

The impact of COVID-19 also highlighted how youth continue to bridge not only the cultural divide between the West and Samoa but also the technological divide. With the advent of technology, youth were able to ensure that their elders were kept connected to online church services as well as aiga all around the world. Youth also continued to entertain their families during this time too, taking charge of family movie nights and other events. Youth were also the designated shoppers who left their houses to get supplies for the aiga so as not to expose their parents or elders to COVID-19.

Lockdowns also allowed families to go back to the roots of Tausi matua in the islands which is the face-to-face, 24/7 care and time together. Even though some family members were affected by job losses, youth continued to see COVID-19 as a time of rest, reflection and faith. It created time for aiga to be home together as a collective, intentionally spending time with each other and reprioritising their time for activities of importance to them, such as lotu. This was restorative for family relationships, with youth valuing time with their parents and matua without the distraction of their normal routines outside the home that impact on quality family time.

COVID-19 made it clear that finding alternative ways to ease financial burdens on aiga into the future, could be a way to allow families more time at home, outside of a lockdown, to work on their relationships with one another. A stronger family unit would lead to better wellbeing and also less time at other activities that could lead to family harm such as gambling activities. Churches could also receive more funding as they served as virtual community hubs during COVID-19, and spiritual support is hugely important for Samoan families especially in the midst of disasters. Churches provided a virtual space so that aiga could stay connected and have their spiritual needs met even during lockdowns. Churches continue to serve as community hubs for Pacific families, therefore adding on modifications for church halls to function as emergency management shelters during disasters and having a food source including vegetable gardens, would also help keep up community resilience and act as sources of support for carers for their aiga.

### ***Carer Informed and Designed Solutions***

The youth expressed that more monetary support for elders and carers was important. The desired support included free healthcare for elders and a higher pension to support them with their living costs. Youth also promoted extra leave for matua who could not afford to stop working. For youth as carers, they advocated for the ability to Tausi matua and get paid

carer leave for youth who are working. There is a sound argument for this case as there is a huge cost-saving opportunity for the health system in paying at home carers in contrast to the cost of placing matua in residential care. This then challenges Tang et al.'s (2022) prediction that elders would burden the healthcare system.

Current financial supports for carers, available under the MSD (2021), were said to be unaffordable for youth to switch to, from a full-time job, as the loss in income is too steep to stop working. With the criteria of these supports, they are also difficult to access and require documentation that costs time and money.

Further, youth campaigned for the creation of education pathways so that study options remain open to them while they Tausi matua. They were also open to any and all forms of training that they could do free of charge to improve their care practises including First Aid, equipment support, training for physical manoeuvres, and nutrition courses to gain more knowledge on healthy meal options for matua. Churches were their main recommendation for workshops, suggesting that healthcare professionals and services come through churches in order to disseminate health information and offer training, as they felt many Pacific Island families could be reached through the use of churches. Additionally, churches were good avenues to inform aiga on supports that they may not be aware of or may be unsure how to access, such as Meals on Wheels or occupational therapy equipment.

More broadly, youth challenged the current definitions of family as immediate family as they said it does not allow for the breadth and extensiveness often found in Samoan families, of carers being extended family members. Healthcare policies should reflect these broader definitions of family.

### **Conclusion**

To conclude, *e sui Faiga ae tumau Faavae* [though the processes change the essence remains the same]. The role of Samoan youth is a role of intergenerational carers who have a

heart to Tausi matua, carried across the oceans in their faasinomaga, captured by the late Associate Professor Teresia Kieuea Teaiwa “we sweat and cry salt water, so we know that the ocean is really in our blood” (Teaiwa, 2021). An ode to the elders who are the guiding lights of communities and the heartbeats of aiga. Further research is needed to better support the care that youth and aiga provide, because though it is a worthy sacrifice, it is difficult, and made more so by the current complexities in accessing essential resources for elders. What is certain though is that despite the challenges in the diaspora, Samoan youth are resilient and will continue to bridge the gap between their elders and the Western world they now live in, just as their elders do for them as their living links connecting them home.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Talanoa Guide for Pilot Family That was Utilised in Talanoa for Wider Study Including Youth Talanoa

#### Schedule of possible questions to guide Talanoa with Pilot-study family

- **Introductions/Lotu**
- **Thank the family and provide an overview of the study (as per Info. Sheet)**
- **Sign consent forms at the beginning or end of talanoa (Facilitator's discretion)**

