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# Tongan Indigenous Approaches in the Prevention and Restoration of Family Violence

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## ABSTRACT

Substantive literature exists on intimate partner violence and the efficacy of various response programmes. There is only limited knowledge of Pacific-indigenous understandings of and responses to violence within the *kainga* (families). This thesis explores aspects of the inaugural application of the Tongan conceptual framework of *Fofola e fala ka e talanoa e kainga* (laying out the mat so families can dialogue) as part of the faith-based *Kainga Tu'umalie* (prosperous families) family violence intervention and prevention programme in Aotearoa New Zealand. The programme is centred around weekend retreats involving Tongan households experiencing family violence. I was culturally immersed in observing, actively engaging in, and evaluating this programme during the retreats that involved 49 Tongan church *kainga* (families). Additionally, formal *talanoa* (a Pacific-indigenous way of engaging families in research) were conducted post retreat with seven faith-based community leaders to draw out their depth of cultural knowledge and how it was applied to the development and conduct of the programme. As well as drawing on the evaluative materials, *talanoa* were conducted with three participating families to further consider their experiences of the programme. Overall, this study found that Tongan indigenous cultural ways infused with faith-based values can be effective, transformational, and restorative for individuals and families experiencing violence. Core findings are encapsulated by three intersecting Tongan-Indigenous cultural concepts of: *Ko e makatu'unga mo'ui mo e malohi* (a powerful and living platform); *Koe kolo malu mo e hufanga* (a place of safety & refuge), and *Fa'utaha* (unity/harmony/peace). These concepts not only represent the interweaving of Christian faith and Tongan indigenous knowledge as symbolised by the *Fofola e fala* (laying out the mat) framework, but also inform our shared understanding of the intent and impacts of the *Kainga Tu'umalie* programme. These concepts also

enlighten my analysis of the positive impacts of the programme on participating families' and their commitments to engaging in efforts to transform their everyday interactions to create more harmonious relationships within which they can thrive together. Participant accounts foreground the importance and potential of working with key faith-based and cultural values to address patterns of violence collectively within Tongan *kainga* (families), and with support from wider community members. This research also speaks to the significance of leveraging collaborative partnerships between community-based agencies and faith-based communities in addressing social issues.

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Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know. (Jeremiah 33:3).

Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing!...I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland. (Isaiah 43: 18-19).

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## GLOSSARY

Angafaka'apa'apa	Respectful heart/manner
Angafakatōkilalo	Humility, humble heart
Angavaivai	Meekness, gentleness, humble
Anga fakatonga	Tongan culture/way of living/indigenous cultural worldview
Anga kātaki	Patient heart/manner
Fa'e	Mother
Fa'etangata	Maternal uncles
Faifekau	Church minister
Faka'apa'apa	Respect, honour
Fakamolemole	Forgiveness
Fala	Mat
Fanau	Children
Fanongo	Listening, hear
Fatongia	Obligations, accountability
Fa'utaha	Unity, harmony, peace, togetherness, closeness
Fefalala'aki	Reciprocal trust
Feongo'i'aki	Emotional connectedness
Fetokoni'aki	Mutual helpfulness, reciprocity
Fe'unu	Strands
Feveitoka'i'aki	Mutual care/generosity

Fofola e fala ka e talanoa e kāinga	Laying out the mat so families can dialogue
Ha'atu'i	Royalty
Hou'eiki	Nobles
Hounga'ia	Gratefulness
'Ilo'i kita	Knowing your responsibilities/boundaries
Kāinga	Family/families
Kāinga Tu'umalie	Prosperous families
Kau tu'a	Commoners
Kelesi	Grace
Ko e Makatu'unga Mo'ui mo e Malohi	A powerful and living platform
Ko e Kolo Malu mo e Hufanga	A place of safety/refuge, sanctuary
Lotu	Prayer
Mamahi'i me'a	Loyalty, passion
Matu'a	Elders
Mehikitanga/Fahu	Paternal aunty who occupy a position of privilege and honour
Melino	Peace/peaceful, harmony
Noa	Zero, balance
Nofo	Reside/residing, indigenous cultural immersion/participation
'Ofa	Love, compassion
'Ofa 'aufuatō	Submission/submissive love
Pālangi	European descent

Tālānga	Another form of Talanoa, akin to debates or constructive arguments
Talanoa	Pacific indigenous ways of dialogue/discussion
Tamai	Father
Tauhi vā	Nurturing/cultivating/fostering/ maintaining healthy/loving/harmonious relationships, reciprocity
Tokoua/Tuofefine	Sisters/cousins on either side of the family
Tokoua/Tuonga'ane	Brothers/cousins on either side of the family
Vahevahe	Sharing
Vātamaki/vākovi	Disharmonious



## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background/Context

Family violence is a priority issue among Pacific peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand (Ministry of Social Development, 2012; Paterson et al., 2007). In part, this is because violence against family members is more prevalent for Pacific peoples in Aotearoa than other ethnic groups (Ministry of Social Development; 2016a; Ministry of Social Development, 2016b). Moreover, Pacific children are more likely to experience harsher disciplinary practices in their homes. It has been suggested that these patterns are linked to the ongoing challenges experienced by some Tongan and Pacific families, for example, with socioeconomic deprivation, cultural exclusion and pressures related to migration to the very different socioeconomic and societal context of Aotearoa today (Grainger, 2009; Koloto & Sharma, 2005; Teaiwa & Mallon, 2005). It is vital to acknowledge the societal context in which family violence occurs and where Pacific peoples commonly experience socioeconomic stress and marginalisation (Cheer et al., 2002; Koloto & Sharma, 2005; Manuela & Sibley, 2014). Such contextual considerations are particularly significant given that previous research highlights how marginalisation and socioeconomic deprivation are linked with increased rates of family violence (Ackerson & Subramanian, 2008; Hamby, 2000). Correspondingly, such violence has also been associated with cultural disruptions and the impacts of negative migration experiences, which often contribute to experiences of ontological insecurity (Ministry of Social Development, 2016a; The Tongan Working Group, 2012).

Migration of Tongan people to Aotearoa New Zealand since the outbreak of World War Two has brought benefits enabling many families to realise our forefather's dreams of providing a good education and better employment opportunities. More importantly migration here has enabled many to send remittances in the form of

financial support back to extended families in Tonga, for example (Crocombe, 1992). Unfortunately, the prosperous years that made New Zealand seem like “the land of milk and honey” for many Tongans have been short-lived. The major economic decline and associated disruptions to many communities from the mid-1970s into the 1980s led to increasingly rigid immigration policies by the then National government (1975-1984). Many Tongan and Samoan people in particular were treated like criminals, for allegedly “overstaying” their visas (Anae, 2020; Beaglehole, 2015; O’Donnell & Tweddle, 2003; Thomsen et al., 2018). The government of the time also launched an “overstayer campaign”, which specifically targeted Pacific migrants over other groups such as recent migrants from the United States and Britain. This campaign is often referred to as the “Dawn Raids” whereby Pacific persons were randomly stopped in the streets by authorities to check their passports. Households were also raided at dawn (hence the term Dawn Raids) as authorities searched for “overstayers” (Anae, 1997; 2020). Tongan and Samoan people were targeted despite evidence showing that the majority of overstayers at the time were from North America and Europe (Beaglehole, 2015; O’Donnell & Tweddle, 2003; Spoonley, 2017). This racist and discriminatory campaign resulted in Tongan and Pacific peoples being classified and positioned as a new type of “underclass and a drain on the economy”. These turbulent times contributed significantly to increased economic insecurities in our communities (Clydesdale, 2008).

The material measures of surveillance and harassment described above were warranted through processes of symbolic power<sup>1</sup> that featured the cultivation of

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<sup>1</sup> Symbolic power refers to the exercise of power through representational practices through which culturally dominant groups discriminate against and marginalise less powerful groups in society.

negative stereotypes of Pacific people within government agencies and news media reports (Loto et al., 2006). These representational practices have contributed substantively to a hostile symbolic environment that has restricted the efforts of Tongans, and peoples of the Pacific more generally, to establish and maintain positive lifeworlds within which we could flourish free from prejudice and discrimination in New Zealand. This situation has improved in recent decades with the development of positive expressions of our cultures at events such as Polyfest that reclaim the symbolic power to name and define ourselves, articulate our own aspirations, and to exercise sovereignty in how we respond to the problems faced by communities. However, it will take time to repair the damage that has been done to our communities. For example, Tongan and Pacific peoples continue to be overrepresented in the lower income sectors of the labour market, experience higher rates of unemployment and overcrowding in domestic dwellings, and experience significant distress, poorer health, and lower life expectancies in comparison to other ethnic groups (Butler et al., 2003; Ministry of Social Development, 2016a). Through associated historical processes of symbolic disempowerment and cultural marginalisation within the body politic of this country, many Pacific people have struggled to find a sense of self, belonging, and harmony in Aotearoa New Zealand. Some have responded in unproductive ways, including acts of family violence.

Tongan and Pacific scholars have approached family violence as a societal and relational issue that is intensified by negative migration experiences and the associated

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Such power is often exercised to obscure the structural origins of hardships faced by marginalised groups and to blame these groups for the situations of disadvantage within which they find themselves (Bourdieu, 1979; Hodgetts & Stolte, 2017).

loss for some families of contact with some of our foundational cultural values of '*ofa* (love and compassion), *tauhi va* (nurturing loving and harmonious relationships), *angafakatokilalo* (humble heart), and *angafaka 'apa'apa* (respectful heart) in familial relationships (Ah Siu-Maliko, 2016a, 2016b; Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b; Jansen et al., 2012). Correspondingly, Tongan family violence within the context of this research is conceptualised as any form of physical, spiritual, psychological, and sexual violence that disgraces or undermines loving and harmonious relationships within the Tongan *kainga* (family). Relatedly, any form of such violence is acknowledged culturally as a disruption or defiance of the balanced and compassionate relationships expected amongst Pacific families and communities (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b; Ministry of Social Development, 2016b; Rankine et al., 2015). This conceptualisation is in keeping with key conceptual work around familial violence among Tongan and Pacific peoples as an intricate issue comprising not only physical abuse, but also encompassing spiritual, psychological, and sexual exploitation towards *kainga* (family) members (Ministry of Social Development, 2012; Rankine et al., 2015). Violence within the *kainga* is often acknowledged by Tongan and Pacific communities as a spiritual matter that cripples family relationships and transgresses against core Tongan cultural and Christian values of compassion and care (Alefaio-Tugia & Havea, 2016; Havea et al., 2021a & 2021b; MacArthur, 2000).

Whilst my concerns lie with issues of family violence among Pacific communities in general, this thesis focuses primarily on this issue within the Tongan diaspora in Aotearoa New Zealand, to which I belong. This doctoral research builds on my practice-based work in the field of family violence prevention within Tongan communities. It comprises an effort to conceptualise and document how Tongan cultural knowledge can be drawn upon as a basis for enhancing restorative practices for

Tongan families and communities. This research is also being conducted within the field of psychology and contributes to the articulation of Pacific-Indigenous psychologies (Alefaio-Tugia, 2022; Havea et al., 2023). More specifically, the overall aim of my research is to identify how a Tongan indigenous and faith-based approach can be used to mitigate patterns of violence and its effects in households and communities. More pointedly, this work involves identifying and conceptualising Tongan cultural concepts in relation to *fofola e fala ka e talanoa e kainga* (roll out the mats so the family can dialogue; (Ministry of Social Development, 2012) as a basis for understanding efforts to promote family transformation and restoration after experiences of violence. In short, central to my doctoral research is the prioritising of Pacific knowledge-generation practices in order to deepen present understandings, of how Tongan families connect, engage and relate to the concept of *fofola e fala kae talanoa e kāinga* and related Tongan concepts that articulate our ways of being in life together.

Through involvement with faith-based initiatives in the field of family violence, I reflect on first-hand experiences of the transformative impact of *fofola e fala kae talanoa e kāinga* on the wellness of participating *kainga* (families). Drawing on my own insights from practice and previous research, particularly those related to indigenous and faith-based responses to family violence, this research aims to document the impacts of this Tongan cultural faith-based initiative to address issues of family violence within the Affirming Works *Kainga Tu'umalie* (prosperous families) family violence programme (discussed below). I demonstrate the significance of the cultural design and implementation of this programme by Tongan and Pacific people as an application of key cultural norms, values, and practices. This research explores the dynamics of faith leaders' and familial efforts to support participating families to live

violence-free by cultivating relationships that are rooted in the faith-cultural principles of 'ofa (love/compassion), 'ofa 'aufuato (submission) faka 'apa 'apa (respect), and angafakatokilalo (humility). Relevant here is a broader effort to unpack, articulate and document the application of key Tongan concepts that are foundational to Tongan psychology. As is the case for other indigenous groups, such as Māori (Rua et al., 2021) and Pacific peoples, the articulation of Tongan psychology as applied to issues such as family violence is part of a broader decolonising project in psychology (Decolonial Psychology Editorial Collective, 2021; Guimarães, 2019; Yang, 2000) that is crucial for extending knowledge of and responses to the pressing social issues in our communities (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b, 2023). In terms of the contribution my doctorate makes to existing knowledge, because the Christian faith has become part of the core value systems of Pacific cultures (Havea, 2011; Siataga, 2001; Tiatia, 1998), research is necessary to extend our understandings of how Tongan and other Pacific people experience Christian faith-based approaches to societal issues that draw on our indigenous family structures and associated relational practices.

The remainder of this introductory chapter is presented in six sections. We begin with an overview of the *Kainga Tu'umalie* Family Violence Prevention Programme. This is followed by my own positionality with regard to the topic of family violence and the programme in question. Next comes a brief review of the literature on family violence with a core focus on faith-based responses to family violence, which is crucial for positioning the present study in relation to previous research. It also leads to a section on the fusion of aspects of Tongan indigenous culture and Christian faith in the present programmatic efforts to address family violence. This in turn leads to the further situating of this doctoral project in relation to broader efforts to indigenise the discipline

of psychology. The chapter is completed with a brief overview of the thesis chapters to follow.

## 1.2 *Kainga Tu'umalie* Family Violence Prevention Programme—Faith in Action

This research focuses on participant experiences of a faith-based family violence prevention programme that was established and implemented by Affirming Works (n.d.), a social services organisation in Auckland. This programme emerged from within a joint partnership between Pacific communities and the New Zealand Ministry of Social Development (2012). This culminated in the development of *Nga Vaka o Kainga Tapu*, a Pacific conceptual framework to address family violence in the seven main Pacific ethnic communities of Aotearoa New Zealand (Ministry of Social Development, 2012). This partnership resulted in the development of ethnic-specific conceptual frameworks for addressing violence amongst *kainga* (families), including *fofola e fala kae talanoa e kainga* for the Tongan community (The Tongan Working Group, 2012). From this, Affirming Works developed the *Kainga Tu'umalie* (prosperous families) family violence programme in partnership with the Tongan Church communities in Auckland. The core aim of this programme is to employ Tongan indigenous relational practices to create a culturally appropriate space for engaging *kainga* (families) in re-learning and cultivating life patterns that enable them to build and sustain violence-free family relationships. The programmatic approach was founded on *fofola e fala ka e talanoa e kainga* (laying out the mat so families can dialogue), a traditional approach to dialogue that is familiar to Tongan people. This indigenous framework was also combined with compatible Christian values around love, respect and forgiveness that are also integral aspects of the contemporary Tongan cultural worldview (Havea, 2011; Havea et al., 2018).

Personal correspondence with the originator of the programme, 'Emeline Afeaki-Mafile'o, revealed the underlying aim of the programme is to support families experiencing violence in ways that resonate culturally with their understandings of themselves and their relationships with others. The ultimate effort was towards helping build prosperous *kainga* (families), not in the monetary sense of prosperity, but in a more holistic sense in terms of relationships with God and being violence-free with each other. In this respect, the *Kainga Tu'umalie* programme was inspired by Christian Scripture and principles of holistic prosperity and God's design for loving family relationships which feature 'ofa 'aufuato (mutual submissiveness) and *angafaka 'apa 'apa* (respect) for one another.

Practically, the programme involved inviting Tongan church *kainga* (families) to attend a weekend retreat comprising both formal and informal sessions to enable connections between family and church members. This effort was grounded in *talanoa* designed to facilitate the relearning of relevant teachings from the Bible and to enable the rekindling of the value of relationships between family members, including husbands and wives, with their children, and with wider family members. Practically, *kainga* (families) were supported in a shared effort to reconcile their faith and cultural values in order to emulate and nurture a deeper understanding of the importance of violence-free *kainga* relationships (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b).

### 1.3 Significance/Motivation for the Study: My Positionality

I was born in Tonga to Tongan parents. My father, the Late Reverend Samiuela Taufa was from Ha'alaufuli Vava'u, and Niuafo'ou. My mother is Latu Fua'i'api Fiefia Taufa from Tatakamotonga and Ha'ateiho, Tongatapu. I grew up in a *kainga* (family) and culture where it was inherent and integral that the pathway to a better life was recognised as stemming from faith in God and education. Underlying this belief system



were obligations to give back and contribute to our *kainga*, village, nation, and wider humanity. Like many Tongan and Pacific parents', it is their vision for children, like me, to access the opportunities that come with migrating overseas, especially to New Zealand given the relationship between our two countries. Such migration is valued as a means of realising their dreams of better access to education and socioeconomic upward mobility. My parent's dream was fulfilled when my father was selected in the 1970s to lead a group of workers from Tonga to engage with the migrant work scheme initiative of the Labour government (1972-1975) of New Zealand at the time. This initiative opened the borders of New Zealand to cheaper labour from the Pacific Islands to work primarily in the manufacturing sector. My father demonstrated an exceptional work ethic, integrity, interpersonal skills and leadership through this opportunity. Consequently, our family was granted residency by the New Zealand government for my father to continue working and being the mentor, coach, leader, and cultural support pillar for new workers from Tonga who took up jobs at Todd Motors, a car manufacturing company in Porirua, Wellington.

When I was approached about building on the experience of conducting a formative evaluation of the first faith-based Tongan family violence prevention programme for my PhD, I was so excited. Developing and conducting faith-based research and initiatives to address social issues with Tongan people had become my passion. As such, this PhD extends my masters' thesis project where I explored the relationship between *lotu* (faith, church, spirituality) and *ako* (formal education/learning) for Pacific university students in New Zealand. Growing up in a culture where there was emphasis on the twin pillars of faith and education, I had developed a desire to explore how one can engage in faith-based scholarship. For me, this PhD has unfolded as a natural progression from my upbringing steeped in the

Christian faith and learning the importance of considering the impacts of positive Tongan cultural values on different aspects of life. It seemed like a natural extension for me to embark on this journey to becoming an emergent scholar who seeks to combine faith-based and Tongan indigenous humanistic values with relevant academic knowledge and rigor. More specifically, I was interested in exploring how our faith as Tongans and as Pacific families and communities can positively impact our *kainga* (family) relationships and lives.

This research topic is very close to my heart. It afforded me further opportunities to immerse myself within the *kainga* retreats alongside participating families and church leaders. Through these engagements, I realised that we all share a longing and vision to restore our families, our peoples, and our communities to prosperity in ways that enable us to overcome intergenerational and socioeconomic disruptions that have accompanied our migration to Aotearoa New Zealand, and which have fractured us and taken our focus away from our traditional core values. As is explored in the publication chapters of this thesis, these values relate to Christian faith, *kainga* (family) unity, and *tauhi va* (loving relationships) which are the faith-cultural values that are embedded in our cultural identities as Tongan persons, families, communities, and citizens.

Being a Tongan, a woman of faith who can speak the language, a daughter of a *Faifekau* (Church minister), and a wife of a Tongan community and church leader was advantageous. My background contributed to open and frank engagements with the families and faith leaders also involved in the violence-prevention programme. Basically, my upbringing and personal and professional lives gave me the appropriate cultural lens and skills to connect effectively with other Tongan people in the conduct of this research. As a Tongan programme facilitator and researcher engaged with

Tongan families, I knew that I was not engaging with strangers, as such. Rather, we already shared existing interconnections through our shared faith and familial histories. For example, when I attended the retreat programmes there were people that I knew and others who upon hearing my name and where I was from, could establish connections with me having known my parents, grandparents, and wider *kainga* members. For some researchers from within the European/American academic tradition that values objectivity and distance in relationship between researchers and participants, these connections may be construed as constituting biases or conflicts of interest in the research process. However, from a Tongan viewpoint on knowledge production (see methods section in Chapter 2), these relationships between my family and those families participating in the violence programme contained the seeds of connectivity for us to cultivate further the *tauhi va* already existing between us. Consequently, the *nofo* and *talanoa* or cultural immersion that is at the centre of this project could flow organically and be deepened and strengthened as a result of our familiar and mutual enactments of '*ofa* (love/compassion), *angafaka 'apa 'apa* (respectful heart) and *angafakatokilalo* (humble heart) during the conduct of this PhD research.

My position as an insider-researcher with cultural insights further enabled my humble observance of the dialectical significance of cultural and relational practices among family members. These practices are reflected in the manner and tone of speech, acts used in particular interactions, the wearing of appropriate attire, and the respectful approaches towards church and faith leaders. Moreover, my position allowed for the integral and correct translation of key Tongan concepts and practices that seemed normal and common sense from the cultural inside, but which were pivotal as heuristic anchor points for my effort to document and analyse participant accounts of their

programme experiences, the impactful uniqueness of this programme, and its ramifications for participating families (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b, 2023).

Extending the scene-setting, reflective account offered above, below I consider the literature relating to faith-based and indigenous responses to family violence. This then leads to a broader focus on current efforts to indigenise psychology as a more pluralistic and inclusive disciplinary space to which this thesis contributes.

#### 1.4 Previous Research into Faith-Based Responses to Family Violence

There is now a large corpus of research into conventional family-violence programmes (Cheers et al., 2006; Puchala et al., 2010; Zellerer, 2003), but far less on faith-based and culturally informed programmes (Drumm et al., 2018; Petersen, 2016; Ringel & Bina, 2007). Sociological research on violence in families did not begin in earnest until the 1970s. This was irrespective of historical and cross-cultural evidence that interpersonal violence has been commonplace within families for as long as we have had written records of family life (Bakan, 1972; DeMause, 1975, 1995; Edgerton et al., 1981). The growth in research into this topic was associated with a number of reforms in the United States in the late 1960s and early 1970s regarding domestic violence, including providing safe shelters to serve the needs of women survivors (Gelles, 1985). These developments in the United States are particularly noteworthy given the country's centrality to knowledge production globally. Early research into what was initially termed "wife abuse" was conducted from a psychiatric point of view (Gelles, 1985) that contributed to the development of various theoretical formulations, including the general systems theory (Straus, 1973) and concepts such as patriarchy (Dobash & Dobash's, 1979). Exploratory studies conducted in the late 1960s and early 1970s (O'Brien, 1971; Levinger, 1966; Steinmetz, 1971) showed that research into this topic could be conducted using nonclinical samples.

The vast majority of subsequent studies were based on samples drawn from the safe houses or refuges that were being set up in the United States and other countries such as the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Pagelow, 1981), and later New Zealand (Fanslow & Robinson, 2010, 2011; Snively, 1994). These early studies provided pathways for revealing and exploring instances of family violence by describing appropriate research strategies and interventions (Gelles, 1985). Gelles's (1985) review of research on family violence almost four decades ago states that the study of this phenomenon was still relatively new. Gelles concluded that those who conduct research in domestic violence were still wrestling "with definitional issues, methodological constraints and problems, and have yet to actually test the major theoretical assumptions and models that have been developed" (p. 364). Research on family violence continues to be an interdisciplinary effort. There is regular collaboration on interests, questions, frameworks, and authorship of research reports amongst sociologists, psychologists, physicians, anthropologists, and social workers (Gelles, 1985; Straus, 1992).

Conventional family violence research and programmatic efforts to address the issue have focused primarily on Caucasian populations (Puchala et al., 2010; Zellerer, 2003) and generally have not dealt well with issues of diversity. However, since the late 1980s and early 1990s concerted efforts have been made to move beyond the dominant focus on Eurocentric populations and approaches. Increasingly, advocates for broader foci on different population groups and culturally informed approaches have been articulated and contributed to increased diversity in the field. For example, Morrisette and colleagues (1993) argued that:

Models of helping remain too firmly entrenched in an ideology and orientation that is particular to conventional society and the worldview of the dominant

culture. As well, these approaches continue to emphasise an individualised model of practice that pays too little attention to fundamental differences in gender, class, and culture. (p. 92)

Furthermore, Eurocentric family violence programmes are still very much based on dominant and culturally relative constructions of domestic violence (Pearson, 2000; Taylor et al., 2004). The field has also been criticised for tending to rely too much on the overuse of standardised processes of intervention that do not reflect the needs of diverse communities or the relational supports that they might offer families (Cheers et al., 2006).

According to Zellerer (2003), a scholar activist who conducted the first family violence programme for Native American men in prison in North America, developing culturally responsive programmes is crucial for addressing the issue effectively. Such culturally responsive programmes break somewhat from the dominant practice of working with individual perpetrators in isolation and offer more holistic strategies that involve broader family and community groups and also incorporate the mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of perpetrators and victims. Zellerer also foregrounds the importance of including indigenous facilitators as part of these programmes as conventional programmes are generally staffed by white, middle-class professionals. Along these lines, Puchala and colleagues (2010) employed traditional spirituality to reduce domestic violence within aboriginal communities in North America, and as an alternative to what was perceived to be the overreliance on medication and the medicalising of family violence that features in many conventional programmes to this day.

It is encouraging that over the last decade in particular, we have seen the development of increased diversity of provision of culturally appropriate response

programmes and services to address family violence from cultural standpoints in countries such as New Zealand. For example, there are more culturally responsive family violence services and programmes across New Zealand for Pacific families run by organisations including Affirming Works, the Pacific Island Women's Refuge, Kainga Pasifika Services, The Fono Health and Social Services (Crichton-Hill, 2018; Pasefika Proud, 2020). Additionally, with indigenous Māori we are seeing the adoption of culturally responsive initiatives and programmes that are grounded in core cultural values, concepts and worldviews (Black et al., 2020; Dobbs & Eruera, 2014; Eruera & Dobbs, 2010).

There is very little research into the impacts of faith-based approaches to Tongan and Pacific family violence. However, there is considerable debate regarding the development and utility of faith-based responses to family violence more generally with previous research documenting both positive and negative results (Aten et al., 2011; Kaybryn & Nidadavolu, 2012; Le Roux, 2015; Zust et al., 2018). For example, previous research has demonstrated that both survivors and perpetrators of family violence can find interpersonal support for change and gain a sense of hope, strength, resilience, healing and restoration from their faith-based communities and related family violence intervention programmes (Asiasiga & Gray, 1998; Ellison et al., 2007; Nason-Clark, 2009; Petersen, 2016). Asiasiga & Gray's (1998) report explored the intervention in and prevention of family violence in Pacific communities. These authors argue for the importance of church communities in the support and rehabilitation of Pacific families experiencing violence. This need is said to stem from the centrality of faith for Pacific families and communities as an important resource for transformation as our spiritual faith is at the heart of who we are as people. Furthermore, these authors argue that church contexts are ideal for implementing such programmes because they

constitute familiar environments for engaging with such affronting issues as family violence. Ellison and colleagues (2007) also suggest that involvement in faith communities, specifically church attendance, serves as a protective factor against family violence. This assertion also resonates with the experiences of Pacific peoples who also often draw a sense of care and kindness towards others through their connectedness to church communities as supportive networks for promoting positive relationships that are inclusive of perpetrators of violence and their *kainga* (families).

Relatedly, Ellison and colleagues (2007) explored the relationship between intimate partner violence, religious involvement, and race using a National Survey of Families and Households in the United States (Sweet et al., 1988). The findings suggest that religious involvement, specifically church attendance, corresponds to reduced levels of family violence and protects against the incidence of family violence, particularly for ethnic minority populations, including African American and Hispanic men and women. These findings (Ellison et al., 2007) suggest that church attendance “may serve as a proxy for prayerfulness, positive religious coping styles, self-discipline, or other such factors” (p. 1107). These results are consistent with previous research showing that there is a positive correlation between church attendance and the reduction of factors that link to domestic violence such as depression and psychological distress (Brown et al., 1990; Jang & Johnson, 2003; Krause, 2002), social isolation (Ellison, 1993; Krause & Van Tran, 1989), and alcohol and substance abuse (Johnson et al., 2000; Wallace & Forman, 1998).

There is evidence for the efficacy of faith-based family violence programmes linked to the implementation of culturally informed strategies and practices that promote more harmonious, respectful, loving, safe and mutually beneficial relationships between intimate partners (Petersen, 2016; Ringel & Bina, 2007). For example,



Petersen (2016) writes on the work of The South African Faith and Family Institute (SAFFI), a multifaith nonprofit agency with a vision for a restorative justice response to violence against women. Petersen has documented how this community organisation commits to being a central resource in partnering with faith leaders and religious communities as key stakeholders in promoting culturally appropriate approaches that foster united and more loving intimate partner relationships. Similarly, Ringel and Bina (2007) explored the relationship between religious values and social attitudes and intimate partner violence in a Jewish Orthodox community in the United States from a survivors' and community leaders' perspectives.

The importance of developing culturally sensitive strategies to enhance prevention and intervention practices for various communities has also been discussed with regard to Pacific communities and the importance of values regarding family harmony and loving relationships (Crichton-Hill, 2001; Magnussen et al., 2008). For example, Magnussen and colleagues (2008) explored the cultural perceptions and responses of Samoan women in a community health centre in Hawaii regarding intimate partner violence. The results identify the loss of cultural values and the protection offered in their communal society back in Samoa. This reinforces the importance of cultural perspectives that also emerged from Crichton-Hill's (2001) work with Samoan women in New Zealand and efforts to deconstruct and bring into question ethnocentric perspectives on domestic violence from the perspective of Samoan women who have been abused by Samoan men. She argues that a way forward is for practitioners to have a comprehensive understanding of not only the complexities of domestic violence, but also to be cognisant of the unique cultural values and practices of the Samoan culture.

It is important to acknowledge that not all studies have produced uniformly positive findings from the intersection of faith-based organisations and efforts to

address family violence. Research also shows that whilst many family violence victims access their faith leaders and faith communities for support to achieve change in their partner's violent behaviour, some faith leaders have been implicated in the perpetuation of such violence (Copel, 2008; Ting & Panchanadeswaran, 2016; Zust et al., 2018). Copel (2008) explored the lived experiences of women in what the author referred to as abusive relationships and who sought spiritual guidance from religious leaders. Copel found that faith leaders were not always helpful in intervening in the violence or addressing the women's spiritual needs. Additionally, the study by Ting and Panchanadeswaran (2016) explored the interface between violence and spirituality in the lives of immigrant African women in the United States. This study revealed that participant women experienced feelings of stigma, blame and misunderstanding, as well as a lack of practical help when interacting with faith leaders. Moreover, Zust and colleagues' (2018) 10-year (2005-2015) study of Christian church support for domestic violence showed that whilst faith plays a central role in the lives of victims of family violence, congregation members also felt that their church leaders needed to be educated in counselling and speaking about domestic violence from the pulpit. As noted below, there is some evidence to suggest that religious beliefs can also function as barriers to help seeking (Ringel & Bina, 2007; Zust et al., 2018). This is likely due to issues such as stigma and shame, as highlighted by Ting and Panchanadeswaran (2016).

