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**FACTORS FACILITATING THE ENGAGEMENT
IN LEARNING OF PĀSIFIKA STUDENTS AT
INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL LEVEL**

ALET VAN VUUREN

2016

**FACTORS FACILITATING THE ENGAGEMENT
IN LEARNING OF PĀSIFIKA STUDENTS AT
INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL LEVEL**

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

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the engagement in learning of Pāsifika students at intermediate school level. Engagement was considered as a multi-layered, multidimensional construct, which is best viewed through an ecological, culturally based lens. The importance of teacher knowledge and understanding of critical cultural components, which are at the core of Pāsifika peoples' values and belief systems, was highlighted.

A case study was used to investigate behavioural and emotional engagement across three different ecological layers: personal, school and wider community. Participant interviews, surveys, whole class observations, and data from the school's database illustrated the significance of shifting understandings of engagement from being uni-dimensional and within-person, to multidimensional and within communities of learning.

The results of the study generated a 'Feeding the Roots' Model of Pasifika Student Engagement. This model illustrates how 'static' as opposed to 'cyclic' processes in a school's ecology can act as barriers or enablers to engagement. 'Static' processes, identify barriers to engagement in learning, and are those communities where there is limited understanding of the value of incorporating critical cultural factors in teaching, learning and interacting with parents. In this context, Pāsifika students' achieved lower levels of engagement in learning, and parents remained on the periphery of the school community. In contrast, 'cyclic' processes that facilitated engagement were environments where students and parents were included in collaborative, reciprocal communities in which critical cultural factors were a central focus. These communities were representative of teaching practices that valued collectivism, community, and reciprocity and generated higher student and parent engagement.

The findings provide insights into the actions teachers can take to develop culturally appropriate and culturally responsive communities of learning. The 'Feeding the Roots' Model of Pasifika Student Engagement is an assessment and reflection tool teachers can use to determine whether their practices are creating higher levels of Pāsifika engagement at student, parent and school levels.

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Education is the great engine of personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that the son of a mineworker can become the head of the mine, and that a child of farmworkers can become the president of a great nation. It is what we make out of what we have, not what we are given, that separates one person from another.

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GLOSSARY

According to Coxon, Anane, Mara, Wendt-Samu and Finau (2002) and Pratt (1984), the following are accurate translations of words or phrases used in this research study:

Fono	meeting or meet
fa'afaletu	drawing together a range of perspectives
Meaalofa	Gift
Pāsifika	“Pācific peoples are both local and global, genealogically, spiritually and culturally connected to the lands, the skies and seas of the Pācific region” (Tofamamao Working Party, 2007). Pāsifika communities are represented by “Samoa, Cook Island, Tongan, Niuean, Fijian and Tokelauan” (Liuvaie, 2008, p. 6). For the purposes of this study, the different Pāsifika communities are represented as: Samoan, Fijian, Tongan, Cook Island-Māori, Niuean.
Teacher-directed	Teacher directed instruction to the whole class
Student-directed	Students engage in set task activities

RESEARCHER'S BACKGROUND

My interest in the engagement of Pāsifika students at intermediate age has developed over a number of years from both personal and professional experiences.

I have built up a wealth of multi-cultural knowledge and experience across many life experiences. This has its roots in my experiences of cultural acceptance when as a young child living in rural South Africa I was gifted the name “Moya”, meaning “child of the wind” from the Sesotho workers on the farm where I lived. My professional career enabled me to have similar multi-cultural experiences, including teaching in South Africa and Taiwan, and becoming a teacher representative to help support government policy developments after the 1994 elections in South Africa.

As a New Zealand trained and registered Educational Psychologist, I have done extensive work with Pāsifika students in schools, while working alongside their families and teachers. Reasons for student engagement challenges at classroom level have always intrigued me. Reading the literature and discussing with teachers and Pāsifika colleagues, further ignited my passion for working with Pāsifika. Over the years these wide-ranging cultural experiences have created an extensive professional network based on relationships of mutual trust and respect. The research topic was located within this context.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THESIS

*Vagahau ti fakafelevehi e tau vagahau Put clothes on your words.
That is, speak with care and with diplomacy
Niuean proverb*

1.1 Introduction

According to Matheson (2006), the quality of student engagement is an indicator of academic achievement and student outcomes in general. If this is true, a certain percentage of Pāsifika students (see Glossary for a definition of the term Pāsifika) in New Zealand schools are at risk academically due to Pāsifika students experiencing the second highest stand-down and exclusion rates amongst the student population in New Zealand (Ministry of Education, 2014). High stand-downs, suspension and exclusion rates suggest that students are out of school for a particular period, potentially resulting in disengagement from education, with a negative effect on student achievement and student outcomes. While some Pāsifika students enter tertiary education and the workforce successfully, there are other groupings within this population, for whom higher education and joining the workforce are not viable options (Ministry of Education, 2014). These two groups include students leaving school early, and those students who leave at an appropriate age but with inferior qualifications.

This study investigates factors that keep Pāsifika students engaged in learning. Pāsifika students in New Zealand schools comprise a multi-ethnic, heterogeneous group encompassing different cultures, belief systems and languages. Pāsifika student diversity was, therefore, a contributing factor in finding the most suitable definition of engagement for the current study.

Engagement is positioned in the literature as a complex, multi-dimensional, multi-layered concept. Libbey (2004) refers to engagement as representing “another common term to describe student relationships with school” (p. 275). She also identifies it as “one of nine salient constructs that relate to school connectedness” (p.278). The Education Review Office (2010) associates student engagement with the roles of teachers and the quality of teaching and assessments. Here, student involvement and regular attendance are linked to setting high standards and expectations for learning. Gibbs and Poskitt (2010) focus on eight engagement factors including, “relationship with teachers and peers, relational learning, dispositions to be a learner, motivation and interest, personal agency/cognitive autonomy, self-efficacy, goal

orientation and academic self-regulation” (p. 10). They furthermore recognise the complex nature of engagement by defining it as a “multi- dimensional, interconnected construct” (p. 2), which should be studied in a holistic manner.

For this study, previous definitions of engagement are considered alongside factors affecting Pāsifika students' engagement directly and within the broader educational context. Factors that have a direct impact on student engagement refer to learning environments, teaching practices, culture, families and their respective communities. The broader context focuses on educational policies and initiatives and the impact that these have on Pāsifika students' engagement in learning.

The definition of engagement used while conducting this study was that offered by Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (2004) and Gibbs and Poskitt (2010), which included both emotional and behavioural factors. Emotional engagement factors include students' perception of the value of learning, their interests, happiness, sense of belonging, how they identified with their school, and their reactions (positive or negative) to teachers, peers and academic activities. Behavioural engagement factors include student presence, participation, on task behaviour, compliance, persistence, concentration, attention and involvement in school related activities. These were used as a starting point to examine engagement factors about Pāsifika students' learning.

Behavioural and emotional engagement factors do not function in isolation but exist as part of the wider communities in which students are located. Students therefore, are not only influenced by the broader communities they are involved in, but also manifest diversity regarding ethnic backgrounds, belief systems, values, socio-cultural experiences and academic integration. Although these levels of diversity apply to all students enrolled in schools within the New Zealand education sector, the current study focuses on the engagement of Pāsifika students as a diverse group presenting with diverse needs at intermediate school level. An ecological, or systems level analysis of these diverse dimensions is relevant in this context as the wider communities are seen to influence, and be influenced by, student engagement (Archambault et al., 2009; Podmore, Sauvao, & Mapa, 2003; Gibbs, & Poskitt, 2010).

For the purposes of this study, cognitive engagement was not explored. Culturally appropriate practices for Pasifika achievement are those that draw on core values of community, group reciprocity, and collectivism (Alton-Lee (2003; Hunter, 2013). Pāsifika success is therefore celebrated as part of participation and contribution within communities of learning or groups;

rather than a celebration at an individual level. Subsequently, cognitive engagement was not considered for this study, as it relates to “individual” ability, rather than contributing to reciprocal communities.

Over the years, governments have attempted to respond to student diversity through education policy changes and various Ministry of Education initiatives. These policy changes and initiatives are efforts to shape the education sector into a more inclusive environment. The Special Education 2000 (SE, 2000) initiative is a good example of this where the initiative specifies, “...the school and classroom environment will recognise, respect and respond to the diverse needs of all students” (Ministry of Education, 1998, p. 5). This statement is similar to the New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2010), which recognises cohesive, supportive learning environments within inclusive, non-discriminatory teaching frameworks. The National Standards introduced in primary and intermediate schools in New Zealand in 2010 provide teachers with an understanding of the expected national achievement levels in reading, writing and mathematics. These standards elaborate on the principles of inclusion by advocating a more holistic approach. It firstly empowers students to evaluate their individual progress and achievement through self-assessment and encourages teachers to report to parents/caregivers twice a year. This way of reporting is a constructive way to involve parents/caregivers in supporting their child's learning at home.

Initiatives such as the Student Engagement Initiative were established in 2001 to address suspensions, truancies and early leaving exemptions. Schools that had not joined the initiative showed a 35% increase in suspensions for Pāsifika students over the period 2000 – 2007, compared to participating schools, which showed a decrease of 21% over the same period (Phillips, 2007). These figures illustrate that the success of an initiative aiming to achieve greater student engagement remains dependent on schools buying in and committing to its principles.

Frequent unjustified student absences or poor attendance affect not only the students but also the teachers and the wider school community. According to Malcolm, Wilson, Davidson and Kirk (2003) students who are frequently absent become disengaged from their peers and learning. Subsequently their return to school can be disrupting for their peers who have to explain the work they have missed while away. For teachers it impacts on teaching time with other students, because they have to spend too much time doing “backtracking” with poor attendees (p. 20). Teachers also find it difficult to build relationships with these students and

often exclude them from school events such as concerts based on their irregular attendance. Poor attendance rates further affect the reputation of the school. In 2012, all state and state integrated schools in New Zealand were invited to participate in an attendance survey. Statistics from this investigation illustrated the total absence rates for students from all ethnic groups except Pāsifika decreased between 2011 and 2012 (Mallari, & Loader, 2012). Furthermore, in 2012, Māori and Pāsifika students had approximately twice the rate of unjustified absences when compared with their Asian and European/Pākehā counterparts. Figures like these contribute to the challenges around engaging Pāsifika students in learning.

Despite the intent of collaborative, inclusive reflective practices, national statistics demonstrate several challenges about the engagement of Pāsifika pupils in the education system. Arguably these proposed initiatives and policy changes intend to promote more inclusive school communities, by improving student engagement and academic achievement through addressing student diversity (at all the different systemic levels) within school communities. Although this may be true for some, literature suggests that a significant number of Pāsifika students experience the opposite.

This chapter identifies the rationale (1.2) and focus (1.3) for this study. The current study intends to contribute to current definitions of engagement through following an ecological approach that focuses on identifying engagement factors within three ecological layers in which Pāsifika students operate. The research question and sub-questions are therefore designed in accordance with the three ecological layers as outlined in section 1.4. The significance of this study is explained in section 1.5. This chapter concludes with an overview of this thesis in section 1.6.

1.2 Rationale for study

Despite considerable effort to improve student engagement, achievement and performance outcomes within the required inclusive educational contexts, a significant number of Pāsifika students still leave school without any formal qualifications. Although 80% of Pāsifika students stay at school until the age of seventeen, they do not necessarily achieve high enough qualifications to guide them into the workforce or tertiary education (Education Counts, 2009). According to Robinson, Hohepa and Lloyd (2009), 55% of Pāsifika students achieve National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) level 2 and above qualifications compared to

70% for European and 84% for Asian students. These figures suggest approximately 45% of Pāsifika students leave school with an NCEA level 1 or a lesser qualification.

The role of teachers in student engagement can never be overestimated. Whelan-Arisa (2010) cautioned against a “cultural mismatch” between teachers and students, which can result in cultural bias, under-achievement and students displaying difficult behaviours (p. 24). Fanene (2006) refers to the diverse nature of the Pāsifika culture and the importance of “effective communication, and interpersonal and intercultural skills” required by teachers in a mainstream school to promote student presence, participation and learning (p. 114). Archambault et al. (2009), also support the importance of the teacher’s role by arguing that school disengagement can start early in a student’s school career but only show later when schooling is interrupted by behaviours such as absenteeism and truancy. They explain how a school or teachers’ management of absenteeism and truancy can cause a decrease in student motivation to attend and learn.