**Research Title:** Caring for our Pacific Wisdom-bearers study

#### **Aims:**

- a) Explore elder-care practices that contribute to Pacific families' health and wellbeing
- b) Examine cultural and contextual changes within the family that impact on their ability to provide care
- c) Detail the social and cultural material supports needed to sustain the care of Pacific Elders

#### **Possible questions for carers who are the children**

- Historical context question: Can you please share some background information on your family eg. How you came to NZ?
- Can you please share some of your experiences in caring for your elderly parents?
- What processes have been put in place to ensure that your parents receive the best care possible?
- What are some of the benefits of having to care for your parents?
- What are some of the challenges of taking care of your parents?
- How has it impacted your relationships with your parents? With your spouse? With your children? With your siblings? Wider family members?
- What would you consider as Pacific ways of Elder care?
- How have these Pacific practices being carried out in your care of your parents?
- What type of support do you need in order to provide quality care for your parents?
- What type of care is being received from government services?

#### **Possible questions for Pacific-Matua being cared for – recipients of care**

- Would you like to share some of your experiences of the care that you are receiving from your family?
- What do you like best about the kind of care that you are receiving?
- Is there anything that you would like to see improve in the care that you are receiving?
- How has receiving care from members of your families impacted your relationships?

- What would you consider as Pacific ways of Elder care?
- How have these Pacific practices being carried out by your children and extended family?

**Possible questions for carers who are grandchildren or part of the extended kainga**

- What has been your role in the care of your grandparents?
- What do you love the most in this role?
- What are some of the challenges for you?
- How has it impacted you personally?
- How has it influenced your relationships with your grandparents/parents/siblings?

**Appendix B: English Family Consent Form**

**MASSEY UNIVERSITY**  
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES  
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
TE KURA PŪKENGĀ TANGATA

**Caring for our Pacific Wisdom-bearers Study****FAMILY PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM**

We have read and have had the details of the study explained to us. Our questions have been answered to our satisfaction, and we understand that we may ask further questions at any time.

We agree to the Talanoa being sound recorded.

We agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet attached.

**Signature/s:**

**Date:**

**Full Name/s**

**printed:**

## Appendix C: English Information Sheet



MASSEY UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES  
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
TE KURA PŪKENGĀ TANGATA

# Caring for our Pacific Wisdom-bearers Study

## INFORMATION SHEET

### Introduction

Warm Pacific Greetings, we are a research team led by Associate Professor Siautu Alefaio based at Massey University, Albany Auckland. In 2018, our team was awarded a grant from the Health Research Council (HRC) to research caring practices for Pacific Matua (Elders) in Aotearoa New Zealand. We would like to invite you to participate in this study which aims to investigate family, community and church perspectives and experiences of caring for Pacific Matua (Elders).

Your participation in this study will help to understand:

- Elder-care practices that contribute to Pacific families' health and wellbeing
- Cultural and contextual changes within the family that impact on their ability to provide care
- Social and cultural material supports needed to sustain the care of Pacific Elder/s.

The Caring for our Pacific Wisdom-bearers study explores how intergenerational relationships (e.g. relationships across generations such as grandparents-parents-grandchildren) support both elder people and whole families within Aotearoa-New Zealand.

The broad aim of this research is to explore family, community and church perspectives and experiences of caring for Pacific Matua in order to improve health and wellbeing of Pacific families and communities.

**The team of researchers leading this study are: Associate Professor Siautu Alefaio, Associate Professor Tracie Mafile'o, Dr Sione Vaka, Professor Fiona Alpass, Professor Christine Stephens, Kotalo Leau (Research Officer/ Youth Lead).**

### What would the study involve?

We invite you to participate by sharing your experiences of caring for Mātua (Elders) parents or grandparents, or your experiences as Pacific Mātua being cared for by family members or community services. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary and involves being part of Fa'afaletui (collective dialogue/discussion) with other families that will be recorded. During Fa'afaletui, Mātua and Carers will be asked to share practices and experiences of caring. At the start of Fa'afaletui, we will also seek some data on your own background, such as age, gender, numbers in household through a short anonymous survey.