Research highlighting concerns regarding faith-based responses to family violence has pointed to how some offenders have also used key Bible verses, spiritual teachings, and cultural practices inappropriately to defend their abusive and violent behaviour as being authorised by God (Petersen, 2016; Pillay, 2013). For example, Ah Siu Maliko (2016a) explored the relationship between Christian faith and family violence in Samoa, documenting how some proponents of a highly patriarchal form of

Christianity in Samoa misinterpret key verses from the Bible where “a literal reading of biblical passages is still used to justify men’s dominance over women and their physical “discipline” of women and children” (p. 58). This phenomenon is also supported by Ringel and Bina’s (2007) research exploring understandings of the causes and appropriate responses to intimate partner violence in a Jewish Orthodox community in America. These authors reveal how religious beliefs can also function as hurdles to effective help-seeking and change among perpetrators and victims of family violence. For example, some victims would prefer to endure violence for the sake of keeping the family together than be seen to be jeopardising their faith by leaving a violent relationship (Zust et al., 2018).

Research also indicates that some survivors of family violence prefer to keep silent about the abuse they have suffered because of the shame they feel and the fear of social stigma that can come from disclosing such violence or seeking to leave an abusive relationship (Rankine et al., 2015; Ringel & Bina, 2007; Ting & Panchanadeswaran, 2016). These findings are also relevant to Tongan and Pacific peoples in that cultural concepts such as *tauhi va* (maintain healthy and loving relationships) and *kainga* (families) are foundational aspects of Tongan cultural ways of being. As such, to leave an intimate relationship is considered by some to be a transgression of core cultural values and ways of being together. To *tauhi va* in an intimate relationship is on occasion taken as referring to how a wife who has experienced violence at the hands of her husband may remain silent in the marriage because of her desire not to bring shame and dishonour to her *kainga* (family). Also, relevant here is the work of Rankine and colleagues’ (2015) in New Zealand that explored seven different Pacific (ie., Tongan, Samoan, Cook Island, Fijian, Niuean, Tokelauan, and Tuvaluan) worldviews focusing on values and practices that could

protect against or prevent sexual violence. These authors found that core Pacific values such as *kainga* (family) *tauhi va* (relationships), collectivity and reciprocity suggest that sometimes some of the abused women will remain silent out of their devotion to their *kainga* and community. This could also be linked to the legacy expectation of Tongan women to be “submissive” to their husbands and to serve them within the *kainga* (Filihia, 2001; Kaitani & McMurray, 2006; Rankine et al., 2015).

Another issue identified in the area of faith-based responses to family violence is the lack of knowledge, understanding, and competence of some faith leaders in dealing with the complexities associated with family violence (Drumm et al, 2018). This issue was also highlighted in a study conducted by Ringel and Bina (2007) on domestic violence in a Jewish Orthodox community in the United States. The study sought to understand the causes and responses to intimate partner violence from the perspectives of Orthodox women survivors and faith leaders. Despite all participants agreeing that faith leaders can play a central role in the prevention of and intervention in intimate partner violence, there were differing perspectives regarding the rabbis’ (faith leaders) abilities and skills in dealing with domestic violence. Additionally, some of the respondents reported that faith leaders were sceptical of external agencies becoming involved in addressing family violence issues in the community because they perceived these agencies as being insensitive to Orthodox values and beliefs. The authors went on to highlight the importance of collaboration between faith-based communities and external organisations in addressing domestic violence in ways that are in keeping with core community values that do not promote family violence.

Looking to address skill gaps among faith leaders, Drumm and colleagues’ (2018) explored the impacts of a training project of 104 Seventh-Day Adventist pastors in the Southeastern region of the United States that was designed to develop more

effective faith-based responses to intimate partner violence. The study identified several areas for skill development among participating leaders. These included increasing the pastors' understandings of the complex dynamics of intimate partner violence, providing informative resources regarding service supports that could be mobilised to address situations of family violence, and developing motivations and competencies among pastors so that they could be more proactive in dealing with abusive relationships. The training programme was found to lead to more informed understandings of and more positive attitudes about the importance and efficacy of pro-victim responses to violence among pastors. Drumm and colleagues (2018) also documented improvements among participating pastors in terms of their engagements in various efforts to address domestic violence amongst their parishioners. This seminal study has contributed to the growing body of literature internationally that foregrounds the need for faith communities and community-based agencies to collaborate and mobilise their various resources and skills to contribute to efforts to address family violence. Such collaborations are important for promoting healing, hope, and transformation among people impacted by family violence (Petersen, 2016; Ringel & Bina, 2007; Ting & Panchanadeswaran, 2016). Petersen (2016) further suggests that such collaborative efforts are also important in African American communities because various change agents can:

...play a pivotal role in both the continuation and the eradication of the problem.

The traditional, predominantly propagated, one-size-fits-all approach which essentially insists that women must leave abusive relationships if they want to be safe and sane, does not recognise the diverse needs and requests by women.

It also runs the risk of leaning toward a patronising approach to African

women's insights and ability to come up with their own solutions and the importance of faith and culture as a resource. (p. 57).

Given that research into family violence programmes that adopts faith-based and culturally sensitive approaches is scant, the previous research of Drumm et al. (2018), Petersen (2016), Ting & Panchanadeswaran (2016), and Ringel & Bina (2007) is invaluable in informing the focus of my present study of the utility of a faith-cultural based approach to family violence within the Tongan community. It has also opened my eyes to how faith-based responses can be both highly problematic and effective depending on the underlying assumptions and gender relations of those involved. Drawing on insights from key scholars in this emergent field, I propose that in the presence of skilful faith leaders who are versant with the complexities of family domestic violence (Drumm et al., 2018; Ringel & Bina, 2007), the adoption of Tongan faith-based cultural values that assert love, compassion, gentleness and collective healing can be nurtured in *kainga* (family) relationships to allow *kainga* to become violence-free (Drumm et al., 2018; Jansen et al., 2012; Petersen, 2016; Ting & Panchanadeswaran, 2016).

### 1.5 The Fusion of Tongan Indigenous Culture and Christian faith Within an Effort to Work with *Kainga* to Address Family Violence

For many Tongan people aspects of our indigenous Tongan culture and Christian faith have become indistinguishable and have become fused in their very ways of being, understanding the world, and relating to others (Halapua, 1997; Havea, 2011; Kalavite, 2019). One viewpoint on this situation is that Christian faith has enabled the European colonisation of Tongan people (Lawson, 1996; Lee, 2002). I can see where that argument comes from. It is also now exceedingly difficult to separate our Christian faith and legacy culture as these have become so entangled across

generations, and both have now become in many respects one and the same (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b; Manuela & Sibley, 2014). It is also well documented that Christianity has not simply been imposed on us and that this faith system has evolved and adapted as an embedded facet of Pacific cultural worldviews, including *Anga Fakatonga* or the “Tongan way” (Havea, 2011; Kavaliku, 2007; Taumoefolau, 2005). We changed with the introduction of Christianity, but we also shaped Christianity as it is articulated in our milieu. Decolonising Tongan culture, like psychology (see next section), is more complex than simply “unlearning” Christianity or core ideas that came with colonisation. It is about redressing imbalances in power and perspective and looking at where communities are at and what actually works for them, in terms of who they are and how they wish to live their lives.

As a core aspect of our communal lives, the church constitutes the indispensable soul of Pacific cultures today (Halapua, 1997; Havea, 2011; Kalavite, 2019), having been embraced by Tongans (Tonga Department of Statistics, 2016) since its introduction into our nation in the early 19th century. Christianity has also evolved with us to become a powerful and transforming force in many respects in Tongan society (Lātūkefu, 1978; Olson, 2001). Due to the dedication of the Kingdom of Tonga by King George Tupou I, Tonga is the only Pacific nation that was never formally occupied or had its sovereignty displaced by the British crown or any of the other colonial powers that invaded the Pacific over the last 200 years or more. However, Tonga was not untouched by processes of British colonisation as is evidenced by our governmental and education systems being modelled on British legal and institutional frameworks (Koloto, 1998).

In 1839 King Tupou 1 dedicated Tonga to God (Havea et al., 2018; Sekona, 2014) through his national seal, “*Koe ‘Otua mo Tonga ko hoku Tofi’a*” (God and Tonga

are my inheritance) (Havea et al., 2018; Lātūkefu, 1978, 2014; Lee, 2002). Christianity was formally interwoven at this point into what it means to be Tongan and became part of our social reality. Moreover, a visitor to Tonga today will observe the dominance of church buildings in this small nation and how church activities pervade the everyday lives and realities of Tongan people (Olson, 2001). This relationship between Christian faith and Tongan culture also remains evident for Tongans in the diaspora, including among those who have migrated to New Zealand, where we make up 21.5% (82,389 people) of the total Pacific population (381,642 people) in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2018). The 2018 census also shows that 67.9% of Pacific peoples residing in New Zealand are affiliated with a Christian church (Ministry of Social Development, 2016a; Statistics New Zealand, 2018).

These complex links between Tongan culture and Christian faith are all but absent from the family violence literature. This reflects a broader gap in terms of conventional family violence responses and faith-based family violence programmes predominantly targeting individual abusers as understood from a Eurocentric perspective. This means that these programmes are not sensitive to the socioeconomic and cultural contexts of abusers' offending or the interconnected character of Tongan understandings of human beings as interdependent beings, rather than independent individuals (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b; Rankine et al., 2015; Robinson & Robinson, 2005). This is likely, at least in part, due to conventional programmes encompassing Eurocentric values that focus on individual victim's rights, and independence without acknowledging the added complexities that come with collectivist and relational considerations that are central for Pacific and Tongan cultures (Anae et al., 2001; Ofahengaue Vakalahi et al., 2008; Puchala et al., 2010). For example, the Duluth model of power and control (the violence wheel) is the most commonly used framework in



New Zealand for screening for and addressing domestic violence cases (Pence et al., 1993). The individualistic cultural assumptions of the wheel are evident in how both victims and abusers are invoked in this framework devoid of the broader family structures (*kainga*), ideas about how *kainga* members are expected to relate to one another, and what can be done collectively when expectations of harmonious and violence-free relations are transgressed (Mafale’o, 2004; Rankine et al., 2015). Relationships within the *kainga* (family) hierarchy are fundamental to the cosmology, epistemology and ontology of Tongan people (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b), and need to be included as design considerations within family violence prevention programmes if these are to be effective with us.

As noted above, Tongan people, like Pacific peoples more generally, are relational beings and, ideally, central to our relationships is the *kainga* (families) and the upholding of *tauhi va* (maintaining loving and healthy relationships) (Mafale’o, 2005a; Moala, 2009). Kalavite (2019) defines *kainga* as “blood or kin ties or living in an extended close-knit family or community lifestyle” (p. 2). She goes on to say that “Kainga is the core of Tongan culture that amalgamates all aspects of their human existence” (p. 3). Within Tongan culture, the notion of self goes far beyond the Eurocentric philosophy of self, entailing the concept of a bounded, autonomous individual. As with Pacific cultures in general, for Tongan people the concept of self is very much embedded in the notion of including other people: particularly, *kainga* and close community members are considered elements in our very being (Ewalt & Mokuau, 1995; Havea, 2011). As such, when caring for or abusing another person we are caring for or abusing ourselves.

Aspects of this fundamentally relational worldview and view of human subjectivity is compatible with Christian principles that centralise duties to care for

others, community connection through faith, and notions of a congregation as an embodiment of collective worship. I would argue that these relational understandings of personhood, connection through faith, care and respect towards self and others presents, metaphorically at least, the seeds that can be used to cultivate violence-free and more loving relationships within Tongan *kainga*. Further, Mulitalo-Lauta (2001) proposes that social institutions, including family and the church to which Pacific persons often belong, are underpinned by the notion of collectivism that is also central to our ways of understanding ourselves as Tongan people. In Pacific contexts, you are an individual articulation of a collective that is unique as well as fundamentally embedded in the lives and being of others. Such notions of communalism are reflected in the traditional value of the *kainga* where people are positioned as interdependent and their wellbeing is of utmost value, whereby collective rights and shared responsibilities are of paramount importance (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b; Helu, 1999; Rankine et al., 2015). A central theme within the *kainga* is that you are part of and emerge from within the collective, which also remains part of your very being. Correspondingly, there is an expectation that you contribute to the *kainga* and in doing so you also contribute to yourself. Everything you do should also be for the benefit of your *kainga*.

Tamasese Efi's poem profoundly and succinctly captures Pacific peoples' worldview of self and our sense of belonging as centred within Tongan people's reciprocal interconnectedness within familial and social relationships that also encompass our spiritual beliefs, and connections to other persons, land, and physical resources:

I am not an individual;

I am an integral part of the cosmos.

I share divinity with my ancestors, the land, the seas and the skies.

I am not an individual, because

I share a *tofi* (inheritance) with my family, my village and my nation.

I belong to my family and my family belongs to me.

I belong to my village and my village belongs to me.

I belong to my nation and my nation belongs to me.

This is the essence of my sense of belonging. (Tui Atua, 2009)

Taufe'ulungaki (2003) states that the basis of Tongan culture is nurturing interconnectedness, offering the bases for maintaining *tauhi va* (loving and harmonious relationships) within the *kainga* and building strong communities. In contrast, Taufe'ulungaki asserts that the hegemonic Eurocentric form of individualism is fixated on self-interest and the objective of creating personal wealth and wellbeing, often at the expense of others.

The centrality of *kainga* relationships within Tongan culture foregrounds the importance of applying collectivist or relational approaches to family violence response programmes. There is considerable potential in working with our faith and cultural values to address patterns of violence collectively within the *kainga*, and with support from the wider communities. The involvement of the *kainga* and related Christian congregation is important in violence interventions for most Tongan families because such inclusions come with meaningful relationships that often serve as a shield of protection, accountability, support, and positive transformations for families experiencing violence (Beautrais et al., 2005; Rankine et al., 2015). The report on effective prevention strategies for addressing the key issue of suicide in New Zealand developed by Beautrais and colleagues (2005) for the New Zealand Ministry of Health supports this assertion. Regarding Pacific peoples and communities, the report stated that the extended family structures are still pivotal aspects of Pacific cultures,

worldviews, and behaviours (Finau, 1982; Ministry of Health, 1997). Moreover, that the social organisations of church and family provide important and meaningful relationships that can serve as shields of protection for family members against suicide (Finau, 1982; Resnick et al., 1997; Skegg, 1997). They further argue that these integral Pacific cultural values and practices need “to be respected in developing suicide prevention strategies and services” (p. 50). This argument also aligns with the research of Rankine and colleagues (2015) examining the values and practices that can protect against sexual violence among migrant ethnic groups from Tonga, Samoa, Cook Islands, Fiji, Niue, Tokelau, and Tuvalu. These authors note that most of the participants in this study understood that the collective relationships within the key social organisations of family and church for Pacific cultures were important preventative factors against sexual violence.

The inclusion of faith leaders in addressing relational issues is also consistent with the intention of the Tongan *Kainga Tu’umalie* family violence prevention programme, which is focused on church families coming together in a safe and restful space and collectively working through issues together as a *kainga* and community. Te Whakaruruhau (Māori women’s refuge) have also championed innovative and research-based methodologies to preventing violence that are rooted within a Māori cultural worldview and related cultural concepts that emphasise interconnectivity and related accountabilities within familial structures (Rua et al., 2021). Correspondingly, Te Whakaruruhau have adopted a community-orientated approach similar to the approach of the *Kainga Tu’umalie* family violence prevention programme through which the broader whānau groupings (of immediate and extended family, including where possible the men who have been violent) are involved in processes of accountability and building sustainable nonviolent futures within whanau (Rua et al., 2021). The

inclusive approach was embraced partly due to the collective acknowledging that family violence in its contemporary forms is implicated in decimating processes of colonisation in general and the imposition of Eurocentric patriarchal ideologies, and issues of power and coercion (Krug et al., 2002; King & Robertson, 2017).

The collectivist and relational approach to addressing family violence also carries the potential for considerable positive change impacts for the perpetrators of violence, because the collectivist approach deepens their ownership of and accountability for their violence. I do realise that the collectivist stance I am advocating can be affronting to some scholar activists within the field of domestic violence who feel that the focus should be solely on perpetrators. Nonetheless, within the context of this research, a Tongan collectivist perspective that focuses on collective responsibilities is paramount. Pivotal is the realisation that lasting transformative change for Tongan violent abusers is more likely to come if dealt with collectively by the *kainga*. I would also emphasise that this standpoint in no way exonerates men who are violent or allows them to avoid taking responsibility for their actions (Havea et al., 2021a & 2021b). If anything, it increases their accountabilities towards others as persons who need to rethink and change their violent actions that transgress our collective sensibilities towards the cultivation of relationships that centralise care and support rather than violence and coercion.

Within the Tongan culture a key aspect of our relationality is spirituality, and one cannot separate out the spiritual dimension of our being from any programme and least of all family violence programmes (Havea et al., 2021a & 2021b). A key difference between more Eurocentric faith-based family violence programmes is that these target the Western independent individual. For Tongans the emphasis is on our interconnections and how our spirituality can be used to strengthen our collective ways

of being. Tongan understandings of violence also emphasise spiritual aspects that are often dismissed from mainstream programmes (Ah Siu-Maliko, 2016b; Havea et al., 2021a & 2021b). For example, violence for Tongans and Pacific peoples is constructed as a profound dishonouring of *tauhi va* (maintenance of loving relationships) that fractures the desired harmony of the *kainga* (families) and can lead to disconnections between abusers, their victims, and other family and community members.

The significance of church and Christianity for Tongans and Pacific peoples also highlights the importance of Pacific churches as effective community contexts for engaging and collaborating with Pacific communities and as potentially effective sites for family violence prevention and intervention (Alefaio-Tugia & Havea, 2016; Capstick et al., 2009; Havea et al., 2021a & 2021b; Rankine et al., 2015). As such, my PhD research centralises a focus on the potential of Christian faith and effective and informed faith leaders as central elements in efforts to address family violence by us, for us. Further, because Christian churches constitute the indispensable soul of Tongan culture today (Halapua, 1997; Havea, 2011), the influence of positive faith leaders in Tongan communities provides the platform to explore how faith-based strategies within a Tongan cultural framework can extend our knowledge of and responses to family violence. It makes a lot of sense culturally and practically to draw on the capacities of families and church communities to develop and deliver programmes that have positive impacts for Tongan *kainga* (families) (Alefaio-Tugia & Havea, 2016). Moreover, the centrality of church communities to the daily lives of many Tongan and Pacific peoples requires practitioners and scholars to develop and practice more spiritually and culturally responsive approaches to violence within families (Aten et al., 2011; Havea et al., 2021a & 2021b; Petersen, 2016).

More broadly, the emphasis I am placing here on the importance of drawing on the cultural understandings of self in relation to others is also in keeping with contemporary efforts to decolonise psychology. These efforts involve the questioning of the individualism that pervades “Western, Educated, Industrialised, Rich, Democratic” (WEIRD) psychologies and our understandings of human beings (King et al., 2017). It is about foregrounding the importance and utility of the indigenous worldviews and relational practices that Tongan, Pacific and indigenous peoples more generally bring with them to the development of a truly globally informed discipline of psychology (Adair et al., 1999; Azuma, 1984; Li et al., 2020; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Moghaddam & Taylor, 1986). The indigenising of psychology to which this PhD contributes is discussed in a little more detail below.

## 1.6 Indigenising Psychology

Since the indigenisation movement in psychology began five decades ago, researchers in many colonised countries have called for indigenous input into the ways theoretical concepts and methods from the Global North are applied to indigenous communities that feature very different theories and psychologies of their own (Adair et al., 1999; Yang, 2005). Indigenous psychology can be conceptualised as an effort to guide psychology towards becoming a more diverse and culturally inclusive discipline that better reflects our shared humanity, which spans various different contexts and ways of living, being, and relating to others (Adair et al., 1999; Azuma, 1984; Li et al., 2020; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Moghaddam & Taylor, 1986). Indigenising psychology is an ongoing process that has reached the point of being foregrounded in undergraduate textbooks as a core part of the cannon in areas such as social psychology. For example, in reviewing the field, Hodgetts and colleagues (2020) propose that indigenous psychologies are central to the pluralising of psychology by embracing

cultural differences. It is a key strategy for ensuring that the global discipline includes previously marginalised voices, traditions and perspectives, on the terms of these communities. Through a Samoan Pacific-indigenous lens, Alefaio-Tugia (2018) states that indigenisation of psychology is also about embracing the diverse cultural approaches to theory, research, and practice that are evident within and across different cultural groups. Within the context of this PhD, indigenising psychology is about embracing the importance of culture and Tongan people being able to see our own unique legacy of knowledge, concepts, values, ways of being, and relational practices in the prevention programmes through which they engage as psychologists (Adair et al., 1999; Groot et al., 2012; Henrich et al., 2010).

If we take into consideration the margins of the discipline, such as community psychologies, then it can be argued that psychological knowledge-production practices have always been plural in form and focus but have not always been culturally inclusive (Havea et al., 2023; Li et al., 2020; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Contemporary efforts to indigenise and pluralise psychology also reflect how the discipline is changing to better reflect the perspectives and diversity of human ways of being and relating to others (Fernández et al., 2021; Guimarães, 2019). These developments have come after considerable effort to foreground the centrality of culture to the human condition and psychology and to show that psychological methods (particularly the use of standardised measures) cannot be free of cultural bias, for example (Henrich, et al., 2010; Hodgetts et al., 2020; Hofstede, 1997; Li et al., 2020). Indigenous cultures are now being welcomed within an increasing number of subdisciplinary domains from community and applied to social, clinical, health, and organisational psychologies. This is resulting in the pluralising of the cultural bases of theory, research, and practice in these domains (Groot et al., 2012; King & Hodgetts; 2017; Liu, 2021).



Although Tongan cosmologies, epistemologies, and relational ethics remain marginal to WEIRD psychologies that seek cultural neutrality and objectivity, the Tongan indigenous approach I have taken in this research does have more in common with community and relational orientations that embrace participative and advocacy-orientated approaches to the discipline (Akom, 2011; Hodgetts et al., 2020; Sonn et al., 2019). Globally dominant WEIRD psychologies<sup>2</sup> (Henrich et al., 2010) are often applied in a top-down manner (Allwood & Berry, 2006; Rua et al., 2021) across a range of contexts in the pursuit of universal laws and replicability of research results. Researchers are currently experiencing a “replication crisis” because the paradigm is not able to achieve its goals of establishing universal laws for human psychology that perpetuate Eurocentrism (Hodgetts et al., 2020). A key issue here is that of epistemological violence whereby WEIRD psychologists produce and interpret “data” on “the other” or people of colour from a Eurocentric point of view with no consideration of alternative perspectives, often finding “the other” to be inferior from their perspective (Teo, 2010). Despite its own paradigmatic problems, practitioners of WEIRD psychology continue to conduct their research with limited regard for local cultural worldviews and indigenous psychologies or ways of understanding people and our relationships with one another (Alefaio, 2018; Anae, 2010, 2019; Hodgetts et al., 2020). Such practices are now openly questioned in other areas of psychology and the social sciences more generally (Fernández et al, 2021; Guimarães, 2019; Li et al., 2020;

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<sup>2</sup> I realise the original 2010 article focused primarily on issues of sampling in quantitative research in psychology. However, the concept of WEIRD psychology offers a means for indigenous scholars and those on the margins of the discipline to question some of the dominant assumptions around individualism and associated research practices in psychology.

Teo, 2010). These criticisms are another indicator that the discipline is changing and pluralising, as is the 2021 apology by the American Psychological Association (APA, 2021) to people of colour for the discipline's contributions to racism and the promotion of racial hierarchies.

The seminal scholarship of Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) has been foundational to many efforts to indigenise the social sciences. Smith promoted the indigenising of research methodologies for Māori people in a way that has opened up pathways for indigenous cultural groups including Pacific peoples to be confident in articulating and utilising our own psychologies, research frameworks, and relational approaches. We have also asserted the need to re-indigenise knowledge production practices within the academy and beyond. We are working to:

Decolonise and re-indigenise research agendas and research outputs by doing research based on Pacific indigenous theories, Pacific research methodologies and Pacific relational ethics. It demands that research carried out with Pacific peoples and communities is ethical and methodologically sound with transformational outputs (Anae, 2019, p. 1).

This PhD research contributes to the re-indigenising of psychology by centralising issues of culture (Adair & Diaz-Loving, 1999; Groot et al., 2012; Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010) in ways that resonate with Tongan and Pacific *kainga* (families) understandings of themselves, their relationships, and family violence.

To recap, in response to the cultural relativity and epistemic issues associated with legacy applications of WEIRD psychologies, considerable effort is currently being devoted to indigenising psychological theory, research and practice across the Asia-Pacific region (Fernández et al., 2021; Guimarães, 2019; Li et al, 2020; Rua et al., 2021). Underpinning such developments is renewed acknowledgement that people's

cultural worldviews, ways of being and relating to others, and embodied and profoundly relational value systems are critical to their psychologies and the development of a truly globally responsive discipline (*cf.*, Hofstede, 1997; Thaman, 2003). Central to these re-emerging indigenous psychologies is a relational understanding of humanity that is not restricted by Eurocentric models of the “lonely thinker” (atomised individual), which have pervaded WEIRD psychologies and restricted disciplinary understandings of diversity within the human condition (Hodgetts et al., 2020).

Given the increasing influence of psychology in diverse communities globally that feature variations in culture, religions, languages and worldviews, it has become even more important to develop culturally and practically responsive disciplinary orientations that can be applied to real-world problems such as family violence (Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Li, et al., 2020). Moreover, Kaholokula and colleagues (2018) have argued that the interpersonal, sociocultural and socioeconomic realities of Pacific peoples need to be incorporated in any health and social intervention programmes, and how these are theorised and researched. Further, there is an urgent call from both Pacific and non-Pacific researchers and practitioners to centralise Pacific knowledges and practices in research and associated attempts to address social and health issues that impact our communities (Anae 2019; Asiasiga & Gray, 1998; Mila, 2016; Mokuau, 1999; Rankine et al., 2015; Taufe’ulungaki, 2006; Thaman, 2003). Specifically, within psychology there are also prominent calls for fostering greater cultural competence for psychologists engaging with diverse cultural communities (Hays & Iwamasa, 2006; Li et al, 2020; Lopez & Bursztyn, 2013; Rua et al., 2021). The articulation, embedding and practicing of diverse cultural cosmologies, values and associated conceptualisations of what it means to be a human being and to relate well towards others needs to be

centralised in the work of effective scholar practitioners of a truly globally informed discipline.

As argued above, efforts to indigenise psychology constitute much more than self-indulgent academic exercises in personal reflection and disciplinary expansion. These efforts are also implicated in collective or community-driven pursuits to address endemic issues such as family violence in ways that make sense culturally to participants (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b, 2023; Pulotu-Endemann & Faleafa, 2017). My PhD research contributes to this inclusive and praxis - or action-orientated agenda and to supporting disciplinary shifts towards inclusion by reflecting methodologically and practically on a culturally immersive approach to conducting and documenting a Tongan family violence programme. As is covered in more detail in chapter 2, my approach to this research stems primarily from a Tongan cultural and faith-based worldview. To advance a Tongan approach to understanding and addressing family violence, I also drew insights from indigenous psychologies and ethnographic and participative methods that are compatible with a Tongan relational orientation towards knowledge production and application. I will demonstrate the utility of mobilising Tongan cosmology, cultural concepts and associated relational practices in the conduct and documenting (researching) of this culturally responsive approach to family violence (*cf.*, Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b; 2023). It is important to note here at the outset that Tongan people tend to be practical people who value meaningful relationships, dialogue and participation in knowledge production and sharing. For Tongan people, knowledge production is predominantly engaged in as a means of informing and enhancing actions to address significant issues such as family violence (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b; 2023).

A key element in my intention to conduct this PhD, was a desire to contribute to the deepening of culturally informed methods of knowledge production and practice in

psychology. This includes positioning the storied beings in our communities as primary knowledge holders as well as allowing future generations to rediscover their knowledge production traditions and their cultural identities as part of the indigenisation process (*cf.*, Fernández et al., 2021; Havea et al., 2023).

## 1.7 Thesis Overview

This thesis is presented in five chapters.

In the present Chapter, I have set the scene for my research and situated it within the emerging field of faith-based and culturally informed approaches to addressing family violence.

Chapter 2 presents the first of three journal articles entitled “Drawing Wisdom from the Pacific: A Tongan Participative Approach to Exploring and Addressing Family Violence”. This article presents the Tongan methodological approach I used to engage in this participative action-oriented research project. This reflexive article draws on my conceptual insights and cultural concepts from the inaugural Tongan faith-based Affirming Works *Kainga Tu’umalie* family violence prevention programme. More specifically, I document the adaptation of three interrelated Tongan value-based orientations to research of *tauhi va* (nurturing loving and harmonious relationships), *nofo* (indigenous cultural immersion), and *talanoa* (Pacific indigenous dialogue and discussion). The article highlights how the application of these faith-cultural orientations that are embedded within a Tongan cultural worldview and associated relational practices is central to heightening knowledge of, and culturally informed responses to violence within the Tongan *kainga* (family) and communities.

Chapter 3 presents the second article titled “Fofola e Fala Ka e Talanoa e Kainga: A Tongan Approach to Family Violence and Prevention”. This article chronicles facets of the inaugural application of the Tongan conceptual framework of

*fofofa e fala ka e Talanoa e kainga* (laying out the mat so families can dialogue) as part of the first Tongan faith-based family violence prevention programme in Aotearoa New Zealand. This article explores the Tongan indigenous framework of *fofofa e fala*, as utilised within the Affirming Works *Kainga Tu'umalie* (prosperous families) programme. The experiences of seven faith-based community leaders who participated in the delivery of the programme provide the empirical basis for this article. Central is my attempt to draw out the depth of the cultural knowledge of these participants and how it was integrated within the development and delivery of the programme. This article foregrounds the importance of Tongan-indigenous approaches to reducing family violence that integrate traditional Tongan cultural knowledge and practices with Christian values as a reflection of our being Tongan together today.

Chapter 4 presents the third article entitled “Kainga (Families) Experiences of a Tongan-Indigenous Faith-Based Violence Prevention Programme”. This article documents the experiences of three Tongan households who participated in the inaugural faith-based family violence prevention programme. This article also chronicles my culturally immersive participation in the programme with 49 Tongan church families that are represented by the three households I interviewed formally for the purposes of this research. More specifically *talanoa* (a Pacific-indigenous way of engaging families in research) with three *kainga* (families) is drawn upon to highlight the impact of the programme in reawakening the need to rebuild positive familial relationships based on core Tongan Christian values. The accounts from the *kainga* (families) highlights the significance of interweaving spiritual faith and indigenous knowledge in efforts to curtail family violence. This research also speaks to the importance of leveraging collaborative partnerships between faith-based communities and community-based agencies in addressing social issues.