Archambault et al. (2009) stressed the importance of maintaining Pāsifika students’ cultural identity within schools. They describe the value of co- constructed school and classroom practices where the school, community and parents work together towards better outcomes for the students. They stressed the importance of Pāsifika students’ feeling that their cultural beliefs are valued and thus reflected in school activities and practices. Ferguson, Gorinski, Wendt- Samu, and Mara (2008) explained that cultural differences often exclude Pāsifika parents from becoming involved in their children’s education and that teachers play a critical role in changing this. When comparing the high stand-down and exclusion rates for Pāsifika students (mentioned earlier) with statements like these, it becomes imperative for teachers to have a clear understanding of the important role they play in student engagement; and how culture, positive relationships and classroom management practices impact on student engagement.

Podmore et al. (2003) argued for the importance of understanding culture as an integral part of a young child’s learning. A 2005 survey by the Education Review Office showed that only 14% of schools are effectively responding to the needs of Pāsifika students. Information like this raises the question as to whether teachers, particularly non-Pāsifika teachers understand the importance of how their knowledge of the different Pāsifika ethnicities and cultures, could contribute to engagement and positive learning outcomes. Furthermore, how the lack of this knowledge may have been a contributing factor to this particular outcome.

In addition to the role of teachers in student engagement and teacher knowledge of student culture, behaviours associated with youth gang activity also influences student engagement and learning outcomes. There appears to be a growing influence of youth gang culture in some regions in New Zealand and a high level of involvement by young Māori and Pāsifika men (Brooking, Gardiner, & Calvert, 2009). Nakhid, Tanielu and Collins (2009) explained how gang and ex-gang members believed schools, specifically school rules, forced them towards gangs for acceptance and identity. Since these result in students leaving school early with inferior qualifications, it raises an additional question as to whether the earlier identification of engagement factors in schools could play a role in these young people's desire for identity, acceptance and acknowledgment.

From the above, numerous factors are contributing to Pāsifika students' engagement in learning. It seems the government intent to "include" has in fact also created opportunities for "excluding" students – namely Pāsifika students. It is against this background that this study, which looks at the factors facilitating Pāsifika student engagement in learning at intermediate school level, was conducted.

1.3 Focus of this study

Many research studies focus on student engagement at primary, secondary and tertiary levels, but there appears to be little evidence concerning the engagement in learning of Pāsifika students, particularly those students younger than 13 years of age. A good example of this is summarised in the recommendations of a research study by Chu, Glasgow, Rimoni, Hodis, and Meyer (2013). The authors establish priorities for Pāsifika Education research in New Zealand and claim that there continue to be gaps in research studies targeting Pāsifika students' engagement in learning at intermediate level. This study aims to address this gap in research by focusing on the engagement in learning of Pāsifika students in the 11 – 12 year age bracket who are attending their 7th and 8th year of schooling at intermediate school level.

Although the current study aims to contribute existing understandings of engagement, it also seeks to develop a wider appreciation of factors that are barriers and enhancers to engagement factors contributing to Pāsifika students' learning at this level of schooling. Subsequently, to create this wider understanding of engagement factors, the current study has extended into the social and cultural environment as the broader communities in which the students operate. It,

therefore, intends to identify factors facilitating Pāsifika students' engagement in learning at intermediate school level by looking at engagement through an ecological lens.

The ecological approach in the current study focuses on identifying engagement factors within three systemic/ecological layers. The first layer, concerned with personal dimensions, involves individual perceptions, Pāsifika values, belief systems, knowledge, learning, family and language. The second layer focuses on school related dimensions such as classroom and teaching practices. The third layer encompasses the wider community, curriculum and education at a national level. This layer includes government policies and initiatives such as the curriculum, National Standards, the Pāsifika Education Plan, governance and leadership. The three layers are interactive, relational and reciprocal and encompass the different socio-educational contexts in which Pāsifika students operate. This study will gradually extend from the first layer concerning individual perceptions to the third layer that includes the wider socio-cultural context.

1.4 Research Questions

The researcher, in her role as an Educational Psychologist, practices in an holistic, systemic manner supporting students across all ethnic groups in schools. For these reasons, she experiences learning as being embedded within the personal, classroom, social, community and cultural layers and levels within school settings. It was within this epistemic preference that the research question and sub-questions for this study were designed. The rationale for the research question design was to provide information about engagement factors within three ecological layers in a school setting. Pāsifika students at the centre of the study, necessitated aligning the study with Pāsifika values as elaborated on in later sections (p. 68).

Research question:

What are the facilitators of Pāsifika students' engagement in learning at intermediate school level?

Sub-questions:

1. *What are the **personal perceptions** of students, parents, teachers and other education professionals of the enablers and barriers to Pāsifika students' engagement in learning at an intermediate level school?*

2. What are the **current teaching and learning practices** at an intermediate level school that support Pāsifika students' engagement in learning?
3. What are the **multidimensional, socio-cultural and ecological understandings of engagement** in learning for Pāsifika students at an intermediate level school that emerge from this study?

Based on the research questions, this study will consider the relationship between perceptions of engagement factors, teaching and learning practices and how they identify in the socio-cultural context in which Pāsifika students learn.

1.5 Significance of the current study

This study is timely as a new curriculum for intermediate schools was introduced in 2009 and the National Standards came into effect in 2010. The outcomes of this study will contribute to the notion that “success in education requires harnessing Pāsifika diversity within an enabling education system that works for young people, their families and communities” (Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 8).

The findings of this study contribute to developing an understanding of the barriers to and enhancers of Pāsifika students' engagement in learning at intermediate school level. The value of the research outcomes, therefore, lies in their potential to support Pāsifika as well as non-Pāsifika teachers to teach within an ecological framework of Pāsifika people's identity and values. Firstly, it contributes new knowledge about the action intermediate schools can take to support the engagement in learning of this particular group of students. Additionally, outcomes will contribute to an enriched definition of engagement by considering, through an ecological analysis, the impact of engagement factors identified in previous studies, and how these extend into the socio-cultural context in which Pāsifika students learn. This new knowledge is an essential component of this study and entails exploring various engagement factors within different ecological layers, which are discussed in more detail in Chapters Two and Six.

1.6 Overview of thesis

The thesis consists of seven chapters. Chapter One outlines the current study and its focus on the engagement in learning of Pāsifika students at intermediate school level. It provides the rationale, focus and research questions followed by the significance and overview of the study.

Chapter Two, presents literature related to Pāsifika students' engagement in learning at an intermediate school level. When reviewing global definitions of engagement, the literature shows that there appears to be limited research available about Pāsifika engagement at intermediate school level. The chapter also outlines a shift in definitions of engagement. While previously perceived as inherent in the individual, literature that is more recent sees engagement as multi-dimensional and influenced by systemic variables. In this study, the multi-dimensional nature of engagement is applied to Pāsifika students in a New Zealand School, across three ecological layers in which they operate. Various factors contribute to student engagement, within each of these layers, for example, factors relating to culture, ethnicity, values and identity in the first layer. The second layer encompasses teaching and learning practices and the third the wider community, curriculum and policies. Lastly, it discusses the Tree of Opportunity, a Pāsifika metaphor, which provides a cultural basis and vision for the current study.

Chapter Three presents the research questions for this study and outlines the case study methodology, informed by Bronfenbrenner's systems theory and the Pāsifika Tree of Opportunity metaphor. The chapter outlines the three stages of planning and consultation, data collection and analysis. The research process describes the role of the researcher, negotiating the research site, accessing the participants, and the various data collection methods, following approval from the Massey University Human Ethical Committee. A theoretical framework explains how the data was processed, analysed and presented for discussion. The limitations and delimitations of the research study are explained followed by approaches to optimise validity, reliability, trustworthiness and generalisability.

Chapter Four presents engagement factors within the first and third ecological layers. The data analysed in response to research question one, relates to the individual participants' perceptions of proximal and distal factors that are enablers and barriers to Pāsifika students' engagement in learning. The distal factors respond to both research questions one and three and include engagement factors related to the curriculum and wider school community.

Chapter Five focuses on the second and third ecological layers, which relate to the second research question and current teaching and learning practices.

Chapter Six discusses the emerging engagement factors, which associate with the socio-cultural and ecological understanding of Pāsifika students' engagement in learning. This chapter relates to engagement factors in the third and fourth ecological layers, which in

response to research question three, presents a summary of the primary findings that have emerged from discussing the three research questions. These results include the participants' perceptions of enablers and barriers to Pāsifika students' engagement in learning; current teaching and learning practices supporting Pāsifika students' engagement in learning, the ecological and socio-cultural dimensions and limitations that have emerged from this study.

Chapter Seven concludes this thesis by discussing the implications arising from key messages based on the research findings. These key messages are used as a basis for shifting our thinking regarding Pāsifika students' engagement in learning. The chapter also presents further research possibilities this study has created.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Oku 'auha 'a e kakai ko e 'ikai ha visone Without a vision, the people will perish
Tongan proverb (Ministry of Education, 2013)

2.1 Introduction

Chapter One demonstrated how the current research aims to contribute to developing an understanding of factors that are barriers and enablers of Pāsifika students' engagement in learning at intermediate school level. A better understanding of these factors will enable Pāsifika and non-Pāsifika teachers to support the engagement of Pāsifika students in their classrooms. This study investigates the factors contributing to engagement, studied using an ecological framework of Pāsifika people's values and identity, and the wider community. Following an ecological approach is imperative since environmental factors have a "more powerful effect on academic achievement and related behaviours" than exploring the various factors in isolation (Anderson, Hattie, & Hamilton, 2007, p. 19).

Chapter Two introduces global definitions of engagement. Analysing these definitions indicates the shift that has occurred from perceiving engagement as a problem located within the individual, to acknowledging that engagement is a multi-dimensional construct located in, and influenced by, ecological systems. The multi-dimensional nature of engagement is applied to Pāsifika students enrolled in schools in Aotearoa New Zealand. Pāsifika students' identity and values have been taken into consideration while exploring the various factors contributing to their engagement and disengagement within mainstream educational environments. Identifying factors that could either enhance Pāsifika student engagement in learning or put them at risk of disengagement is important, as it can provide proactive steps that can be taken to ensure effective student engagement at all the different levels that students operate. Student engagement and academic outcomes will improve if proactive steps against student disengagement are taken, consequently decreasing the number of Pāsifika students leaving school early or leaving school with inferior qualifications.

In this chapter, previous research studies, theories and reviews related to the topic are presented. The literature review is aimed at "discovering what is not yet known about the topic" (Machi, & McEvoy, 2009, p. 3). Literature related to engagement factors has been explored

using critical analysis to determine the contributions and limitations regarding the current research topic.

In section 2.2, global definitions of engagement are presented. This section distinguishes between engagement factors perceived as being inherent in the person, compared with the more current view that acknowledges engagement as being a multi-dimensional construct influenced by systemic variables. Various global definitions related to the multi-dimensional nature of engagement are discussed. Global engagement and disengagement factors are introduced in the context of Pāsifika students enrolled in schools in Aotearoa New Zealand.

In Section 2.3, student engagement as a multi-dimensional construct is considered within three ecological layers that involve Pāsifika students. In layer one, Pāsifika identity and values are identified as essential contributors to student engagement. In this section, various factors that contribute to identity and values are discussed, for example, individual perceptions of students, teachers and parents. In the second layer, engagement relating to teachers supporting Pāsifika students in classrooms is explored. The impact of teaching practices on engagement is outlined, followed by a discussion of the role of teachers when students disengage from education, and how they can contribute to building positive relationships with Pāsifika parents. The third ecological layer involves factors within the wider community that impact on the engagement of Pāsifika students in school settings. In this layer, the Ministry of Education as a key role player in policy changes and initiatives to enhance Pāsifika student engagement and outcomes, is a critical point of focus. Various initiatives are discussed, for example, the role of the Board of Trustees in the Pāsifika Education Plan has become a valuable avenue to creating greater Pāsifika parent representation in school governance. This representation has the potential to create more opportunities to affect Pāsifika student engagement and outcomes in schools positively.

Section 2.4 describes the Tree of Opportunity as the Pāsifika theoretical basis for the current research. There is not a substantial amount of literature available on the Tree of Opportunity metaphor, although it is gradually becoming more widely accepted and appreciated. This section, therefore, provides a brief outline explaining the history of the model and the rationale for using it in this context. Section 2.5 provides a summary of this chapter.

The significance of the engagement information shared in this chapter foregrounds a shift that occurred in definitions of engagement, and how it is applied in educational contexts. This

change from uni-dimensional to multi-dimensional notions of engagement aligns with the ecological aspects of the current research.