The information you provide will be used to understand successful caring practices, strategies and challenges that Pacific families experience in caring for Mātua (Elders). You will not be able to be

identified personally in any external reports. No names or family names will be used in any written documents or presentations. Your comments will only be linked to a general role label. All data will be kept confidential and separate from any identifying information in a secure location.

All information provided to researchers is completely confidential and will be used only for the purposes of this research. It will not be possible to identify individuals in any dataset or report from the study. All recorded information and transcripts will be kept in a locked room and as with all study materials will be destroyed ten years after the completion of the study.

### **Your Rights:**

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation to be involved in this research.

If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any question.
- withdraw from the study at any point before or during Fa'afaletui.
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation.
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during Fa'afaletui.
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used.
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is finished.

If you have any questions or would like to receive further information regarding this research, please feel free to contact us.

In a few days one of our research team will telephone you to answer any of your questions and to ask if you want to participate in the study. If you would like to contact Kotalo our Research Officer, her telephone number is 021315032 and her email address is: [K.Leau@massey.ac.nz](mailto:K.Leau@massey.ac.nz)

Fa'afetai lava (Thank you again) for your contribution to our research on caring for Pacific Matua in Aotearoa New Zealand.

*This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Prof Craig Johnson, Director, Research Ethics, telephone 06 356 9099 x 85271, email [humanethics@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethics@massey.ac.nz).*

## Appendix D: Samoan Family Consent Form



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AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
TE KURA PUKENGA TANGATA

### SUESUEGA MA ILOILOGA O MATUA TAUSI

#### PEPA FA'ATAGAINA AI LE AUAI O LE AIGA I LENEI SUESUEGA – ILOILOGA

Ua matou faitau ma malamalama i leni suesuega ma iloiloga pei ona fa'amatala mai ile pepa fa'amatalaga o leni suesuega (Information Sheet).

1. Ua matou malamalama fo'i e lē fa'alauaitelina talanoaga o le a matou auai ai. Fa'apefa fo'i talanoaga a isi aiga ma tagata pe a fa'asoa mai i totonu o talanoaga.
  2. Ua matou malamalama fo'i:
    - E lē fa'alauaitelina i fafo atu o leni suesuega mataupu ua uma ona talanoaina.
    - E lē fa'ailoina suafa o i latou o lo'o auai i totonu o leni suesuega se'i vagana ua fa'atagaina mai, ma ua loto lava e fa'ailoa le suafa.
  3. Taliaina o leni suesuega
- O le matou auai i leni talanoaga o le sainia lava lea o matou igoa. O le fa'atagaina a lea o le pu'eina o talanoaga.

Sainia:

Aso:

## Appendix E: Samoan Information Sheet



### SUESUEGA MA ILOILOGA O MATUA TAUSI FA'AMATALAGA O LENEI SUESUEGA

#### Fa'atalofa atu

I le ava ma le fa'aaloalo matou te fa'afeiloa'i atu i le paia ma le mamalu o Samoa potopoto. O matou nei o sui o le Univeste mai Massey (Massey University-led Research Team). Matou te vala'au atu ma le fa'aaloalo i aiga, aulotu ma nu'u ina ia tatou auai fa'atasi i le fa'atalanoaina o lo outou silafia fa'apea tofa mamao i auala o lo'o tausia ai o tatou Matua Tausi.

#### Mafuaaga o lenei suesuega ma iloiloga

O le autu atoa lava o lenei suesuega ma iloiloga ia auiliili ma talanoa maeaea le tausiga o Mātua i totonu o aiga, aulotu, ekalesia ma nu'u. Ia maua ai le nofo lelei, le fealofani ma le feavata'i, ma le soifua maloloina lelei.

O mea nei e a'afia ai i totonu o lenei suesuega ma iloiloga:

- O le vā fealoaloa'i i auga tupulaga, fa'ata'ita'iga: Mātua ma o latou fanau, ma fanau a fanau (Grandparents relationship with children and grandchildren)

O i latou nei e fa'atinoina lenei suesuega: Associate Professor Siautu Alefaio, Associate Professor Tracie Mafile'o, Dr Sione Vaka, Professor Fiona Alpass, Professor Christine Stephens, ma Kotalo Leau (Research Officer).

E iai le meaalofa fa'apitoa mo latou e auai i lenei suesuega ma iloiloga.