Chapter 5 completes the thesis with a general discussion of key insights from across the three articles. These are related to previous research into faith-based cultural responses to family violence and the implications of the present contribution are considered. Chapter 5 is concluded with a policy brief for the Ministry for Pacific Peoples and the Ministry for Social Development aimed at supporting the high-level needs of Pacific communities.

## CHAPTER 2: DRAWING WISDOM FROM THE PACIFIC: A TONGAN PARTICIPATIVE APPROACH TO EXPLORING AND ADDRESSING FAMILY VIOLENCE

### 2.1 Abstract

The development of qualitative research approaches that are embedded within a Tongan worldview and associated relational practices is pivotal to enhancing knowledge of, and culturally informed responses to violence within the Tongan *kainga* (family). We are currently in the early stages of such developments. This reflexive methodological article draws conceptual insights and cultural concepts from the exemplar of a Tongan faith-based family violence prevention programme, which was developed by Tongan community practitioners in Aotearoa New Zealand. We document the adaptation of *Tauhi va* (nurturing loving and harmonious relationships), *Nofo* (indigenous cultural immersion), and *Talanoa* (Pacific indigenous ways of dialogue and discussion) in the design and documenting of this culturally embedded response to such violence. Elsewhere, we have documented the violence programme in question and its implications for participating families and the broader faith-based community and leaders. In this article we present a Tongan methodology that we hope is used for other scholar activists also engaged in participative action-oriented research within Tongan and other Indigenous communities more broadly.

With notable exceptions (e.g., Participative Community Psychology and Research), globally dominant WEIRD (Western, Educated, Industrialised, Rich,



Democratic) psychologies <sup>3</sup> (Henrich et al., 2010) are often applied in a top-down manner across a range of contexts. This is often done with limited regard for local cultural worldviews and indigenous psychologies or ways of understanding people and our relationships with one another (Anae, 2010, 2019; Hodgetts et al., 2020). In response to the cultural relativity and epistemic issues associated with such applications of WEIRD psychologies, considerable effort is currently being devoted to indigenizing psychological theory, research and practice across the Asia Pacific region (Fernández et al., 2021; Guimarães, 2019; Li et al., 2020; Rua et al., 2021). Underpinning such developments is renewed acknowledgement that people's cultural worldviews, ways of being and relating to others, and embodied and profoundly relational value systems are central to their psychologies (*cf.*, Hofstede, 1997; Thaman, 2003). Central to these reemerging indigenous psychologies is a relational understanding of humanity that is not restricted by models of the 'lonely thinker' (atomized individual), which pervade WEIRD psychologies and restrict our understandings of diversity within the human condition.

Given the increasing reach of psychology into diverse global communities with different cultures, religions, languages and worldviews, it has become even more important to develop culturally and practically responsive orientations (Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Li et al., 2020). Further, Kaholokula, Ing, Look, Delafield and Sinclair (2018) have argued that the interpersonal, sociocultural and socioeconomic realities of Pacific peoples need to be considered in any health and social intervention programmes, and how these are researched. Moreover, there is an urgent call from both Pacific and

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<sup>3</sup> We realise the the original 2010 article focused primarily on issues of sampling in quantitative research in psychology. However, the concept of WEIRD psychology offers a means for indigenous scholars and those on the margins of the discipline to question some of the dominant assumptions around individualism and associated research practices in psychology.

non-Pacific researchers and practitioners to centralize Pacific knowledges and practices in research and efforts to address social and health concerns (Asiasiga & Gray, 1998; Mokuau, 1999; Rankine et al., 2015). Specifically, within psychology there are also prominent calls for fostering greater cultural competence for psychologists engaging with diverse cultural communities (Hays & Iwamasa, 2006; Lopez & Bursztyn, 2013). Articulating, embedding and practicing cultural values and associated concepts needs to be centralised in the work of effective scholar practitioners.

Efforts to indigenise psychology constitute much more than self-indulgent academic exercises in personal reflection. These efforts are often implicated in collective or community-driven efforts to address endemic issues such as family violence and in ways that make sense culturally to participants (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b; Pulotu-Endemann & Faleafa, 2017). This article contributes to this inclusive agenda and disciplinary shift by reflecting methodologically on a culturally immersive approach to conducting and documenting a Tongan family violence programme. We demonstrate the utility of mobilizing Tongan cosmology, cultural concepts and associated relational practices in the conduct and documenting (researching) of this culturally-responsive approach to family violence (*cf.*, Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b). It is important to note here at the outset that many Tongan people value practical applications of knowledge. Relatedly, Tongan people are enculturated to value meaningful positive relationships, dialogue and participation in knowledge production and sharing.

Foundational to the exemplar of the *Kainga Tu'umalie* (prosperous families) family violence prevention programme (Alefaio-Tugia & Havea, 2016) and this article is how the programme emerged from within a long-term relationship between a key social service provider, Christian churches as community hubs, and a group of Pacific

university researchers. It reflects a break from convention within WEIRD psychology in that faith and the spiritual dimensions that are foundational to the everyday lives and ways of being for Tongan people are central aspects of the programme design, and the indigenous approach taken to research it (Alefaio-Tugia & Havea, 2016; Havea, 2011). This programme involves families accessing the support to work through the issues they face from faith and cultural leaders as well as their broader *kainga* (families) in Aotearoa and in Tonga. The overall intent is to situate *kainga* within supportive networks that enable members to become more self-sustaining in living without violence. This exemplar also foregrounds the centrality of collaborative relationships within Pacific communities that draw on the expertise of *kainga*, community leaders and scholars who work practically and constructively not only for the purposes of knowledge production, but also to inform the refinement of community initiatives to address pressing social issues such as family violence (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b).

In the absence of a substantive Tongan psychological literature, Pacific psychologists and scholars are starting to articulate our own approaches to researching practice initiatives such as the programme in question (Alefaio-Tugia, 2015; Anae, 2019; Ka'ili, 2017; Thaman, 2003). In doing so, we are contributing to the growing diversity and dynamism in the discipline. Central to this evolving agenda is the increasingly recognised need for Pacific scholars to articulate our engagements with our own cultures, cosmologies, epistemologies, ethics, and ways of being, which are foundational to our subjectivities and knowledge production and application practices (Ka'ili, 2017; Mahina, 2010; Thaman, 2003). Thus, one of the aims of this paper is to articulate and unpack key Tongan concepts as foundational to the articulation and further refinement of a Tongan psychology that can extend research and responses to the social issues we face as communities (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b).

More specifically, central to the approach outlined in this article are Tongan ways of knowing and being that are evident in the concepts of *Talanoa* (Tongan/Pacific indigenous dialogue), *Nofo* (reside, cultural immersion) and *Tauhi va* (nurturing loving and harmonious relationships). The concept of *Nofo* speaks specifically to the importance of residing with others or cultural immersion in community settings. This concept relates to the increased sustainability of relationships between researchers and community organisations in sharing expertise, resources and networks, and exercising resourcefulness in sustaining collaborative partnerships to address issues of shared concern (*cf.*, Li et al., 2020). Such efforts carry the ultimate goal of strengthening the Tongan *kainga* (family) by mobilizing *Tauhi va* (nurturing loving and harmonious relationships) and centralizing ‘*ofa* (love/compassion), *angafaka 'apa 'apa* (respectful heart), *angafakatokilalo* (humble heart), and *feveitoka 'i 'aki* (mutual care/generosity) in how family violence is addressed collectively (Havea et al., 2021a; Johansson-Fua, 2014; Mafale’o, 2008). The embedded worldviews and cosmological theories of Tongan people within these cultural principles offer effective foci for preventative and ameliorative measures against family violence amongst Tongan families (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b). More broadly, these values inform the theorizing and conduct of our approach to qualitative inquiry.

As noted above, central to our present effort is a practical orientation towards scholarship that informs efforts to address pressing needs in the community. For Tongan people simply documenting social issues is not enough. Our communities also expect scholar practitioners to involve themselves or become immersed within efforts to formulate and respond to social issues for our collective benefit. In some respects, this praxis orientation could be read as similar to recent work on Participative Action Research (PAR) (Chevalier & Buckles, 2019; Lewin, 1946, 1997; Swantz, 2008). With

PAR, Indigenous approaches share an emphasis on conducting programmes to address social issues and to document such efforts *with* and not *on* our communities (Elder & Odoyo, 2018; Rua et al., 2021). This orientation is reflected in a key move away from more the positioning of researchers as external evaluators and towards the position of researchers as meaningfully engaged participants embroiled in shared learning with programme leaders and families (Akom, 2011; Caxaj, 2015). Like PAR, the Tongan approach manifests a transformative praxis that is anchored in trusting partnerships, caring and inclusive interactions as the basis of knowledge production and application.

As is the case with other indigenous approaches to participatory research praxis (Akom, 2011; Caxaj, 2015; Dadich et al., 2019; Elder & Odoyo, 2018), the Tongan approach we outline is much older than PAR, draws from a distinct intellectual cosmology, linguistic tradition, cultural concepts, ethics and relational practices, and is more profoundly anchored in cultural insider participative leaderships. Another key difference is how when outlining the underlying philosophical assumptions to their approaches, psychologists engaged in action-oriented qualitative research focus primarily on epistemological issues and to a lesser degree ontological concerns. In contrast, scholars operating from within indigenous participative action projects, do not demarcate epistemic and ontological principles from those of existential, cosmological or ethical concerns (Hau'ofa, 2000; Ka'ili 2017; King et al., 2021; Mahina, 2010).

To recap, this article offers a Tongan approach to culturally immersive and practically minded research praxis (*Nofo*). This approach speaks to the importance of embracing cultural ways of engaging in partnership from *within* communities (*Talanoa & Tauhi va*) to produce knowledge of and responses to social issues impacting these communities. In many respects, this is a reflexive article that implicates, but does not fixate on us as investigators. We seek to think through and articulate some of the

methodological issues that are embedded in the use of *Talanoa* (Tongan/Pacific indigenous dialogues) to understanding the *Kainga Tu'umalie* family violence programme.

## 2.2 Engaging in the *Kainga Tu'umalie* (Prosperous Families) Programme

The faith-based Affirming Works non-government organization developed the *Kainga Tu'umalie* (prosperous families) programme in collaboration with Tongan faith leaders in Auckland. At the time of this research, the programme involved four Tongan churches and 49 *kainga* (families) being invited to attend weekend retreats. There were formal programme sessions addressing key topics, including Biblical narratives relating to care and violence, the implications of violence, and the dreams of harmonious lives of our Pacific forefathers (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b).

The aim of the programme is to provide a culturally conducive space where *kainga* members can *talanoa* and be encouraged and relearn new ways of rebuilding and fostering violence-free family relationships. It encompasses a strengths-based approach that seeks to empower families to rebuild and enable strong, resilient familial relationships. This space is signified by the utilization of the Tongan framework of '*Fofola e fala ka e talanoa e kainga*' (laying out the mat for the families to dialogue). This is an approach that is familiar to participants and conducive to promoting open dialogue, respect, and accountability. Embodying this cultural framework are Tongan core faith-cultural values of '*ofa* (love/compassion), *tauhi va* (cultivating loving and harmonious relationships), *angafakatokilalo* (humble heart), and *angafaka'apa'apa* (respectful heart). Interwoven into the programme is the key message that at the heart of Biblically based familial relationships are the enactment of these core values. The programme sessions were developed to encourage and challenge *kainga* (families) to

reconcile their faith and culture to nurture a deeper understanding of the significance of violence free *kainga* relationships (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b).

The Interweaving of a Tongan indigenous approach and the Biblical narrative is important because Christianity has been adapted as a culturally embedded value system among Tongan people (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b). That is, Christian teachings have been fused with Tongan spiritual traditions to the point that both have now evolved in concert and are very difficult to demarcate. Participants identify with and respond positively to the programme because their faith is an integral part of their identities and cultural worldview (Alefaio-Tugia & Havea, 2016; Havea, 2011). The Christian Bible-based principles align with Tongan traditional principles and values offering practical tools that cultivate and foster family connections and relationships. Moreover, a differentiating aspect of this programme from more generic programmes, is that facilitators were also faith leaders who work with the whole *kainga* (family) as a living entity and not just with men or women who have been violent. Another important feature of the programme is the blend of a Tongan cultural metaphor of '*Fofola e fala ka e talanoa e kainga*' (Laying out the mat so the families can dialogue) and the Biblical narrative. This blended approach provided a culturally safe space and a sense of dedication for *kainga* (family) members to collectively, and openly discuss the often-taboo topic of violence. The mat also helps to ameliorate power differences not only between facilitators and participants, but also between different family members, which are common characteristics of Tongan social hierarchical structure. The collectivist and relational norms, values and practices of Tongans and Pacific people and cultures as experienced within the *Kainga Tu'umalie* programme highlights the significance of this faith-based programme (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b).

The first author participated fully in the weekend retreats, becoming culturally immersed within *Talanoa*, *vahevahe* (sharing), *fanongo* (listening), observing, and reflecting on the activities at the retreats. Allowing oneself to be fully immersed as a meaningful participant in the retreats (*Nofo*), enabled important personal connections (*Tauhi va*) to be made *with* participating families and faith leaders. *Nofo* is central to orientating the research and assessing the key issues for dialogue. Like cultural immersive strategies employed by other indigenous communities (see Rua et al., 2021), *Nofo* resembles a collectivist take on the auto-ethnographic tradition of inquiry whereby the researcher is also an immersed participant in the culture and programme under investigation (Ellis et al., 2011). This nurturing of rapport and trust facilitated a deeper understanding of how the programme works, its underlying cultural values, and the impacts for *kainga* (families) (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b). It is important to emphasise here that there is a deep and multifaceted spiritual dimension to relating in this way. That is, reflected in the concepts of *Tauhi va*, *Nofo* and *Talanoa* and the reconciliation of violence, it reflects how in Pacific research settings reciprocal relationships are sacred and paramount (Anae, 2019; Ka’ili, 2005, 2017).

Within this research context, *Tauhi va* (fostering loving and harmonious relationships) is a nurturing value, and if necessary to reconcile any *vatamaki* (disharmonious) relationships (Ka’ili, 2005; Kalavite, 2019) using the gifts of faith, respect, and care. By no means is it being suggested that keeping *Tauhi va* is an easy and simple process. Particularly in situations where there are tensions and disagreements: “More often than not it is complex, multi-layered, and fraught with difficulties” (Anae, 2019, p. 11). For example, the sensitive topic of family violence transgresses cultural expectations and as such, has to be broached in a loving and sensitive manner. To *Tauhi va* as a married couple is sometimes taken to mean that a



wife who has experienced violence at the hands of her husband often remains silent in the marriage because of her desire not to bring shame and dishonour to her *kainga* (families). A key aspect of the programme was to create an environment in which such issues can be discussed and whereby the work can be done to ensure the woman's voice is heard and her safety is ensured. This is important because like many other women of faith around the world, many decide to remain in the relationship (Zust, Flicek, Moses, Schubert & Timmerman, 2018).

In essence, the spiritual dimension of *Tauhi va* is manifested in both the holistic and relational spirituality that is central to the interactions and relational practices that are foundational to the programme. Holistic spirituality results from the flow and fluidity of relationality, where there is no divide between the sacred and the secular, meaning that relational or social life is spiritual life (Anae, 2019; Havea, 2011). These principles suggest that in *Tauhi va*, Tongan people are relationships and see ourselves mirrored in the other. Ultimately, as Va'ai and Casimira (2017) contend, relationality is the key to life and that spiritual relationality is a Pacific response to the 'moral issues' now faced by the world today. In the engagement and research context, the gift of relational spirituality is found in the relational accountability in the *va* across all stages of the programme and associated research process (from developing research questions, design, analysis, and dissemination).

Moreover, Tongan faith-based relationships can manifest through the practice of spiritually sensitive research. Practically, this means that researchers and programme participants more generally become more open to mutual discoveries of ways to more fully connect, dialogue, and cooperate in addressing family violence. As Li, Hung and Hodgetts (2020) note, "engaging in such allied and human-hearted scholar activism enables scholars to realise their own humanity through service to others" (p. 18). If our

desire is to study social life and complex situations including those featuring violence, then we must develop methods that allow us to witness and engage with the turmoil, emotion, and uncertainty that may in return impact our own subjectivities (Adams & Manning, 2015). This immersive orientation resonates specifically with the Tongan concepts of *'ofa* (love/compassion), *angafakatokilalo* (humble heart) and *feveitoka'i'aki* (mutual care/generosity) (Kalavite, 2019). These concepts are important features of *Tauhi va* (nurturing loving and harmonious relationships) and Tongan culture.

For the necessary intensive dialogues to occur within the programme, it was imperative that the programme facilitator and researcher (first author) was a cultural insider who knew how to navigate the various cultural protocols and nuances involved. This is not only because of the first author's ability to speak the same language, but also because of her understanding and ability to enact *Tauhi va* and provide a culturally safe space for the families to open up to the shared effort towards change. For example, in one of the programme retreat sessions a father and daughter engaged in a frank conversation about his violence. Only a cultural insider or Tongan researcher/facilitator would understand the cultural significance of a daughter being this open and frank about her father's abusive disciplinary practices. Also significant is for the father to acknowledge his weaknesses and allow himself to be vulnerable in front of his *kainga* (family) and church community (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b). Traditionally, Tongan children are taught to show *faka'apa'apa* (respect) and obedience to their parents, and can only engage in such open dialogue on the woven mat and when the appropriate cultural space of *Tauhi va* is opened up for this to happen. This is an example of Tongan relational ethics in action.

The sacredness of *Tauhi va* is a pivotal aspect of *Talanoa* and *Nofo* in Tongan qualitative inquiry. For Tongans the concept of *Tauhi va* (nurturing loving and

harmonious relationships) begins with ones' relationship with God. The quality of this sacred *va* or relationship determines the strength and importance placed on ones' relationships with others (Anae, 2019; Kalavite, 2019). It is this sacred relationship which invites one into communal *va* or relations of '*ofa* (love/compassion), *angafakatokilalo* (humble heart), *angafaka'apa'apa* (respectful heart), *fatongia* (accountability); and *feveitoka'i'aki* (mutual care/generosity) (Anae, 2019; Havea, 2011). It is the spiritual dimension of *Tauhi va* that enables a person to show '*ofa* (love/compassion), *kelesi* (grace) and *fakamolemole* (forgiveness) if the relationship is *vatamaki/vakovi* (disharmonious).

As a Tongan programme facilitator and researcher engaged with Tongan participants, it is important to note that we are already interconnected and come to our interactions with familial histories. For example, the first author came into the programme where there were people whom she already knew and others who knew her parents and grandparents. From a Eurocentric perspective this might be classified as a conflict of interest or bias. From a Tongan perspective it means that the seeds of connectedness and the *Tauhi va* (nurturing loving and harmonious relationships) are already in place to be cultivated further and brought to the fore through our cooperative interactions. As a result, the *Nofo* and *Talanoa* or cultural immersion can flow naturally and will be deepened and strengthened as a result of our shared enactments of '*ofa* (love/compassion), *angafaka'apa'apa* (respectful heart) and *angafakatokilalo* (humble heart) towards one another.

## 2.3 Further Thoughts on Key Concepts for a Tongan Approach to Qualitative Inquiry

All too frequently, Pacific worldviews and practices have been researched through the eyes of non-Pacific researchers. This has been the dominant process of

academic knowledge production since the early 17<sup>th</sup> century when explorer's attempted to 'record' Oceanic cultures. As a result, "our traditional knowledge systems have been partially understood at best, misrepresented and often relegated to knowledge that is 'interesting' with little value to contemporary life" (Johansson-Fua, 2014, p. 52). As argued above, there is an increasing recognition of the need to develop and apply Pacific approaches in both research (Anae 2019; Thaman, 2003) and in addressing complex social issues, including family violence (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b; Rankine et al., 2015). At a base level, in order to access and make sense of the qualitative accounts provided by participants, it is important to recognise and engage with our ways of relating to one another and generating knowledge. We are now reclaiming spaces to speak for ourselves, in ways we understand, and which reflect our cultural realities and knowledge systems.

Pacific approaches such as the one offered in this article offer avenues for Pacific researchers to emanate our identities and cultural worldviews, and to engage with our shared ways of understanding and responding to issues such as family violence without "shame or pretence" (Johansson-Fua, 2014, p. 51). As is the case for Māori and other indigenous scholars (King, 2019; Rua et al., 2021), Pacific methods are foundational to our generation of knowledge that can be applied to addressing violence in our everyday contexts. Correspondingly, our approach combines insights from the inter-related concepts of *Tauhi va* (nurturing loving and harmonious relationships), *Nofo* (Tongan indigenous cultural immersion) and *Talanoa* (Pacific-indigenous way of dialogue and discussion). Although we have considered aspects of these concepts above, it is important that we delve a little deeper in order to unpack the philosophical and relational bases of our approach to action-oriented qualitative inquiry.

The concept of *Tauhi va* underpins *Talanoa* and *Nofo* as Tongan research concepts. The combined essence of these three cultural concepts is relationship building (F'avae et al., 2016; Ka'ili, 2005; Vaioleti, 2011). *Tauhi va* or “the value of nurturing and looking after or attending relationships” (Mafile'o, 2008, p. 125) is an epistemological, ontological, and ethical concept (Ka'ili, 2005; 2017; Mahina, 2010), which carries the essence of Tongan ways of knowing, being, and doing research praxis. When engaging with such concepts, one cannot separate or parcel out epistemological, ontological, ethical, cosmological or existential concerns (King et al, 2021). This is because *Tauhi va* is the essence of the fabric of Tongan culture or *Angafakatonga*, our ways of being, and associated knowledge production practices (Mahina, 2010; Ka'ili, 2005). As also noted above, the practices of *Nofo* and *Talanoa* are foundational to enactments of *Tauhi va* and the nurturing of harmonious relationships (Mafile'o, 2008; Saltiban, 2012). The cultivation of *Tauhi va* as a relational space with participants in which Tongan values are experienced and enacted (Ka'ili, 2005; Kalavite, 2019) is an integral aspect of the approach we are outlining in this article. Anae (2019) also asserts that this is the case with the parallel concept of *va* where “Pacific values of love, service, spirituality, respect, reciprocity, collective responsibility, gerontocracy, and humility” (p. 9) are consistent with Pacific research practices.

*Tauhi va* is an embedded philosophy and practice that Tongan people observe and experience within their *kainga* (families) and their life journeys (Paea, 2016). It is a concept that applies to all levels of relationships and across different contexts, including research. *Tauhi va* requires the maintenance, nurturing and reciprocal practices of care in ways that reflect the continuation of a Tongan rhythm (time) of engagement (Ka'ili, 2008). Correspondingly, of key relevance to the programme and first author's roles as

programme facilitator and researcher is the enactment of good *va* (relationships) and cultural obligations towards supporting everyone's wellbeing. This is done through enactments of the Tongan core values of '*ofa* (love/compassion), *angafakatokilalo* (humble heart), and *feveitoka'i'aki* (mutual care/generosity) (Kalavite, 2019; Mafile'o, 2008).

The essence of *Tauhi va* is knowing yourself and knowing your status in relation to others. This reflexive realisation invokes the Tongan concepts of '*ilo'i kita* (know your responsibilities and boundaries) and *fatongia* (obligations) in the social structures of the *kainga* (family), church and community (Kalavite, 2019; Paea, 2016). It is applicable to all contexts where there is social interaction, including research. In the context of this research, *Tauhi va* becomes the logic behind how the researcher relates to the Tongan *kainga* (families) and faith leaders in the process of *Nofo* (residing/cultural immersion) and *Talanoa* whilst knowing and enacting her positioning as a researcher and as a Tongan woman.

Given that *Tauhi va* is fundamental to Tongan relationships and the broader social fabric the enactment of these create, behaving appropriately and respectfully is pivotal in gaining access to a place in dialogue and gaining peoples' trust and participation (Johansson-Fua, 2014). In residing (*Nofo*) with the Tongan families during the programme the first author needed to ensure adherence with cultural protocols and appropriate conduct of the Tongan relational self. This was necessary to ensure a sense of familiarity and mutual respect with participating families and faith leaders (Fa'avae et al., 2016; Vaioleti, 2011). Here, the reciprocal practice of the principle of *angafaka'apa'apa* (enacted respect) is central to connecting effectively with others (Foliaki, 2003). An example of how the first author enacted this value was to take the time to participate in the programme (*Nofo*) and *Talanoa*, contribute to the nurturing of

the *Tauhi va*, express a willingness to listen and learn with humility (*angafakatokilalo*), to share her own story (*Talanoa*), and to be seen to contribute what she can in helping the families address the violence.

Such cultural participation and immersion (*Nofo*) has been practiced by Tongan people for milenia and reflects the timeless collective values of *kainga* (families), of *Tauhi va* and of cooperative decision making through *Talanoa* (Mafile'o, 2004; Havea et al., 2021b). A sense of communalism and interconnectivity, social participation, and inclusion is central here. The space opened up by the violence programme and research, is one in which every participating person is encouraged to feel a strong sense of familiarity, belonging, togetherness (*fa'utaha*) within a mutual effort to understand, address, and prevent further violence. The concept of Kononia or fellowship is another way of thinking about the values based, culturally-patterned process of inclusion that is central to this approach to qualitative inquiry. Having researchers as scholar activists culturally immersed amongst *kainga* (families) demystifies and transcends 'them' and 'us' (Chevalier & Buckles, 2019) positionings that are often reproduced in research practices in psychology. It also helps us overcome any suspicions participants may have about the researcher(s) or how information might be used, because any knowledge use has to be negotiated with all concerned (*cf.*, Li et al., 2018).

Relatedly, Māori community psychologists have also raised the importance of cultural values and immersive practices in understanding the underlying principles for working participatively with indigenous groups. Central is the use of cultural practices and styles of relationality that are recognisable to participants and which enable researchers to 'reside' with participants prior to and whilst engaging in research. For example, Rua and colleagues (2021) argue that cultural immersion motivates community psychologists not only to challenge the field, but also to push beyond the

hegemonic use of WEIRD approaches, tools and frameworks. In residing and participating (*Nofo*) in the programme weekend retreats, the first author was able to *Talanoa* and to interact with participating *kainga* (families) and develop that important relational connectedness (*Tauhi va*). The combination of cultural practices of *Tauhi Va*, *Nofo*, and *Talanoa* allowed for the establishment of cooperation between researchers and participants as community members and contextually inform open and frank dialogue throughout the research process. What emerged was a situation during the programme retreats whereby enactments of key cultural values ‘acts as a method to integrate inquiry and intervention’ (Tandon, 1981, p. 299).

A crucial aspect of many Indigenous approaches and psychologies is the development of penetrating and relevant psychological knowledge through enactments of relational values such as those outlined above (Alefaio-Tugia et al., 2015; Rua et al., 2021). In taking the time to reside in the retreats and enact the concepts of *Nofo* and *Talanoa*, the research process becomes an organic artefact of culturally patterned interactions, rather than an externally imposed structure of engagement that disrupts community rhythms for the purposes of knowledge extraction. *Nofo* also complements *Talanoa* as a way to contextualise information gathered through *Talanoa* as a non-disruptive mode of engagement (Johansson-Fua, 2014). The complementary utility of these Tongan indigenous values allows us to quickly understand and meld into the context *with* participants. Moreover, to provide in-depth-analysis of the context of the programme, participant experiences of it, and what consequences the programme may be having for families and their efforts to live violence free.

The Tongan cultural practice of *Talanoa* was the primary means of knowledge production because it was also foundational to the very design of the *Kainga Tu’umalie* (prosperous families) programme (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b). In order to capture



*kainga* experiences of the programme, it was appropriate that this cultural form of open dialogue was adopted (Halapua, 2000; Vaioleti, 2011). The concept originates from the Tongan words *tala* which means to tell or communicate, and *noa* denotes silence, unable to speak or zero representing an expectation from the others to listen (Ka'ili, 2005; 'Otunuku, 2011). This protocol applies in both formal and informal contexts and was central to the process of working through issues of violence with participants and documenting their experiences. As such, the first author's research practice was in keeping with Ka'ili's (2008) conceptualisation of *Talanoa* as conversing critically and harmoniously in order to reach shared understanding or common ground.

Efforts to reach inclusive understanding and agreement also reflects how *Talanoa* is a collective form of dialogue where every person's voice is valued. It is much more than a simple focus group. Tongan academics, propose that *Talanoa* is also a skill, and its enactments, the language and nuanced practices used, and people involved are determined by the context (Johansson-Fua, 2014). *Talanoa* also allows for more indepth and authentic information to be generated within Pacific research (Fa'avae et al., 2016; Vaioleti, 2006; Vaka et al., 2016).

One of the key features of *Talanoa* is how it reflects the cultural practice of Tongan people, of talking around an issue as a way of contextualizing it before moving to a more central focus on the core topic. In other words, participants will not always address the topic at hand immediately or directly. *Kainga* participants in this study did not always address violence directly, but rather talked in a more indirect and less affronting way around the issue. This is the culturally appropriate way of addressing sensitive issues that allows for open discussion in a non-threatening manner. This does not mean that the dialogue did not address key issues of cause and responsibility. For example, a *Talanoa* guide was developed for this project to ensure that key issues were

covered whilst at the same time allowing the *Talanoa* to flow. Thus, the focus of the *Talanoa* was to encourage *kainga* participants to reflect on how the programme helped them to address and prevent further violence in their families.

To recap, as an adaptive, dynamic and multi-faceted concept and process, *Talanoa* was utilised in both the *Kainga Tu'umalie* prevention programme and research process. After learning from engaging as a facilitator of *Talanoa* during the retreats, the first author collected her thoughts and identified topics that needed to be discussed in documenting the programme and its impacts. She then invited both the families and the faith-based facilitators to engage in further *Talanoa*. Families were asked to reflect further on the impact of the programme on their relationships and everyday lives, for example. During these *Talanoa*, the respectful (*angafaka 'apa 'apa*) and humble (*angafakatokilalo*) practice of *Tauhi va* (relational connectedness) was employed to connect meaningfully with both the families and faith leaders. It required the first author to demonstrate that she knew her place (*'ilo 'i kita*) as the researcher and as a Tongan woman in this cultural nexus by opening and closing the sessions with *lotu* (prayer) and enacting the appropriate language and wearing respectful, appropriate attire ('Otunuku, 2011).

Upon reflection, I believe that the development of a *Talanoa* guide emerged from my own academic training within a western paradigm and desire to be a 'good researcher'. This was coupled with my own lack of understanding as an emerging researcher of the utility of adapting research methods to meet the needs of participants as the primary priority (Fa'avae et al., 2016). This illustrates a tension around the use of *Talanoa* as a research method. Halapua (2000) proposes that a central feature of *Talanoa* is that participants are not guided by a "pre-determined agenda" (p. 3), but rather are involved in speaking from their hearts openly. Johansson-Fua (2014) argues

that *Talanoa* needs to be a flexible and open form of information gathering, in the sense that it is not a focus group as such. Rather it is a cultural process through which researchers approach “...the participant with an idea that the participant is asked to muse, to reflect upon, to talk about, to critique, to argue, to confirm, and express their conceptualisation in accordance with their beliefs and experiences” (p. 56). *Talanga* which is another form of *Talanoa* can also be akin to debates or constructive arguments focusing on issues that require attention (Fa’avae et al., 2016; Vaiioleti, 2013). There is a balancing act to be performed here between focus and openness, which relies on the facilitator’s cultural skills. Relatedly, Prescott (2008) also emphasises that as a research tool *Talanoa* should be guided by the researcher, rather than allowing it to be an open ended forum. Despite there being different levels and perspectives of *Talanoa* (Manu’atu, 2000; Vaiioleti, 2013), what is clear is that it comprises a malleable and useful method for attaining robust information (Halapua, 2000; Vaiioleti, 2006).