2.2 Global definitions of engagement

For researchers such as Finn (1989), Fredricks et al. (2004), Reschly and Christenson (2012), Shernoff and Schmidt (2007), at the root of research related to student engagement is an interest in how it can enhance participation, learning and academic outcomes. According to Reschly and Christenson (2012), the earliest mention of the term engagement was in a study by Mosher and McGowan in 1985. Since this period, particularly over the last decade, a heightened interest in studying student engagement resulted in numerous research studies, which generated various conceptualisations, models and theories.

The heightened interest in studying engagement has also created a lack of consensus amongst researchers about engagement as a construct. Appleton et al. (2008) believe engagement has arrived at a “critical crossroads” due to the lack of clarity and “little consensus about definitions and substantial variations in how engagement is operationalized and measured” (p. 370).

An analysis of these theoretical contributions shows how the term engagement has moved through an evolutionary process, creating a shift in how researchers perceive engagement as a construct. According to Bryk and Thum (1989), earlier studies on engagement focused on the personal characteristics of disengaged students, for example, their attitudes, behaviour, socio-economic status and access to educational resources at home. Li and Lerner (2013) refer to these as uni-dimensional definitions of engagement, characterised by mostly behavioural components such as active participation in school-based activities; and studied separately, either in isolation, or to determine causal relationships. An example of a uni-dimensional study would be to determine the relationship between one of the components of student behaviour (student effort) and engagement.

Another example of a uni-dimensional/individual focus is the study by Bandura and Cervone (1986) which explains the relationship between a sense of self-efficacy and task completion. According to Bandura and Cervone (1986), self-efficacy is linked to a student’s performance and capability, which suggests that a low sense of efficacy will result in a focus on problems, adverse outcomes of set tasks and personal deficiencies. Consequently, a person in this situation will shy away from difficult tasks and give up easily. According to Bandura (1993), a student with high self-efficacy will see difficult situations as a challenge, rather than feel

threatened by the thought of failure. As Bandura (1993) states, “students’ belief in their capability to master academic subjects predicts their subsequent academic attainment” (p. 133). This contribution of how self-efficacy and perceived ability relates to engagement is supported by Skinner, Wellborn and Connell (1990).

Some researchers propose that a sense of belonging and a positive perception of school are prerequisites for student engagement and participation. Finn (1989) defined engagement as a form of identification, which relates to a sense of belonging, the students’ perception of the value of education, and their participation in what the school environment has to offer. This definition allows for maximum to minimum engagement and includes “responsiveness to requirements, participation in class-related initiatives and extra-curricular activities, and decision-making” (p. 652). Finn (1989) argues that the absence of a sense of “belonging” is a predictor for absenteeism, challenging behaviour and leaving school early.

A sense of belonging and the need to be accepted and supported in a caring, safe environment, will facilitate how well a young person is engaged in learning and committed to regular school attendance. According to Archambault et al. (2009), engagement originates “in part from the Social Control Theory (Hirschi, 1969, as cited in Christenson, et al., 2012), which places a great deal of emphasis on individual feelings of attachment and belonging to social institutions” (p. 652). Having a sense of belonging is mostly defined by a person’s perception and involves feeling accepted, respected and supported by others, feeling part of a community, feeling committed or identifying strongly with a school (Finn, 1989; Hall, 2014; Walker, & Green, 2009; Xin Ma, 2003). These feelings of attachment and perceptions of belonging will mostly present as contextual factors in supportive environments, whether these supportive environments are at school, in the home, or the communities in which students operate. Walker and Green (2009) state that school environments, where this sense of belonging amongst students exists, are schools fostering a climate characterised by higher levels of engagement and student achievement.

Various researchers have expressed concern about focusing on one variable only to determine causal relationships with engagement, which result, in particular, in tensions around investigating engagement as a construct separately. A typical example of this is research aiming to determine the causal relations between engagement and academic success. Using a uni-dimensional approach to defining engagement can be limiting, consequently failing to provide sufficient information to explain the dynamic, interrelated, multi-dimensional nature of

engagement, and in turn, academic success. Fredricks et al. (2004), Reschly and Christenson (2012) and Shernoff and Schmidt (2007) support the limiting nature of uni-dimensional definitions of engagement. These researchers state that the uni-dimensional approach defines non-engagement as a “problem” within the child, and disregards the contributions of factors within the various ecological settings within which students operate. According to Skinner, Kindermann, and Furrer (2009) engagement encapsulates the level of student involvement in learning activities in the classroom. They suggest engagement ranges from “energized, enthusiastic, focused, emotionally positive interactions with academic tasks to apathetic withdrawal” (p. 494).

Due to the limitations of the uni-dimensional approach, more and more researchers started exploring definitions of engagement that supported a multi-layered, systemic framework. In recent years, there has been a shift from perceiving factors that affect student engagement as located in the person, to acknowledging the effects of multiple external factors on student engagement. An example of focusing on external factors is a study by Guthrie, Wigfield and Perencevich (2003), which addressed the need for changes in instruction and curriculum content delivery to raise student achievement and engagement. This shift from individual to multiple external factors became necessary as it became more and more evident that looking at engagement factors in isolation was no longer an option. Being multiple and external suggests that engagement factors are interlinked, inter-related, multi-faceted and dependent on the environments students operate in for cause and effect (Fredricks et al., 2004; Kelly, 2007; Li, & Lerner, 2013; Shernoff, & Schmidt, 2007; Skinner, & Pitzer, 2012; Skinner, Wellborn, & Connell, 1990; Walker, & Green, 2009).

2.2.1 Shift: uni-dimensional to multi-dimensional definitions of engagement

There is much more to “engagement” than perception, achieving, sense of belonging, attitude and belief. Over the last decade, particularly since 2002, there has been a clear shift in focus, which has brought about some changes in how engagement is perceived and applied in research. Firstly, there is a shift from the individual, uni-dimensional conceptualisation of engagement, to defining it as a multi-dimensional construct consisting of behavioural, emotional and cognitive dimensions. Being multi-dimensional comprises behavioural, emotional and cognitive dimensions of engagement while engagement, being multi-faceted, involves student achievement within classrooms and in extra-curricular activities. Li and Lerner (2013) argue that being multidimensional means the three constructs – behavioural, cognitive and emotional

engagement – can be “studied simultaneously rather than individually” (p. 21). Archambault et al. (2009) and Washor and Mojkowski (2014) concur. Additionally, Shernoff and Schmidt (2007) highlight another shift, which urges researchers to investigate ethnic diversity and student engagement and disengagement factors.

The multidimensional nature of engagement and the concept of simultaneously studying the three dimensions of engagement have had a profound effect on future research studies. New correlations between dimensions, constructs and academic achievement have continued to be identified, which provide new knowledge about ecological engagement factors and their impact on student outcomes (Finn, 1989; Finn, & Voelkl, 1993; Skinner, & Pitzer, 2012). Research on student engagement has increased as more researchers realise it has the potential to predict academic and behaviour outcomes and help to create a better understanding of students’ experiences in schools. This new knowledge is invaluable because greater knowledge about student experiences in school will provide a clearer understanding of factors that are barriers and enablers to students’ engagement in learning at a more holistic level (Finn, & Voelkl, 1993; Fredricks et al., 2004; Matheson, 2006).

Numerous researchers support the multidimensionality of student engagement. For example, Appleton et al. (2008) stated that amongst the many conceptualisations of engagement there is one constant: the fact that it is multidimensional. Being multidimensional implies behavioural, emotional and cognitive dimensions of engagement, according to Appleton and colleagues (2008), Fredricks et al. (2004), Shernoff and Schmidt (2007). These researchers explain the three dimensions of engagement as follows:

1. Behavioural engagement refers mainly to student participation. Firstly, it includes student attendance and suspensions; secondly, it involves academic activities, which comprise, for example, attention and concentration; and thirdly it involves participation in classroom and extra- curricular activities like sport or school leadership roles.
2. Emotional engagement is the students’ reactions to peers, teachers, their academic work and their perception of their school environment. It also encompasses affective reactions such as boredom, happiness and anxiety.
3. Cognitive engagement refers to a student’s ability to process, understand and master difficult tasks while also being able to self-regulate their behaviour when engaged in learning activities.

The three dimensions of engagement are interrelated and varying in intensity and frequency, which has significant implications for students, teachers and parents (Fredricks et al., 2004). Fredricks and colleagues suggest this interrelated, flexible nature of the three engagement dimensions enables teachers and parents to set short and long term goals with students to achieve changes (e.g., in behaviour) and desirable outcomes (e.g., in academic work). The flexible, interrelatedness of the three dimensions of student engagement proposes some advantages for student engagement, for example various contexts in school settings present with opportunities for students. How students interact and react to these opportunities can help shape tailor-made interventions (Hazel, Vazirabadi, Albanes, & Gallagher, 2014). According to Finn (1989), it is important to remember that student engagement changes all the time because opportunities and contexts change as students' progress with their schooling.

The three dimensions of engagement are most evident in a school setting where they facilitate processes or indicate specific actions. Bryk and Thum (1989) refer to indicators and facilitators of engagement in the wider community as the "different aspects of school organisation" (p. 9). Skinner and Pitzer (2012) extend this thinking by referring to different opportunities within the context of their Model of Motivational Dynamics. In this model, they distinguish between indicators and facilitators of engagement. Indicators of engagement are explained as, "an action construct that captures its behavioural, cognitive and emotional facets," (p. 37) and having a specific function, "observable student interactions with academic activities such as on-task behaviour and homework completion" (p. 26). Facilitators are causal relationships and are outside the target construct. Personal facilitators refer to "self-esteem, self-efficacy, sense of belonging" while social facilitators are reflected in the quality of "social interactions with peers, teachers and parents" (p. 26).

In the Motivational Model, student engagement is presented at four different levels, which include "engagement with learning activities, engagement in the classroom, engagement with school and engagement with prosocial institutions" (Skinner, & Pitzer, 2012, p. 23). Engagement is a direct pathway to help students acquire certain skills in support of their learning and academic outcomes while simultaneously protecting students against negative outcomes. For example, engagement in the classroom "promotes achievement and protects against failure" (p. 23), while engagement with school involves supporting student retention and "protects against dropout" (p. 23). Engagement at prosocial levels "promotes positive youth development" and protects young adolescents from engaging in at-risk behaviours. Skinner and Pitzer (2012) claim engagement plays a crucial role in the quality of student experiences, in

their academic successes and in long-term outcomes such as “self-regulated learning and taking ownership of one’s progress in high school and beyond” (p. 24).

The multi-dimensional nature of engagement is also acknowledged by referring to the degree of student involvement and how committed and devoted they are to engage in the academic and extra-curricular activities available in school settings (Li, & Lerner, 2013). Li and colleague state that a student’s level of engagement can be perceived as a predictor for successful academic outcomes, and success later on in life. In their study of the interrelated nature of cognitive, behavioural and emotional engagement, they concluded that a uni-directional relationship exists between cognitive and behavioural engagement, where behavioural engagement influences cognitive engagement, but not vice versa. These perceptions are different from the outcomes of the study by Gibbs and Poskitt (2010) who suggest that behavioural and emotional engagements are “preconditions of cognitive engagement” (p. 13).

Although Li and Lerner (2013) and Gibbs and colleague (2010) are clear in their references to engagement’s potential to predict academic success and having uni-directional influences, Lam et al. (2014) suggest that the large amount of research related to defining engagement has created some confusion. Lam and colleagues, for example, explain that some studies conducted previously attempted to measure the effects of engagement on student outcomes, while there is no clear definition of engagement. According to Lam et al. (2014), this can create confusion and have consequences for future research. To minimise confusion, they distinguish between indicators, facilitators and outcomes as variables of engagement. Indicators are “features that define engagement” (Lam et al., 2014, p. 226), and include time on task, attendance and homework completion as explained by Fredricks, McColske, Meli, Mordica, Montrosse, and Mooney, (2011). According to Lam and colleagues, facilitators are “contextual factors that influence engagement” (p. 215).

Salanova, Schaufeli, Martínez and Bresó (2010) qualify facilitators as factors that enhance engagement such as involving parents, setting expectations related to success, and creating culturally appropriate resources. Outcome variables in this regard refer to the “outcomes student engagement may produce,” for example, suspensions (Lam et al., p. 226). However, different researchers use the terms indicators and facilitators differently. Bryk and Thum (1989) refer to the indicators and facilitators of engagement in the wider community as the “different aspects of school organisation” (p. 9). Skinner and Pitzer (2012), in their Model of Motivational Dynamics, refer to indicators as an action construct that is used to describe actions such as

homework completion and on-task behaviour, and facilitators (personal and social) to explain causal relationships (referring to, for example, self-esteem, self-efficacy, social interactions).