#### O lou auai i lenei suesuega ma iloiloga

O lou auai mai i lenei suesuega ma iloiloga, e fai lava i luga o lou loto fuatiaifo, ma lou sa'olotoga. O le avanoa e fa'asoa ai lou silafia i le tausiga o Matua tausii, ae maise fo'i o ou lava lagona i le va'aiga o oe o le tagata Matua.

O talanoaga uma lava I lenei suesuega ma iloiloga e puipuia I lalo o le Tulafono tau suesuega (ethics). O nei puipuiga e aofia ai mea nei:

- E le fa'alaua'iteleina i fafo atu o lenei suesuega mataupu ua uma ona talanoaina
- E le fa'ailoina suafa o i latou o lo'o auai i totonu o lenei suesuega se'i vagana ua e fa'atagaina mai, ma ua e loto lava oe e fa'ailoa lou suafa.
- Afai e te le fia auai, e tatala lava le avanoa e te susu ese ai ae le'i amataina talanoaga.
- Tusitusiga uma lava ma lipoti e auala mai i lenei suesuega e tatala lava mo lo outou silafia

Afai e iai ni fesili fa'amolemole fa'afeso'ota'i mai i le Sui o lenei suesuega, Kotalo Leau (Research Officer): Telefoni feavea'i(mobile): 021315032, Imeli(email): [k.leau@massey.ac.nz](mailto:k.leau@massey.ac.nz)

*O lenei suesuega ua uma ona taliaina e le Univesete, ae afai e iai ni fesili e fa'apitoa I le matou vaega o lo'o fa'atinoina lenei suesuega fa'afeso'otai atu: Prof Craig Johnson, Director, Research Ethics: Telefoni (phone): 06 356 9099 x 85271, Imeli (email): [humanethics@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethics@massey.ac.nz).*

**Fa'afetai lava!**

Te Kunenga  
ki Pūrehuroa

Massey University School of Psychology – Te Kura Hinengaro Tangata  
Private Bag 102-904, North Shore Auckland 0745 T +64 9 414 0800 extn 43116 [www.massey.ac.nz](http://www.massey.ac.nz)

## Appendix F: Poster Presented at IAGG Asia Oceania Regional Congress 2023

# CARING FOR OUR WISDOM BEARERS PACIFIC MĀTUA (ELDER) CARE

Associate Professor Siautu Alefaio-Tugia\* (Massey University), Professor Tracie Mafile'o (Avondale University/Massey University), Associate Professor Rev Sione Vaka (University of Waikato), Kotalo Leau (Massey University), Petra Satele (Massey University)

60% live in rental housing  
95% from multi-generational households  
Fa'afaletui of 8 Talanoa



Over 120 participants  
57 Families  
Ages of 6 - 87yrs  
2 North Island cities urban + rural

### OBJECTIVE

As a whole new way of understanding the wellbeing of Pacific mātua and their families in Aotearoa-New Zealand, our research objectives

1. Identified Pacific elder-care practices that contribute to the health and wellbeing of Pacific elders, carers and families
2. Examined the impact of cultural-contextual change on Pacific Mātua care practices
3. Detailed the socio-cultural and material supports needed to sustain Pacific care practices.

### Related literature



Alefaio-Tugia, S., Mafile'o, T., Vaka, S., Leau, K. & Satele, P. (2023). Caring for our Wisdom Bearers: Pacific Mātua (Elder) Care Final Report. Published report.

Alefaio-Tugia, S. (2022). Pacific-Indigenous Psychology: Galuola, A NIU-Wave of Psychological Practices. Springer International Publishing AG.



### INTRODUCTION

In this study our elders are referred to as 'wisdom bearers'. With migration to Aotearoa New Zealand, very little was known about the cultural changes that impact traditional family based elder care, and the needs of aiga (extended family) who sustain it - until now. This research poster outlines findings from our study investigating Pacific mātua (elder) care practices and the way in which caring for mātua impacts the health and wellbeing of Pacific carers and families.

### OUR PACIFIC-CENTRIC METHODOLOGY

This qualitative study draws on Pacific methodologies comparable to participatory action-oriented research methods but are Pacific-designed utilising Pacific language, metaphors and frame of reference (ways of knowing, being and doing).

Figure 1 Project Methodology



Talanoa and Fa'afaletui, were used to capture perspectives and experiences of caring for Mātua.