It is also crucial to note that in the approach, we are advocating to a Tongan participative to action-oriented qualitative inquiry, where *Talanoa* is not restricted to engaging participants in ‘data collection’ processes but also extends the *Tauhi va* into the analysis process (Fa’avae et al., 2016). For example, the *Talanoa* with the faith and community leaders encompassed ideas that the first author formulated with the *kainga* (families) regarding their experiences and needs. We then extended this interpretative process into the domain of the cultural concepts, which we have outlined in this article. This is important because what we are engaged in is not research on a culture. It is research within a culture in collaboration *with* others, many of whom are experts in the cosmologies and philosophies of the Tongan people. Finally, WEIRD psychologists engaging in applied scholarship, often separate out research design, fieldwork, intervention, and analysis elements of a project. From a Tongan perspective this makes

little sense. All these elements can be approached as central facets of *Talanoa* as a dynamic process of dialogue to understand and address family violence.

## 2.4 Conclusion

The purpose of this article was to document Tongan indigenous ways of engaging and conducting research with Tongan *kainga* (families) and faith leaders as part of a community programme for addressing family violence. We have presented a series of cultural concepts and values and how these inform the programme and research approach. In particular, we have emphasised the significance and fluidity of the Tongan concept of *Tauhi va*, which comprises a central dimension of Tongan ways of being and engaging with others. This concept has some resonances with notions of relational ethics in terms of the primacy given to mutual accountability and responsibilities towards care (*cf.*, Hodgetts et al., 2021; Liu, 2021; Rua et al., 2021). Relational ethics emphasises not only the epistemic and ontological basis of knowledge produced through research and practice, but also the relational utility of such knowledge and issues regarding whose worldviews it reproduces and whose interests it serves. We have engaged these concepts in an effort to articulate the depth of importance of developing Tongan approaches to qualitative inquiry that are embedded within our traditional knowledge systems.

The recent trend in which academics are subjected to increased scrutiny regarding the impact of their research has resulted in the renewed prominence of cultural and community-based approaches. Numerous calls have been made for more open dialogue and for *Talanoa* style engagements amongst researchers. Emphasis is also placed on the importance of establishing community-based networks within which local cultural ways of being and relating to people are centralized in the research process (Boursier 2017; Forber-Pratt et al., 2019). It is our hope that this paper

contributes to this dialogue and greater understanding and appreciation of Indigenous and Tongan/Pacific ways of being, relating, producing and applying knowledge.

The approach we have presented also stems from the recognition of the need for Pacific psychologists (to which there are very few, first two authors included) and accomplices (third author) to respond to and serve community needs through research praxis. Central for us are efforts by Tongan and Pacific *kainga* to be supported in living lives where *tauhi va* (nurturing loving and harmonious relationships), ‘*ofa* (love/compassion), *angafaka’apa’apa* (respectful heart), *angafakatokilalo* (humble heart), and *feveitoka’i’aki* (mutual care/generosity) are normalised. The potential impact of developing research that is embedded in Tongan/Pacific indigenous wisdom is significant particularly in addressing the destructive effects of violence among Tongan and Pacific *kainga* (families) and communities.

More broadly, writing this article has reminded us that psychological research has always been plural in its approaches to knowledge production, but has not always been culturally inclusive (Li et al., 2020; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). A key context for this article is that this situation appears to be changing (Fernández et al., 2021; Guimarães, 2019). The pretence from some quarters that culture is not foundational to human psychology and that psychological methods are culture free has been increasingly brought into question (Henrich, et al., 2010; Hodgetts et al., 2020; Hofstede, 1997; Li et al., 2020; Thaman, 2003). Indigenous cultures are now being embraced within some areas of psychological research and practices as crucial to the pluralizing of the cultural bases of theory, research and practice in psychology (King & Hodgetts; 2017; Liu, 2021). Although Tongan cosmologies, epistemologies and relational ethics remain marginal to WEIRD psychology, our approach does relate with community-ground or ‘bottom-up’ orientations that are evident in participative

approaches and community-oriented psychologies (Akom, 2011; Hodgetts et al., 2020; Sonn et al., 2019).

As Taufe'ulungaki (2006) argues, the failure of western paradigms to address Pacific social issues is due to “fundamental flaws in the paradigms as opposed to inefficiency, lack of human capacity and commitment to good governance, unconducive economic environment, poor resource base, political instability or combination thereof” (p. 6). Tongan academic, Thaman (2003, pp. 3-4) aptly encapsulates in her poem below the related and ever-present tension between Pacific research approaches and WEIRD methodologies outside of the typical ontological orientation that is often found within Western academic discourses (Naepi, 2019):

your way  
objective  
analytic  
always doubting  
the truth  
until proof comes  
slowly  
quietly  
and it hurts

my way  
subjective  
gut-feeling like  
always sure  
of the truth

the proof  
is there  
waiting  
and it hurts  
(Konai Helu Thaman, “Our Way”)

Tongan and Pacific indigenous approaches and our concepts of *Talanoa*, *Nofo*, and *Tauhi va* are also more closely aligned with qualitative traditions that are more accepting of cultural and community considerations (King et al., 2017). Many embrace overlapping story sharing or narrative methods to the experiences of human beings as storied beings (Cassim et al., 2015; Caxaj, 2015). Our motivation in this article is to contribute to the deepening of culturally informed methods of knowledge production and application in psychology. This includes positioning the storied beings in our communities as key knowledge holders as well as allowing future generations to rediscover their knowledge production traditions and their identities as part of the decolonization process (*cf.*, Fernández et al., 2021).

By way of further contrast, WEIRD psychologies often implicitly reproduce or centralize the autonomous individual who has personal rights and freedoms that must be preserved (Rua et al., 2021). In essence, in doing so they reproduce a cultural regime that focuses more on the individual as opposed to the collective needs and wellbeing of Tongan/Pacific *kainga* (families) (Anae et al., 2001; Rankine et al., 2015). This is in contrast to Pacific ways of being where a person’s value and wellbeing is important, but as an inter-connected part of the *kainga* whereby collective rights and responsibilities are paramount (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b; Helu, 1999). We make this distinction not only for conceptual reasons, but also because of the practical implications of a

culturally collectivist approach to addressing serious issues such as familial violence that constitute breaches of custom and ethics within Tongan culture. For example, the common utility of ‘The violence wheel’ framework for screening and addressing domestic violence cases (Pence et al., 1993) reproduces individualistic cultural assumptions. The focus is on the autonomous actions of individual’s and a core distinction between victim and perpetrator. Clearly the rights and safety of women and children who predominantly experience violence are of paramount importance. From a Tongan perspective these necessities need to be seen in the context of the *kainga* (family) as a whole and our shared responsibilities to live violent free lives (*cf.*, Rua et al., 2021). As such, patterns of violence can be addressed collectively within the *kainga* and with support from the broader community and faith leaders. Within the collective unit of *kainga* the collectivist approach we advocate deepens the ownership of a person’s action and responsibility for perpetuating violence. We do realise that this stance can be affronting to some scholar activists within the family violence field. However, it is our task here to outline a Tongan perspective that focuses on collective responsibilities, which is necessary for realising lasting transformative change for Tongan perpetrators of violence. We would also emphasize that this stance in no way exonerates men who have been violent for their actions.

In outlining a Tongan approach, we emphasise that this is not a rigid model for conducting praxis-based research with Tongan people. What we are proposing is that within the Tongan culture there are dynamic relationships between family members and with the broader community that need to be respected in any programmatic response to issues of violence (Havea et al., 2021b; Rankine et al., 2015). The everyday conduct of positive familial relationships within Tongan culture, offers a sound and positively oriented, mutually respectful ontological basis for engaging families in addressing



issues of violence in ways that are culturally recognisable to them. These relationships are founded on notions of equality and responsibilities of mutual care and support. A focus on restoring such relationships enables us to draw upon the potential of the *kainga* (family) members through *Talanoa* (open dialogue) as a basis of drawing participants into shared decision-making processes with mobilized community supports for change (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b).

## 2.5 From General Methodological Strategy to Talanoa with Faith Leaders

The previous Chapter Two presented the first of my three peer-review publications, which focuses on the Tongan action-oriented methodology developed for this research (Havea et al., 2023). As well as offering a further introduction to Tongan cosmology, and our cultural worldview, this methodological article extends the conceptual basis for my PhD and documents the importance of Tongan relational practices and obligations in research into such a sensitive topic as family violence. The framing of this article reflects how entwined, theory, method and action can be within Tongan orientated and indigenised community research. I developed a Tongan indigenous and faith-based approach to this research in a manner that embraces the importance we as a people place on people (both those leading the programme and the families experiencing violence) engaging with each other on our cultural terms. More specifically, I document the adaptation of three inter-related Tongan value-based orientations to research of *Tauhi va* (nurturing loving and harmonious relationships), *Nofo* (indigenous cultural immersion), and *Talanoa* (Pacific indigenous dialogue and discussion). The article foregrounds how the application of this faith-based cultural orientation is crucial for embedding a Tongan cultural worldview and associated relational practices in the present effort to extend knowledge of, and culturally informed responses to violence within Tongan families and communities.

This first article is one of the first to offer a cultural framework for a Tongan faith-based indigenous approach to researching and addressing family violence that speaks directly to the discipline of psychology and related approaches such as Participative Action Research. What is presented is a methodological strategy for engagement and knowledge production that was recognisable to participants, and through which they could engage in open dialogue. Writing this article enabled me to

deepen my understanding of the importance of Tongan culture and relational practices, in efforts to extend knowledge of and address family violence in a manner that both respects and draws strength from our shared faith and indigenous cultural values of care and respect. The article also foregrounds the need for culturally oriented approaches through which indigenous communities can work through such issues in ways that harness and renew our core cultural norms, values, and relations of care. Moreover, Chapter Two situates my research within broader dialogue that surround indigenous psychologies and philosophies within the global discipline of psychology. It does this by centralising issues of culture in ways that resonate with Tongan people specifically, and aspects of which will also resonate with other Pacific peoples in general. Given my desire to talk Tongan culture to the discipline of psychology and contribute to the diversification of cultural inclusion and knowledge production practices in global psychology, this article will be published in *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, a journal that is open to the exploration of indigenous research methods in psychology.

Chapter Three focuses on my *Talanoa* with faith leaders. The focus in article two in Chapter Three is on the leaders' experiences of the programme. It was important to begin my conversations with the leaders as this enabled me to probe deeper into the faith and cultural foundations of the program, the contributions of the facilitators to its implementation, and to offer a context for a subsequent exploration of family experiences of the programme. Chapters Two and Three are published respectively as:

Havea, S., Alefaio-Tugia, S., & Hodgetts, D. (2023). Drawing wisdom from the Pacific:

A Tongan participative approach to exploring and addressing family violence. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 1-21.

Havea, S., Alefaio-Tugia, S., & Hodgetts, D. (2021a). Fofola e fala ka e talanoa e kainga: A Tongan approach to family violence prevention and intervention.

*Journal of Pacific Rim Psychology, 15.*

<https://doi.org/10.1177/18344909211040866>

## CHAPTER 3: *FOFOLA E FALA KA E TALANOA E KAINGA*: A TONGAN APPROACH TO FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

### 3.1 Abstract

There is limited knowledge of how Pacific-indigenous approaches can aid efforts to curtail violence within the *kainga* (families). This article documents aspects of the inaugural application of the Tongan conceptual framework of *Fofola e fala ka e talanoa e kainga* (laying out the mat so families can dialogue) as part of the faith-based *Kainga Tu'umalie* (prosperous families) family violence intervention and prevention programme in Aotearoa New Zealand. *Fofola e fala* symbolises a place of safety and refuge for every member of the *kainga* to freely express their feelings. The first two authors were involved in evaluating the programme with the first author engaged in direct observations and being immersed in *Kainga Tu'umalie* retreats. Given their depth of cultural knowledge and involvement in the development of this programme seven faith-based community leaders were engaged in *talanoa* (Pacific-indigenous way of dialogue and discussion). Participant accounts form the core basis of our analysis which highlights the significance of *Kainga Tu'umalie* as a violence prevention programme for Tongan families. Of key consideration is the importance of Tongan-indigenous approaches to reducing family violence that draw from a combination of traditional cultural knowledge and Christian values that are central to the realities of being Tongan today.

Family violence is a pressing social issue among Pacific peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand. Such violence has been linked to gender role expectations, economic inequalities, the loss of cultural ties, and alcohol and drug misuse (Ministry of Social Development, 2012; The Tongan Working Group, 2012). According to the Ministry of

Social Development (2016b), Pacific peoples are more likely to commit a serious offence against a family member than other ethnic groups. Additionally, Pacific children are more prone to experiencing physical punishment in their homes. It has been argued that these trends reflect ongoing challenges experienced by many Pacific peoples in New Zealand with socio-economic deprivation, cultural exclusion and stresses associated with migration to a very different social system (Grainger, 2009; Koloto & Sharma, 2005; Teaiwa & Mallon, 2005). Within the context of this article, family violence refers to any form of physical, spiritual, psychological, and sexual violence dishonouring the balanced relationships within the *kainga* (families). Any form of such violence is understood culturally as a violation or disruption to the harmonious relationships needed for wellness among Pacific people (Ministry of Social Development, 2016b; Rankine et al., 2015).

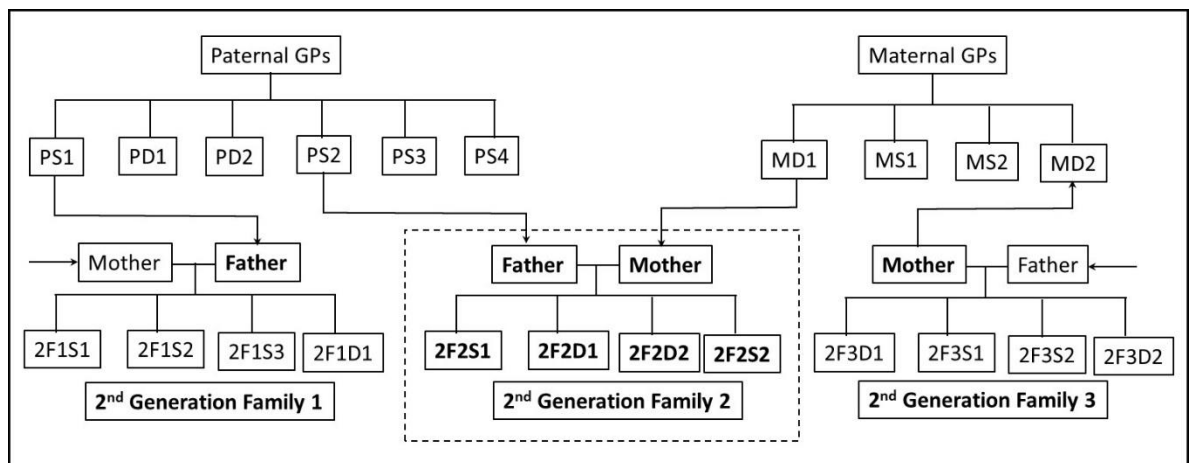
We argue that to be effective in addressing family violence for Tongan communities, it is important that Tongan cultural perspectives and gendered relationships are taken into account. This is important because interventions based on Eurocentric notions of the nuclear family also obscure Tongan ways of being and conducting family life that can inform responses to family violence. For example, Tongan culture contains complex gender relations where men and women hold differing roles subject to their cultural roles and rank. Tongan social structure is constructed along a hierarchical system of *Ha'atu'i* (Royalty) at the top of the pyramid, followed by the *Hou'eiki* (Nobles) and then *Kau tu'a* (Commoners) (James, 1990, 2003). At the heart of this social framework is the significance of *kainga* relationships and ties (Agnew et al., 2004; Helu, 1999). Everyday family roles for Tongan people transcend the nuclear household and include the actions of grandparents, aunties,

uncles, cousins, and so forth. Key roles held within the *kainga* that mobilise these extended familial relationships and associated obligations of care and mutual respect.

As illustrated in Figure one, Tongan social structures are complex. This figure presents a simplified version of *kainga* (family) relationships. The *tamai* (father— as depicted in the second-generation family two) is considered to be the head of his family and it is customary for this man to also care for his sister and her children.

Consequently, ones *fa'etangata* or maternal uncles (MS1 & MS2) are considered lower in ranking because of their obligation to their sisters and their children. Conversely, ones' paternal aunts (PD1 & PD2) are the highest-ranking family members. These aunts occupy positions of privilege and honour and are referred to as *mehikitanga* or *fahu* (Helu, 1995; James, 2003). The other important dynamic within *kainga* relationships is all maternal aunts (MD1 & MD2) are referred to as a *fa'e* (mother), similarly paternal uncles (PS1-PS4) are called a *tamai* (father). The cousins on either side of the family are referred to as brothers (*tokoua/tuonga'ane*) (2F1S1-2F1S3 & 2F3S1-2F3S2) and sisters (*tokoua/tuofefine*) (2F1D1 & 2F3D1-2F3D1). Likewise, for women their sisters' children (2F3D1-2F3D2) are called their children (*fanau*) also because they are considered as mothers to them. The same applies for men, and their brothers' children (2F1S1-2F1D1) will refer to them as a father (Helu, 1999; Kaeppler, 1971). Thus, the implication is that the ultimate responsibility for family violence and efforts to resolve it fall on all members of *kainga*.

Figure 1: Kainga Tonga (Tongan families) social structure



*Note.* GP = Grandparents, P = Paternal, M = Maternal, S = Son, D = Daughter, 2F = Second generation family; all other numbers denotes the ranking, eg. 2F3D2 = Second generation family 3, daughter no. 2.

Relationships within the *kainga* (family) hierarchy are fundamental to the worldview shared by Tongan people and need to be incorporated within family violence programmes. Further, prevention and intervention programmes developed within a Eurocentric and individualised model of practice typically only extend to the nuclear family. Such programmes are problematic from a Tongan perspective because they can obscure the more collectivist and broader understandings of family that still shape everyday life in Tongan and Pacific communities more generally (Kasturirangan et al., 2004; Rankine et al., 2015). For example, the Duluth model of power and control (the violence wheel) is the most commonly used model in New Zealand for screening for and addressing domestic violence cases (Pence et al., 1993). The individualistic assumptions of the wheel are evident in how both victims and abusers are represented devoid of the broader family structures (*kainga*) within which they relate to one another (Mafile'o, 2004; Rankine et al., 2015). The involvement of the *kainga* and related Christian congregation is vital in violence interventions for most Tongan families



because it invokes meaningful relationships that often serve as a shield of protection, accountability, support and positive change for families experiencing violence (Alefaio, 2009; Beutrais et al., 2005; Ellison et al., 2007).

Another key reason why orthodox family violence programmes often prove ineffective for Pacific communities is that Pacific peoples' understandings of violence also emphasises spiritual dimensions that are often purged from Eurocentric initiatives (Ah Siu-Maliko, 2016a; Alefaio-Tugia & Havea, 2016). Further, orthodox models for family violence tend to reduce family violence to a dysfunctional pattern of individual behaviour used to control victims (Ministry of Social Development, 2012; Rankine et al., 2015; Zellerer, 2003). Violence for Pacific peoples is also constructed as constituting a form of defilement of *tauhi va* (the sacred boundaries of relationships) that fragments families and can lead to disengagements by victims, offenders and their *kainga* (families). Moreover, the centrality of Church communities to the everyday lives of many Pacific peoples' and their wellbeing necessitates engagements with spiritual considerations (Havea, 2011; Ihara & Vakalahi, 2011).

The role of the church and Christianity in contemporary Tongan culture is a central concern. This is because Christian faith and Tongan indigenous understanding have evolved together to become so intertwined within everyday cultural life that they are inseparable and are now twine pillars of contemporary Tongan ways of being (Ah Siu-Maliko, 2016b; Havea, 2011). As Pacific academics we still have a long way to go in unpacking, articulating, and documenting what Christianity means for not only Tongans, but also more broadly for Pacific cultures. What is clearly evident is that we cannot ignore the potential of Christian faith as a central element in efforts to address family violence. Further, because Christian churches constitute the indispensable soul of Tongan culture today (Halapua, 1997; Havea, 2011), the influence of faith leaders in

Tongan communities provides the platform to explore how faith-based strategies within a Tongan cultural framework can extend our knowledge of and responses to family violence. It makes a lot of sense culturally and practically to draw on the capacities of families and church communities to develop and deliver programmes that have positive impacts for the Tongan *kainga* (families) (Alefaio-Tugia & Havea, 2016).

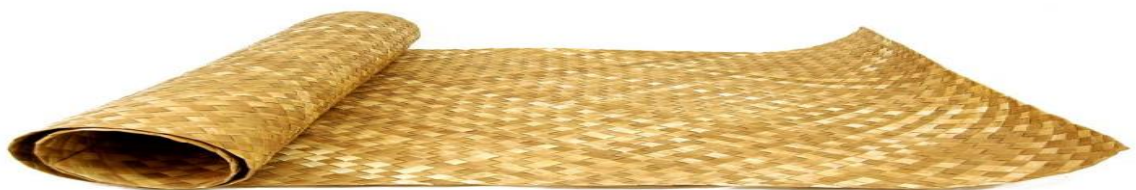
Despite the paucity of research on the impact of faith-based responses to Tongan and Pacific family violence, the international literature highlights the importance of such initiatives for faith-based communities. Previous research has demonstrated both positive and negative results from faith-based interventions (Aten, McMinn, & Worthington Jr, 2011; Kaybryn & Nidadavolu, 2012; Le Roux, 2015; Züst et al., 2018). Previous studies show that increased participation in faith-based communities not only provides strength, resilience, healing and wholeness, but also can protect against and prevent the incidence of family violence (Ellison et al., 2007; Nason-Clark, 2009). Collaboration between community service agencies and faith-based organisations has also demonstrated positive impacts in reducing family violence (Johnson, 2015; Wang, et al., 2009). Conversely, other studies have shown that the relationship between faith and violence can be paradoxical offering both solutions to and in some cases exacerbating violence (Petersen, 2016; Züst et al., 2018). Although faith-based organisations are a source of emotional comfort and practical support, they may also perpetuate silence. Further, some communities are ill equipped in terms of resources and may not have the capacity and capability to respond appropriately to family violence (Nason-Clark, 2004; Pyles, 2007; Züst et al., 2018).

This article reflects on the design and implementation of a Tongan-indigenous faith-based approach for the resolution of family violence amongst Tongan families. Our specific focus is on the utilisation of the Tongan framework of *Fofola e fala ka e*

*talanoa e kainga* (laying out the mat for the families to dialogue) as practiced within the Affirming Work's *Kainga Tu'umalie* (prosperous families) family violence prevention programme. This programme was developed through an initial partnership between the New Zealand Ministry of Social Development (2012) and Pacific communities. This partnership resulted in the development of ethnic specific conceptual frameworks for addressing family violence, including *Fofola e fala* for the Tongan community (The Tongan Working Group, 2012). More specifically, we will consider how the programme centralises the creation of a safe liminal space (Watkins & Shulman, 2008) on the mat that allows *kainga* (families) to collaboratively deal with the violence and negotiate a violence free future. We consider how time on the *fala* (mat) together as a *kainga* (family) can produce a platform for the enactment of reciprocal trust (*fefalala'aki*), love (*'ofa*), humility (*angafakatokilalo*) and emotional connectedness (*feongo'i'aki*) that is important for addressing issues of family violence within Tongan communities.

### 3.2 The Present Study: Affirming Works (AW) Kainga Tu'umalie Programme

Figure 2: The Tongan mat as liminal space for familial engagements



This research explores the Tongan indigenous concept of *Fofola e fala ka e talanoa e kainga* (as depicted in Figure 2) used within the Affirming Works *Kainga Tu'umalie* (prosperous families) programme. The *Kainga Tu'umalie* programme was developed as an Affirming Works (AW) church-partnership project for the prevention

and restoration from family violence within Tongan Christian Churches. *Kainga Tu'umalie* metaphorically translates as prosperous families or prosperous souls. The concept invokes a holistic prosperity towards linking family, mind, body, soul and spirit among Tongan people. Within the Tongan language, the concept of *Tu'umalie* (prosperity) can be interpreted as financial or material wealth. However, prosperity in this context surpasses material wealth and encompasses richness in ones' spiritual life that often manifests in strong and healthy relationships (*tauhi va*) with God and other human beings. The basis of the Affirming Works *Kainga Tu'umalie* programme vision is the embracing of the existing interweaving of Christian faith within Tongan indigenous cultural knowledge. Adopting this cultural orientation, the programme is designed to engage Tongan families in a holistic therapeutic environment immersed in Tongan cultural and spiritual faith.

Four Tongan churches and 49 families (equating to approximately 230 individuals) participated in the *Kainga Tu'umalie* programme over four week-end retreats. The idea behind the retreat was to remove families from the stresses and pressures of everyday life and to provide a neutral and safe space where they could relax and enjoy themselves together. The retreat was intended to encourage receptiveness to learning more about and openness to share the highs and lows of family life. The retreat consists of both formal and informal interactions. The formal part involves workshop sessions facilitated by faith leaders addressing different topics, including Biblical narratives, the implications of violence, and dreams of our forefathers. Families were introduced to this session through *Fofola e fala* and were challenged to *talanoa* about the impact and the outcomes of violence. The *kainga* are encouraged to lay out the mat and to discuss among themselves about the causes and effects of violence. In response, families literally sit on the 'mat' in a round circle and

collectively *talanoa* (dialogue). Afterwards each family provides feedback to the rest of the group. The figurative application of this framework had the effect of generating vibrant discussions where each family member had the freedom to share their thoughts and feelings. These were very raw, vulnerable and highly emotional *talanoa* where tears of parental convictions of weaknesses and acknowledgement of areas for improvement and change were shed. There were also tears of joy and gratefulness for being part of the dialogue as well as laughter, and the singing of Tongan hymns of praise and worship. The informal activities involved fun activities such as games; a movie and sports which allows *kainga* (families) to enjoy time together.

After the retreat there were follow up sessions on topics that have been identified by the *kainga* with which they needed further support. The application of *Fofola e fala* was also used in these follow up sessions. Families were encouraged to continue utilising this Tongan approach in their home environments. Ongoing follow up support services were also put in place, depending on the needs of the families.

Correspondingly, we developed the culturally patterned research approach to documenting and interpreting this violence programme, and integrate cultural processes of *talanoa* that extended to participatory immersion by the first author within the context of the programme. A key dimension of the *talanoa* approach is the emphasis placed on maintaining healthy relationships or *tauhi va* (sacred space) amongst *kainga*, communities and individuals. It is an approach underpinned by core Pacific cultural values of respect, humility and reciprocity (Halapua, 2003; Morrison & Vaioleti, 2008). Linked to the *talanoa* process was the key role played by the researcher in fully participating, listening, observing, appreciating and reflecting on the activities at the retreats. This is a form of ‘cultural-participatory immersion’ designed to generate substantive knowledge of how the programme works, its underlying cultural values, and

impacts for *kainga* (Alefaio-Tugia and Havea, 2016). Cultural participation and immersion in the retreats was significant for not only gaining knowledge of the application of the model of *Fofola e fala*, but also for enacting effective engagement with faith leaders involved in the retreats.

In short, the researchers' immersion in the *Kainga Tu'umalie* retreats provided opportunities for *talanoa* (dialogue) and cultural collaboration with community and faith leaders and Tongan *matu'a* (elders), as well as participating families. Seven of the leaders involved in the programme were further invited to *talanoa* about their experiences of the programme. Six of the leaders' *talanoa* were conducted in the Tongan language and one in the English language. Another element that contributed to open and frank engagement with the seven faith leaders was the first author's position as a Tongan woman who can speak the language; a daughter of a *Faifekau* (Church minister); and as a wife of another Tongan community and faith leader. Being an insider-researcher with cultural insights also allowed for respectful observance of cultural protocols such as appropriate attire, manner of speech and the relevant approach to undertake with church and faith leaders. These seven *talanoa* are foundational to the present article. Future publications will explore the experiences of participating *kainga* (families).

More specifically, *talanoa* (dialogue) with faith leaders conducted in the Tongan language were digitally recorded, transcribed in the Tongan language and then translated into English for analysis. The translated scripts were analysed through repeated and reflective reading to highlight key themes, relevant Tongan concepts and the Pacific cultural values at play in the programme (Morse & Richards, 2002). The *Fa'afaletui* dialectical approach to qualitative analysis brought a Pacific-indigenous lens to the interpretation of the *talanoa* transcripts (Alefaio-Tugia, 2015). This approach

follows the cultural logic of, and resonates with *talanoa* where it involves collective dialogue with cultural *matu 'a* (elders) to deepen knowledge and understanding of cultural concepts and key themes identified from the *talanoa*. In this way, the line between researcher and participant does become somewhat blurred in that participants are also involved in the interpretation of their *talanoa*.

The resulting analysis for this article focused on four primary themes that emerged from *talanoa* (Pacific-indigenous dialogue) and our own observations of the programme in action. Firstly, why *Fofola e fala* resonates with Tongan people. Secondly, *Fofola e fala* as a 'Powerful and living platform' (*Makatu 'unga mo 'ui mo e malohi*) that provides a strong sense of faith, cultural identity, and hope for a violence free life. Thirdly, *Fofola e fala* as a 'uniting concept' or *Fa'utaha* as translated in the Tongan language, creating unity, peace and harmony amongst *kainga* (families). Fourthly, the concept of *Fofola e fala* signifying a place of safety or *Kolo malu* and refuge or *Kolo hufanga*. Like the *fala* (mat), these themes are interwoven and inter-dependent creating a platform of peace, hope and new life for violence free families.

### 3.3 Fofola e Fala (Laying Out the Mat)

*Fofola e fala* is a model for how *kainga* (family) members can connect, engage meaningfully and relate to each other. This model embodies the Tongan indigenous cultural worldview or *Anga Fakatonga*. The *fala* (Tongan mat) symbolises for *kainga*, a place of safety and neutral ground. The *feunu* (strands) that are weaved to make the *fala* signify the four golden pillars of the Tongan culture (*Anga Fakatonga*) which are: *Faka'apa'apa* (respect), *angafakatokilalo* (humility), *tauhi va* (cultivating healthy relationships/reciprocity), and *mamahi'i me'a* (loyalty/passion) (The Tongan Working Group, 2012).