The views by Lam and colleagues (2014), Li and Lerner (2013) and Bryk and Thum (1989) demonstrated the value of adding indicators, facilitators and outcome variables to engagement, that the three dimensions of engagement are interrelated, uni-directional (behavioural engagement influenced cognitive engagement) and perceived as a predictor of academic success. The clear distinction between cognitive, behavioural and emotional dimensions of engagement helps prevent confusion by providing clear boundaries within its multidimensional, interrelated and interdependent nature. These views also show the presence of the different dimensions of engagement within the different system of a school community, for example the engagement dimensions relate to personal success, homework, on-task behavior in classrooms, suspensions and involving parents. These imply the different dimensions of engagement can be analysed systemically.

2.2.2 Introducing global definitions of engagement in the Pāsifika context

The cognitive, behavioural and emotional dimensions of engagement factors within the Motivational Model would affect any ethnic group. However, Pāsifika students over the years have been particularly disadvantaged as the above factors that should also support and protect ethnic identities are often ignored in the mainstream education system (Gorinski, & Fraser, 2006; Nakhid, 2002; Schernof, & Schmidt, 2007). Gorinski and Fraser (2006) refer to the monocultural paradigm, which highlights the historical “dominance of an Anglo- European education system” (p. 1).

These historical systems of ignorance of education systems have disadvantaged ethnic minority groups (such as Pāsifika) with different beliefs and value systems. It has also resulted in a form of ethnic discrimination while the dominant group “through its ubiquitous representation remain in control” (Nakhid, 2002, p. 244). Gorinski and Fraser (2006) refer to this as a process of “acculturation,” which internalises the values and identities of the dominant culture to the detriment of minority groups such as Pāsifika.

It is interesting to note that globally acculturation has affected many minority groups including indigenous populations in countries such as Australia and Canada. For example, the Residential School System that operated in Canada between 1876 and 1996 resulted in social and emotional damage for thousands of indigenous residents (The Guardian, 2015). Children

were removed from their families, and forbidden from speaking their own language as part of an effort to assimilate them into the mainstream school system.

In the Canadian mainstream system, programmes promoting student engagement affected student achievement outcomes in various ways. A study by Cherubini (2014) on *Aboriginal Student Engagement Achievement* raised several concerns, for example, the effect of “colonist factors that continue to marginalize them within public school culture” (p. 3) and classrooms that fail to recognise the “legitimacy of Aboriginal epistemologies or to adequately incorporate them into curricula” (p. 4). In this study a school allowed Aboriginal students to “explore epistemic preferences in culturally rich learning environments” (p. 38). According to Cherubini (2014), these students re-engaged academically and developed a “greater sense self-identity” (p. 42).

According to Gorinski and Fraser (2006), acculturation locates the problem of underachieving to factors within the student, hence ignoring the effect of systemic influences on Pāsifika student identity and parent-school relationships. Acculturation, therefore, takes a uni-dimensional approach and contradicts more contemporary theories and conceptualisations of engagement. Although the current research acknowledges the historical detriment of acculturation on Pāsifika student engagement, it focuses on investigating enablers and barriers to student engagement ecologically and within a Pāsifika theoretical framework. The ecological approach aligns with the current conceptualisations of engagement and responds to Shernoff and Schmidt’s (2007) recommendation to investigate the relationship between ethnic diversity and student engagement and disengagement factors.

Enablers and barriers to Pāsifika student engagement are important to consider given the close correlation between student engagement, academic performance and student outcomes (Matheson, 2006; Appleton et al., 2008). Researchers are therefore required to acknowledge the multidimensional, multifaceted nature of engagement while following an ecological approach to investigation. In the Pāsifika student context, ecological factors that play a role in student engagement are identified as academic challenges students face on a daily basis, motivation to learn and teaching practices. Also included would be the extent to which their cultural identity is taken into consideration in curriculum planning and delivery, and how much parents are acknowledged and invited to be involved in their children’s learning (Hunter, 2013; Nakhid, 2002). Other factors identified by researchers (e.g., Mahatmya, Lohman, Matjasko, &

Farb, 2012; Zepke, Leach, & Butler, 2010) include the role of teachers, personal factors, the family and the impact of social and cultural factors on successful outcomes for students.

The goal for education in Aotearoa New Zealand is for all students to be included and actively engaged in education. According to a Report on the *Compulsory School Sector in New Zealand - Nga Kura o Aotearoa* (Ministry of Education, 2012), the New Zealand Curriculum advocates that schools make the curriculum meaningful for all students and connect students to their wider communities. Exemplary examples of schools that include Pāsifika perspectives in their curriculum and thus support students to experience success through activities and experiences they are familiar with are presented. In this way, the report acknowledges the role of positive student engagement in academic success. Likewise, the Pāsifika Education Plan (2013 – 2017) aims to connect Pāsifika students' academic worlds with their cultural diversities by fostering positive home-school partnerships. It seeks to increase Pāsifika learners' participation, engagement and achievement throughout the education sector from early education through to tertiary education and beyond so that they become valuable contributors to society.

The Ministry of Education's report on *Student, Family and Community Engagement* (2007) emphasised engagement as the main contributor to student success and increased student retention rates. As a result, several initiatives aimed to increase student engagement. For example, the Suspension Reduction Initiative (SRI), which began in 2001, has evolved to become the Student Engagement Initiative (SEI). There are broader curriculum choices offered through National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA), which allow more Pāsifika students to engage. Also, there are transitioning support services, work-based learning, or courses with tertiary providers through the Secondary Tertiary Alignment Service (STAR) and Gateway. Schools can also access various service providers to address student diversity at different levels. These include the Severe Behaviour Service Initiative provided by the Ministry of Education, Special Education, Resource Teachers of Learning and Behaviour (RTLB), Incredible Years Teacher and Parenting Programmes, Social Workers in Schools and High and Complex Needs Units, (Ministries of Health, Education and Social Development).

Despite the many Ministry of Education initiatives, a recent Education Review Office Report on *Improving Education Outcomes for Pācific Students* (Ministry of Education, 2012), continues to signal concern stating that "results from national and international assessments show that the learners most at risk of not achieving in New Zealand schools are Pāsifika students" (p. 1). Many researchers (Brown, Devine, Leslie, Paiti, Sila'ila'i, Umaki, & Williams, 2007; Thaman,

1990; Gorinski, & Fraser, 2006; Nakhid, 2003; Wendt-Samu, 2006) identify the problem as school based. According to Brown et al. (2007) and Wendt-Samu, (2006) despite the intent of the education system in Aotearoa New Zealand for all students to be included, for Pāsifika students, this has not occurred, because other priorities have disadvantaged positive outcomes for Pāsifika students. Brown and colleagues (2007) argue that despite the fact that the Pāsifika student population is the fastest growing population in New Zealand schools, little provision is made for teacher induction, teacher management and teacher education to accommodate the change in demographics. Additionally, schools do not respond to the disparities in academic outcomes between Pāsifika and non-Pāsifika students adequately. For example, both the Education Review Office report (Ministry of Education, 2012) and Brown et al. (2007) identify a problem in that Pāsifika student results are not sufficiently analysed to determine what is needed to accelerate progress. The academic outcomes data is not used to inform teachers about what keeps Pāsifika students engaged so that they can understand what supports Pāsifika students' successes or failures. Thus, teachers do not develop understandings of appropriate responses to Pāsifika students' identity, language and culture. Brown et al. (2007) also raise a concern related to Pāsifika teacher employment. There are few Pāsifika teachers, and little is done to retain them in the education system. Consequently, Pāsifika is underrepresented in all the different levels of the education system. The Education Review Office Report (Ministry of Education, 2012) also outlines how, despite the Pāsifika Education Plan (initially introduced in 2001) and New Zealand Curriculum's goals to encourage schools to consider Pāsifika diversity, cultures, language, identity and interests when teachers develop in-class curriculum, it still does not take priority.

2.2.3 Pāsifika disengagement factors

The Education Review Office's (ERO) report on *Promoting Pacific Student Success in Schools* (Ministry of Education, 2010) defines engagement as "a range of factors that combine to produce conditions where students are motivated to achieve and learn" (p. 10). The above report acknowledges the following as critical for student engagement "high-quality teaching and assessment, students' involvement in their learning, morale and perceptions about school, participation in decision-making, attitudes and behaviour" (p. 10). Although the report acknowledges Pāsifika student diversity, the role of positive relationships, the commitment of teachers to learn about the Pāsifika background and to connect the curriculum with Pāsifika life experiences, the majority of this definition of engagement appears to fit the dominant European culture in New Zealand schools rather than minority groups like Pāsifika. Engaging Pāsifika

students in learning should acknowledge the prominence of Pāsifika values, language, belief systems and identity. However, there appears to be a gap in the literature that clearly delineates what engagement means within a Pāsifika context.

It could be argued that Pāsifika as a minority group does not receive equal learning opportunities as they are subject to a system providing mainly for the academic and socio-emotional needs of the dominant group. Discrepancies and mismatches in Pāsifika student engagement are thought to exist due to biased perceptions of student ability, unfair expectations of Pāsifika student success, inequalities in learning opportunities and negative student-teacher interactions. According to Thaman (1992), discrepancies and mismatches in Pāsifika student engagement are related to issues associated with the pupils, teachers and the curriculum. She points out that teachers underestimate the ability of Pāsifika students as they link student inability to learn, understand and conceptualise foreign concepts to cognitive ability. Thaman (1992) argues that if the language of instruction is the same as a student's first language, Pāsifika students will achieve much higher results. Linking deficits in the education system to Pāsifika students' cognitive ability is also a concern for Nakhid (2002) who claims that all students should have equal opportunities towards achieving academic success. She contends that, "unless Pāsifika students attain a 'Palagi' set of qualifications they cannot be considered to be successful" (p. 17). Wendt-Samu (2006) explains that Pāsifika students and teachers "interact at the interface of two culturally embedded, yet different worlds" (p. 46). These worlds are portrayed in formal education (the classroom or school) and the individual world of the Pāsifika student.

Pāsifika students and their teachers are required to interact and engage across two different worlds on a daily basis. Pāsifika student success, according to Wendt-Samu (2006), will greatly depend on the nature of interactions between teachers and their pupils while faced with inequalities and mismatches created by the "wider world" (p. 46). According to Wendt-Samu (2006), there are strong correlations between Pāsifika student engagement, academic success and positive relationships with their teachers. She claims that these relationships can be compromised by cultural misinterpretations and misunderstandings unless teachers acknowledge the cultural identities of Pāsifika, and focus on "tailor-made, contextualised teaching" (p. 46). Thaman (1999) supports the latter, suggesting that cultural analysis is a critical component in creating curriculum content that is appropriate for Pāsifika students. Nakhid (2002) adds the importance of students' voice as a valuable contributor to creating Pāsifika identity in schools. Nakhid (2002) refers to adding student voice to education

opportunities in schools as an “identifying process,” which allows Pāsifika students to explain their perceptions of school, their peers and teachers.

Pāsifika students’ culture and identity play a significant role in their engagement in learning. Essential for their academic success, is to create equitable opportunities that could support their engagement in curriculum related activities. Gorinski and Fraser (2006) explain that decisions related to Pāsifika student education and curriculum development are currently based on the perceptions and views of teachers and schools within the dominant culture only. Thaman (1992) cautions against excluding the Pāsifika voice at various levels of curriculum development and delivery. She argues that discrepancies and mismatches result which impact on Pāsifika student engagement, achievement and outcomes. If only the dominant culture in the education sector is considered in curriculum development at a national level, then the diverse needs of Pāsifika students are not met, especially if their identity, beliefs and values are disregarded. Likewise, if culture, identity and ethnicity are disregarded at a local level in programme and curriculum planning, there is a potential risk for mismatches. Whelan-Arisa (2010) states that a “cultural mismatch between teachers and students can result in cultural bias, misconceptions and misinterpretations, which can lead to underachievement and students displaying behaviour difficulties” (p. 24). The mismatch between curriculum content and student needs contributes to disengagement from learning. Ferguson, et al. (2008) support the concept of equitable achievement outcomes for Pāsifika students and urge educational systems to consider current “understandings, practices and terminology” that could potentially prevent equitable achievement outcomes for Pāsifika students (p. 3).