Fa'afaletui of 8 Talanoa (cultural- participatory dialogue) were conducted with over 120 participants representing 57 families, across two North Island cities of urban and regional areas. Fa'afaletui (collective houses of wisdom) represent Samoan and Tongan populations of the Pacific diaspora from Carers.

Mātua (elders), Tinā (mothers), Tamā (fathers) and Tupulaga (youth). Ages range from 6 - 87yrs. A family of Tokelau Tuvalu descent approached our study to gift us their experiences of caring for Elders. As such, the shared multi-generational family experiences were utilised as a pilot for our study.

### RESULTS

#### SHARING THE CARE, LIGHTEN THE LOAD

Tausi Mātua - a unique Pacific Aiga/ Kāinga (family) care practice, a collective system of care based on family life-cycle.

#### CARING ACROSS BORDERS, MOVING WITH SEASONS

Tausi Mātua as a shared, collective practice based on family life-cycle, functions well in an environment of village-supports where multiple carers are available.

#### LISTENING FOR THE WISDOM TO SPEAK

Ageing-Free - Ageing-well enables freedom of mobility for Pacific Mātua to age-well.



..you do it together. You do it in a collectivistic way just like we're doing anything else. So you share it...there's two of us here at home. So me and her often taking turns and when were both away. One or the other siblings, steps in so everything is shared (Tongan Youth)

### CONCLUSION

Tausi Mātua a unique Pacific Aiga/ Kāinga (family) care lifestyle underpinned by inherent cultural values and beliefs that uphold caring for mātua as bringing meaning, life-purpose, a blessing and inspiration for life. Within this cycle, the **Youth carer phenomenon** is intrinsic to intergenerational care specific to Pacific families. Innovative policies are needed that focus on Pacific Mātua as the core of Aiga/Kāinga (family) wellbeing. We recommend the prioritisation of carer leave and church community-led centres of care