Central to *Fofola e fala* is the creation of liminal spaces (Watkins & Shulman, 2008) that can enable members of the *kainga* (families) to *talanoa* (discuss/talk) openly and honestly about their personal struggles, including the key issue of family violence. One of the faith leaders referred to *Fofola e fala* as the great equaliser:

*If you think of the concept of 'Fofola e fala...' like everyone's the same. You know, whether you're the victim or you're the perpetrator, you're the same on the mat. Whether you're the contractor or the participant, whether you're the church leader or the member, everyone is the same on the fala.... (Tepola)*

Effectively, the mat offers an intentional cultural enclave within which Tongan social hierarchical relations are suspended, though not totally absent, for a time. In the application of this cultural concept within the *Kainga Tu'umalie* programme, the enactment of hierarchical social structure is discouraged so that every person has an opportunity to voice their concerns and to be heard— this includes children. An interesting dimension of *Fofola e fala* is that despite an embedded hierarchical social structure with some family members having more power and authority than others, on the *fala* everyone enters more egalitarian ground and acts accordingly in less hierarchical ways.

Correspondingly, one of the most significant aspects of the *Fofola e fala* is the promotion of genuine dialogue in a culturally textured liminal space where family members can experience 'freedom of voice' in ways that also reflect fundamental Christian principles of human dignity and respect. Grace, redemption, healing and restoration are also Christian principles that are embodied within this cultural framework and are enacted through practices of intervention to address family violence (Alefaio-Tugia & Havea, 2016). Finally, the liminal space created retains respect for the sanctity of Tongan familial relations, respect for your elders and respect for your



parents whilst working together to address family violence and to prevent it from occurring in the future.

This section has presented the use of *fofola e fala* as being central to the creation and opening up of a culturally patterned liminal space for addressing family violence. In the following section, we extend this exploration to consider the functioning of this space as a powerful and living platform where embedded cultural ways of being and relating as Tongan people are realised, and a strong sense of connection can be shared in addressing violence in a culturally patterned manner.

### 3.4 Koe Makatu'unga Mo'ui mo e Malohi (A Powerful and Living Platform)

Our participants present *fofola e fala* as a strong platform for familial transformation in addressing violence. This framework is conceptualised in terms of its foundations in both Tongan indigenous traditions and Christian values. It provides *kainga* with a sense of identity and belonging (Koloto & Sharma, 2005; Teaiwa & Mallon, 2005), which enables them to share and to support one another when faced with the devastating issue of family violence. *Fofola e fala ka e talanoa e kainga* affords a platform where trust, love and emotional connectedness can be cultivated. A faith leader expressed it this way:

*Fofola e fala... is a powerful instrument...it's an identity. This is who we are that we trust one another, we love one another, we feel for one another so it's a living tradition. (Mosese)*

*Fofola e fala* is presented here as a powerful instrument of engagement because it is embedded in Tongan traditions and identity formations. *Fofola e fala* is also considered by our participants to offer a dynamic living relational space within which individuals and families can receive mutual love, care, support, encouragement to change, and spiritual nourishment. In this space, the church community is believed by the

participants as a key mechanism for providing positive messages for change and supporting the families, including both the victims and perpetrators of violence to enact measures that leads to a violence free life (Capstick et al., 2009; Rankine et al., 2015). Where such rehabilitative work is implemented within familiar cultural settings, such as the mat, the likelihood of understanding why the offense occurred and how it can be redressed is enhanced.

Space on the mat is created to reconnect people in meaningful and culturally informed ways. This is important because when part of the *kainga* (family) and the church congregation, people often gain a sense of reconnection, support and hope that change is possible. For our participants the mat becomes a microcosm of the church—as a primary contemporary cultural institution – in action. It is the human connections and dialogue that is possible through engagements with faith in Christian values of peace and care that are understood as being central to families developing violence free lives. The mat also affords a space in which positive Tongan identities and values that have also become anchored in Christian faith come to life:

*It's just like church, when you go to church on Sunday it becomes alive ... The sense of church is a reality so we feel that the church is alive because we are there, you are there and I am there so the Fofola e fala...is almost like the family rises, the family lives... you know it's just spark[ed] me off on another thing about the church becoming alive when it gathers: "...Where two or three come together in my name [Jesus' name], there am I with them" [Biblical text found in Matthew 18:20 (NIV translation)]. That sense comes true and the family to fofola e fala, its identity is identified, it's transparent, we see the identity of what we call famili [family] or kainga...so in that way it's a very powerful platform and it is a living platform. (Mosese)*

References to the family identity in this extract invokes the culturally patterned nature of human subjectivities. In the context of *Fofola e fala*, this church leader's statements highlight the embedded values and beliefs of the *kainga*, as a sense of validation of a person's value and belonging. Strongly reflected also is the sense of fellowship, of inclusion in the *kainga*, of gathering together and hence the freedom to contribute, to confront, to care, and to share. Scripture informs the work of faith leaders (Alefaio-Tugia & Havea, 2016) and accordingly, the reference to the Gospel of Matthew signifies a belief by this church leader in the promise of God's presence, leading and guidance when Christians gather together. This Scriptural reference is significant in the context of this Tongan metaphor because it affirms that wherever and whenever believers meet they constitute a church community of support and care.

*Fofola e fala* also provides a space in which participating Tongan people can enact their cultural identities based on shared values and beliefs. There is a palpable desire among participating faith leaders for Tongan people to acknowledge and take hold of this cultural treasure to support them through the challenges that come with family violence. In reflecting on the take up of *Fofola e fala* by families, another faith leader involved in the programme stated:

*I think that Fofola e fala... has become a living document like a word made flesh... People are actually applying it to their lives... Just reinforce that, strengthening it, allows it to be once again Tongan owned and, ...it's a real strength-based approach...I call it cultural resiliency, where it helps families and cultural communities become resilient using their own cultural protocols and proverbs so all that connectedness to values and sense of belonging and mentoring. (Tepola)*

The conceptualisation of a Tongan framework as an active and transformational platform that enables resiliency amongst families is powerful in reconnecting Tongan people culturally in ways that open up solutions for addressing family violence. This resiliency is rooted in the cultivation of strong connections to cultural knowledge and faith as families work to address violence in their lives.

Tepola also reflected on how—when on the mat—families can minister to one another and together can work to resolve their problems. This faith leader promoted the idea that families and communities can find their own resolutions for healing and restoration in the face of violence. In the process, the Christian faith that Tongans possess is presented as a significant resource for positive change:

*When we come to these retreats, we are actually all the same...and we are all designing solutions to our problems from our families, how we can minister to one another through peer support, through community relationships. But most importantly we can be patient with ourselves to grow, because there are few and far between practitioners and resources, and so does that mean that our communities continue to stay broken, or they start to find ways to heal themselves.*

The challenge is presented here for Pacific communities to realise the potential of embedded indigenous approaches for healing and restoration. This reflects the growing acknowledgement amongst Pacific scholars and community organisations that many of the solutions to key issues including family violence, can be generated from the communities themselves (Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2001; Ministry of Social Development, 2012). It also reflects care arguments within the domain of Indigenous psychology regarding the need to embrace the significance of people being able to see

and experience their own traditional knowledge and practices in intervention programmes (Adair, & Diaz-Loving, 1999; Groot et al., 2012).

Christian faith is a core dimension of Tongan life today that is expressed through a belief in God, prayer and worship as a significant source of healing and restoration (Alefaio-Tugia & Havea, 2016; Havea, 2011). Below, Tepola proposes that the secular professionalization of family violence work has displaced faith in the healing process for Pacific families:

*So faith brings healing through prayer, through worship, through recognising that there's a higher being; that God can bring healing and He just did that through the cross and through a man that was a carpenter's son. I just think that we have like professionalised pain and family violence, and we've really removed it from our communities, and they can begin to heal themselves if they have been given a good place and space to heal.*

This faith leader promotes the significance of Christian faith immersed with the safe space of the mat can bring healing and restoration for families. All of the leaders were of the view that the fusion of faith and indigenous knowledge can form a powerful and living platform (*Koe Makatu 'unga Mo 'ui mo e Malohi*) for addressing family violence (Ah Siu-Maliko, 2016a; Petersen, 2016). As such, the centrality of spiritual faith in Jesus Christ as a firm foundation (Havea, 2011) was also highlighted by the other faith leaders when conceptualising *Fofola e fala* as a living platform for passing on inter-generational faith-cultural knowledge:

*It is vital that we share and practice what we have learned with the next generation, for parents to pass on their knowledge to their own children, and then they will pass it on to the next generation. Secondly, it's important that we*

*build the family with faith in Jesus as the foundation of all things and allow Christ to control everything in their lives including violence. (Sione)*

In this extract, Sione urges Tongan parents to not only pass on their knowledge and wisdom, but also to model positive and non-violent values to their children (Hendricks, 2003; Marshall, 2001). This faith leader reflects on this Christian principle as stated in Scripture, where it talks about faith without action as futile or unprofitable (James 2: 17). Also, the significance of building the family in Christ as the solid foundation (Psalm 127: 1), and cultivating a spirit of submission and humility to the Lordship of Christ (MacArthur, 2000). Trusting these Christian promises is presented as providing strength and love to abstain from violence; and courage to deal with the issues of violence.

To recap, we have examined *Fofola e fala* as a living and powerful platform for healing and restoration that draws and enacts from Tongan and Christian values. In the following section, we extend this discussion further to consider the mat as a space for unity and peace. We will then conceptualise the resulting liminal space as one of safety and refuge within which issues of violence can be opened up and addressed.

### 3.5 Fa'utaha (Unity/Harmony/Peace)

Another key theme that was expressed by the faith leaders is the notion of *Fofola e fala* as a uniting concept or *Fa'utaha*. The literal translation of *Fa'utaha* is unity, togetherness, a strong sense of harmony, peace and being in balance as a collective. *Fa'utaha* is a concept that unites relationships, meaning it applies to husband-wife, parents-children, and across broader family relationships. *Fa'utaha* conveys the 'essence' of *Fofola e fala* and explains the depth of impact that this Tongan metaphor develops, which is one that builds strong unified relationships through

spending quality time within families. This is highlighted in the following extract where the significance of spending quality time with one's *kainga* is emphasised:

*For me it was significant learning about the importance of quality time, a time to 'Fofola e fala ka e talanoa e famili' (family) at home, a time of prayer and devotion, a time of sharing (talatalanoa), of bringing each member's voice to the family circle. (Sione)*

*Fofola e fala* is invoked as a channel for uniting the families, fostering a strong sense of connectedness to one another and shared enterprise (Mafale'o, 2004; Rankine et al., 2015). The application of this Tongan framework within the home environment is emphasised by several participants. Spending regular time together at home in spiritual devotion and worship is a traditional practice of Tongan families. This faith leader is acknowledging the importance of this practice (Hendricks, 2003) amidst the busyness of life in the Tongan diaspora.

Below, Sione also emphasises the pride and joy that can come from the use of a Tongan-indigenous approach that draws on the wisdom and practices of Tongan ancestors. He highlights the literal application of *Fofola e fala* in enabling *kainga* (families) to spend quality time together:

*I rejoice... as this is the proper forum [Fef] for constructing and nurturing of the Tongan family, and no wonder why our ancestors practiced this method...for me that was the impact... reinforcing the significance of quality time of talanoa of dad, mum and the children to develop and maintain oneness and togetherness (fa'utaha) within the family structure....*

The application of *Fofola e fala* in everyday life is presented as enabling the *kainga* to spend quality time together and connect meaningfully with each other. Simple relational activities such as praying together that are encouraged in the *Kainga Tu'umalie*

programme presents opportunities for open and frank dialogue amongst family members. The concept of *fa'utaha* is the positive outcome of valuing family and spending time together as a family unit is foundational to the programme. The promotion of a unified and connected *kainga* within the programme acts as a preventative measure against further family violence.

### 3.6 *Koe Kolo Malu mo e Kolo Hufanga* (A Place of Safety and Refuge)

The Tongan faith leaders all emphasised the concept of *Fofola e fala* as a space that signifies safety or *Kolo malu*, and refuge or *Kolo hufanga*. These concepts were consistently highlighted by the facilitators of the *Kainga Tu'umalie* programme. The term '*kolo*' in the Tongan language not only refers to a physical place, but also is translated as a village or town. The term *malu* translates as safety or security, and the notion of *hufanga* translates to mean refuge or sanctuary.

As evidenced by the following quote, *Fofola e fala* is presented by the faith leaders as offering a safe haven and a sanctuary or enclave for a daughter to be transparent and honest in expressing her emotions towards her father's disciplinary practices. This is an example of the kinds of courageous acts for such daughters in the context of traditional gendered practices in Tongan culture that require daughters to show respect to their fathers through obedience. This act had the reciprocal effect of convincing fathers to humbly acknowledge their need to be more receptive to the voices of their children and to change their disciplinary practices:

*Over the various talanoa, I was surprised when my daughter shared [how I applied corporal punishment] because that has never happened before. They [my children] did what they were told and had to keep quiet. You see that was the type of leadership and control that I practiced because I didn't want to be challenged on what I know... Afterwards [Kainga Tu'umalie retreat], I thought*



*this is the sort of thing that I should have encouraged and practiced at home because there has never been a time when I listened to their voices. I'm sure they were longing to voice their opinions, but couldn't.* (Paula)

*Fofola e fala* can facilitate the process of transforming mindsets and uprooting embedded and dysfunctional disciplinary practices. This was illustrated by the remorseful response by the church leader and acknowledgment of his need to change his authoritarian leadership style. The conviction of this father's admission of his failures is significant in illustrating the impact of an indigenous model rooted in Christian principles of forgiveness, love, respect and humility (Alefaio-Tugia & Havea, 2016). The Tongan hierarchical social structure places men in positions of authority and honour, especially as fathers and church leaders can sometimes have negative consequences when their decisions and practices remain unchallenged. The sentiment of this father and church elder is symbolic of the struggle that many Tongan fathers have in disciplining their children in a foreign environment and in ways that reflects their values of faith, love, respect and humility. This is also reflective of the ongoing challenges experienced by some Tongan and Pacific families as they attempt to uphold their cultural values in a Eurocentric societal context (Mulitalo-Lauta, 2001, Teaiwa & Mallon, 2005).

As a symbol of a place of security, the development of *Koe Kolo malu mo e Kolo hufanga* provided a setting in which fathers could humbly acknowledge the need to review their priorities for and engagements with their families. Moreover, it encouraged *talanoa* and more open communication among family members, particularly for fathers to listen to the voices of their *kainga* (family). Once again, an acknowledgment by the church leader of his need to prove himself at home first, to be a non-violent role model at home before he can preach to his congregation:

*The programme (Kainga Tu'umalie) has taught me the importance of communicating with my wife and family about the important issues of life; to talk about our relationship and how we can improve our family, and when my wife shares my shortfall that I have the humility to receive it....That our family needs to be solid before we can be effective in what we have been called to do. I have to humble myself and like the verse which says 'If my people would humble themselves and turn from their wicked ways then I will hear...' [Part of the verse from 2 Chronicles 7:14]. (Paula)*

Humility (*angafakatokilalo*) is a Christian core value (Mafile'o, 2004) that informs *Fofola e fala* and has the power to transform mindsets, to encourage men to acknowledge their failures and weaknesses, and to commit to being willing to make positive changes in their lives. Humbling oneself in this way enables men to see the error of their ways and be more receptive to the needs of their loved ones.

As a representation of *Kolo malu* and *Kolo hufanga*, *Fofola e fala* engaged parents to reassess and to re-apply some of the core cultural values of *Anga Fakatonga* (Tongan way) to family life. The following faith leader reminisced on how sincere modelling of the values of '*ofa* (love) and *faka'apa'apa* (respect) is both preventative and protective in terms of addressing family violence (Alefaio, 2009: Beautrais et al., 2005):

*There were two additional lessons that I learned from the Kainga Tu'umalie programme. Firstly, the quality of love ('ofa), and secondly living a life of respect (faka'apa'apa). If I practice love and respect at home I believe that I will be incapable of behaving badly or doing anything to harm or offend my wife and my children. (Sione)*

Sione also expressed the impact of the greatest love of all, agape love. This sacrificial love is demonstrated in one's actions that reflect the virtues of forgiveness, patience, gentleness, helpfulness and healthy relationships (Mafile'o, 2004; Mulitalo-Lauta, 2001):

*And putting aside the love that we were taught and experienced growing up in Tonga I am talking about the love that only comes from God which is far greater than anything else. When we have this Godly love, there is also the outflow of forgiveness (fakamolemole), of patience (anga kataki) and meekness/gentleness (angavaivai). The wonderful thing is that I observe this happening amongst the...families in the way that the couples are relating to each other (tauhi va), there is evidence of love, of mutual helpfulness/reciprocity (fetokoni 'aki) and there is respect from the menfolk to their wives.*

What this faith leader is suggesting is that when *kainga* relationships are rooted in the values of love, forgiveness, patience and meekness; husbands, wives, children, and *kainga* can relate to one another in more positive and non-violent ways (MacArthur, 2000; Marshall, 2001). Assertions of God's agape or unconditional and selfless love as demonstrated through the cross of Christ is presented by participants as bringing salvation and hope for those who put their faith in Jesus.

### 3.7 Conclusions

The lack of substantive literature on Pacific indigenous faith-based approaches to family violence intervention was the catalyst for this article. Our core intent was to document the cultural logic behind the development of a programme that better met the needs of Tongan families facing issues of violence. The identification of core cultural concepts by Tongan faith leaders informs our evolving understanding of the *Kainga Tu'umalie* programme as an important effort to create a strong sense of identity and a

platform of trust, love and emotional connectedness (*Koe Makatu'unga Mo'ui mo e Malohi*). It is from the liminal space recreated in this programme that family violence can be addressed in a culturally sensitive way. What the *Kainga Tu'umalie* programme does is open a liminal enclave in which families can suspend aspects of the Tongan social hierarchy and then openly and honestly *talanoa* about violence. The notion of *Fa'utaha* that builds strong and united *kainga* (family) relationships through quality family time and spiritual devotion. The concepts of *Kolo malu* and *Kolo hufanga* signifying *Fofola e fala* as a place of safety and refuge that transforms familial relationships and practices. Faith-based leaders also expressed the idea of *Fofola e fala* as the great equaliser where it enables the communal sharing of ideas and solutions.

The *Kainga Tu'umalie* programme fuses aspects of Tongan indigenous culture with Christianity. In centralising issues of culture in ways that resonates with Tongan and Pacific families responding to family violence, this article also contributes to the indigenisation of psychology (Adair et al., 1999; Groot et al., 2012; Henrich et al., 2010). Our approach to this broader agenda does not dismiss the usefulness of aspects of thought that came to Tongan people with colonisation. For example, the Christian church is now a central context for engaging with Pacific families around issues of family violence and culturally informed responses (Alefaio-Tugia & Havea, 2016; Capstick et al., 2009; Rankine et al., 2015). Further, the experiences of faith leaders reported in this article speak to the importance of indigenous Tongan and Christian concepts in efforts to heal *kainga* (families). The connectivity shared between Tongan culture and Christian faith creates a familiar platform for families to *talanoa* on key issues of family violence. Correspondingly, participant accounts in this article regarding the importance of spirituality in the *Kainga Tu'umalie* programme are also consistent with the more general literature on faith-based responses to family violence. Research

in this area readily acknowledges the important role that faith-based communities play in providing opportunities for healing and restoration for both victims and perpetrators of violence (Johnson, 2015; Zust et al., 2018).

At the heart of the Tongan culture and worldview are the core values of *faka'apa'apa* (respect), *angafakatokilalo* (humility), *tauhi va* (cultivating healthy relationships), and *mamahi'i me'a* (loyalty/passion) (The Tongan Working Group, 2012). The *Fofola e fala* framework is constructed on this Tongan worldview or *Anga Fakatonga*. Underpinning these interrelated and holistic principles and protocols is the virtue of *'ofa* (love/compassion). There was a strong conviction by our participants to revisit and re-evaluate whether these core values are manifested in familial relationships. This suggests that family violence within the *kainga* network is, at the very least, symptomatic of a breakdown and a violation of these core values (Ah Siu-Maliko, 2016a; Jansen et al., 2012). As such, the key dimensions of *Anga Fakatonga* (Tongan way/culture) cannot be separated from faith-based principles. Our participants believe that it is their faith that enables family members, especially fathers to humble themselves and to learn to love (*'ofa*) and respect (*faka'apa'apa*) their spouse and children. The shield of faith and grace enables family members to value their relationships and look beyond the struggles that sometimes cause violence. This interconnectedness between indigenous culture and Christian faith presents an opportunity for this intersecting relationship to be taken seriously in addressing family violence.

In conclusion, this article highlights the significance of cultural and spiritual considerations in addressing Tongan family violence. We have highlighted some of the perceptions of faith leaders who are working within the *Fofola e fala* framework and in doing so have demonstrated the importance of creating spaces for care and respite

through which issues of violence can be addressed. The centrality of spiritual faith and its inseparability from cultural values within Tongan culture supports the significance of this programme. It informs our commitment to further exploration of the impacts of this faith-based approach to working with families and supporting lasting changes of life without violence. In subsequent articles we will document the experiences of participating *kainga* (families) of the programme and their efforts to develop violence free lives together.

### 3.8 Extending Talanoa from Faith Leaders to Participating Kainga (Families)

The previous Chapter Three presents the second peer-reviewed publication (Havea et al., 2021a) focusing on faith leaders' experiences of the inaugural application of the Tongan conceptual framework of *Fofola e fala ka e Talanoa e Kainga* (laying out the mat so families can dialogue). This article explores the utility of this indigenous framework within the first Tongan faith-based family violence prevention programme in Aotearoa New Zealand. The *talanoa* with the faith leaders was crucial to the success of the programme because of the depth of cultural knowledge that the participants in this article brought to the development and implementation of the programme, and this research. As Zellerer (2003) proposes, it is crucial to have senior indigenous leaders involved in such family violence programmes. This is because such facilitators are able to lead sensitively and articulate the rationale for the stopping violence programme being woven from a combination of traditional Tongan cultural knowledge and relational practices, and Christian values of care and respect. These elements are all interconnected and integral to shaping the realities of being Tongan today.

As discussed in Chapter three, interlinked with the accounts of faith leaders is the third peer-reviewed publication (Havea et al., 2021b) that follows in Chapter Four. This third article chronicles the experiences of three Tongan households regarding their

participation in the inaugural faith-based family violence prevention programme. As key stakeholders in this research, both the faith-leader accounts and the experiences of the families are important, and the inclusion of both perspectives in this research is consistent with previous studies highlighting the significance of culturally responsive programmes that rely on key stakeholder engagements (Lemke & Harris-Wai, 2015; Newcomer et al., 2015) for addressing family violence effectively (Petersen, 2016; Zellerer, 2003). Chapter Four draws on the experiences of householders to highlight the importance of promoting *Talanoa* around such pressing social issues not only as a means of holding particular persons to account for their actions, but also to go further to demystify misunderstandings about the role of fathers in families and the misuse of violence for disciplinary purposes. It is through *Talanoa* between faith and cultural leaders, and families that misconceptions around violence in family settings which can be a taboo topic for Tongans and Pacific peoples can be worked through as a collective in a supportive yet pointed manner. The *Talanoa* (Pacific-Indigenous dialogue and discussion) with families is drawn upon to underscore the impact of the programme in re-awakening *kainga* members regarding the need to rebuild and foster positive familial relationships based on core Tongan Christian values of care and mutual respect. The householder accounts underscore the significance of interweaving spiritual faith and indigenous knowledge in their efforts to curtail family violence. Article Three is one of the first of its kind in terms of engaging the whole household in *talanoa* regarding their experiences of family violence and a programme such as that under investigation in this research. As such, the article makes an important contribution to the field of family violence and the indigenisation of psychology. Article Three also speaks to the importance of leveraging collaborative partnerships between faith-based communities and community-based agencies in sharing expertise and resources to address family

violence in dialogue with those families who are living through it and seeking violence free futures together.

Whilst for articles one and two I targeted appropriate journals in psychology, article three has been published purposefully in a leading interdisciplinary journal for Indigenous scholarship. This is to contribute directly to contemporary dialogues regarding indigenous research and its applications to addressing pressing concerns that are impacting our communities. The reference is as follows:

Havea, S., Alefaio-Tugia, S., & Hodgetts, D. (2021b). Kainga (families) experiences of a Tongan-Indigenous faith-based violence-prevention programme. *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples*, 17(1), 83–93.

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## CHAPTER 4: KAINGA (FAMILIES') EXPERIENCES OF A TONGAN-INDIGENOUS FAITH-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAMME

### 4.1 Abstract

Christianity is an embedded value system within Pacific cultures that is now being employed to inform efforts to address social issues such as family violence. This article chronicles a Tongan woman's cultural immersion with 49 Tongan church *kainga* (families) who participated in the Tongan faith-based *Kainga Tu'umalie* (prosperous families) family violence programme. *Talanoa* (Pacific-indigenous way of engaging families in research) with three *kainga* is drawn upon to highlight the impact of the programme in re-awakening the need to rebuild positive familial relationships based on core Tongan Christian values. More broadly, accounts from the *kainga* foreground the importance of interweaving spiritual faith and indigenous knowledge in efforts to address family violence. This research also speaks to the importance of leveraging collaborative partnerships between community-based agencies and faith-based communities in addressing social issues.

Family violence is a serious social issue that impacts all ethnic communities in Aotearoa/New Zealand, including Pacific communities (Koloto & Sharma, 2005; Ministry of Social Development, 2016a). Such violence is often conceptualized amongst Tongan and Pacific communities as a multifaceted problem encompassing physical, spiritual, psychological, and sexual abuse towards members of *kainga* (families). Family violence is often associated with broader socio-cultural norms, material living conditions, substance misuse, and the breakdown in family values (MacArthur, 2000; Petersen, 2016; Ringel & Bina, 2007). Violence amongst *kainga* is often understood by Tongans and Pacific peoples as a fundamentally spiritual matter

that undermines positive familial relationships and associated Tongan-indigenous and Christian values of care and love (Alefaio-Tugia & Havea, 2016; Dobson, 2004; MacArthur, 2000). Correspondingly, Pacific scholars have approached this issue as one exacerbated by the loss of *'ofa* (love/compassion), *angafakatokilalo* (humility) and *angafaka 'apa 'apa* (respect) in familial relations (Ah Siu-Maliko, 2016a; Jansen et al., 2012).

It is also important to consider the societal context in which family violence takes place and in which Tongan people have often been marginalized. Contextual considerations are particularly important given that previous research shows how marginalisation and socio-economic stress are associated with the increased incidence of family violence (Ackerson & Subramanian, 2008; Hamby, 2000). The migration of Tongan people to New Zealand since the outbreak of the Second World War allowed for the fulfilment of ancestors' migrant dreams of providing a good education for their children and the ability to send remittances back to Tonga to help extended families (Crocombe, 1992). The years of prosperity that made New Zealand seem like the land of milk and honey for Tongans was short-lived from the mid-1970s to the 1980s due to the effects of a major economic recession. This economic downturn led to a much tighter immigration policy control where the then National government singled out Pacific migrants who were predominantly Tongan and Samoan people. The government of the time launched the 'overstayer campaign' which is also known as the Dawn Raids. This campaign led to issues of stigma and stereotyping of Tongan and Pacific peoples who were labelled and positioned as a new type of 'underclass' (Clydesdale, 2008). This stereotyping of Tongans was further reinforced by negative profiles in government and news media reports (Loto et al., 2006). These representational practices have contributed to a symbolic environment that has hampered the efforts of Tongan and

Pacific peoples, more generally, in forging prosperous lives for themselves in Aotearoa New Zealand. Here, where we remain overrepresented in the lower income sectors of the labour market, among the unemployed, and as a result many live in crowded homes, with considerable stress, poorer health and lower life expectancies when compared to other ethnic groups (Ministry of Social Development, 2016a).

Mainstream intervention programmes for family violence that predominantly target individual offenders, and which are not sensitive to the socio-economic and cultural contexts of their offending have proven less effective for Pacific peoples (Rankine et al., 2015; Robinson & Robinson, 2005). This is likely, at least in part, due to such programmes encompassing Eurocentric values that emphasise individual rights and independence without including collectivist and relational approaches that are prevalent within Pacific and Tongan cultures (Ofahengaue Vakalahi et al., 2008; Puchala et al., 2010). Tongan and Pacific peoples are relational beings and central to our relationships is the *kainga* and the upholding of *tauhi va* (maintaining good relationships) (Mafale'o, 2005a, 2005b; Moala, 2009). Moreover, mainstream programmes generally ignore the importance of spiritual faith to Pacific and Tongan *kainga* as well as how we see ourselves as fundamentally inter-dependent social beings. Correspondingly, it is crucial for scholars and practitioners to develop more culturally and spiritually responsive approaches to violence in the *kainga* (Aten, McMinn, & Worthington Jr, 2011; Petersen, 2016).

There is considerable debate regarding the development of faith-based responses to domestic violence with some scholars arguing that Christian faith is implicated in the perpetuation of violence (Copel, 2008; Ting & Panchanadeswaran, 2016). For example, key scriptures, spiritual teachings and cultural practices can be employed by perpetrators to justify their abusive behaviour as being mandated from God (Petersen,

2016; Pillay, 2013). Christian faith can also function as a barrier for seeking help. Some victims would rather endure violence to keep the family together than be seen to be compromising their faith by leaving a violent relationship, and as such attracting shame and stigma (Ringel & Bina, 2007; Ting & Panchanadeswaran, 2016; Zust et al., 2018). Alternatively, Christian faith can play a key role in addressing domestic violence and holding perpetrators to account (Ellison, Trinitapoli, Anderson, & Johnson, 2007; Johnson, 2015). Research suggests that both perpetrators and survivors of family violence can find interpersonal support for change and gain a sense of hope, strength of purpose and justice from their faith-based communities and related family violence intervention programmes (Nason-Clark, 2009; Petersen, 2016; Ting & Panchanadeswaran, 2016). What can render faith-based intervention programmes effective is the implementation of culturally-informed strategies and practices that reflect and promote more harmonious, equitable and loving relationships between intimate partners.

The literature on family violence programmes that take an indigenous and faith-based approach is scant at best. This paper aims to fill this gap and contribute to existing knowledge by highlighting the value for Tongan and Pacific peoples more generally of prevention and intervention programmes that take a faith-based cultural approach. Consequently, we propose that in the presence of competent faith leaders who are versed in the complexities of domestic violence (Drumm et al., 2018; Ringel & Bina, 2007), the enactment of Tongan faith-based cultural values that emphasize love, compassion, gentleness and collective healing can be fostered in *kainga* to become violence free (Drumm et al., 2018; Petersen, 2016; Ting & Panchanadeswaran, 2016). Here, it is important to note that in many respects Christian and core Tongan cultural values have now become intertwined and somewhat inseparable. It is well documented

that Christianity has evolved as an embedded dimension of Pacific cultural worldviews, including *Anga Fakatonga* or the ‘Tongan way’ (Kavaliku, 2007; Taumoeofolau, 2005). Christianity is now central to conceptualizations of Pacific cultural worldviews and is inseparable from Tongan and Pacific ways of knowing, being and conducting relationships with others (Ah Siu-Maliko, 2016a, 2016b; Havea, 2011).