Teachers can enable changes at grass roots level by including Pāsifika voice in the general operational structures of their classroom management. As Ferguson et al. (2008), Thaman (1999) and Nakhid (2002) explain, through establishing a greater understanding of the needs of Pāsifika students, teachers acknowledge cultural diversity and identity as essential components of student engagement and academic success. This knowledge will inform teachers’ perceptions of student identities and their responses towards their pupils. This knowledge is invaluable when teachers collaborate with students and their parents about academic goal setting: it can support effective feedback to Pāsifika parents about their children’s progress, and can eliminate unfair bias and labelling in school contexts by creating a better understanding of reasons trends, patterns and behaviours.

Although knowledge of the diversities in the Pāsifika culture, and how they fit into the world of education is an important aspect of learning and engagement, it cannot be looked at in isolation. Language, ethnicity and identity run parallel to culture as important contributing factors to student engagement and student outcomes. Reports from the Education Review Office (Ministry of Education, 1998, 2005, 2006, 2012) and Podmore, et al. (2003) outline how they should be taken into consideration when deciding on how to best accommodate the educational needs of Pāsifika students in educational settings. They acknowledge ethnic diversity when explaining factors facilitating Pāsifika students' engagement in learning.

Before linking culture and ethnicity to engagement, it is necessary to differentiate between each aspect. Thaman (1998) defines culture as,

Ways of life of a discrete group, which includes a language, a body of accumulated knowledge, skills, beliefs and values,

Culture are central to the understanding of human relationships, and members of different cultural groups have unique systems of perceiving and organising the world around them (p. 120).

Podmore et al. (2003) claim a better understanding of culture is a critical aspect of a young child's learning, stating that effective learning relationships are essential and parallel to teachers' understanding of children's cultural contexts. Gorinski and Fraser (2006) extend the concept of culture to home-school partnerships where parents and teachers can share knowledge to enhance teachers' knowledge of Pāsifika values and cultural differences, cultural competencies and knowledge about Pāsifika learners. These create invaluable learning opportunities to enhance knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity, to contribute to Pāsifika student engagement in learning. According to Gibson (as cited in Gorinski, & Fraser, 2006), ethnicity is a concept that takes "the notion of culture to a deeper level in that it focuses upon how one group's collective beliefs and experiences within a given culture, differ from other groups" (p. 12).

Thompson, McDonald, Talakai, and Taumoepeau (2009) report that teachers who are not well informed about their students' cultural needs in the school context are at risk of biased or unfair assumptions because these inform their responses and expectations. Negative teacher responses and low expectations have an adverse effect on regular school attendance and student motivation to engage in class related activities and curriculum content. Subsequently, students disengage from education as they experience low levels of academic success, which

consequently causes them to drop out of school early. In contrast, Walker and Green (2009) describe how teachers who are supportive and knowledgeable about their students are better equipped to minimise biased perceptions, and motivate them towards higher academic outcomes. These teachers create environments where students feel valued and experience a sense of belonging. Thompson et al. (2009) add that those teachers who are knowledgeable about student identity, values and culture also realise the value of incorporating a broad range of teaching strategies. They use culturally responsive strategies and resources and are motivated to implement effective planning and classroom management. As a result, Pāsifika students' engagement is associated with high- quality teaching and assessment, and high standards and expectations for learning.

The definition of engagement changes as individuals enter different environments where there are different practices, expectations and challenges (Finn, 1989; Fredricks et al., 2004; Mauigoa-Tikene, Howie, & Hagan, 2013; Skinner, & Pitzer, 2012; Hazel et al., 2014). For example, in the previous section, engagement was defined in the school context, while in other contexts it is used to describe how families and schools interact or engage with external agencies and support services when seeking help for young people with high individual needs.

Mauigoa-Tikene et al. (2013) further suggest that it is important to engage Pāsifika families early and in a culturally appropriate manner, especially when seeking Special Education service support for their children with high and very high educational needs. Successful engagement at this level is reliant on the input of professionals at various levels, for example, their cultural sensitivity and willingness to develop positive relationships and work holistically. These researchers believe professionals should assist in setting up support networks within communities, and in creating resources that are readily available and culturally appropriate, as these will further contribute to successful engagement outcomes between families and external agencies.

The interrelatedness of the different settings in which individuals operates suggests reciprocal relationships, implying that the wider context will have an impact on the actual settings and the individual needs of the family and young person and vice versa. These engagement factors differ from those in the immediate setting because they are linked to the external and wider context in which Pāsifika students operate.

Parents have various opportunities to contribute to the engagement of their children. Firstly, at school level, they can support their children's engagement in learning by collaboratively setting

academic goals via the National Standards. This suggests discussing with their children and teachers what academic level, their children, are working towards in mathematics and literacy, before setting school and home goals towards achieving these. Secondly, in the wider context they can participate in the decision-making process to begin engagement with external agencies should their children require additional support.

Although the broader context in this instance refers to external agencies, it can also refer to the curriculum (for example, the National Standards). The National Standards (Ministry of Education, 2010) provide an assessment framework to assist students to evaluate their learning strategies and set goals about specified learning criteria and expectations. Teachers work alongside students and use the assessment data to reflect on their teaching strategies, identify student needs and involve parents in their children's learning.

Although this is the ideal, Pāsifika parents are not always involved and engaged at these levels. To be involved is important as engaged parents have the potential to contribute to positive student outcomes. For example, students' learning needs could be identified and addressed early and appropriately, as this level of collaboration creates opportunities to communicate about the enablers and barriers to their children's learning outcomes. Another advantage is that parents are empowered to better support their children's learning by being informed about curriculum expectations and the role they can play in their children's schooling. However, Pāsifika students and parents are still excluded and do not always contribute sufficiently. To be able to support their children effectively, Chu, et al. (2013), claim that Pāsifika families need to gain sufficient knowledge and understanding "that will enable them to provide sound input regarding their children's academic and career choices" (p. 3). They also state the need for research to create transparency so parents can have knowledge about the disproportionate representation of Pāsifika students in lower stream education. Placing Pāsifika students in lower stream education is mostly based on biased interpretations of ability because systemic and cultural factors are not considered. According to Chu and colleagues (2013), information from this kind of research will help Pāsifika parents make informed decisions about the kind of support they can provide to their children's academic placement, achievement and outcomes.

The previous section outlined the interrelated nature of engagement, which aligns with the ecological context of the current study as it considers engagement alongside Pāsifika identity, values, language, parent-teacher relationships, the role of the school, the role of the family and factors within the wider community.

Exploring the dimensions of engagement ecologically rather than focusing on factors within the individual is, therefore, important. The next section elaborates on this more by discussing how an ecological focus affects the engagement of Pāsifika students.

2.3 Ecological focus: The three dimensions of engagement that involve Pāsifika students

It is important to analyse the impact of the behavioural, cognitive and emotional engagement factors within the various ecological systems in which Pāsifika students operate. Various researchers state that looking at engagement factors ecologically will help create a clear understanding of the reciprocal nature of these factors as the wider communities are seen to influence, and be influenced by student engagement (Archambault et al., 2009; Gibbs, & Poskitt, 2010; Podmore et al., 2003). Although exploring engagement factors ecologically is important, it is also necessary to consider earlier identification of engagement factors, which can further help explain “academic and social behaviour success” of Pāsifika students in school settings (Fallon, O’Keefe, & Suggai, 2012, p. 209).

2.3.1 Pāsifika values and identity applied ecologically

Various researchers agree that Pāsifika student engagement is dependent on creating safe teaching environments (for example, building trusting relationships), acknowledging the students’ identity and values and using appropriate teaching methods (Thaman, 1990; Hunter, 2007; Nakhid 2002; Thompson et al., 2009). Numerous factors contribute to safe teaching environments as long as Pāsifika students’ values and identity are acknowledged. Pāsifika student engagement in learning depends on how these critical engagement factors are interpreted, perceived and applied in the various ecological settings in which Pāsifika students operate. According to Alton-Lee (2003) and Wendt-Samu (2006), the importance of culturally responsive teaching practices should not be underestimated when creating safe teaching environments for Pāsifika students.

They emphasise these teaching practices not only acknowledge Pāsifika student diversity but also contribute to raising student engagement and achievement levels.

Teaching practices also incorporate the individual perceptions of students, teachers and parents of the enablers and barriers of factors contributing to student engagement. The unique life experiences of these individuals have shaped their perceptions and created certain

responses that are culturally appropriate or inappropriate. In culturally responsive teaching practices, individual perception plays a crucial role in how various ecological settings acknowledge and develop Pāsifika values. For Nakhid (2003), culturally appropriate practices include settings in which Pāsifika students and their teachers openly and honestly explain their experiences and perceptions of school and each other. She further encouraged systems that “recognize the importance of the Pāsifika students’ identifying process to their achievement” (p. 299). Identifying in this sense refers to how students construct or form their identities in schools. Nakhid (2003) commented on studies that were conducted on Pāsifika student underachievement. She concluded that although various “authors on the surface, indicate their intention to move away from the deficit perspective, this perspective is indirectly maintained through their acceptance of the assumptions held of Pāsifika students by the education system” (p. 299). These perceptions, according to Nakhid (2003), have resulted in Pāsifika student underachievement. She challenges future research studies to gain accurate information related to factors contributing to Pāsifika student underachievement, which can only be achieved if the “perceptions and assumptions held by the dominant cultures of Pāsifika are challenged” (p. 299).

In the previous section, factors contributing to perceptions of teaching practices for raising Pāsifika student engagement and achievement were discussed. In the next section, the focus shifts to the perceptions of students, parents and teachers as to what constitutes enablers and barriers to Pāsifika students’ engagement in learning. This is followed by a discussion on current teaching and learning practices and factors extending into the wider communities, and how these impact on the engagement in learning for Pāsifika students. In a widening ecological context, the perceptions of teachers, pupils and parents of enablers and barriers to engagement comprise the first ecological layer, teaching practices that support engagement comprise the second layer and factors within the wider community that are enablers or barriers to engagement, the third layer.

2.3.1.1 Teacher, student and parent perceptions of engagement

A number of factors can influence perceptions about Pāsifika student engagement in learning. The term Pāsifika and how it is defined, interpreted and understood can create barriers to teacher, parent and student perception of what engagement in learning entails. Many professionals within educational settings fall into the habit of using “Pāsifika” when referring to students from the different Pācific nations. Using Pāsifika as an umbrella term for students from

various Pācific ethnicities poses a risk of cultural confusion for Pāsifika students, their peers and teachers because there is no reference to a particular ethnic group (Wendt-Samu, 2006).

Since the term “Pāsifika” gathers all the different ethnicities into one common definition, the assumption is created that the different Pāsifika ethnicities (Samoan, Tongan, Niuean, Cook Islander, Tokelauan and Fijian) can all be taught and treated in a similar manner. Teachers who are focused on a common definition of Pāsifika will no doubt experience some challenges related to successful integration, engagement and building positive relationships with Pāsifika students and their parents (Nakhid, 2003).

There is much more to Pāsifika peoples than “ethnic definition and labels” (Cram, Phillips, Sauni, Taugalu, 2014, p. 223). Many research studies (e.g., Fletcher, Parkhill, Fa'afoi, Taleni, & O'Regan, 2008; Gorinski, & Fraser, 2006; MacIntyre, 2013) show treating Pāsifika students as if they are all the same is an assumption that causes ethnic marginalisation. A good example of marginalisation is the way in which Pāsifika students, as part of a minority group in the New Zealand education system, receive instruction within a European dominated system. In this system, the value of cultural differences, identity and the effect of ethnic languages are not always taken into consideration in curriculum planning, content delivery and general classroom management. Another effect of marginalisation is the perceptions amongst some Pāsifika students about their schooling. According to Nakhid (2003), their belief is that the education system does not exist for their benefit, serve their needs or advance their careers. Nakhid (2003) stated, “...that a necessary condition of academic success for these students is for them to be able to carry out their identifying process and to have that valued by the school” (p. 297). Pāsifika students also perceive their teachers as “uninterested and lacking understanding of the world of the students from Samoan and Tonga communities” (Horsley and Walker, as cited in McInerney, Dowson, & Van Etten, 2006, p. 345). According to Horsley and Walker, this creates a breakdown in student-teacher relationships that result in students not having the confidence to ask for help. They also perceive the education system as one, which does not serve their particular needs and they are reluctant to answer questions in class out of fear of the responses from teachers and peers. These student reactions to marginalisation and misconceptions are related to the behavioural definition of engagement while low self-belief about enrolling in academic subjects is related to emotional engagement, as identified in a number of studies (Fletcher et al., 2008; Nakhid, 2002).