COI DISCLOSURE  
WE HAVE NO FINANCIAL RELATIONSHIPS TO DISCLOSE



## Appendix G: Samples of the Fa'afaletui-Dialectical Analysis for Each Youth Group

TRANSCRIPT – EFKS PAPAURA TUPULAGA	BACK-TRANSLATION (ENGLISH with Samoan interpretation)	Essence of <u>fa'afaletui</u>
<p>Kotalo: I le <u>toʻu</u> olaga <u>tuputupu</u> ae, <u>Did</u> you guys grow up with your grandparents? ... <u>leai</u></p> <p>Participants: No</p> <p>Participant 1 (female- youth): ..... <u>Oh</u> like does is <u>foi</u> ga le</p> <p>Kotalo: Yeah</p> <p>Participant 1 (female- youth): Like oh yeah</p> <p>Kotalo: ia soo se mea a</p> <p>Participant 1 (female- youth): is it like the ones in the islands where they go and then come back</p> <p>Kotalo: yeah, soo se mea even if they don't stay but you've <u>kausia</u> your grandparents pe kusa <u>foi</u> a e le o ou grandparents poo <u>sesi</u> e <u>makua</u> i le <u>kou</u> aiga like if it's an aunty pe e <u>jai</u> <u>sesi</u> e <u>ʻu</u> a e le <u>kou</u> aiga ae ga <u>kausi</u> mai a e <u>oukou</u> kau <u>oga</u> <u>kou</u> laiki. <u>sesi</u> e ese mai i le <u>kou</u> <u>makua</u>. Like pe <u>jai</u> gi <u>kou</u> <u>uso</u> poo gi great grandparent or anything</p>	<p>In your upbringing, did you guys grow up with your grandparents? ... no</p> <p>Participant 1 (female-youth)..... Oh like does is, is it like e</p> <p>Kotalo: yeah anything</p> <p>Kotalo: yeah, anything even if they don't stay but you've looked after your grandparents or even if <u>its</u> not your grandparents but any elder in your family like if <u>its</u> an aunty or even if its someone that's not family that you've looked after since you were young, an elder that's not your parent. Like if you have great <u>auntys</u>/uncles or great grandparents or anything</p>	<p>Trying to establish who elders are to these youth – who they see as elders</p>
<p>Kotalo: <u>ga</u> <u>kou</u> <u>gogofu</u> <u>faakas</u> pe. oh yeah, <u>so</u> o <u>le</u> <u>a</u> <u>le</u> <u>kou</u> <u>what</u> do you <u>o</u> a gi <u>experience</u> i le <u>kou</u> <u>olaga</u> ma <u>kou</u> <u>grandparents</u>. Pei o <u>le</u> <u>a</u> le <u>kou</u> <u>kausia</u> o le <u>kou</u> <u>grandparents</u> o <u>le</u> <u>a</u> se <u>kou</u> <u>vaai</u> i ai. <u>Pe</u> e i ai gi mea e <u>maua</u> mai i le <u>kou</u> <u>grandparents</u> e ese ma <u>kou</u> <u>makua</u>.</p> <p>Participant 3 (female youth): <u>so</u> o <u>lou</u> ia <u>magaku</u> i ai e <u>jai</u> le <u>eseesega</u> o ou <u>makua</u>. O ou <u>makua</u> so e <u>kele</u> a o <u>kai</u>mi <u>ouke</u> <u>faalogo</u> gi <u>makua</u> o <u>makua</u> e <u>fai</u> mai kala ia, <u>ia</u> <u>kou</u> <u>maguia</u> so e <u>seasea</u> ou <u>faalogo</u> i ou <u>makua</u> ga o <u>makua</u> o ou <u>makua</u> ou <u>ke</u> <u>faalogo</u> i ai so o <u>lou</u> <u>mafau</u>fau o le <u>eseesega</u> ga o ou <u>makua</u> ma <u>makua</u> o ou <u>makua</u> e <u>seasea</u> <u>fai</u> mai ou <u>makua</u> ia <u>oukou</u> <u>maguia</u>, <u>ga</u> o le <u>loomakua</u> ma le <u>koeaiga</u> e <u>fai</u> <u>mai</u> <u>faafekai</u> a i le <u>kou</u> <u>kausia</u> o <u>maua</u>. <u>pe</u> a <u>kuu</u> <u>foi</u> <u>maua</u> i le <u>elele</u> e <u>avaku</u> <u>uma</u> <u>faamaguiaga</u> ia <u>oukou</u> so, e <u>jai</u> <u>lou</u> <u>magaku</u> <u>ouke</u> <u>iloa</u> e <u>jai</u> le <u>eseesega</u> ga a ou <u>makua</u> ma <u>makua</u> o ou <u>makua</u>.</p> <p>Kotalo: <u>oh</u> nice <u>aga</u> la <u>oe</u></p> <p>Participant 4 (youth female): ia sei ou <u>mafau</u>fau</p> <p>Kotalo: its ok, <u>its</u> okay ia ma <u>oukou</u> <u>foi</u> pe i ai <u>gisi</u> ga <u>kausia</u> e <u>oukou</u> <u>kalu</u> mai ga <u>kou</u> <u>laiki</u> ia even if <u>its</u> your parents.</p>	<p>Kotalo: Did <u>you</u>s live together or, oh yeah, so what was your what do you what are some experiences in your life with your grandparents. Or how did you care for your grandparents or what is your view on this? Are there things you get from your grandparents that's different from your parents</p> <p>P3: <u>So</u> my thoughts on it <u>is</u> there is a difference with my parents. <u>So</u> my parents so many times I hear my Grandparents say these words, may you be <u>blessed</u> so I rarely hear my parents, I only hear my grandparents say this so in my mind this is the difference between my parents and grandparents. My parents rarely say may you be blessed, only our elders tell us thank you for taking care of us, once we are below <u>ground</u> we give you all our blessings so, my thoughts are this is what I know to be the difference between my parents and grandparents.</p> <p>K: <u>Oh</u> nice what about you</p> <p>P4: Yup I'll think about it</p> <p>K: Its ok, its ok you guys too if there was anyone that your family cared for since you were young even if <u>its</u> your parents</p>	<p><u>Faamanuiga</u> Blessings overflow/blessings in abundance from our Grandparents that they pour over us/cover us in the present and into the future</p> <p>Grandparents heart of gratitude for care</p>