This article documents some of the positive experiences of Tongan *kainga* who participated in the Affirming Works (AW) faith-based *Kainga Tu’umalie* (prosperous families) family violence prevention programme. We consider the importance of prioritizing Tongan faith-cultural knowledge as a basis for the restorative healing practices that are central to the *Kainga Tu’umalie* programme. This programme constitutes a seminal attempt to draw on Tongan faith and indigenous concepts to engage *kainga* through Tongan cultural practices in open dialogue. This includes perpetrating family members owning up to and reflecting on their actions, as well as victims and those who experienced family violence reflecting on the impact that the violence (and their exposure to the family violence) had on them. The paper also demonstrates the importance of approaching family violence intervention and prevention programmes in ways that reflect, and are cognisant of, how various cultural norms, values and practices prevalent within Tongan and Pacific cultures benefit our communities. Our over-arching objective is to highlight the value of incorporating Tongan principles into violence intervention and prevention programmes. More specifically, we explore the dynamics of being violent-free for Tongan *kainga* who have relationships that are rooted in the faith-cultural principles of ‘*ofa*’ (love/compassion), ‘*ofa*’ *‘aufuato* (submission) *faka*’*apa*’*apa* (respect), and *angafakatokilalo* (humility).

## 4.2 A Tongan-Indigenous Faith-Based Response to Family Violence Prevention

The *Kainga Tu'umalie* (prosperous families) initiative was developed with Tongan faith leaders in Auckland by Affirming Works (AW), a faith-based social services organisation with a mission to affirm Pacific people to realise and attain their full potential (Affirming Works, n.d.). The aim of *Kainga Tu'umalie* as a violence-prevention programme is to engage *kainga* (families) to cultivate life patterns that enable them to build and maintain violence free family relationships. A distinguishing feature of the programme, which is different from mainstream programmes is that facilitators (were faith leaders) work with the whole *kainga* as a living entity and not just men or women who have been violent. Another key aspect of the formal programme is the fusion of *Fofola e fala ka e talanoa e kainga* (Tongan-indigenous cultural metaphor of laying out the mat so the families can dialogue) and the Biblical narrative. *Fofola e fala* is the conceptual and practice basis for this programme. The mat provides a culturally safe space and a commitment for family members to collaboratively and openly discuss the often taboo topic of violence. The *fala* also helps to ameliorate power differences not only between facilitators and participants, but also between different family members, which are common features of Tongan social hierarchical structure (Havea et al, 2023). As such, programme sessions (refer to Table 1) are designed to challenge and assist *kainga* members to reconcile their faith and culture to cultivate a deeper understanding of the importance of violence free *kainga* relationships. On the *fala* (mat) *kainga* are challenged in their *talanoa* (Pacific style discussions) about the causes and impact of violence upon their lives. This occurs through weekend retreats involving *kainga* from churches who were invited to take part in the programme. The invitations was extended to all church members and families as

opposed to only those with reported histories of violence. Table 1 presents main sessions that occur over the weekends.

Table 1: Main sessions for the *Kainga Tu'umalie* (KT) programme weekend retreat

TABLE 1: Main sessions for the <i>Kainga Tu'umalie</i> (KT) programme weekend retreat (Source: KT Narrative Report, 2016)
Devotions
Session 1 Creation Story
Session 2 The Fall
Session 3 Fofola e fala kae talanoa e <i>kainga</i> (Laying out the mat so that families can dialogue)
Session 4 Dawn Raids/Spirit of Poverty
Session 5 Outdoor activities
Session 6 Dreams/Joseph movie
Session 7 Church Service
Session 8 Closing Circle

These sessions were conducted flexibly and commenced with *lotu* (prayer) and devotion by the church leader who acted as the facilitator. This was followed by the Biblical narrative story of Creation reminding *kainga* of how they were created in God's image. Sessions two and three are combined introducing family violence in light of the Fall of mankind through Adam and Eve. On the *fala* (mat), individual *kainga* members are invited to talanoa about the triggers and effects of family violence. There were also sessions on familial aspirations, the Dawn Raids and developing prosperous mindsets and a positive outlook for their *kainga*, rather than fixating negatively on a

poverty mindset. Session five involves outdoor fun *kainga* activities, including sports. Continuing on with the aspirational theme, the first day ends with the Dreams session and a movie night featuring the inspirational story of Joseph, the Biblical character who was a man of great vision who rose from the pit of slavery to become the prime minister of Egypt (Swindoll, 1998). The movie is used to characterise the qualities of integrity, godliness and leadership, which are values implicit within the vision and philosophy of this faith-based family violence prevention programme. Sunday morning session commences with a time of worship led by the Faith leader. The final retreat session provides opportunities for *kainga* to reflect and share their experiences of the retreat. *Kainga* members were often very emotional in acknowledging their own failures and weaknesses, and in identifying areas they needed to improve on in order to develop violence free families.

Following the retreat there were follow up sessions on key areas that had been identified by *kainga* members for which they needed additional support. This included the ‘Love Languages’ session in response to requests for support in improving communication amongst *kainga* members. The *Kainga Tu’umalie* programme ends with a graduation ceremony in celebration and acknowledgement of the commitment and dedication of participating *kainga*. Ongoing follow-up support was also provided by Affirming Works subject to the needs of the *kainga*.

The primary goal of this faith-based programme is to mobilize faith and Tongan-indigenous principles in an effort to restore positive *kainga* relations and to stop and prevent further family violence. It encompasses a strengths-based approach that seeks to empower families with Biblical values and principles to build and enable strong, resilient familial relationships. Implicit in the programme sessions is the Christian perspective on family relationships and the Biblical text of Ephesians by the



apostle Paul is drawn upon to illustrate the intention of God's design for successful and harmonious family relationships. This in essence creates a beautiful picture that interweaves Tongan-indigenous principles and Biblical values for restoring Tongan familial relationships.

The significance of such activities and practices highlights how Christian bible-based scriptures align with the Tongan principles and values offering practical tools that nurture and foster family connections and relationships. A key verse in chapter five of Ephesians proposes that family members should 'Submit to one another in reverence to Christ' (verse 21). The concept of submission is the overriding principle that permeates Gods gracious instructions for a peaceful and harmonious family. Submission from a Tongan Christian perspective refers to a heart manifested in sacrificial love, peace, respect and humility (Hendricks, 2003; MacArthur, 2000). It is not a concept that demands a sense of control, dominance or superiority over other family members. The notion of submission is also familiar to Tongan people and akin to the indigenous concept of '*ofa* '*aufu*ato. This concept is the guiding principle for the programme and encompasses mutual submission among all *kainga* members. Interwoven into the programme is the message that at the heart of positive familial relationships is '*ofa* (love/compassion), mutual respect (*faka* '*apa* '*apa) and support that stems from the teachings of Christ (Hendricks, 2003; MacArthur, 2000). Like '*ofa* '*aufu*ato, '*ofa is interwoven as the core value and principle of *Anga Fakatonga* or the Tongan cultural worldview. It manifests as a virtue that goes beyond just mere words, and which is demonstrated in material enactments of love, compassion and care for other people. Emphasis is placed on a humble (*angafakatokilalo*) servant's love like that demonstrated by Christ. Central in the value of '*ofa is the striving for harmonious *kainga* relationships and evident in efforts to make sacrifices for the wellbeing of the***

collective (Havea, 2011; Mafile'o, 2005a, 2005b). The collectivist and relational norms, values, practices of Tongans and Pacific people and cultures as practiced within the *Kainga Tu'umalie* programme highlights the significance of this faith-based programme.

### 4.3 The Present Study

This article draws on the first author's cultural immersion within the programme and corresponding weekend retreats involving 49 *kainga* (equivalent of approximately 230 persons). As a team formed around the first author's PhD research, the authors complemented each other. The first (SH) and second (SA) authors are of Tongan and Samoan descent respectively. Both brought emic perspectives to the project and were involved in the initial evaluation of the programme; with SH also participating in the *Kainga Tu'umalie* retreats. The third author (DH) identifies culturally as Pakeha (Palangi) and has supervised a number of Pacific graduate research projects. As a cultural outsider, DH brought an etic perspective to the project, which encompassed aspects of intuitive inquiry (Anderson, 2011) and involved asking somewhat naïve questions, regarding key cultural concepts and practices. This leaving SH and SA to work through translations of key concepts and practices that seemed like common sense from the cultural inside, but which were crucial for analysing the uniqueness of the programme and its implications for participating families.

We will pay particular attention to formal *talanoa* (preferred traditional Pacific-style discussions) with three *kainga* as exemplars of participant experiences of the programme. The first *kainga* consisted of a young couple with five children under the age of ten, where the two older children come from the mother's former relationship. Both parents were born in Tonga, with the father migrating to New Zealand as an adult

and the mother migrating as a young girl. The second *kainga* comprised of another Tongan born couple with four New Zealand born teenage children. The third *kainga* involved recent migrants to New Zealand comprising of a Tongan father married to a Fijian wife with four grown children and one grandchild born in New Zealand.

*Talanoa* (Pacific cultural dialogue) were used to create spaces for cultural participatory immersion (Alefaio-Tugia & Havea, 2016) through which *kainga* were invited to share their stories and to reflect openly on the causes and consequences of violence in their relationships. *Talanoa* refers to a form of collective talk by a group of people through which subjective differences can be outlined and discussed until common ground or *noa* (zero point or balance) is established (Tevita, 2017). A central element of *talanoa* is the value afforded to upholding good relationships or *tauhi vā* (sacred relational spaces) amongst participants and researchers where every participants voice is valued and respected. Moreover, *talanoa* offer spaces for *kainga* to collectively enact core Tongan and Pacific principles of respect, humility and reciprocity (Halapua, 2003; Prescott, 2008). These principles governed the *talanoa* with the three families participating in conversations, *lotu* (prayer) and the reciprocal sharing of information. It is important to note these same underlying principles relate both to research *talanoa*, and also formal engagements within Tongan culture and as such this study drew on a research and intervention orientation that is consistent in terms of praxis and recognizable to the participants as Tongan people.

These research *talanoa* were carried out post retreat to enable *kainga* to reflect on the impact of the programme on their relationships and everyday lives. They were conducted in a culturally-responsive manner which included starting and ending in *lotu* (prayer) and conversing in Tongan language as required by *kainga*. An important dimension of the cultural-participatory immersion approach was the first author

participating in the weekend retreats and being known to *kainga*. This approach has similarities to auto-ethnography whereby the researcher is also an immersed participant in the culture and programme under investigation (Alefaio-Tugia & Havea, 2016; Ellis et al., 2011). This form of immersive community engagement enabled culturally safe rapport, mutual trust and respect which facilitated authentic participation by *kainga* in open, honest and deep reflective manner (Health Research Council of New Zealand, 2014).

All three *talanoa* were digitally recorded and the two conducted in the Tongan language were transcribed into Tongan and then translated into English for analysis. The analysis presented in this article is based on a systematic and iterative exploration through repeated reading and categorising of prominent issues from the *talanoa*, as well as the first authors ethnographic field notes from her participation in the programme as well as programme progress reports. A central focus in the analysis was how Tongan faith-based indigenous concepts and values functioned to help *kainga* understand the importance of violence free relationships and commit to realizing such relationships. A process of reflective analysis was applied to interpret participant accounts in this regard and to consider the impacts of the programme for participating *kainga* (Morse & Richards, 2002). Alefaio-Tugia's (2015) 'Fa'afaletui-dialectical analysis' tool was also used to explore the participant accounts from an indigenous perspective that is consistent with the principles of *talanoa* outlined above. In short, the focus in this analytic approach is on employing collective wisdom of cultural *matu'a* (elders) to enhance knowledge and understanding of the core themes identified in the analysis process.

#### 4.4 Narratives of Transformation from a Tongan-Cultural Understanding

The interpretation of *kainga talanoa* draws on three inter-connected immergent Tongan indigenous concepts of: *Ko e Makatu'unga Mo'ui mo e Malohi* which translates as 'A Powerful and Living platform'; *Ko e Kolo Malu mo e Hufanga*, representing 'A Place of Safety and Refuge'; and *Fa'utaha*, a concept which includes the meaning of unity, 'ofa (love/compassion), peace and harmony. These three interrelated concepts not only symbolise the cultural representation of *Fofola e fala*, but they also embody the faith narrative of Tongans as peoples of the Pacific. *Ko e Makatu'unga Mo'ui mo e Malohi* refers to how faith and culture was experienced by *kainga* as a powerful and living platform for positive change. *Ko e Kolo Malu mo e Kolo Hufanga* signifies a place of safety and refuge. While *Fa'utaha* refers to enabling oneness, harmony and peace amongst *kainga*. Interwoven into these concepts are the core Tongan values of 'ofa (love/compassion), 'ofa 'aufuato (submission), *angafakatokilalo* (humility), and *faka'apa'apa* (respect). These embedded cultural values are foundational to effort to "build the quality of life in which happiness, peace, harmony, and creativity reign" (Moala, 2009, p. 111). They are also central to both the programme design and participant reflections. Throughout the participant dialogues emerged what appeared to be a genuine intent by *kainga* participants to live lives that demonstrate these core values and ultimately violence free lives.

When reading this analysis it is important to realise that there is a clear gendered dimension to men/fathers and women/mothers engagement in the programme. The men/fathers are perpetrators and women/mothers victims. This means the men are working to address their actions with the support of the women. It is also important to note that one of the reasons the programme appears to work culturally is that it involves

the men and women working together to realise positive changes with the support of the *kainga*.

#### 4.5 *Ko e Makatu'unga Mo'ui mo e Malohi* (A Powerful and Living Platform)

The Tongan indigenous concept of *Ko e makatu'unga mo'ui mo e malohi* originated from a Tongan faith leader's description of *Fofola e fala* and is metonymically reflective of how aspects of Christian faith and Tongan culture are interwoven in the practical experiences of participants as a powerful living platform for positive transformational developments within the *kainga*. The manifestation of this Tongan principle is reflected in the desires of families to build and sustain strong and resilient relationships that feature a greater sense of identity and belonging. This was also reflected in how the programme afforded the opportunity for *kainga* to reprioritise and to re-establish positive role modelling within their families. Moreover, this Tongan principle is evident in how the *kainga* foregrounded the importance of the language of love ('*ofa*) and forgiveness (*fakamolemole*) in creating violence free households. The programme approach is signified as a strong platform enabling families to be open about their experiences of violence and produce ways of responding to and preventing further violent incidents.

An important outcome from the programme relates to how it enabled fathers to reflect on factors that were driving their violence and to commit to valuing their children and violence free *kainga*. For example, after participating in the programme, Timote (father of five children) reported giving up his alcohol misuse because of a greater sense of responsibility to his children and a renewed mindset of '*ofa* (love/compassion) towards the value of his *kainga*. The extract from his account below reflects a general sense in which many of the men who had been violent committed to changing their lifestyles and pledging to acting more consciously in ways that benefit

all *kainga* members. Timote recounted feeling liberated by committing to act responsibly with ‘*ofa* (love) and ‘*ofa* ‘*aufuato* (submission) towards members of his *kainga*:

*The most important lesson that I learned from the programme is the significance of family especially my children and to take care of them. I thought that my responsibility was just to go to work and come home and sleep and get drunk. After the programme I gave up drinking as well as smoking because I needed to take care and provide for my children. I believe that it was God’s leading for me and my family to attend the programme.* (Timote)

Alcohol misuse is a key risk factor of violence (Dalton, 2009; Jewkes, 2002). Timote’s conviction and consequent decision to stop drinking is consistent with the literature on the positive outcomes of spiritual faith, which can promote personal transformation (Petersen, 2016; Wuthnow, 2004). Through the programme, Timote’s vision is rekindled with the realization that his role is more than just meeting the physical and material needs of his children. As a father he is also responsible for their holistic wellbeing – socially, spiritually, emotionally and intellectually. Christian scholars support this perspective and reinforce the paramount role of parents in proactive love, nurture and discipline of their children and being effective role models at home (Hendricks, 2003; MacArthur, 2000). The faith-cultural approach of the programme creates a strong and living platform from which Timote expresses a more urgent desire to create a new home environment where the children feel a stronger sense of security, significance and belonging. A home where the children and the family are devoid of the effects of alcohol abuse and associated violence.

A recurring theme from the *kainga* narratives on their experiences of the programme was the need to re-establish positive roles for parents in the home. This was

reignited as a result of the dreams and visions session. Church *kainga* were reminded of the dreams of their forefathers in leaving their loved ones in their homelands in order to pursue better opportunities for their *kainga* and for future generations. Every family member was challenged to dream and to have aspirations for a more hopeful future as individuals, as children, as couples and as a *kainga*. In the extract below from our discussion of the programme session on Dreams we can see how the fathers, in particular, expressed the necessity of building a loving, and joyful environment at home that nurtures holistic growth and development before it is too late:

*For me it was the session on 'Dreams' where families were invited to write all of their dreams. I realised that I have been selfish in insisting that everyone in the family follow my instructions. The environment gave everyone the freedom including my children to write down their wishes. I realise that if I don't change and be attentive to their aspirations there will be a time when they are older that they will leave home because they don't have that joy and sense of belonging (lata 'I 'api) at home. (Timote)*

The programme offered such participants spaces in which they could reflect on their actions with a view to moving forward in a manner that involved positive changes in their actions. Particularly towards their *kainga* whereby parents realised the importance of positive role modelling and aspirations in the home environment. There was also a deeper sense of belief in the dreams and aspirations of their ancestors in migrating to 'the land of milk and honey', and the sacrifices that were made in the process. For some these sacrifices included cultural identity, heritage and citizenship through their assimilation and compliance to western masculine ideals (*cf.*, Thaman, 1995). Additionally, there was a typical recognition in the extract above that there needs to be a character adjustment on the part of men in order for them to support the achievement



of the dreams and aspirations of the *kainga*. The symbolic and practical application of *Koe makatu'unga mo'ui mo e malohi* is shown where these men spoke of the need to foster an environment reflecting the values of 'ofa (love) and *angafaka'apa'apa* (respect) at home. Moreover, to build the *kainga* as a solid foundation; and to exemplify people of faith in their child-rearing practices.

The principles of Chapman's (1992) book on the five love languages is explored within the *Kainga Tu'umalie* (prosperous families) programme aimed at improving communication and a greater sense of 'ofa (love/compassion) especially for couples. Chapman's theory is that people communicate in five primary love languages: words of encouragement, quality time together, giving of gifts, acts of service, and physical touch. His core proposition is that maintenance of your spouses' love language(s) enhances the quality of the marriage relationship. Emphasis is placed on being receptive and understanding your spouse's love language, and what makes them happy. During the follow up sessions couples were encouraged to openly identify ways in which they can express their heartfelt commitment to their spouse. This resulted in mothers' acknowledging their need to be more sensitive to their husbands' language of love being acts of service and the value they place on having a tidy and clean home:

*Me and my husband used to argue all the time. I am the sort of person that is ok, when I clean, I'll clean. And when I am just plain lazy and tired I will just leave it.... I used to get so frustrated, and we would argue just over me not [cleaning], and then it wasn't until we came to the five languages of love, and then it just made sense to me, that that's his language of love....I'm like, "I've made dinner, can't you just be happy with that?" He is like, "No. If you just have the house clean and if I just come and eat kapaika (tinned fish) with bread, I don't care I would be happy with that. (Mele)*

Mele's quote suggests a sense of indifference towards her husband's needs and values before learning about the languages of love ('*ofa*). This was a clear point of contention in their relationship, which created an unhappy and sometimes hostile *kainga* environment. In this regard, the programme was experienced as a transformational platform where this Tongan mother was enlivened to create a more loving and nurturing environment where there is peace and harmony between her and her husband and their children.

Through the language of love ('*ofa*), Mele reports her heart softening towards her husband and there is a strong sense of forgiveness and a desire to have a non-violent relationship with him. This is not to suggest that Mele is accepting his violence. However, it does reflect how her account feature the importance of forgiveness as expressed through the language of Christian love and core Tongan cultural values. The concept of forgiveness in our participants accounts is akin to the Tongan notion of *fakamolemole*, which is a genuine heart desire and willingness to overlook the wrongdoing of others out of ones own '*ofa* (love/compassion), '*ofa* '*aufuato* (submission) and *angafakatokilalo* (humility). The principles of Chapman's love languages resonated with these Tongan couples as such language aligns closely with Tongan faith-based principles. This can be misinterpreted as a sign of weakness, but from the faith-cultural perspective of Tongan people, *fakamolemole* (forgiveness) constitutes an act of strength, love, self-control, and moral worth. In eliciting such reactions from participants, the programme appears to provide a strong platform for promoting more loving, respectful and healthy relationships between intimate partners. This is supported by research from other contexts which suggests that this is one of the positive outcomes of faith-based family violence programmes (Petersen, 2016; Ringel & Bina, 2007).

The culturally textured dialogical space offered by the programme also led many participants to reflect on their *kainga* relationships and how others might benefit from the programme. For example, Timote proposed that his brothers in Tonga would also benefit from the programme. His account reflects how participants expressed the desire to reach out to their *kainga* in Tonga who are also experiencing the same issues with family violence:

*I just wish my brothers in Tonga were here to attend and experience it [programme] because their life in Tonga...is the same old thing of drunkenness, and I hear that my brother's wife is always 'escaping' to her parent's home. I tried to talk to my brother but he just makes a joke out of it but I really wish that he was here to learn so that they'll see the importance of looking after their families. (Timote)*

The programme is invoked here as a platform for change that participants see as potentially beneficial to other family members beyond the shores of Aotearoa. This extract highlights the emphasis Pacific peoples place on the collective responsibilities they have to the *kainga*, rather than just themselves as individuals (Finau, 1996; Mulitalo-Lauta, 2001).

In this section we have discussed the programme experiences of the *kainga* and how the faith-cultural approaches provided an opportunity for family members to reflect on their actions and to commit to cultivating stronger and more resilient familial relations that are devoid of violence. The following section presents the *kainga* narratives on how *Kainga Tu'umalie* (prosperous families) provided a space of safety and refuge for transformed mindsets towards parenting roles and marital relationships.

#### 4.6 *Ko e Kolo Malu mo e Hufanga* (A Place of Safety and Refuge)

The concept of *Ko e Kolo Malu mo e Hufanga* speaks to how a faith-based cultural approach can create a place of safety and refuge for participants. This is a concept signifying Christian faith and Tongan embedded values and principles as central to the creation of places of protection, peace, harmony, rest and security that is accepting of repentant hearts and renewed mindsets. It is also a Tongan indigenous principle that has utility in encouraging participating *kainga* to open up and share their feelings regarding a father's disciplinary practices and the need for these to change. The space provided by the programme was experienced by *kainga* as safe enough for children to openly share their experiences and perspectives with the other church *kainga* and the programme facilitators. Similarly, the impact of Christian faith combined with a Tongan cultural approach was experienced as having a profound impact on fathers and encouraged them to humbly (*angafakatokilalo*) acknowledge their shortcomings and to embrace the need to change their behaviour towards their *kainga*. What appears to be elicited here is a form of faith and cultural accountability.

In the following extract a father presents his willingness to put things right with his children. In doing so, he demonstrates how the programme opened up a safe space for fathers to reflect further and openly on their actions and what was driving their violence:

*Over the various talanoa, I was surprised when my daughter shared [how I applied corporal punishment] because that has never happened before. They [my children] did what they were told and had to keep quiet. You see that was the type of leadership and control that I practiced because I didn't want to be challenged on what I know... (Paula - Father and church leader)*

Paula's response to his daughter's revelation in front of the church *kainga* is significant. It is remarkable in this context for a father who is also a church leader to admit his failures and to allow himself to be vulnerable in the presence of his *kainga* and congregation. The programme appears to have had the effect of convicting this Tongan father of his need to change his controlling leadership style into a more positive and participative leadership orientation. This extract is symbolic of the constant tension that many Tongan fathers have in raising their children in a new country whilst trying to maintain the authority that comes with their headship of the household and to balance this with their values of 'ofa (love/compassion), 'ofa 'aufuato (submission), *angafakatokilalo* (humility) and *faka'apa'apa* (respect).

In this regard, the programme was experienced as constituting a *Kolo Malu mo e Hufanga* (safehaven) to change perceptions and disciplinary practices in the home. Consequently, there was a heightened awareness by participating parents that in order for the home environment to change, they needed to change. That in order to create a peaceful and harmonious home setting, parents need to exemplify inner peace, strength and self-discipline in terms of how they communicate and act towards their children and each other. The acknowledgement of the need to transform mind-sets was a constant theme of the accounts from the *kainga*. The recognition of this positive change in outlook is foregrounded by Mele's account of the content of her prayers in seeking forgiveness, help and guidance from God:

*[The programme] gave me a lot to look at, at my behaviour, towards my husband, my children...cos I get to the point where I am now praying like, "Lord, help me to be a mother who speaks, words of love and peace," "Lord help my children to forgive me, for yelling at them, especially every morning, including Sabbath morning when we are getting ready for church....(Mele)*

In this extract, Mele presents herself as taking ownership and responsibility for her own actions towards her children and in doing so acknowledges the role of the programme in her reaching this realization. She proposes that if the parents are verbally and physically violent then it follows that the children will be more likely to act in similar ways.

Further, if parents model loving (*'ofa*) and nurturing behaviour then children are more likely to respond accordingly (Deković et al., 2004; Hendricks, 2003; Stephens, 2007).

Prayer (*lotu*) is an important spiritual practice for Tongan people that was also practiced within the programme to encourage honest disclosures and to open up spaces for exploring aspirations for non-violence and loving futures. The yearning of Mele's heart to God in prayer suggests a renewed vision of God, a softened heart, a recognition of her need for forgiveness and help from God. There is an eagerness in this account for a home environment where *kainga* can experience *'ofa* (love) and *melino* (peace/harmony) devoid of violence.

Moreover, the programme was experienced as providing a place of refuge and safety (*Ko e kolo malu mo e hufanga*) within which fathers could repent of their immoral and violent actions. The mindset of *'ofa* (love/compassion) and *angafakatokilalo* (humility) was evident in fathers expressions of the need for change in their actions: "*I used to be a compulsive liar especially to my wife, but after the retreat I was convicted to stop lying...*" (Sekope). Through such statements, Sekope demonstrates a desire to rebuild his marriage based on honesty and integrity rather than lies and deceit. Moreover to honour the sanctity of marriage; to model what it means to love his wife sacrificially (*'ofa 'aufuato/'ofa*) as the Bible teaches; and ultimately to model what a Christian marriage should be for his children. As Christian writers advocate, these values and principles provides a strong foundation of peace, harmony

and rest (*Ko e kolo malu mo e hufanga*) which serves as a protective armour against violence (Chapman, 2008; Hendricks, 2003).

One of the programme sessions specifically involved *kainga* being challenged to adopt more positive thoughts and outlooks for their children. The aim of this session was to help families expel the misconceptions that have been embedded through environmental factors such as racism, stereotypes, and the selfishness that can come with capitalism. This session was inspired from the Bible verse: “*As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he*” (Proverbs 23: 7, NKJV). This verse is often interpreted as meaning that a person’s thoughts directly impact their life, and that changing thought patterns can transform lives and the world. This idea can be misinterpreted to mean that a person just needs to think positive thoughts and the world will be a better place. That is not the rationale behind this session. It is about encouraging the spiritual discipline of fostering a positive mindset which leads to peace and rest despite the negative circumstances experienced.

This session also included testimonies of experiences in the Dawn raids era in New Zealand history, which Pacific peoples would rather forget. It was a dark time in the 1970s where we were hunted down and arrested in the early hours of the morning for allegedly overstaying temporary work permits. This discriminatory enforcement was justified in light of the economic recession, which meant fewer employment opportunities and higher social costs for New Zealanders. Tongan and Samoan people, in particular, were singled out despite evidence showing that the majority of overstayers were from Europe or North America (Beaglehole, 2015; Spoonley, 2017). Sadly, these events led to a degree of negative stereotyping among Palangi (Europeans) towards Pacific peoples, which has contributed to the way Pacific communities in New Zealand have been denigrated and stereotyped as an ‘underclass and drain on the economy’

(Clydesdale, 2008). These and subsequent events have negatively impacted the mindsets of Pacific peoples into believing that negative labels and stereotypes have merit. Some have internalized the stereotypes (Thomsen et al., 2018).

In the context of such concerns, Mele's reports having realised that there is nothing wrong with aspiring for a better and more hopeful future for herself and her *kainga*. Mele represents a generation of Tongan people born in New Zealand who refuse to be defined by their migration history, but who have grown up with and express a deep desire to overcome the stereotyping and negative self-imaging of Pacific people. Consequently, they express a heightened awareness of the need to train their mindsets to focus on more positive experiences and aspects of their lives in order to achieve the future that they aspire for their *kainga*:

*... I think that's where we've realised the whole poverty thinking and the prosperous thinking, [that] it's not bad to dream and think positively and work towards it, ...that we can better ourselves and not try and you know, 'Lets just stay poor because that's the way we grew up and, let's just be like that for the rest of our life. (Mele)*

Mele's acknowledgement of their need for transformed mindsets suggests a real desire to re-establish her and her husband's role as positive parents and to create a family home that reflects their values as Tongan people of faith. That creating a peaceful, loving and harmonious home environment free of violence is not beyond their reach and is within their own ability to story their own lives in ways that reflect their realities and not Palangi stereotypes of them (*cf.*, Rappaport, 2000). With new found knowledge and understanding of the Pacific migration stories and the injustices experienced, Mele's generation are encouraged to reach their dreams and the aspirations of their forefathers in their newly adopted home country (Alefaio, 2008). Learning how the first



generation Pacific migrants have persevered and overcome adversity through their faith and cultural values of *‘ofa* (love/compassion) for their *kainga* has sparked a greater sense of resolve and hope for participating *kainga* to realise violence free ways of living.

In this section we have explored the experiences of the *kainga* conceptualised as a safe and restful space for renewed mindsets towards the marriage relationship and parenting roles. Next, we extend this discussion to consider the *kainga* accounts as reflecting a yearning for unity, peace and harmony.

#### 4.7 *Fa'utaha* (Unity/Harmony/Peace)

Closely linked to the indigenous principle of *Koe Kolo Malu mo e Hufanga* (A place of safety and refuge) is the concept of *Fa'utaha*, which can be conceptualized as a sense of unity, harmony and peace. This is a concept that unites or binds *kainga* as one entity united in mind and heart, despite conflicts and disagreements. *Fa'utaha* in essence encapsulates the impact or the essence of the fusion of Christian faith and Tongan cultural knowledge as practiced within the programme. Correspondingly, many participants expressed a strong sense of yearning for this unity, peace and harmony, particularly in *kainga* relationships between husband and wife and between parents and their children:

*Like every family we have our issues, lack of communication; constant conflict over financial issues; and my lack of respect for my husband. I was always angry with my husband over his passivity and lack of clear communication with the children, but after the retreat I felt more love and respect for him and saw his strong points as a hard-working man who is doing his best to provide for the family. (Ma'ata)*

The barriers to attaining united, peaceful and harmonious relationships and *kainga* are identified by this Tongan mother. Feelings of anger, unforgiveness, bitterness and resentment towards her husband were part of her everyday experiences of life for this *kainga*. Feelings of remorse expressed by Ma'ata regarding harmful emotions was a common sentiment from participating *kainga*. The faith-based cultural approach of the *Kainga Tu'umalie* initiative was a motivational factor to demonstrate 'ofa (love/compassion) and *faka'apa'apa* (respect) towards ones' spouse and to see beyond their imperfections, shortcomings and limitations. There is now a renewed sense of pride and appreciation of the strengths and values of husbands and a desire to create a *kainga* and a home that is more loving ('ofa), respectful (*faka'apa'apa*), peaceful (*melino*) and free of violence.