Pāsifika students have identified some aspects of their schooling experience, which could impact positively on their engagement, academic success and perceptions of who they are as learners. These include the need for their parents to have a greater understanding of the education system, improved home-school relationships and teachers and parents holding high expectations for their success. They also include a need for more Pāsifika resources, lower noise levels in classrooms, less bullying, improved communication, asking students for their opinions, providing direction and support through quality teacher-student time, learning environments supported by computer technology and greater awareness and knowledge of the various cultural identities and family responsibilities.

A stronger focus on how knowledge of the different Pāsifika ethnicities can contribute to student engagement and improve academic outcomes is needed to counter the effects of ignorance, misconceptions, misinterpretations and marginalisation concerning ethnicity. In relation to this, Wendt-Samu (2006) and Hunter (2013) emphasises the importance of providing teachers with a comprehensive understanding of the Pāsifika culture as an integral part of their teaching, consequently achieving successful student outcomes facilitated by effective learning and student engagement. Having this knowledge and understanding will prevent teachers from using the term 'Pāsifika' as a label of convenience, in which the unique Pāsifika diversities are ignored (Kēpa, & Manu'atu, 2011, p. 662), subsequently creating assumptions, forming broad generalisations and labelling or judging Pāsifika students unfairly (Thompson et al., 2009).

A person's unique life experiences shape his/her Individual perceptions, interpretations and personal views (teacher, parent or student). According to Wendt-Samu (2006), these include country of birth, socio-economic status, interaction with people from the various communities they operate in, gender, age, culture, religion, belief systems, expectations and values. These life experiences are responsible for creating unique personal traits, particular expectations within communities and cultural diversities, and have an impact on Pāsifika student engagement in education.

Teachers who have had perceptions shaped by their unique life experiences, bring to their classroom environments their personal views and perceptions. Without knowledge of the ethnic diversities within the Pāsifika culture, they are therefore at risk of viewing situations in their classroom through a very narrow lens of their expectations and experiences (Annan and Mentis, 2013). This narrow view can create some misinterpretations and misunderstandings about teachers' perceptions of the Pāsifika students they are trying to engage in learning.

Nakhid (2002) refers to this as “dissonance,” stating, “teachers perceptions of Pāsifika students have been created by the schools and do not take into account Pāsifika students’ own constructions of their identity” (p. 233). If Pāsifika students’ desire to create their identities in schools is ignored, misinterpretation and wrong perceptions are created, which contribute to vulnerabilities, academic failure and student disengagement.

Cultural misunderstandings can occur in unexplained absences of Pāsifika students, students who are collected from school early, parents who do not reply to school notices, and parents who do not attend school meetings (Gorinski, 2005). Fletcher et al., (2008) explain that many Pāsifika parents work long hours and are often unable to attend school events. These have the potential to create unfair perceptions and interpretations about parents. For example, if teachers do not understand the Pāsifika culture and reasons for these behaviours, they affect school-parent relationships, which are an important component of student engagement (Kēpa, & Manu'atu, 2011; Nakhid, 2002).

Perceptions are also shaped by cultural mismatches caused by some Pāsifika parents’ limited understanding of English, and their limited knowledge and experience of the education system. These may also include an inability of non- Pāsifika teachers to relate to the different Pāsifika languages, and the different Pāsifika cultures (Ministry of Education, 2013; Thompson et al., 2009). Teachers, who have unrealistic expectations of students and their parents, especially when it comes to the role parents can play in their children’s learning, further reinforce these mismatches. Some teachers wrongly stereotype Pāsifika parents as not interested in their children’s learning, or expect parents to help their children with academic subjects, or teach them English, while parents are reluctant to engage in any of these “for fear of doing it wrong” (MacIntyre, 2013, p. 141). Due to these mismatches, Jones (as cited in Nakhid, 2002) states that schools have lower expectations of students from minority groups and place them in lower-ability classes, where less time is spent on instruction, homework is not reinforced, and teachers are less enthusiastic about their role as educators. According to Ferguson et al. (2008), the school and their expectations of Pāsifika students shape these perceptions. Nakhid (2003) argue the need to determine if the perceptions schools’ hold of Pāsifika differ from the students’ perceptions of themselves. According to Nakhid (2003), “this is of utmost importance because as it currently exists, it is the schools' perceptions of Pasifika students and the way that the education system interprets the presence of these students that are used to determine the institutional responses to their presence” (p. 305).

Language and communication barriers are some of the reasons Pāsifika parents feel excluded from greater involvement in their children's learning. Teachers can help overcome this obstacle by establishing positive relationships with parents. In this process, both parties learn from each other, become more confident in their interactions, and change negative, biased perceptions into constructive contributions towards positive student outcomes. Cultural difference is another factor that needs consideration. Nakhid (2002) suggests teachers should learn more about the Pāsifika culture and involve Pāsifika parents more so they can break down stereotypical barriers, obtain a better understanding of Pāsifika parents' contributions to their children's lives and start rating them higher and more positively. Enhanced cultural knowledge and involving parents more will change negative, judgmental perceptions to something more constructive and relational. Positive parent-teacher relationships have a role in creating positive perceptions and student outcomes. As a number of researchers explain, where positive relationships were established Pāsifika parents felt acknowledged and respected, students achieved better academic outcomes, parents became more confident to join in school-related activities and worked more closely with non- Pāsifika teachers as their English proficiency levels increased. Teachers, on the other hand, learned more about the Pāsifika culture, changed their negative perceptions and expectations, and involved students and parents more in their decision-making (Nakhid, 2002).

Positive student-teacher and teacher-parent relationships are essential components of student engagement and commitment to higher learning outcomes in schools. These relationships can counter incorrect perceptions, assumptions, misinterpretations, unfair labelling and bias. Furthermore, the teachers' contribution lies in creating mutual respect and understanding and improving confidence levels to allow participation, contribution and collaboration at all the different systemic levels.

In a school setting, the word "perception" also encapsulates cultural perceptions of relationships, learning practices, respect, individual responses, happiness and involvement. Positive environments where Pāsifika identities, values and diversities are celebrated will further enhance ongoing learning and teaching practices to the benefit of Pāsifika students in New Zealand schools. According to Alton-Lee (2003), core values strengthen Pāsifika worldviews and determine how they engage and interact with others. Examples of these core values are the importance of family and group reciprocity in social relationships. For decision-making, it is important to understand the concept of consensus in the Pāsifika culture and the high regard there is for the community and social structures while spirituality encompasses

religious practices and church affiliations. Trust is, therefore, a crucial component of creating and maintaining relationships with Pāsifika peoples.

In the previous section, the focus was on how the perceptions of teachers, students and parents, shaped by their unique cultural experiences, became essential contributors to the Pāsifika learner and his/her engagement in learning, commitment to school and academic successes. Although perceptions are unique to each person's life experiences, teachers have the responsibility to remain neutral and accommodate Pāsifika students' engagement in learning by acknowledging their identities, values and ethnic diversity in their teaching practices. Although the role of the teacher has been introduced, in the next section culturally responsive teaching practices will be shown to be critical to engage Pāsifika students successfully (Nakhid, 2003; Thompson et al., (2009). Teachers also act as a critical point of connection between the student and various engagement factors within the three ecological layers: between student and parent, between student and school, between student and external agency support, and also between student and national initiatives such as curriculum and the Pāsifika Education Plan.

At the centre of student engagement, within the ecological layers, is the Pāsifika student and various factors affecting student engagement. Amongst the various factors are the perceptions of students, teachers and parents, which through acknowledging Pāsifika, play a particular role in student engagement in the school setting. Other factors involve Pāsifika student identity and cultural diversity. According to Wendt-Samu (2006), teachers have a responsibility to match Pāsifika students' learning experiences to their cultural experiences. One way of doing this is to create a better understanding of Pāsifika diversity and a more in- depth understanding of Pāsifika identity. Alton-Lee (2003) responds to the issue of Pāsifika cultural diversity in classrooms stating that quality teaching "respects and affirms cultural identity" (p. 32).

2.3.1.2 The role of teachers and Pāsifika identity

Teachers play a crucial role in helping Pāsifika students create an identity as part of student engagement in learning, both in their classrooms and in the wider school community. Nakhid (2002) recommends that teachers recognise their students' ethnic identity and allow students to create their identities in school settings. Students should therefore identify with who they are, with what is important to them, and with which social and ethnic group they affiliate. The importance of teachers supporting Pāsifika students to create their identities within the classroom community is further emphasised by Ferguson et al. (2008). Educational policies and

initiatives like the Pāsifika Education Plan strongly encourage schools to acknowledge the different Pāsifika cultures, languages and identities (Ministry of Education, 2010). According to Pasikale, “Identity is a critical issue for Pāsifika learners and can mean the difference between continued academic failure and educational success based on the realities of future Pāsifika Island generations” (as cited in Coxon, Anae, Mara, Wendt-Samu, & Finau, 2002, p. 91).

Teachers need to distinguish between the national (being a New Zealander) and ethnic identities of Pāsifika students (Siteine, 2010). Huge benefits for fostering student identity and engagement are supported through this awareness. Unfortunately, as Siteine (2010) explains, often teachers choose to “focus on one or the other but not both” (p. 1). Nakhid (2003) proposes representation as something that links the Pāsifika identity with what they wish to identify with or whom they wish to be. It is, therefore, important for teachers not to allow Pāsifika representations to be defined by the dominant culture in a school setting, but rather constructed by each Pāsifika student. Without representation, identity stays with the person and becomes insubstantial in its contribution to Pāsifika success.

Allowing Pāsifika students to create their identities within school settings and to be represented helps them to form positive perceptions about being successful. It contributes to establishing a sense of belonging and improving confidence levels and pride (Nakhid, 2003; Siteine, 2010). According to Nakhid (2002), it also allows students to see schools as “stimulating and academically challenging” (p. 236). Teachers who acknowledge Pāsifika student diversity and encourage students to construct their identities allow Pāsifika students to identify whom they want to be part of and whom they relate to best. Wendt-Samu (2006) links this to the Pāsifika students’ ability to relate to the “cultural traditions of their parents and grandparents” (p. 41). Wendt-Samu (2006) argues for the need for a process of identity negotiation between students and teachers. This negotiation sets expectations related to future aspirations (that which these students aim to become), which helps teachers towards culturally appropriate teaching strategies and curriculum development. These will, in turn, contribute to higher levels of student engagement and enhance learning outcomes (Alton-Lee, 2003; Wendt-Samu, 2006). Another means of fostering student identity in classrooms is through narratives and stories. Coxon et al. (2002) refer to published narratives and stories as a “source of mana and vision” for Pāsifika (p. 21). According to Coxon and her colleagues, narratives and stories play a significant role in recognising and honouring Pāsifika identity. It also inspires younger generations towards positive academic outcomes as their history (for most Pāsifika) is integral in creating their future (Coxon et al., 2002; Siteine, & Samu, 2011).

Teachers' understanding of Pāsifika student identity, and how they acknowledge it when they decide what to teach and how to teach, will have major implications for student outcomes (Siteine, 2010). Anae, Mila-Schaaf, Coxon, Mara, Sanga (2010) state that forming cultural Pāsifika identity is relational; relationships should therefore be acknowledged and prioritised when professionals work together for better Pāsifika student outcomes. According to Nakhid (2002), parents see teachers as the “experts from whom parents and students seek educational knowledge” (p. 215). She also highlights that schools use teachers' knowledge and experiences of the Pāsifika students they teach when designing school policies and teaching and learning practices. To utilise teachers as the experts can be beneficial to Pāsifika students' engagement in learning, especially when they acknowledge the value of Pāsifika student identity and cultural diversity in their teaching and learning practices.

Pāsifika students will get maximum benefit out of an education system that invests in evidence-based professional development for teachers of Pāsifika students (Ferguson et al., 2008). Ferguson and colleagues (2008) concluded that “effective teaching, learning and assessment, productive learning partnerships and how culture counts” are critical in bringing about changes to teaching practices if teachers want to meet the diverse needs of Pāsifika students in their classrooms (p. 51). A good example of a research-based programme that taught teachers to meet the diverse needs of students in their classrooms is a government-funded project run in a few schools in South Auckland. The aim of the project is to develop a new teaching model for teachers of mathematics. This approach (named by students as ‘Bobbie Maths’) uses a collaborative approach to problem-solving in mathematics. According to Dr Bobbie Hunter, who developed the approach, teachers are trained to understand the approach, draw on the core Pāsifika values, and facilitate these values through drawing on cultural contexts that reflect the lives of their students; it also involves parents and communities (Hunter, 2007). The model allows students to work collaboratively in groups where they can debate and question their way through solving mathematical problems, using culturally based examples and contexts, for example, weighing a taro. The success of the approach lies in the fact that it is tailor-made to the culture of the student. Furthermore, it is inquiry-based, providing teachers with training and involving parents and the wider community.