TRANSCRIPT – PAPA KURA PIC TUPULAGA	BACK-TRANSLATION (ENGLISH with Samoan interpretation)	Essence of <u>fa'afaletui</u>
<p>Introduction</p> <p>PM: ... mafua i la ta <u>tausiga</u> o <u>tagata matutua</u>, o <u>auaia</u> ia e <u>tatau</u> ona <u>fai</u> e <u>matou</u> ia <u>tupulaga</u> mo le <u>tausiaina</u> o <u>tagata matutua</u>?</p> <p>Kotalo: Pei a o mea <u>uma</u> a <u>na</u> e <u>lua</u>. O mea la e <u>tou te faia</u> i <u>taimi nei</u>, <u>faapea</u> foi, o a mea e <u>tatau</u> ona <u>tou faia</u>. Poo a <u>ni</u> mea o <u>tou faia</u> i <u>taimi nei</u> ae poo a <u>ni</u> mea e <u>manaomia</u> le improve, poo <u>ni</u> mea e <u>leaga</u> foi. <u>Aua</u> e <u>iaj</u> foi mea <u>faafitauli</u> e <u>sau</u> ma le <u>tausiga</u> o <u>matua</u>, e <u>iaj</u> a <u>isi</u> <u>tagata</u> e ... po o a <u>foi ni</u> <u>tou faafitauli</u> o loo <u>feagai</u> ma <u>outou</u> i le <u>tausiga</u> o <u>matua</u>. ... My name is Kotalo. O <u>lo'u</u> <u>igoa</u> o Kotalo ... maybe we'll just start with a <u>quick round of introductions</u>? <u>Aua</u> e <u>tele</u> <u>outou</u> e <u>foi</u> i <u>lau</u> <u>vaai</u>, e <u>foi</u> <u>foi</u> le <u>tou</u> <u>vaai</u> mai ia <u>a'u</u> ...</p> <p>PF: Talofa lava o <u>lo'u</u> <u>igoa</u> o Lia</p> <p>PF: Talofa lava o <u>lo'u</u> <u>igoa</u> o Sau</p> <p>PM: O Alex</p> <p>PM: O Si?</p> <p>PM: O Tai</p> <p>PM: O <u>lo'u</u> <u>igoa</u> o Tolo</p> <p>PF: Talofa lava o <u>lo'u</u> <u>igoa</u> o <u>To'a</u></p> <p>PM: O <u>lo'u</u> <u>igoa</u> o <u>Sipu</u></p>	<p>Explanation of the study....and clarification of consent with participants...</p> <p>We'll start with introductions because many of you are new to me and same with me to you</p>	
<p>Kotalo: Ia <u>outou</u> la, o le a le <u>tou</u> definition o le "<u>tausī matua</u>"? O le a le <u>uiga</u> o le <u>tausī matua</u> ia <u>outou</u>?</p> <p>PF: O mea tau tupe, o <u>fe'au</u> ...</p>	<p>K: <u>So</u> you all then, what is your definition of <u>tausī matua</u>? What does <u>tausī matua</u> mean to you?</p> <p>P: Financial type support, chores/physical-practical type support (feau)</p>	<p>Care is not just physical but is holistic – includes everything</p>
<p>Kotalo: Well, o <u>isi fesili</u>, <u>pei</u> a <u>fesili atu</u>, o mea ua iloa <u>uma</u> e i tatou, a o le mea la e <u>fia oo atu</u> ai, <u>faamatala</u> mai pea, <u>aua</u> o mea ia e lei iloa e le au <u>palalagi</u> ma mea <u>faapena</u> ... ma <u>tagata</u> la e <u>fia</u> iloa, <u>faafea tonu</u> a ona <u>tausī</u> e tatou o tatou <u>matua</u> ... Mea la <u>na</u>, ia <u>outou</u> a ia, o le a le "<u>tausī matua</u>" ia <u>oe</u>? Pe a <u>na fesili atu seisi</u> ia <u>oe</u> ... O le a le <u>uiga</u> o le "<u>tausī matua</u>"? E <u>isi se eseese</u>ga o le <u>tausī matua</u> o le Samoa ma le <u>tausī matua</u> a le palagi, ia <u>outou</u>? Pe <u>tutusa uma</u>? le <u>vaalga</u> o <u>matua</u> e ... (4:26)</p>	<p>K: Well, some of these questions that I ask, are around things that we all know and live, but what I'm trying to get at is to still explain it because this is what <u>palalagi</u> aren't aware of or know, how exactly are we caring for our elders? <u>So</u> for you all, what is <u>tausī matua</u> to you, if someone was to ask you? Is there a difference between <u>tausī matua</u> of a Samoan vs a European to you all? Or is it all the same? The caring for elders</p>	<p>Explain our everyday – though the questions force us to look at what is <u>our norm</u>, this is because our ways of living aren't known in this NZ environment we are in now (paucity in academia) – building awareness</p>
<p>PM: Malo, <u>faatalitali</u> atu pe <u>faali manatu</u> ia ... ae ou te iloa e <u>a'u</u> ia, o ia <u>manatu</u> e <u>fai si eseese</u>ga.</p> <p><u>Ona o lea</u> ou te iloa e tele le involve o tatou <u>tu ma</u> aga foi le <u>na</u> le i le <u>aganuu</u> i le <u>tausiga</u> o tatou <u>matua</u>. E <u>iaj</u> le <u>vaega</u> foi le <u>na</u> le i le <u>tu faa-Samoa</u> e <u>faigata</u> ona <u>oo</u> <u>iaj</u> le <u>tausī matua</u> <u>tama</u>, <u>poo</u> le <u>tausī matua</u> <u>teine</u>, i le <u>va</u> lea ma <u>matua</u>.</p>	<p><u>Manatu</u> (views/opinions) will differ... these are mine...</p> <p>I know because we are involved in "<u>tu ma</u> aga i le <u>aganuu</u>" (Samoan-Indigenous cultural ways of knowing, being and doing) in the care of our elders there are <u>vaega</u> (components/parts) of "<u>le tū faaSamoa</u>" (ways of Samoan-Indigenous being) that pose as challenges or are difficult in the care of elders as young men and women in the care of elders.</p>	<p><u>Fa'asinomaga</u></p> <p>Depth of holistic being in caring for <u>Mātua</u> (Elders)</p> <p>Relational understanding of role of one in relation to another – type of relationship with parents as one that shows respect</p>