The programme has the positive impact of convicting fathers of their need to build strong, resilient and unified *kainga* relationships through quality time together in family *lotu* (prayer). One of the objectives of the programme is for *kainga* to come together to a safe and restful space and collectively work through issues together as a family and community. The importance of quality time together as a *kainga* was emphasised in both the retreat and the follow up sessions. A Tongan father acknowledges the significance of family time together in worship:

*We have always planned to have a time of family lotu (prayer) but never eventuated, because we always made up excuses. But since the retreat we have commenced a time of family worship. It has also given me the opportunity to connect more with my children. (Sekope)*

Sekope recognises his need to model his vital role as the leader of the *kainga*. As a Tongan father he expresses a common cultural desire to be an effective loving person who contributes to a strong *kainga*. Uniting in precious times of *lotu* (prayer) and

family worship is a traditional practice of Tongan *kainga* and is often neglected in diaspora given the pace and demands of life today. There is a conviction of the need for his *kainga* to revive this important practice and to make it a priority where it becomes a life pattern.

Hendricks (2003) writes that today more than ever Christian families need to unite in frequent, unhurried times of prayer and worship sourcing inner strength, peace and courage amidst the struggles of life. There is also a greater sense of empowerment and resilience and more intentionality about connecting better with every *kainga* member particularly with the children. Christian writers highlight that the most influential people in children's lives are their parents, not peers which underscores the importance of parents being consistent godly role models for their children (Hendricks, 2003; MacArthur, 2000). Tongan fathers being given the space to pause and reflect as part of the programme results in renewed mindsets to be more effective models for their children.

A key session in the programme is the *kainga talanoa* about family violence in relation to the Biblical narrative. Individual *kainga* literally sit on the *fala* (mat) and *talanoa* about the triggers and impacts of violence on their daily lives at home, work or school. Affirming Works community and faith leaders facilitate these sessions. *Kainga* are consistently reminded that the *fala* is a safe space (*Koe Kolo Malu mo e Hufanga*) for *talanoa*. This resulted in very emotional and vibrant sessions where every *kainga* member's voice was expressed and heard. The faith narrative combined with a familiar indigenous approach of laying out the mat was so impactful liberating children to be open about their views and to be confident in sharing the outcome of their families' *talanoa* with the other church *kainga*:

*It's quite an effective tool (Fofola e fala...) in getting us as a family to talk to one another. We were surprised and encouraged by our daughter's openness to share her views and her willingness to stand up and share her family's feedback [on the Family Violence session] to the wider group. (Ma'ata)*

Ma'ata's account suggests that *talanoa* with her *kainga* was rare. Seeing her daughter's openness and confidence in sharing her perspective encouraged her as a mother to continue the open dialogue in their home environment. Through these sessions, Tongan mothers' hearts are strengthened to create a home environment that enables their children to freely *talanoa* free of condemnation or fear. There is a conviction of the need to lay out the *fala* (mat) more frequently at home to attain a greater sense of unity, oneness and togetherness (*Fa'utaha*) creating strong and happy *kainga* devoid of violence.

Every family member reported being positively impacted by the programme and proposed that it resulted in a stronger sense of worth and belonging. The spirit of the *Kainga Tu'umalie* programme was experienced as creating an atmosphere that allowed the children to realise the sacrifices that their parents and forefathers have made to enable them and future generations to have a prosperous future in a new country. They reported feeling closer to their parents:

*The whole programme has drawn me closer to my parents, especially my Mum and I have a greater appreciation of what they are doing for me and my brothers. ('Eseta)*

'Eseta's account signifies a sense and a desire for *Fa'utaha* (togetherness/closeness) with her parents and brothers. As a result of immersing in this *kainga* focused programme, children reported a sense of emotional liberation enabling them to show more love (*'ofa*), gratitude (*hounga'ia*), respect (*faka'apa'apa*) and humility

(*angafakatokilalo*) towards their parents. It is the intent of the programme that promoting unified (*Fa'utaha*), mutually respectful *kainga* acts as a protective factor in preventing further family violence.

#### 4.8 Conclusion

The goal of this article was to document the positive experiences of *kainga* participating in the inaugural Tongan faith-based family violence prevention and intervention programme. Additionally, we sought to demonstrate the value of Tongan faith-based approaches to combating family violence in Tongan families and communities. Consequently, we set out to examine what being violent-free might look like for Tongan *kainga* who have relationships that are embedded in key faith-cultural principles such as '*ofa* '*aufuato* (submission), '*ofa* (love/compassion), *angafakatokilalo* (humility) and *faka'apa'apa* (respect). In drawing on three reciprocally connected Tongan indigenous principles, we have sought to unpack how the programme can create a safe cultural space in which *kainga* are willing to engage with the issues and reflect on their actions, and consider what needs to change for them to become violent free. We have shown that the concept of *Ko e Makatu'unga Mo'ui moe Malohi* is central to understanding fathers' efforts to reflect on and reconsider the value of their *kainga* and the need for them to be violence free. This is manifested through a greater desire to build spiritually strong and resilient families by being consistent godly role models.

The indigenous principle of *Ko e Kolo Malu mo e Hufanga* conceptualises the programme providing a safe sanctuary for renewed mindsets for fathers, mothers, husbands, wives and children. Accordingly, participating fathers demonstrated a commitment to transform their destructive disciplinary practices. Mothers articulated the desire to exemplify Godly principles in their home environments. Husbands and

wives spoke in ways that invoked their dedication to building stronger marriages based on 'ofa 'aufuato (submission), 'ofa (love/compassion), *angafakatokilalo* (humility) and *faka'apa'apa* (respect). Children also demonstrated how they were emotionally liberated during the programme to share their own perspectives and feelings. The Tongan notion of *Fa'utaha* signifies the longing of every *kainga* member for a greater sense of love, unity and togetherness within their *kainga* relationships. The re-embedding of these faith-cultural values and principles amongst *kainga* relationships and in the home is an important step in preventing further family violence.

The positive impact on participating *kainga* in the programme suggests the significance of a faith-based cultural approach for addressing family violence amongst Tongan *kainga*. This is consistent with some of the global literature on faith based responses to domestic violence which shows the positive influence of protection, hope, healing and transformation for religious survivors and offenders (Nason-Clark, 2009; Petersen, 2016; Ting & Panchanadeswaran, 2016). As with conventional family violence programmes, mainstream faith-based family violence programmes primary focus is on the individual victim and perpetrator (Ofahengaue Vakalahi et al., 2008; Zellerer, 2003). This approach is somewhat contrary to the cultural values of Tongans and Pacific peoples who emphasise collective and social responsibility within the *kainga* (families) (Mafale'o, 2005a, 2005b; Thaman, 1995). The positive accounts of *kainga* members participating in the *Kainga Tu'umalie* programme illustrates the potential impact of the collective approach to family violence prevention and intervention amongst Tongan and Pacific communities. It also highlights the significance of such faith-cultural approaches.

In conclusion, this article underscores the magnitude and potential of faith-cultural approaches in addressing the wicked issue of family violence amongst Tongan

and Pacific families. We have highlighted some of the transformational narratives of participating *kainga* members where they were given safe and culturally appropriate space to pause and reflect and then commit to moving towards violence free living. It also highlights the significance of partnerships between community service organisations and faith communities. The collaboration between Affirming Works and Tongan church communities affirms the importance of such partnerships and is consistent with the growing global literature recommending the importance of community networks in addressing domestic violence (Drumm et al., 2018; Petersen, 2016).

## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

The primary objective of the *Kainga Tu'umalie* (prosperous families) intervention programme in Auckland (Affirming Works, n.d.) is to mobilise Tongan-indigenous principles and Christian faith in an effort to restore positive family relationships, and to stop and prevent further family violence. As noted in my publications, a key dimension of the formal programme is the blending of *fofola e fala ka e Talanoa e kainga* (Tongan-indigenous cultural metaphor of laying out the mat so the families can dialogue) with the Biblical narrative. Embodied in *fofola e fala* are Tongan core faith-cultural values of 'ofa (love/compassion), *tauhi va* (cultivating loving and harmonious relationships), *angafakatokilalo* (humble heart), and *angafaka 'apa 'apa* (respectful heart). At the heart of the Tongan culture and worldview are these core values (Kalavite, 2019; Moala, 2009; The Tongan Working Group, 2012) which are embedded in this cultural framework of *fofola e fala*. Interwoven into the programme is the key message that at the heart of Biblically based familial relationships are positive enactments of these core values. The programme sessions were developed to encourage and challenge *kainga* (families) to reconcile their faith and cultural imperatives towards loving relationships with instances of violence seen as transgressions of these imperatives, and to nurture a deeper understanding of the importance of their cultivating violence-free *kainga* relationships (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b, 2023).

The core aim of this PhD has been to explore how the fusion of Tongan-indigenous cultural knowledge and Christian faith can inform efforts to address family violence amongst Tongan families in Aotearoa, New Zealand. A core intent was to chronicle the cultural logic behind the development of the programme, which according to participating families and cultural leaders who participated in this research, appears to meet the needs of Tongan families facing issues of violence. Taking a Tongan



approach to this PhD, I focused on both the experiences of faith-leaders who worked as facilitators in the programme and participating families. My interpretation of these experiences was, like the programme itself, informed by core Tongan cultural values. These were used as key heuristics in the analysis process.

In the remainder of this final chapter, I first consider key findings regarding the experiences of the programme across both participant groups with an emphasis on key Tongan and Christian cultural values and concepts. This is followed by a section on my contribution to the family violence literature in particular, and the indigenising of psychology more generally. I then offer some concluding reflections and future research directions. The thesis is then completed with a policy brief that will be sent to the Ministry of Social Development and Ministry of Pacific Peoples to help inform national efforts to address family violence in culturally nuanced ways.

### 5.1 Key Findings with a Focus on Core Tongan Cultural Concepts

There was a strong conviction among both facilitators and families about the need to revisit and re-evaluate whether the core Tongan values introduced above are manifested in contemporary familial relationships. This is because both groups associate the emergence of family violence today within the *kainga* as, at least in part, symptomatic of the violation of these core values (Ah Siu-Maliko, 2016a & 2016b; Jansen et al., 2012). Family violence was also seen as a violation of related Christian values of care and respect that are now also key elements of *Anga Fakatonga* (Tongan way). Correspondingly, participants proposed that it is Tongan cultural tradition and Christian faith that enables participating family members, especially fathers to *angafakatokilalo/angavaivai* (humble) themselves and to relearn to show ‘*ofa*’ (love/compassion), and *angafaka’apa’apa* (respect) to their spouses and children in constructive ways both during the programme and beyond (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b).

Central to my PhD are efforts by Tongan and Pacific *kainga* (families) to be supported in living lives where these cultural values are renormalised. In short, the shield of tradition and faith is presented as enabling family members to relearn to value their familial relationships and look beyond the struggles and stressors of life that can contribute to violence in the home.

Core findings from this research are encapsulated by three cultural concepts identified by Tongan faith leaders and *kainga* (families) during our *talanoa*; 1) *Koe makatu'unga mo'ui mo e malohi* (a powerful and living platform), 2) *Ko e kolo malu mo e hufanga* (a place of safety and refuge), and 3) *Fa'utaha* (unity/harmony/peace) are Tongan concepts representing the interweaving of faith and Tongan indigenous knowledge as symbolised by the *fofola e fala* framework. These concepts inform our shared understanding of the intent and impacts of the *Kainga Tu'umalie* programme. The positive impact of this framework resides in the enabling of participating families to recognise themselves within it alongside the faith leaders as Tongan people working together to resolve the violence. The framework enabled participating *kainga* (families) to engage in the open process of acknowledging the violence that has occurred, exploring why it has occurred, and working towards ensuring that it does not occur again.

Central to the application of these key cultural concepts is the opening of a cultural space for dialogue. This contributes to shared efforts to transform how families communicate, interact and behave towards one another in more harmonious ways that enable them to flourish together. Like the *fala*, (mat), these concepts are interwoven and interdependent, creating a platform of peace, hope and new life for violence-free families, and together they form an approach for addressing violence amongst Tongan families. Also evident is how when combined into a framework these key concepts can

be mobilised in practical ways to provide a significant effort to create a strong sense of identity and a platform of trust, ‘*ofa* (love/compassion), and emotional connectedness within participating families.

My articulation of these concepts in this PhD thesis comprises a novel contribution to psychology as a diverse global discipline that is increasingly open to such indigenous knowledge, and to developing new ways to address complex issues, such as family violence (see Chapter 2 on the methodology). These concepts are central to understanding the psychology and actions of Tongan people and how we as a profession might render assistance. Below, I consider the Tongan psychology that stems from these and other relational understandings and how they relate to our sense of self as Tongan in a little more detail.

As is reflected across my three publications, the three key concepts are interconnected and embody the repentant hearts of participating families and faith leaders. These concepts can be used with practical care to reignite a deep and genuine sense of longing and desire for renewal and cultivation of violence-free familial relationships. Additionally, *koe makatu’unga mo’ui mo e malohi*, is metonymically<sup>4</sup> reflective of how aspects of Tongan culture and Christian faith are interwoven in the practical experiences of respondents as a powerful living platform for familial transformation and flourishing. The conceptualisation of a Tongan framework as an active and transformational platform that enables resilience amongst families is

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<sup>4</sup> A metonym is a part that stands for a larger whole. For example, a stethoscope can come to represent or stand in for the profession of medicine. In this context, I am using it to refer to key cultural concepts that have come to represent the fusion of core values of care and respect in Tongan indigenous culture and Christianity.

powerful in reconnecting Tongan people culturally in ways that open-up solutions for addressing family violence.

Participating faith leaders proposed that the fusion of faith and indigenous knowledge can form a powerful and living platform (*koe makatu 'unga mo 'ui mo e malohi*) for addressing family violence and, I would add, one that can inform psychological community praxis. The positive responses of participating families also reflected their renewed commitments to their spiritual faith as a pillar that they can depend on to keep their family relationships strong. Trusting in Christian promises and living faith in action is presented as providing strength and love to abstain from violence, and courage to cope with the issues of violence. Faith leaders shared the significance of their understandings of Christian faith as grounded within the safe space of the mat as a central locale for dialogue that is opened up in the programme to promote healing and restoration for families. The faith-cultural approach is embraced by participants as a powerful instrument of engagement because it is embedded in Tongan traditions and identity formations that have also been shaped by Christianity. Consequently, participants also shared their thoughts regarding how embracing Tongan traditions of dialogue and related Christian values facilitated the opening of a dynamic living relational space in the form of the programme within which they could come together and share mutual love, care, support, encouragement to change, and spiritual nourishment.

The *fala* (mat) was also metonymically symbolic of the opening up of a strong and powerful space that was necessary to enable participants to gain a sense of fellowship, of inclusion in the *kainga* (family), and to confront the actions of violent men whilst caring for one another during hard conversations. The faith-cultural approach of the programme provided a space where participating families and faith

leaders can enact their traditional cultural identities based on shared values and beliefs. Families spoke of how the mat enabled these positive human reconnections that are necessary for genuine dialogue to occur so that *kainga* could cultivate violence-free lives together. The *fala* (mat) also affords a space in which positive Tongan identities and values, which have also become anchored in Christian faith, can be articulated safely.

The practice of rolling out the mat and engaging in dialogue is also central to understanding the men's efforts to reflect on and reconsider their actions, the value of their *kainga* (families), and the importance of violence-free familial relationships. These men expressed and demonstrated a profound acceptance of the need to work with other family members to cultivate more harmonious and violence-free *kainga* relationships. The programme appears to have culminated in participating husbands and fathers being reawakened culturally to the need for them to contribute to the building of families with a stronger sense of security, safety, belonging, and mutual respect. It has resulted in families exhibiting a deeper sense of belief in the dreams and aspirations of our ancestors in migrating to "the land of milk and honey", and the inevitable sacrifices that were made in the process. Furthermore, the symbolic and practical application of *Koe makatu'unga mo'ui mo e malohi* is where families spoke of the need to foster a home environment reflecting the values and the language of 'ofa (love and compassion), *angafaka'apa'apa* (respect), and *fakamolemole* (forgiveness).

Participants also shared how the centralising of a culturally textured dialogical space on the mat led to them reflecting on not only their own *kainga* relationships, but also on how others might benefit from the programme. Furthermore, this faith-cultural programme opens a liminal enclave within which families can suspend aspects of the Tongan social hierarchy and in doing so engage in more open and honest *talanoa* about

violence. This enclave is opened through the interrelating of the concepts of *Kolo malu* and *kolo hufanga* so that participants can collaborate openly in the co-construction of a space and productive dialogue through which the work of transforming their familial relationships and practices can begin. The direction travelled is one that features the men in particular repenting and owning their violent actions, and committing to the safety and protection of family members in ways that promote peace, harmony, and respite. Accordingly, participating fathers demonstrated a commitment to transform their destructive disciplinary practices, and the need to reassess their priorities for and engagements with their *kainga* (families).

Husbands and wives also spoke together in ways that invoked their dedication to rebuilding stronger marriages based on '*ofa* '*au'fuato* (submission), '*ofa* (love/compassion), *angafakatokilalo* (humility) and *faka'apa'apa* (respect) towards each other. Likewise, children demonstrated how they were emotionally liberated during the programme to share their own perspectives and feelings regarding the violence. *Fofola e fala* created that safe and secure space (*koe kolo malu mo e hufanga*) for participating members of the *kainga* to voice their concerns and be heard. As the faith-based leaders have expressed, *fofola e fala* is symbolic of the great equaliser that enables and fosters the communal sharing of ideas and solutions.

Briefly, the interconnected notion of *Fa'utaha* was conceptualised by participants as building and fostering strong, unified, and harmonious family relationships through quality family time and spiritual devotion. *Fa'utaha* in essence encapsulates the depth of impact of the interweaving of Tongan indigenous knowledge and Christianity as practised within the programme, which is one that builds strong unified relationships through spending quality time together. Fathers were convinced of their need to prioritise building strong, resilient and unified families through precious

times of *lotu* (prayer) and family worship. The faith-cultural approach of the programme culminated in children being more aware of the sacrifices that their parents and forefathers have made to enable them and future generations to have a prosperous future in a new country. Consequently, a sense of emotional liberation was invoked in many participating children that enabled them to show more *‘ofa* (love), *hounga’ia* (gratitude), *faka’apa’apa* (respect), and *angafakatokilalo* (humility) towards their parents. Additionally, the Tongan notion of *fa’utaha* signifies the longing of every *kainga* member for a greater sense of love, unity, and togetherness within their *kainga* relationships. Fathers expressed their conviction of their need to contribute in nonviolent ways to cultivating strong, resilient, and unified families, and working collectively with the *kainga* to address the problems and issues of life that they face together. The promotion of unified and connected families within the programme also appears to function as a preventative measure against further family violence.

I would argue that the re-embedding of these faith-cultural values and principles amongst *kainga* relationships and in the home is an important step in preventing further family violence. It is a step well received by the research participants. I am aware that I have presented a very positive account of the programme and its impacts for participants. However, I also acknowledge that it is unlikely to have worked as well for everyone. Programme outcomes for people often do vary. However, the information I have is that in this case the programme is overwhelmingly positive for participants. Whether it remains effective over time is an open question that would require further work. As I note in relation to future research below, a more longitudinal focus will be necessary to fully substantiate whether or not this programme has ongoing positive impacts for *kainga*. Also worth noting here is that at the completion of the retreats, the

faith leaders were committed to continuing to support participating households, and it may be time to check in with the participants to see how this support has panned out.

## 5.2 Contributions to the Field of Family Violence and the Indigenising of

### Psychology

The positive and unique impacts on participating *kainga* of the programme supports the potential and value of this faith-based cultural approach for addressing violence amongst Tongan families (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b, 2023; Petersen, 2016; Zellerer, 2003). Admittances by participating fathers demonstrated their commitment to transform their destructive disciplinary practices. Further, the temporary suspension of the Tongan hierarchal structure that placed the father at the top allowed other *kainga* (family) members the freedom to openly voice their concerns on this often-taboo topic of violence and was a key aspect of rolling out the mat for dialogue. This demonstrates the importance of understanding the cultural context and relationality in working with *kainga* to address issues of violence.

Given the scarcity of previous research on the impact of faith-based and Pacific indigenous approaches for Pacific family violence prevention and intervention, I draw insights and connections from the family violence literature in general and studies of faith-based programmes in particular to further articulate my contribution to present knowledge. What is evident from my findings is that it is important to consider the potential of Christian faith and Pacific indigenous knowledge as central elements in efforts to address violence amongst Tongan and Pacific families. The findings also highlight how family violence intervention and prevention programmes could be developed further in ways that reflect, and are cognisant of, cultural norms, values, and relational practices. These issues have been raised in the global literature on faith-based responses to domestic violence, which also demonstrates the positive influence of



protection, hope, healing, and transformation for perpetrators and survivors of violence (see Asiasiga & Gray, 1998; Nason-Clark, 2009; Petersen, 2016; Ting & Panchanadeswaran, 2016).

As with conventional family violence programs, Western faith-based family violence programmes focus primarily on individual perpetrators and/or victims (Ofahengaue Vakalahi et al., 2008; Zellerer, 2003). This orientation is somewhat contrary to the cultural values and relational understandings of what it means to be a person of Tongan and Pacific descent because we emphasise collective and social responsibility within the *kainga* (families) (Finau, 2001; Mafile'o, 2005a; Thaman, 1995). Relationships within the *kainga* (family) are the essence of Tongan culture and worldview (Ka'ili, 2008; Kalavite, 2019; Moala, 2009; Thaman, 1995). This research demonstrates the utility of including such relational considerations in the design and delivery of family violence prevention programmes. Clearly the rights and safety of women and children who predominantly experience violence remain of paramount importance across both conventional Western and Tongan programmes. From a Tongan perspective any violence needs to be seen in the context of the *kainga* (family) as a whole and our shared responsibilities to live violence-free lives (*cf.*, Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b; Rankine et al., 2015; Rua et al., 2021). As such, patterns of violence ideally need to also be addressed collectively within the *kainga* and with support from the broader community and faith leaders. However, what should and does happen in actuality can be two different things. As such, formal projects such as the one explored in this research are invaluable in ensuring that *kainga* are aware of and practice their cultural and faith-based obligations towards non-violence. Within the collective unit of *kainga*, the relational approach advanced in this thesis can actually deepen a father's

personal ownership of his violent actions and acceptance of the negative impacts of his perpetuation of violence.

As noted in Chapter 1, I realise that this relational stance can be affronting to some scholar activists within the family violence field, and particularly those advocating for some feminist perspectives. I am aware of other approaches that have been developed for work within more individualised cultures (DeKeseredy & Dragiewicz, 2007; Hansen & Harway, 1993; Yllö & Bograd, 1988). Such work is clearly valuable in holding men to account for their actions and for working constructively with survivors. However, my primary task here is to outline a Tongan perspective that focuses on collective responsibilities. This relational focus is necessary culturally for realising lasting transformative change for Tongan perpetrators of violence. This stance is in no way intended to detract from the important work of other cultural groups and approaches. I would also emphasise that this Tongan cultural stance in no way exonerates men who have been violent for their actions. The positive accounts of *kainga* members participating in the *Kainga Tu'umalie* programme illustrates the potential impact of the collective approach to family violence prevention and intervention amongst Tongan and Pacific communities. It also highlights the significance of such faith-based cultural approaches in holding men to account as well as offering avenues for the *kainga* (families) to move collectively forward towards violence-free lives together.

This Tongan approach to addressing family violence is supported by the work of scholar activists from other indigenous cultures. For example, Zellerer (2003) conducted the first family violence programme for Native American men in prison in North America and argues that developing culturally responsive programmes is crucial for addressing family violence effectively. Such culturally responsive programmes

break somewhat from the dominant practice of working with individual perpetrators in isolation and offer more holistic strategies that involve broader family and community groups and also incorporate the mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of both victims and perpetrators. Zellerer also foregrounds the importance of including indigenous facilitators as part of these programmes because conventional programmes are generally staffed by white, middle-class professionals who do not understand our relational structures, practices, and behavioural expectations. Along similar lines, Puchala and colleagues (2010) employed aspects of indigenous North American spirituality to reduce domestic violence within First Nations communities. Their initiative was presented as an effective alternative to what was perceived to be the overreliance on medication and the medicalising of family violence that features in many conventional programmes to this day.

In the context of emergent culturally focused approaches such as those above, my PhD project affirms the utility of a Tongan stance on family violence and how we might respond more effectively with *kainga*. It also draws from a perspective advanced by several Pacific scholars that family violence is a societal and relational issue that is intensified by the loss for some families of foundational cultural values of ‘*ofa* (love and compassion), *tauhi va* (nurturing loving and harmonious relationships), *angafakatokilalo* (humble heart), and *angafaka ’apa ’apa* (respectful heart) in familial relationships (Ah Siu-Maliko, 2016a, 2016b; Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b; Jansen et al., 2012).

Moreover, the significance of my research is highlighted by the addition of new indigenous knowledge constructs that can be applied in psychology research and action with Tongan people. This is demonstrated by the three intersecting Tongan-indigenous cultural concepts of *Ko e makatu ’unga mo ’ui mo e malohi* (a powerful and living

platform); *Koe kolo malu mo e hufanga* (a place of safety & refuge), and *Fa'utaha* (unity/harmony/peace). The interconnectedness of these constructs to *Fofola e fala* is vital for effective engagements with Tongan families in violence-prevention programmes. My documenting of the effective use of these constructs in the programme under study also adds to the prominence of Pacific knowledge in extending present understandings of how our discipline can respond to pressing socio-psychological issues, including family violence. It also demonstrates the utility of Tongan faith-cultural knowledge as a basis for the restorative healing practices that are integral to the *Kainga Tu'umalie* (prosperous families) programme. The unpacking, articulation and documentation of key intersecting Tongan concepts are also more broadly foundational to the articulation and further refinement of a Tongan psychology that is yet to be fully expressed in the increasingly diverse global discipline of psychology (Hodgetts et al., 2020). As is the case for other indigenous groups, such as Māori (Rua et al., 2021), the development of such psychologies is part of a broader decolonising project in psychology (Decolonial Psychology Editorial Collective, 2021; Guimarães, 2020; Yang, 2000) that, in this case, is crucial for extending knowledge of, and responses to the pressing social issues we face today as Tongan and Pacific communities (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b, 2023). In terms of the contribution my doctorate makes to existing knowledge, it is crucial to note that the Christian faith has become part of the core value systems of Pacific cultures (Havea, 2011; Kavaliku, 2007; Siataga, 2001; Tiatia, 2008). It cannot be ignored or reduced to a colonial imposition because we have in many respects Tonganised Christianity and made it our own. As shown in the findings of my research, Christian faith is at the core of Tongan ways of being, knowing the self, and relating to others. As such, it is implicated with various other factors in how we can

respond to and eventually overcome pressing challenges for families experiencing violence.

In centralising issues of culture in ways that resonate with Tongan and Pacific families, this PhD also contributes to the indigenisation and pluralising of psychology (Adair et al., 1999; Alefaio-Tugia, 2018; Groot et al., 2012; Henrich et al., 2010; Hodgetts et al., 2020). Within the context of my PhD, indigenising psychology is about embracing the importance of culture, and Tongan people being able to see our own unique legacy knowledge, concepts, values, ways of being, and relational practices in the programmes with which we engage, and how we are written about in scholarly publications (Adair et al., 1999; Alefaio-Tugia, 2018; Groot et al., 2012; Henrich et al., 2010; Nikora, 2014). My approach to this broader agenda does not discard the value of facets of thought that came to Tongan people with colonisation, and which are also evident in our fledgling engagements with the discipline of psychology.

The Christian church is also increasingly recognised in New Zealand as a central avenue through which psychologists can engage with Pacific families around issues of family violence and culturally informed responses to it (Alefaio-Tugia & Havea, 2016; Capstick et al., 2009; Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b; Rankine et al., 2015). The findings of the present study speak to the importance of indigenous Tongan and Christian concepts in efforts to heal and restore *kainga* (families). Additionally, given that Christian churches constitute much of the soul of Tongan culture today (Halapua, 1997; Havea, 2011), the influence of faith leaders in Tongan communities provides the platform to explore how the use of faith-based strategies within a Tongan indigenous framework extends our knowledge of and responses to family violence. My PhD research shows that it makes a lot of sense culturally and practically to draw on the capacities of families and church communities to develop and implement programmes that have

positive impacts for Tongan families (Alefaio-Tugia & Havea, 2016; Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b). The connectivity shared between Tongan culture and Christian faith creates a familiar and effective platform for families to *talanoa* on key issues of family violence. Correspondingly, *kainga* participant accounts regarding the importance of faith and church communities in the *Kainga Tu'umalie* programme are also consistent with the more general literature on faith-based responses to family violence. Research in this area readily acknowledges the important role that faith-based communities play in providing opportunities for healing and restoration for both victims and perpetrators of violence (Asiasiga & Gray, 1998; Johnson, 2015; Zust et al., 2018). Also consistent with participant accounts is the finding that the involvement in faith communities can serve as a protective factor against family violence (Beautrais et al., 2005; Ellison et al., 2007; Finau, 1982; Rankine et al., 2015).

Although Tongan epistemologies, cosmologies, and relational ethics remain marginal to WEIRD psychologies, the cultural indigenous approach of my research does relate with community-grounded or “bottom-up” relational orientations that are evident in participative approaches and community-oriented psychologies (Akom, 2011; Hodgetts et al., 2020; Sonn et al., 2019). Globally dominant WEIRD psychologies (Henrich et al., 2010) are often applied in a top-down manner (Allwood & Berry, 2006; Rua et al., 2021) across a range of contexts in the pursuit of universal laws and replicability in research findings. This has often been done with limited regard for local cultural worldviews and indigenous psychologies or ways of understanding people and our relationships with one another (Alefaio-Tugia, 2018; Anae, 2010, 2019; Hodgetts et al., 2020; Nikora, 2014). Such practices are now openly questioned in psychology (Fernández et al., 2021; Guimarães, 2019; Li et al., 2020).

Moreover, this PhD contributes to the re-indigenising of psychology by centralising the importance of culture to advancing the knowledge of and responses to complex social psychological concerns (Adair et al., 1999; Groot et al., 2012; Henrich et al., 2010). I have also worked consciously to ensure that my interpretation of participant accounts would resonate with Tongan and Pacific *kainga* (families') understandings of themselves, their relationships, issues such as family violence, and how we might respond effectively. Correspondingly, the findings of my research are consistent with literature supporting renewed acknowledgement of people's cultural worldviews, ways of being and relating to others, and embodied and profoundly relational value systems which are critical to our psychologies as Pacific peoples (Alefaio-Tugia, 2018; Anae, 2019; Hofstede, 1997; Nikora, 2014; Thaman, 2003).