2.3.1.3 The role of culturally appropriate education policies and teaching practices

The role of authentic, meaningful, culturally responsive teaching practices, education policies, the New Zealand Curriculum and initiatives such as the Pāsifika Education Plan, encourage

schools to incorporate and acknowledge the diversity of Pāsifika students in their decision-making. These indicate a general intent towards culturally appropriate approaches and better outcomes for Pāsifika students. According to Podmore et al. (2003), a survey by the Education Review Office (ERO) shows only 14% of schools are responding effectively to the needs of Pāsifika students. Similar results are shown in an ERO report on the *Achievement of Pācific Students* in 2006 (Ministry of Education, 2006).

In a 2010 ERO report on *Promoting Pācific Student Achievement: Schools' Progress* the assessors indicate that some schools have made constructive efforts to improve Pāsifika student engagement and academic outcomes; similar results are shown in the 2012 ERO report on *Improving education outcomes for Pācific students*. The ERO 2012 report indicates some schools have introduced numerous programmes to address the issues related to improving Pāsifika student engagement. These initiatives include raising awareness of the diversity of the Pāsifika cultures and ethnicities, higher expectations for achievement, and improving teaching strategies. There are also language programmes to provide support with learning English and Pāsifika languages, and integrating elements of Pāsifika culture into programmes such as art, social studies, and music (Education Review Office, 2012).

However, the ERO 2012 report states that despite these positive efforts, most schools and teachers have not measured the effectiveness of the initiatives on the engagement and learning outcomes of Pāsifika students. These results are contradictory to the guidelines provided in the New Zealand Curriculum that schools should use collected data to analyse their current systems, and “change policies, programmes, teaching practices, as well as for reporting to the Board of Trustees, parents and Ministry of Education” (p. 42).

The limited availability of data related to Pasifika student outcomes and progress is widely acknowledged (Chu et al., 2013; Education Review Office, 2012; Education Review Office, 2013; Nakhid, 2002). The effect of limited data has serious implications for Pāsifika student progress.

While researchers such as Chu et al. (2013) encourage schools to base their decisions about Pāsifika students on actual data rather than perceptions it does not happen consistently. Evaluations in the ERO report (Education Review Office, 2012) state that many schools “do not carefully analyse Pācific learners' assessment results to determine actions they could take to accelerate their progress” (p. 4). According to the ERO report, only a minority of schools explored Pāsifika student achievement in mathematics and reading, and less than 20%

explored their writing achievement. The reasons for the reluctance to use assessment data to accelerate Pāsifika student progress are unexplained. One school of thought suggests that the evaluation tools do not provide sufficient information to help teachers make informed decisions about the kind of support Pāsifika students require to progress.

Some researchers argue that traditional assessments are discriminatory. A study by Alison and Marsha (2007) examined multicultural, multilingual classrooms in schools in America and concluded that the traditional assessments methods used in these contexts fail to acknowledge important factors such as language and cultural experiences. In the New Zealand context, many studies refer to the use of language in assessments that are not within the life experiences of Pāsifika students, which affects the academic results (Alton-Lee, 2003; Gorinski et al., 2008; Nakhid, 2002; Siteine, & Samu, 2011). These language related concerns are also applicable to indigenous students in other parts of the world. For example, Pearce and Williams (2013) did a study on the appropriateness of standardised language assessments for indigenous students in Australia. The study explained how speech pathologists experience uncertainty in interpreting standardised results for this particular ethnic group. Their findings further state that inappropriate diagnosis is a risk associated with standardised assessments. The immediate question that arose after reading the study by Pearce and colleague is whether standardised tests would ever create fairness and equitable systems for the engagement of school age students from different cultures.

Hunter (2012; 2013) supplies evidence of when teachers draw on student language and cultural experiences, students with mathematics problems can engage in high-level mathematical reasoning. In one of these studies the teachers drew on the Communication and Participation Framework to introduce Pāsifika students into “reasoned mathematical practices” (Hunter, 2013, p. 3). Teachers considered the background of these students so they could draw on “culturally appropriate ways to structure the social norms of the classroom” (Hunter, 2013, p. 3). Students were encouraged to participate in small groups using multiple resources and questioning while discussing mathematical problem-solving strategies with their peers. Teachers used real life experiences as metaphors when they explained instructions to the students (for example, how different family members would use different ways to prepare a meal was used as a metaphor to explain that it is acceptable to use various methods to construct solutions to mathematical problems). Students were also reminded that asking questions added their voice to classroom discussions and added to pride in their ‘fono’ (family). The students were subsequently required to justify their constructed solutions through

mathematical argumentation and generalise their knowledge to more complex problems. According to Hunter (2013) these teachers drew on the Pāsifika students' sense of reciprocity, community and collectivism within a Pāsifika context to help them make sense of their reasoning and arguments. These provided culturally responsive teaching practices, which encouraged the student's voice, greater equity, positive student engagement and higher academic outcomes (Airini, 2013; Alton-Lee, 2003; Hunter, 2013).

Over the years, several research studies, education initiatives and policies have emphasised the importance of the Pāsifika student voice, culturally responsive teaching practices and positive teacher-student relationships in Pāsifika student engagement (Finn, 1989; Thaman, 1990; Hunter, 2013; MacIntyre, 2013; Ministry of Education, 2007; Nakhid, 2002; New Zealand Curriculum, Pāsifika Education Plan 2012 – 2017; Wendt-Samu, 2006). Active student involvement is also promoted in recommendations made in the Education Review Office Evaluation Report (2010), whereby engagement is defined as a process where students are “motivated and active participants in their learning” (p. 11). The critical factors for student engagement in the report align with the three dimensions of engagement identified by Fredricks et al. (2004) and Mahatmya et al. (2012). These include: students' involvement in their learning and extra-curricular activities (behavioural engagement); their morale and perceptions about school (emotional engagement); student participation and willingness to master difficult tasks (cognitive engagement); student attitudes and behaviour, and their levels of absenteeism (behavioural engagement); and truancy, stand-downs and suspensions (behavioural engagement).

According to Achembault et al. (2009), stand-downs and suspensions are indicative of some form of disengagement from education. This disengagement from education can hypothetically be associated with a breakdown in teacher-student relationships and a break-down in home-school relationships (Fredricks et al., 2004; Mahatmya et al., 2012), and indicates students who are not actively engaged in their learning.

This section described how engaging Pāsifika students in learning is incumbent upon the teachers' understanding of the importance of cultural diversity, forming positive relationships and making appropriate connections between curriculum content and life experiences of Pāsifika learners (Nakhid, 2002). Teachers who are knowledgeable about Pāsifika student diversities in relation to culture, identity and values are better equipped to engage Pāsifika students more successfully. They have an awareness of culturally appropriate classroom

management styles, and the use of culturally adequate resources to accommodate the learning needs of Pāsifika students in their teaching practices. Teachers need to have a clear understanding of the importance of the above as it contributes to positive learning outcomes for Pāsifika students (Archambault et al., 2009; Hunter, 2013; Thompson et al., 2009). Teachers, who are ill-informed of the cultural diversity of Pāsifika students, are therefore at risk of unrealistic teacher expectations, bias and limited understanding of Pāsifika students' learning. This can result in discrepancies in expectations, perceptions, belief systems and outcomes, hence disengaging students from learning.

2.3.1.4 The role of teachers in student disengagement

Disengaged students can be categorised as students who display behaviour that is disruptive or students who withdraw without being disruptive. Disruptive behaviour contrasts with behaviour expected from engaged student activity and, as a result, requires a response from teachers and schools. Archambault et al. (2009) suggest that the school and teachers' management of disengaged behaviours play an important role in student perceptions about school, and, therefore, contribute to a student's desire to disengage from education and leave school early. Archambault and colleagues (2000) in their extensive research on student engagement and early disengagement factors, found a strong correlation between behavioural dimensions of engagement, school dropout and the role of teachers. Behavioural dimensions of engagement are recognised as student presence, participation, on task behaviour, compliance, persistence, attention, concentration and involvement in school related activities (Appleton et al., 2008; Fredricks et al., 2004; Shernoff, & Schmidt, 2007).

In the New Zealand school context, Pāsifika students form part of a minority group and are subject to the educational expectations of a predominantly western culture. As explained (in 2.2.3), this means their unique cultural beliefs, diversities, identities and value systems within the education sector are not always well reflected and acknowledged. Although this is true for many Pāsifika students, Fanene (2008) suggests that teachers affect changes in students' presence, participation and learning through "effective communication, interpersonal and intercultural skills" (p. 114). The role of the teacher is, therefore, important in building positive relationships with parents, which will be changing the notion of disengaged parents to including them in their children's education. This suggests that more involved parents, teachers who are culturally empowering students to believe there are some advantages for them in the education system, will contribute to a lesser likelihood of students who disengage from education.

Whelan-Arisa (2010) cautions that “cultural mismatch” between teachers and students can contribute to student disengagement, under-achievement, and students displaying behaviour difficulties. According to Ferguson and colleagues (2008), cultural differences have the potential to not only lead to disengagement of Pāsifika students but also their parents from becoming involved in their children’s education. Teachers can play a critical role in the prevention of student and parent disengagement. For example, Fanene (2008) suggests that teachers affect changes in students’ presence, participation and learning through “effective communication, interpersonal and intercultural skills” (p. 114). The role of the teacher is, therefore, critical in building positive relationships with parents, changing the notion of disengaging parents to including them in their children’s education.

2.3.1.5 The role of teachers in creating relationships with parents

Life experiences have shaped the perceptions and belief systems teachers and parents have about the education system. In some situations, these can create confusion for Pāsifika students, consequently affecting their behaviour and commitment to learning. Coxon et al. (2002) and Ferguson et al. (2008) explain this by referring to the traditional model in which Pāsifika parents encourage their children to be respectful of authority figures, be obedient and listen to teachers. However, the New Zealand school system encourages participation, questioning and interaction, which can be confusing for Pāsifika students, teachers and parents. Thaman (1998) speculates that different cultural groups “have unique systems of perceiving and organising the world around them” (p. 120). These unique systems influence how people think, which help shape their behaviour and belief systems. He argues that difficulty understanding this concept creates issues with learning and teaching Pāsifika students. Teachers need to foster positive relationships with Pāsifika parents to change their confusion related to the different schooling system. Positive relationships are required to create opportunities in which they (teachers and parents) can learn from each other to address the complexities related to different expectations and cultural diversities in an appropriate way. An article in the *Talanoa Ako* (Ministry of Education, 2013) explains that greater parent involvement in school related activities and greater participation in their children’s learning will enhance Pāsifika student engagement, eliminate bias and confusion, create consistency in strategies that work for Pāsifika students and create opportunities for positive learning outcomes for Pāsifika students.

Teachers who create a positive environment in their classrooms for Pāsifika students understand the value of curriculum development and content delivery within a framework of Pāsifika student identity and values. These include allowing student voice and positive teacher-parent and student-teacher relationships to remain central in decisions that are made related to engagement in various levels of the school community. Culturally appropriate teaching and learning practices are therefore more likely to promote student engagement and support Pāsifika students towards greater academic and social outcomes (Ferguson et al., 2008; Pāsifika Education Plan, 2012 – 2017; Siteine, 2010; Thaman 1998; Whelan-Arisa, 2008; Zepke et al., 2010).

2.3.2 The wider community

Pāsifika student engagement, as suggested by researchers such as Fredricks et al. (2004) and Gibbs and Poskitt (2010), should be investigated holistically. Research should therefore not be limited to factors within the student: factors related to culture, individual perceptions, teaching practices, or factors within school communities should be included. Examining engagement holistically also requires including factors in the wider community such as the national curriculum, and policies and initiatives introduced by the Ministry of Education, because these have a profound effect on the engagement of Pāsifika students and their academic achievement outcomes.

2.3.2.1 The Ministry of Education

Pāsifika students' learning outcomes are impacted by decisions made at a national level. In Aotearoa New Zealand, most of these decisions are based on promoting quality teaching, which includes encouraging schools towards greater inclusive practices, acknowledging student diversity to achieve higher levels of engagement in learning, and ultimately contributing to increased academic outcomes. The current study follows an ecological approach in which the impact of the wider community is investigated to explore factors that are barriers and facilitators of Pāsifika student engagement at intermediate school level.