## Appendix H: Sample of the Full Table of the Essence of Fa'afaletui-Dialectical Analysis

	Quotes	Sub-themes
<p><u>Tausi Matua</u></p>	<p>“Ou te lei tausia matua o ou matua but na ou vaai iai, cos o taimi na la e outou te laitiiti. E maliliu ou grandparents la e ou te laitiiti. Ou te lei faia le tausimatuafoi na le, but, to my parents now, oo lo'u faia le galuega lea, o le tausimatuafoi ... i totonu o le matou aiga.”</p> <p>I didn't care for my Grandparents, but I saw it being actioned (na ou vaai iai) because at that time I was young. My Grandparents passed away and I was still young. I didn't action tausimatuafoi per se but now to my parents, this is my role (o lo'o faia le galuega lea), to tausimatuafoi within our family.</p> <p>Growing up with a one parent ... one grandparent that couldn't walk. I had to grow up and watch, how to take care of him. So now that I'm full on taking care of him, there are some things that I thought I couldn't do, that I can do now.</p> <p>Like, I take him for his showers, when he wants to go toilet, cos I reckon there is a difference how we take care of our parents than how palagis take care of our</p>	<p><b>Vaai i le faatino</b></p> <p>Na ou vaai iai to my parents now, o loo ou faia</p> <p>Observation (vaai) Faatino (action)</p> <p>Intergenerational learning by observation – Surrounded by it as a norm of everyday life to now actioning it for the generation above as observed in the past</p> <p>Saw and learnt how to take care of Grandparent, now doing it full-time</p>
	<p><u>parents</u> cos us Samoans we don't want other people to come to do our own stuff</p> <p>“Ae sa ou vaai iai i le taimi lea na tausiai e ou aunties ma ou uncles ia latou matua ona o lea e toatele... I saw the time my Aunties and Uncles care for their parents because theres many of them</p> <p>“Matou lae i nei e mafai foi ona ma tago e lafo ia pusa i Samoa, o tupe... ae faatino e latou” For example us here we can send boxes of supplies to Samoa, money... and they action the care”</p> <p>“So our parents will go with the grandparents' ones?... Cos there are some there in their late 70's [pointing to the carer group]</p>	<p>Samoans don't want external people coming to do 'our stuff'/ our responsibilities/duties e.g. practical aspects of care such as showering, toileting</p> <p>Strength of numbers in witnessing Aunties and Uncles caring for their parents</p>