Given the increasing influence of psychology in diverse communities globally that feature variations in cultures, religions, languages and worldviews, it has become even more important to develop culturally and practically responsive disciplinary orientations (Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Li et al, 2020). The findings of the present study also align with Kaholokula and colleagues' (2018) argument that the interpersonal, sociocultural and socioeconomic realities of Pacific peoples need to be incorporated in any health and social intervention programmes, and how these are theorised and researched. Further, there is an urgent call from both Pacific and non-Pacific researchers and practitioners to centralise Pacific knowledge and practices in research, and attempts to address social and health issues that impact our communities (Anae 2019; Asiasiga & Gray, 1998; Mila, 2016; Mokuau, 1999; Rankine et al., 2015; Taufe'ulungaki, 2006; Thaman, 2003). Specifically, within psychology there are also prominent calls for fostering greater cultural competence for psychologists engaging with diverse cultural communities (Hays & Iwamasa, 2006; Li et al., 2020; Lopez &

Bursztyn, 2013; Rua et al., 2021). This PhD offers a worked example of the articulation, embedding and mobilisation of Tongan values and relational values in a collective effort to address family violence that may be of use when training psychologists to work more effectively with such population groups.

Further, my PhD research contributes to this inclusive praxis or action-orientated agenda, and supports disciplinary shifts towards inclusion by reflecting methodologically and practically on a culturally immersive approach to conducting and documenting a Tongan family violence programme. I have demonstrated the utility of mobilising Tongan cosmology, cultural concepts and associated relational practices in the conduct and documenting (researching) of this culturally responsive approach to family violence (*cf.*, Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b, 2023). The development of such participative approaches that are embedded within a Tongan cultural worldview and associated relational practices is central to enhancing knowledge of, and responding in a culturally-informed way to violence with Tongan families. As asserted in Chapter 2 for example, Tongan people are practical people who value meaningful relationships, dialogue, and participation in knowledge production and sharing. For Tongan people, knowledge production is predominantly engaged in as a means of informing and enhancing actions to address significant issues such as family violence (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b, 2023).

A key dimension in my intention to conduct this PhD was a desire to contribute to the development of culturally informed methods of knowledge production and practice in psychology. This includes positioning the storied Tongan beings in our communities as primary knowledge holders and engaging with them to contribute to documenting the application of core Tongan values of care and relational practices that are central to our traditions of knowledge production and ways of addressing complex



social issues (*cf.*, Fernández et al., 2021; Havea et al., 2023). It is crucial that we document such processes now as a means of informing the further development of Tongan psychology by future generations.

In outlining a Tongan approach, I emphasise that this is not a rigid model for conducting praxis-based research with Tongan people. What I am proposing is that within the Tongan culture there are dynamic relationships between family members and with the broader community that need to be respected in any programmatic response to issues of violence (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b; Rankine et al., 2015). The everyday conduct of positive familial relationships within Tongan culture offers a sound, strengths-oriented, and mutually respectful ontological basis for engaging families in addressing issues of violence in ways that are culturally recognisable to them. These relationships are founded on notions of equality and collective responsibilities towards mutual care and support. A focus on restoring such relationships enables us to draw upon the potential of the *kainga* (family) members through *talanoa* (open dialogue), as a basis of drawing participants into shared decision-making processes with mobilised community supports for change (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b).

### 5.3 Future Directions and Concluding Thoughts

In conclusion, my PhD research highlights the importance and potential of cultural and spiritual considerations in addressing violence amongst Tongan families. I have foregrounded the need for culturally oriented approaches through which Tongan and perhaps other indigenous communities can work through such issues on their own terms (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b, 2023; Pulotu-Endemann & Faleafa, 2017). This is consistent with the community-grounded relational orientations that are evident in participative approaches and community-oriented psychologies (Akom, 2011; Hodgetts et al., 2020; Sonn et al., 2019). It is my hope that my PhD research foregrounds the

utility of working with local cultural worldviews and indigenous ways of being to address family violence (Alefaio-Tugia, 2018; Anae, 2010, 2019; Hodgetts et al., 2020). I have highlighted some of the perceptions of faith leaders who are working within the *Fofola e fala* framework and in doing so have demonstrated the importance of creating spaces for care and respite through which issues of violence can be dialogued and addressed. I have also underscored some of the transformational narratives of participating *kainga* (family) members from within the safe and culturally appropriate space that the programme under study constructed with them. It is in this space that *kainga* could pause, reflect upon, and then commit to moving towards violence-free lives. This PhD also highlights the significance of partnerships between community service organisations and faith communities. The collaboration between Affirming Works and Tongan church communities affirms the importance of such partnerships and is consistent with the growing global literature highlighting the importance of community networks in addressing domestic violence (Drumm et al., 2018; Petersen, 2016; Ting and Panchanadeswaran, 2016).

Briefly, it is my hope that this study will not only contribute to policy and practice, but also add to improved collaborations amongst Pacific scholar activists, government agencies, community services, and Pacific churches. This research is intended to foreground the importance of developing spaces for meaningful *talanoa* amongst individuals, *kainga* (families), church communities, policy makers, and social practitioners on how our Tongan/Pacific indigenous and faith-based approaches can curtail the devastating impact of violence amongst Pacific families and communities.

In some respects what I have presented regarding the efficacy of the inaugural Tongan family violence programme could be interpreted as a template for use with all Tongan communities and across different contexts. This is not my intent, and future

research needs to explore the transferability of the programme outlined in this research and my analysis of the experiences of the Tongans involved. It is also important to point out that there is no perfect intervention or research strategy in this space. What is evident is the power of culture in engaging *kainga* (families) in meaningful dialogue for change. However, how Tongan relational values and practices are utilised in other programmes and contexts needs to remain nimble and adaptive to the needs of those involved. An issue raised by participants in the inaugural programme was the longevity and scale of the programme. Participants were very keen to see the programme continue and be scaled up to reach more *kainga* (families) in a larger effort to address the issues of violence in our communities. I share a belief in this imperative, and it is one of the reasons that I will complete this PhD with a policy brief for the Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Pacific Peoples that hold responsibility for the development and resourcing of such interventions. This was done in recognition of ongoing concerns regarding the resourcing and sustainability of such programmes (Alefaio-Tugia & Havea, 2016). There is also a pressing need for training to ensure some consistency in the facilitative practices of faith leaders to ensure we are engaging with the full complexities that violence brings to *kainga* (families) (Drumm et al., 2018; Ringel & Bina, 2007).

### 5.3.1 Policy Brief

#### Title

*Fa'utaha*: Fostering Harmony for Tongan Families Through a Cultural Response to Family Violence

#### Key Messages/Summary

- A Pacific-indigenous faith-based approach is required in addressing violence amongst Tongan *kainga* (families);
- Combating violence for Pacific communities requires a collective approach;
- Collaborative partnerships between Pacific churches as Faith hubs are needed to enable positive change with Pacific families.

#### Introduction

Family violence is reaching epidemic proportions, including within Pacific communities. This policy brief is based on my doctoral research into a community-developed cultural response to family violence prevention. It showcases the fusion of Tongan cultural knowledge and Christian faith as a basis for addressing violence within Tongan families. The core aim of this brief is to highlight the transformational impact of family violence prevention and intervention programmes informed and developed by the faith-cultural values, norms, and practices of Tongan and Pacific peoples.

The PhD study was built on previous applied research with a Tongan faith-based family violence programme called *Kainga Tu'umalie*, a Tongan concept which translates as “prosperous families”. It is a concept which transcends material wealth but emphasises holistic prosperity in family, spirit, mind, body, and soul among Tongan people. This programme was developed by Emeline Afeaki-Mafile'o of Affirming Works (an Auckland-based social service provider) and delivered in collaboration with Tongan Christian churches of Auckland. The programme originated from a partnership between the Ministry of Social Development (2012) and the seven main Pacific ethnic

communities of New Zealand. Further, this programme was developed in response to this partnership and building on *Nga Vaka o Kainga Tapu* (The Sailing Vessels of Sacred Families) conceptual framework to address violence amongst Pacific families and communities.

This PhD study involved identifying and conceptualising Tongan cultural concepts in relation to *Fofola e fala ka e talanoa e kainga* (roll out the mats so the family can dialogue), which provided the practice framework that underpins the programme in question. The cultural framework blends Christian values and embedded aspects of Tongan culture. Specifically, the PhD aimed to extend knowledge of the dynamics of Tongan families and communities which enable them to live violence-free and to develop their relationships in accordance with the faith-cultural principles of ‘*ofa* (love/compassion), *tauhi va* (cultivating healthy relationships), *faka’apa’apa* (respect), and *angafakatokilalo* (humble heart).

More specifically, the study involved community leaders from four Tongan churches and 49 families (equating to approximately 230 individuals) participating in the *Kainga Tu’umalie* programme over four weekend retreats. The idea behind the retreats was to offer families some respite from the stresses and pressures of everyday life and to provide a neutral and safe space within which they could relax and enjoy time away together. Additionally, the retreat was intended to encourage receptiveness to learning more about and openness to share the highs and lows of family life. The retreat consisted of both formal and informal interactions involving vibrant and interactive workshops on key topics including family violence and fun activities such as sports and games allowing *kainga* (families) to connect and enjoy time together.

The author of the PhD was culturally immersed and fully participated in the retreats enabling the development of culturally safe rapport, mutual trust, and respect which facilitated authentic participation by families in an open, honest, and deeply reflective manner. The cultural immersion by the primary researcher also provided opportunities for further formal *talanoa* (dialogue) and cultural collaboration with seven community

and faith leaders as well as three families as exemplars of participant experiences of the programme. These research *talanoa* were carried out post retreat to enable *kainga* (families) to reflect on the impact of the programme on their relationships and everyday lives.

## **Evidence and Analysis**

Core findings from this research are encapsulated by the three intersecting Tongan-indigenous cultural concepts of *Ko e makatu'unga mo'ui mo e malohi* (a powerful and living platform); *Koe kolo malu mo e hufanga* (a place of safety and refuge), and *Fa'utaha* (unity/harmony/peace). These concepts were identified by participating faith leaders and *kainga* (families) and were mobilised to deepen our shared understanding of the intent and impacts of the *Kainga Tu'umalie* programme. Moreover, these concepts represent the interweaving of faith and Tongan indigenous knowledge as symbolised by the *fofola e fala* framework. These three interconnected concepts embody the repentant hearts of participating families and faith leaders and can be used with care to reignite a deep and genuine sense of longing and desire for renewal and cultivation of violence-free familial relationships. These concepts also capture the reported positive impacts of the programme on families' commitment to engage in the transformation of their everyday patterns of communication and behaviour in the direction of cultivating more harmonious relationships and environments where all *kainga* members are able to flourish and thrive.

This shift involved the coaching of *kainga* members around how to model the core values of '*ofa* (love/compassion), *tauhi va* (cultivating healthy relationships), *faka'apa'apa* (respect), and *angafakatokilalo* (humble heart) in their everyday lives. *Koe makatu'unga mo'ui mo e malohi* is reflective of how aspects of Tongan culture and Christian faith are interwoven in the practical experiences of participants as a powerful living platform for familial transformation and flourishing. *Koe kolo malu mo e hufanga* is depicted by faith leaders and families as a space of safety and refuge that transforms familial relationships and practices. The notion of *Fa'utaha* is visualised by participating families and leaders as building and fostering strong, unified and harmonious family relationships through quality time and spiritual devotion.

This PhD research shows the significance of Tongan faith-cultural values and approaches in addressing violence amongst Tongan *kainga* (families). The efficacy of the process of *Fofola e fala ka e talanoa e kainga* (laying out the mat so families can dialogue) was evident in participating families gaining access to a culturally safe space where they could openly discuss family violence and how they planned to address it in a transparent way. The mat also represented a strong and resilient platform for families to gain a strong sense of identity, trust, love, and emotional connectedness. Further, *Fofola e fala* was symbolic of a sanctuary for nurturing and cultivating strong, unified, and harmonious family relationships through ongoing quality family time and spiritual devotion. These findings suggest the significance and potential impact of adopting Pacific-indigenous and faith-based approaches in addressing violence amongst Tongan and Pacific families.

Results from the PhD research (Havea et al., 2021a, 2021b, 2023) also highlight the need for more research to be directed towards supporting the development and delivery of such indigenous and faith-based responses to family violence. This need is reinforced by the sparsity of previous research exploring the impacts of such approaches for reducing Tongan and Pacific family violence. Previous research reports, government policy, and strategic documents have pointed to the significance of Christian faith for Pacific communities. It is now time to study the impacts of faith-based programmes in addressing pressing social issues such as family violence and to consider the further resourcing and scaling up of initiatives such as the *Kainga Tu'umalie* programme.

The present PhD foregrounds considerable potential in working with our faith-based and cultural values to address patterns of violence collectively within the *kainga* (families), and with support from the wider communities. The involvement of the families and related Christian congregations is important in violence prevention and intervention for most Tongan families because such inclusions come with meaningful existing relationships that often serve as a shield of protection, accountability, and support for families experiencing violence. This research highlights how the collective

relationships within the key social organisations of family and church for Pacific cultures are important resources and preventative factors against family violence.

Conventional family violence programmes are still based primarily on an individualised model of practice that gives no consideration to fundamental differences in gender, class, and culture. In contrast, our Tongan and Pacific cultures prioritise the collectivist and relational considerations. Relationships within the *kainga* (family) structure are pivotal in Tongan culture and worldview and need to be included as design considerations within family violence prevention programmes. The findings of this PhD add further weight to the importance of adopting a collective approach and culturally informed strategies in combating violence amongst Tongan and Pacific families. This research foregrounds the significance of providing culturally appropriate approaches in services addressing family violence where the unique worldviews of different cultures are taken into consideration.

This study also reveals the significance of collaborative partnerships between community service organisations and Tongan church communities that leverage off their respective capacities and resources to bring healing, restoration, hope and transformation to *kainga* affected by family violence. The involvement of church leaders in the programme was particularly significant. The influence of faith leaders in Tongan communities provided a platform to explore how faith-based strategies within a Tongan framework can extend our knowledge of and responses to family violence.

The findings of the PhD suggest that because this inaugural Tongan family violence programme is immersed in the Tongan worldview, it may well prove effective with other Tongan communities. However, further research would need to accompany any effort to scale up the programme for use in other contexts. Our recommendation for the scaling up and continued evaluation of the programme comes directly from participating faith leaders and *kainga* who raised issues regarding the sustainability and accessibility of the programme for other *kainga* that they felt would also benefit from the programme. This feedback is testament to the positive impact of this faith-based



indigenous programme that works with the cultural strengths of Tongan people to affect positive changes in behaviour.

Relatedly, the key issue of resourcing and sustainability is an ongoing challenge for these types of programmes. As has been identified in the literature, one of the ways that these programmes could be improved is to provide additional training for faith leaders in dealing with the complexities associated with family violence. Such training would need to be central to the future scaling of the programme, if this is to eventuate. Such further development of the programme would require the careful management of collaborations amongst Pacific scholar activists, government agencies, community services, and Pacific church communities. A key impediment to such collaborations is how current government funding models have resulted in divisions among the community service organisations and faith-based communities who have come to see themselves as being in competition for scarce resources. As such, any future collaboration would need to start with *talanoa* and the recultivation of trust between different service providers and church communities. Our shared interests in cultivating nonviolent *kainga* hold the key to cultivating such trust. However, this will need to be managed sensitively and in accordance with Tongan cultural practices.

## **Policy Implications and Recommendations**

Given the findings of this PhD research, further recommendations include:

1. Review and develop tailored prevention and intervention family violence programmes that adopt Tongan and Pacific cultural frameworks and faith-cultural values that assert love, compassion, gentleness, and collective healing and restoration in family relationships;
2. Review and develop current programmes to provide opportunities for funding collaboration within Pacific faith communities, and strengthening collaboration between Pacific faith communities, Pacific community service organisations, and mainstream family violence organisations;
3. Provide training opportunities for faith leaders and practitioners within Pacific faith-based initiatives to strengthen collaboration between initiatives,

faith communities, and mainstream family violence prevention organisations;

4. Review and strengthen collaboration amongst key policy agents (such as the Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry for Pacific Peoples) and Tongan and Pacific families and communities in integrating church and faith as valuable resources into their policies and strategic priorities regarding violence-free families and communities;
5. Acknowledgement by policy makers and funders that Pacific faith-based initiatives are partners in family violence prevention and intervention, to ensure that Pacific faith-based representation is included in policy, strategy development, and key events relating to family violence.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Talanoa Guide with Families

#### Schedule of Questions to guide Talanoa with Tongan Kainga (Families)

##### Personal

1. What are your own hopes and dreams for your families? *Ko e ha e ngaahi taumu 'a moe visone 'o ku ke faka'amu ke a'usia 'e ho'o famili?*
2. What does your faith mean to you? *Ko e ha hono mahu'inga 'a ho'o tui faka-Kalisitiane kiate koe?*
3. How does your faith influence/impact on the way that you relate to your spouse/children? *Ko e ha e felave'i 'a ho'o tui faka-Kalisitiane pea mo e founa ho'o tauhi ki ho hoa pea mo ho'o fanau?*
4. How does your faith influence your attitude towards violence? *Ko e ha e felave'i 'a ho'o tui faka-Kalisitiane pea mo ho'o tu'unga fakakaukau ki he fakamamahi/houtamaki (violence) 'i he ngaahi famili?*

##### Kainga Tu'umalie (Prosperous Families) Programme

5. How did you find the retreat and follow up sessions? *Na'e fefe ho'omou ongo'i ki he retreat pea mo e ngaahi follow up sessions?*
6. What were the sessions that you found most helpful to you individually or as a family? *Ko e ha e ngaahi kaveinga na'e 'aonga lahi kiate koe fakafo'ituitui pe pehe foki kia tekimoutolu fakalukufua?*
7. Was there anything that you thought could have been improved? *Na'e 'I ai ha me'a 'i he polokalama na'ake/na'amou pehe 'oku fiema'u ke to e fakalelei'i?*
8. How has the programme so far influenced the way that you relate to your spouse and children? *Ko e ha ha me'a 'oku ala tokoni atu ai 'a e polokalama ke to e lelei ange 'a ho'o tauhi ki ho hoa mo ho'o fanau?*
9. How has the programme influenced/impacted your attitude towards family violence? *Ko e ha ho'o fakakaukau ki he family violence hili ko ia 'a e ngaahi polokalama 'I he Kainga Tu'umalie (KT) retreats?*
10. What are your thoughts on the use of the Tongan metaphor 'Fofola e fala...' as a conceptual framework for the prevention of family violence? *Hange ko ia ku oke/kuo mou 'osi lave'i, koe taha e founa/motolo 'oku ngaue'aki 'e he polokalama*

*KT ko 'etau founga ko ia ko e 'Fofola e fala ka e talanoa e Kainga'; Koe ha ho'o/ho'omou fakakaukau ki hono ngaue 'aki 'a e founga ko 'eni 'I hono fakalotolahi'i e ngaahi kainga ke to e lelei ange 'a e fepotalanoa'aki mo femahino'aki 'i honau ngaahi famili, tautautefito ki ha ngaahi founga ke matu'aki ta'ofi ai 'a e houtamaki (violence) 'I he ngaahi famili?*

11. What are your thoughts on providing a family violence prevention programme from a faith-based setting/perspective? *Ko e ha nai 'a ho'o fakakaukau ki hono ngaue'aki 'e he polokalama 'KT' 'a e ngaahi founga fakalaumalie ki hono langa hake mo hono tauhi 'o e ngaahi va 'I he famili, tautautefito ki hono malu'i 'a e famili mei he houtamaki (violence)?*
12. Is there anything else you would like to share? *'Oku to e 'i ai ha me'a kehe 'oku ke tokanga ki ai?*

## Appendix 2: Talanoa Guide with Leaders

### Personal

1. What are your own hopes and dreams for your families? *Ko e ha e ngaahi taumu'a moe visone 'o ku ke faka'amu ke a'usia 'e ho famili?*
2. What does faith mean to you? *Ko e ha hono mahu'inga 'a ho'o tui faka-Kalisitiane kiate koe?*
3. How does your faith influence/impact on the way that you relate to your spouse/children? *Ko e ha e felave'i 'a ho'o tui faka-Kalisitiane pea mo e founa ho'o tauhi ki ho hoa pea mo ho'o fanau?*
4. How does your faith influence your attitude towards violence? *Ko e ha e felave'i 'a ho'o tui faka-Kalisitiane pea mo ho'o tu'unga fakakaukau ki he fakamamahi/houtamaki (violence) 'I he ngaahi famili?*

### Vision for the Congregation

5. What are your hopes and dreams for your congregation? *Ko e ha e ngaahi taumu'a mo e visone 'o ku ke faka'amu ke a'usia 'e ho kainga lotu?*
6. How has the retreat programme and the follow up sessions impacted on your relationships with the families in your congregation? *Ko e ha ha ola 'o e 'retreat'/workshops ko 'eni 'i ho va mo ho'o kainga lotu?*
7. How do you see your role in terms of providing on-going support for the prevention of family violence? *Ko e ha ha ngaahi founa te ke ngaue'aki ke hokohoko atu hono ta'ofi pe malu'i e kainga lotu mei he violence?*

### Kainga Tu'umalie (Prosperous Families) Programme

8. How did you find the retreat and follow up sessions? *Na'e fefe ho'o ongo'i ki he retreat pea mo e ngaahi follow up sessions?*
9. What are some of the changes that you have witnessed with the families that have participated in the Kainga Tu'umalie (KT) programme? *'Oku ke lava 'o sio ki ha ngaahi liliu 'I he ngaahi famili na'e kau ki he polokalama KT? How has that impacted on other families who were unable to participate in the programme? 'Oku fefe 'a e ongo'i 'a e ngaahi famili na'e 'ikai ke nau kau ki he polokalama?*

10. How has the programme so far influenced/impacted the way that you relate to your spouse and children? *Ko e ha ha me'a 'oku ala tokoni atu ai 'a e polokalama ke to e lelei ange 'a ho'o tauhi ki ho hoa mo ho'o fanau?*
11. How has the programme influenced/impacted your attitude towards family violence? *Ko e ha ho'o fakakaukau ki he family violence hili ko ia 'a e ngaahi polokalama 'i he Kainga Tu'umalie (KT) retreats?*
12. What are your thoughts of providing family violence intervention and strengthening families from a faith-based setting/perspective? *Ko e ha nai ho'o fakakaukau ki hono ngaue'aki 'e he Kainga Tu'umalie (KT) e ngaahi founa fakalaumalie ki hono langa hake 'a e ngaahi famili pea mo hono ta'ota'ofi e family violence?*
13. What are your thoughts on the use of the Tongan metaphor 'Fofola e fala...' as a conceptual framework for encouraging dialogue including the prevention of family violence? *Koe taha e founa 'oku ngaue 'aki 'e he polokalama KT ko 'etau founa Fakatonga koi a ko e 'Fofola e fala ka e talanoa e Kainga', koe ha ho'o fakakaukau ki hono ngaue 'aki 'a e founa ko 'eni 'I hono fakalotolahi'I e ngaahi family ken au fepotalanoa'aki mo femahino'aki pea mo hono ta'ota'ofi 'o e family violence?*
14. Is there anything else you would like to share? *'Oku to e 'i ai ha me'a kehe 'oku ke tokanga ki ai?*



## Appendix 3: Ethics Approval Letter



Date: 07 March 2017

Dear Sesimani Havea

Re: Ethics Notification - 4000017340 - Tongan Indigenous approaches to kainga (family) restoration and wellbeing.

**NB:** Please note that in regards to question 2, I'm working from an existing research corpus and I will not be collecting more data.

Thank you for your notification which you have assessed as Low Risk.

Your project has been recorded in our system which is reported in the Annual Report of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee.

The low risk notification for this project is valid for a maximum of three years.

If situations subsequently occur which cause you to reconsider your ethical analysis, please go to <http://rims.massey.ac.nz> and register the changes in order that they be assessed as safe to proceed.

Please note that travel undertaken by students must be approved by the supervisor and the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and be in accordance with the Policy and Procedures for Course-Related Student Travel Overseas. In addition, the supervisor must advise the University's Insurance Officer.

**A reminder to include the following statement on all public documents:**

*"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 in this document are 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(s), please contact Dr Brian Finch, Director - Ethics, telephone 06 3569099 ext 86015, email [humanethics@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethics@massey.ac.nz).*

Please note, if a sponsoring organisation, funding authority or a journal in which you wish to publish requires evidence of committee approval (with an approval number), you will have to complete the application form again, answering "yes" to the publication question to provide more information for one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. You should also note that such an approval can only be provided prior to the commencement of the research.

Yours sincerely

Research Ethics Office, Research and Enterprise  
Massey University, Private Bag 11 222, Palmerston North, 4442, New Zealand T 06 951 6841; 06 95106840  
E [humanethics@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethics@massey.ac.nz); [animalethics@massey.ac.nz](mailto:animalethics@massey.ac.nz); [glc@massey.ac.nz](mailto:glc@massey.ac.nz)

## Appendix 4: Consent Forms



### ***Formative Evaluation of Strengths-Based Approaches to Pasifika Family Well-being***

#### **KAINGA TU'UMALIE PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM**

I/We have had the details of the study explained to me. My/Our questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I/We agree/do not agree to the sessions being sound recorded.

I/We wish/do not wish to have my recordings returned to me.

I/We agree to participate in this study under the conditions that have been explained to me.

Signature (On the Date:  
behalf of the  
family) \_\_\_\_\_  
Full Name -  
printed \_\_\_\_\_

***Tongan Ethnic-Specific Approaches to Family  
Restoration***

**KAINGA TU'UMALIE PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM**

I/We have had the details of the study explained to me. My/Our questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.



I/We agree/do not agree to the sessions being sound recorded.

I/We wish/do not wish to have my recordings returned to me.

I/We agree to participate in this study under the conditions that have been explained to me.

Signature (On Date:  
behalf of the  
family) \_\_\_\_\_  
Full Name -  
printed \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 5: Statements of Contribution Doctorate with Publications/Manuscripts

 			
STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTION DOCTORATE WITH PUBLICATIONS/MANUSCRIPTS			
We, the student and the student's main supervisor, certify that all co-authors have consented to their work being included in the thesis and they have accepted the student's contribution as indicated below in the Statement of Originality.			
Student name:	Sesimani Havea		
Name and title of main supervisor:	Professor Darrin Hodgetts		
In which chapter is the manuscript/published work?	2		
What percentage of the manuscript/published work was contributed by the student?	80		
Describe the contribution that the student has made to the manuscript/published work: Candidate conducted all original research, drafted the article, and was completely involved in the collaborative editing, re-drafting, and re-writing processes during the completion of this article.			
Please select one of the following three options:			
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<b>The manuscript/published work is published or in press</b> Please provide the full reference of the research output: Havea, S., Alefaio-Tugia, S., & Hodgetts, D. (In press). Drawing wisdom from the Pacific: A Tongan participative approach to exploring and addressing family violence. <i>Qualitative Research in Psychology</i> .		
<input type="radio"/>	<b>The manuscript is currently under review for publication</b> Please provide the name of the journal:		
<input type="radio"/>	<b>It is intended that the manuscript will be published, but it has not yet been submitted to a journal</b>		
Student's signature:	Sesimani Havea <small>Digitally signed by Sesimani Havea Date: 2023.02.15 15:53:30 +13'00'</small>	Main supervisor's signature:	Professor Darrin Hodgetts <small>Digitally signed by Professor Darrin Hodgetts Date: 2023.02.16 08:07:11 +13'00'</small>
This form should be placed at the beginning of each relevant thesis chapter.			

## STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTION DOCTORATE WITH PUBLICATIONS/MANUSCRIPTS

We, the student and the student's main supervisor, certify that all co-authors have consented to their work being included in the thesis and they have accepted the student's contribution as indicated below in the Statement of Originality.			
Student name:	Sesimani Havea		
Name and title of main supervisor:	Professor Darrin Hodgetts		
In which chapter is the manuscript/published work?	3		
What percentage of the manuscript/published work was contributed by the student?	80		
Describe the contribution that the student has made to the manuscript/published work: Candidate conducted all original research, drafted the article, and was completely involved in the collaborative editing, re-drafting, and re-writing processes during the completion of this article.			
Please select one of the following three options:			
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	The manuscript/published work is published or in press Please provide the full reference of the research output: Havea, S., Alefaio-Tugia, S., & Hodgetts, D. (2021). Fofola e fala ka e talanoa e kainga: A Tongan approach to family violence prevention and intervention. <i>Journal of Pacific Rim Psychology</i> , 15. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1177/18344909211040866">https://doi.org/10.1177/18344909211040866</a>		
<input type="radio"/>	The manuscript is currently under review for publication Please provide the name of the journal:		
<input type="radio"/>	It is intended that the manuscript will be published, but it has not yet been submitted to a journal		
Student's signature:	Sesimani Havea Digitally signed by Sesimani Havea Date: 2023.02.15 15:53:30 +13'00'	Main supervisor's signature:	Professor Darrin Hodgetts Digitally signed by Professor Darrin Hodgetts Date: 2023.02.16 08:08:12 +13'00'
This form should be placed at the beginning of each relevant thesis chapter.			

## STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTION DOCTORATE WITH PUBLICATIONS/MANUSCRIPTS

We, the student and the student's main supervisor, certify that all co-authors have consented to their work being included in the thesis and they have accepted the student's contribution as indicated below in the Statement of Originality.			
Student name:	Sesimani Havea		
Name and title of main supervisor:	Professor Darrin Hodgetts		
In which chapter is the manuscript/published work?	4		
What percentage of the manuscript/published work was contributed by the student?	80		
Describe the contribution that the student has made to the manuscript/published work: Candidate conducted all original research, drafted the article, and was completely involved in the collaborative editing, re-drafting, and re-writing processes during the completion of this article.			
Please select one of the following three options:			
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	The manuscript/published work is published or in press Please provide the full reference of the research output: Havea, S., Alefaio-Tugia, S., & Hodgetts, D. (2021b). Kainga (families) experiences of a Tongan-Indigenous faith-based violence-prevention programme. <i>AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples</i> , 17(1), 83–93. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1177/1177180121994924">https://doi.org/10.1177/1177180121994924</a>		
<input type="radio"/>	The manuscript is currently under review for publication Please provide the name of the journal:		
<input type="radio"/>	It is intended that the manuscript will be published, but it has not yet been submitted to a journal		
Student's signature:	Sesimani Havea <small>Digitally signed by Sesimani Havea Date: 2023.02.15 15:53:30 +13'00'</small>	Main supervisor's signature:	Professor Darrin Hodgetts <small>Digitally signed by Professor Darrin Hodgetts Date: 2023.02.16 08:08:58 +13'00'</small>
This form should be placed at the beginning of each relevant thesis chapter.			