Pāsifika students enrolled in schools in Aotearoa New Zealand represent a multi-ethnic, heterogeneous population characterised by unique ethnic groups, cultures, belief systems and languages. In the educational context, this complex representation narrates cultural diversity and particular considerations regarding their engagement in learning, to which there have been numerous national responses and initiatives over the years. Some of these responses to

diversity refer to national education policy and curriculum changes. Examples of these changes include the Pāsifika Education Plan, launched in 2001 to accommodate Pāsifika student diversity alongside the National Curriculum. More recently changes to the Education Legislation Bill 2015 state:

The Pācific Islands Polynesian Education Foundation Act 1972 establishes a foundation that has the aim of supporting the education of students of Pācific Island descent who are New Zealand citizens or permanent residents. The Bill updates and revises the Act to ensure that –

*the Foundation continues to be representative of Pācific peoples in New Zealand:
the Foundation’s Board can operate more flexibly and efficiently (p. 3).*

In recent years, the Best Evidence Synthesis (BES) *Quality teaching for diverse students in schooling* (Alton-Lee, 2003) has been introduced to provide policymakers, educators and researchers with evidence-based data about what works for students in New Zealand schools. The BES has a strong focus on student diversity across all age ranges. According to Alton-Lee (2003), the BES identifies the characteristics of quality teaching, which encourage teachers to acknowledge group and individual student diversity within “caring, cohesive, inclusive learning communities” (p vi). The BES uses information collaboratively by linking policy makers, educators and researchers, thereby creating a strong evidence-base to inform policy changes. This process of collaboration, therefore, creates a cycle in which education outcomes are continually improving to achieve the national goal, whereby “...the school and classroom environment will recognise respect and respond to the diverse needs of all students” (Ministry of Education, 1998, p. 5).

The value of initiatives such as the BES is encompassed in its evidence-based contributions to education in New Zealand. It cautions, for example, against the effect of using the “learning style” approach to address student diversity in Māori and Pāsifika students. According to Dilworth and Brown (as cited in Alton-Lee, 2003), the learning style approach creates hazards by stereotyping students and creating the impression certain students (for example, Pāsifika) can only learn one way. Higgins (2001) states that incorrect assumptions such as these impact negatively on the engagement and academic outcomes of these students because they perpetuate least effective learning opportunities.

Student diversity is also addressed in the New Zealand Curriculum (2010), in which cohesive, supportive learning environments that are inclusive and non-discriminatory are strongly promoted. Several education leaders within the Ministry of Education, propose that improving outcomes for Pāsifika students should coincide with increasing their achievement across the curriculum while also creating a more equitable system in which they could be engaged in learning longer (Pāsifika Education Plan Monitoring Report, 2010). Various initiatives have since been introduced to support Pāsifika student success and retention rates:

- The National Standards initiative introduced in primary and intermediate schools in New Zealand in 2010 is an attempt to improve retention levels and academic outcomes by accommodating student diversity more holistically. It provides teachers with an understanding of the expected national achievement levels in reading, writing and mathematics. The intention of these standards is to provide a more holistic approach, by empowering all students to evaluate their individual progress and achievement through self-assessment. Teachers are expected to report to parents/caregivers twice a year meaning parents/caregivers can be involved in supporting their child's learning at home. According to Tuafuti, Pua, and van Schaijik (2011), the effect of the National Standards on Pāsifika student outcomes resulted in strong debates between Pāsifika educators and national policy makers. Pāsifika educators raised concerns about the lack of consultation with Pāsifika educators and parents and felt current research outcomes on Pāsifika literacy and the value of bilingual education were ignored. Other issues raised relate to fears that Pāsifika students may be labelled as "failures" (p. 61), as the National Standards is not perceived as an assessment tool capable of raising Pāsifika literacy levels. Taufuti and colleagues (2011) explained that although parents felt frustrated and angry, "showing respect for teachers and authorities was the only position they felt was left for them, thus, they said nothing, although they disagreed with the school's decision and wanted their child in the bilingual class" (p. 67).
- The Ministry of Education introduced the Pāsifika Education Plan in 2001 with the aim to promote higher educational outcomes for Pāsifika students in Aotearoa New Zealand schools. In 2013, the *Progress Report on the Pāsifika Education Plan* showed improvement in most of the targeted areas. However, there is also an improvement for non-Pāsifika students in these areas, which means the gap between outcomes for Pāsifika and non-Pāsifika students remains similar. A revised version of the Pāsifika Education Plan was released late in 2012. In this revised version, new targets were set

to continue to improve the educational outcomes for Pāsifika students. In a mid-term review of the Pāsifika Education Plan (Ministry of Education, 2011), some progress had been made against targets set in 2007 as illustrated in Figure 1:

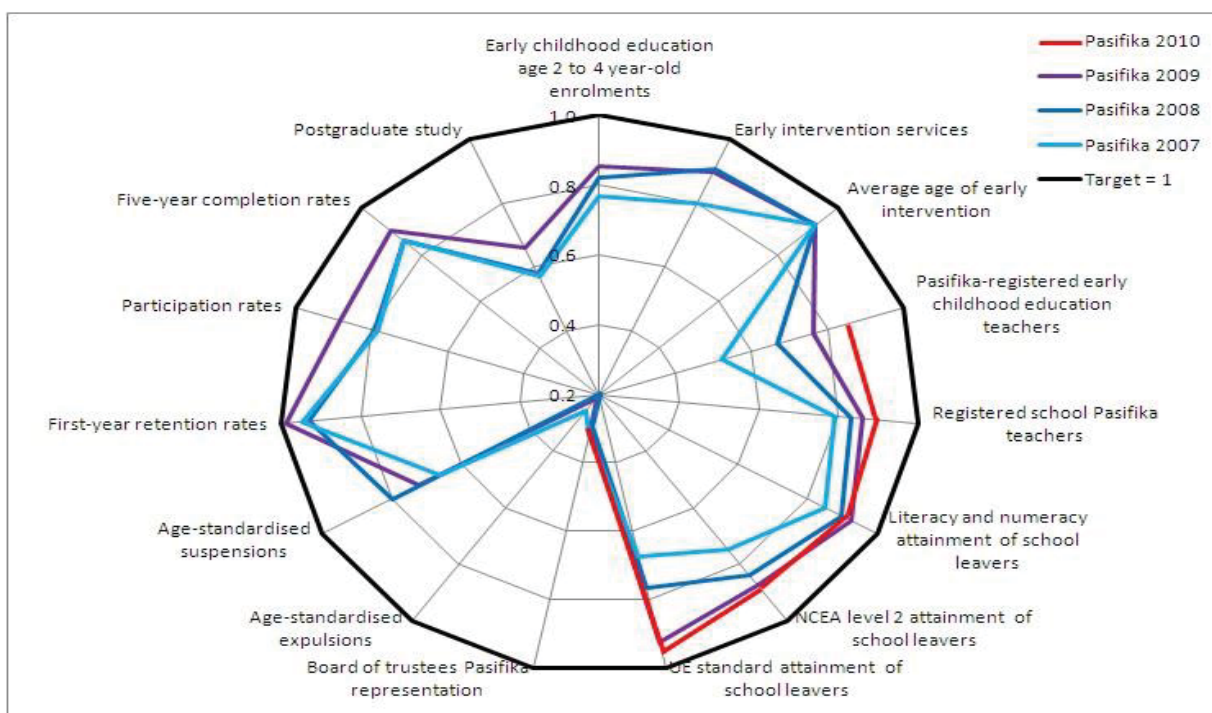


Figure 1: Progress Against Targets. (Reprinted from Mid-term Review of the Pāsifika Education Plan 2009-2012 (p. 2), by Education Counts, Wellington: Ministry of Education)

- Another initiative undertaken by the Ministry of Education to increase Pāsifika students' outcomes is the Education Review Office's Pācific Strategy. This strategy was introduced to review continuously and respond to issues related to Pāsifika students within the education sector. This strategy forms part of the wider education sector's commitment to Pāsifika and allows ERO to contribute towards the government's goals for Pāsifika students.
- Power Up, an initiative for National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) Pāsifika students at college or secondary level, aims to connect parents, families and communities with Pāsifika students' learning. Parents and students commented that this initiative is supportive, empowering and validates Pāsifika values, identities and cultural beliefs within a context of collaboration and community support. Additionally, students are more confident about their academic achievements and parents feel more empowered to support their children and schools. Student confidence is

perceived as a “task-facilitating emotion,” and therefore linked to emotional engagement (Mahatmya et al., 2012, p. 151).

Despite these efforts to improve Pāsifika student engagement, achievement and student outcomes, statistical evidence by Education Counts (Mnistry of Eduction, 2012) continues to raise concerns. Although a significant number of Pāsifika students remain in school until the end of their secondary school career (Year 13), many still leave school without any formal qualifications. These results indicate that they do not necessarily achieve sufficient qualifications to support them into the workforce or tertiary education levels. Persistence to remain in school for longer is associated with behavioural engagement (Fredricks et al., 2004; Mahatmya et al., 2012). Therefore, although the majority of schools in Aotearoa New Zealand strive to operate within a framework of inclusion, for Pāsifika students’ inclusion is not a reality yet. According to Nakhid (2002), numerous statistical and research evidence shows factors such as a lack of a Pāsifika identity and “examinations, subject selection and streaming” (p. 111) are providing barriers to Pāsifika students’ inclusion and subsequent chances of success.

According to the Education Act of 1989 all schools in New Zealand, whether state or state-integrated, must have a Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees fulfils certain responsibilities such as the governance of the school, management of staff, curriculum, property, finance and administration, employer, and collaboration with parents, staff and students about the school’s strategic direction. Furthermore, the Board of Trustees is responsible for providing a safe environment where quality education is a priority for all its students (Ministry of Education, 2014).

The Pāsifika Education Plan (2012 – 2017) encourages Pāsifika parents to become members of school boards, so they can help contribute to the changes that are needed to facilitate Pāsifika student outcomes. One of their recommendations is for schools to have a proportionate representation of Pāsifika parents on their Boards of Trustees. In 2013, 39% of schools in New Zealand indicated they had a fair representation of Pāsifika parents on their Boards of Trustees. National policy guidelines suggest there should be at least one Pāsifika member on a school’s Board of Trustees (Education Counts, 2013). Mara (1998) summarised a few positive initiatives undertaken to create successful school-community-parent liaison models. These include:

- Raising parents’ expectations through communication and information Some schools have translation and interpreter services available

- Parent workshops to focus on knowledge of curriculum expectations and building parent leadership skills
- Developing home-school relationships that respect cultural diversity
- After school programmes
- Recognising academic growth and achievement

Guidelines state that Pāsifika values and identity should be incorporated in how Boards of Trustees operate. They are encouraged to listen to the students' parents to understand what they want for their children. They are advised to collaborate with the parents about issues of concern, communicate with them in a culturally appropriate manner, and understand the value of positive relationships where ideas and strategies can be shared – ideas and strategies that parents and teachers can use to support students' engagement and learning (Nakhid, 2002). They should also accommodate Pāsifika identity and help their students, parents and communities to have a voice within the school and its goals. However, the Education Review Office report (2014), argues that although the current 39% is a fair representation of Pāsifika parents on Boards of Trustees, much more should be done to motivate and encourage parents to become part of this process.

In the wider community, current initiatives and policy changes have contributed to positive changes for Pāsifika students enrolled in schools in Aotearoa New Zealand. Schools have been encouraged to acknowledge the cultural diversity of Pāsifika students in initiatives such as the Pāsifika Education Plan and the National Standards. Changing teacher practices have contributed to better systems for engaging Pāsifika students in their learning towards better academic outcomes. The ongoing support from the Ministry of Education is imperative in this process, providing proper consultation happens on a regular basis with relevant Pāsifika stakeholders, including students, parents, school staff, Boards of Trustees, community leaders and various professional experts in the field who can provide research evidence and advice.

The current research uses an ecological approach to explore engagement factors within a Pāsifika theoretical framework. The ecological layers Pāsifika students operate in encompass Pāsifika values, culture, identities and their involvement in the wider community as illustrated in Figure 2 (Compass for Success Model) below. In this model, the Pāsifika student is in the centre of all attempts to enhance Pāsifika presence, achievement and engagement. The model acknowledges the multiple worldviews and ethnic diversities amongst Pāsifika students. It

promotes Pāsifika student success as “harnessing Pāsifika diversity within an enabling system that works for young people, their families and communities” (Pāsifika Education Plan Monitoring Report, 2009, p. 3).

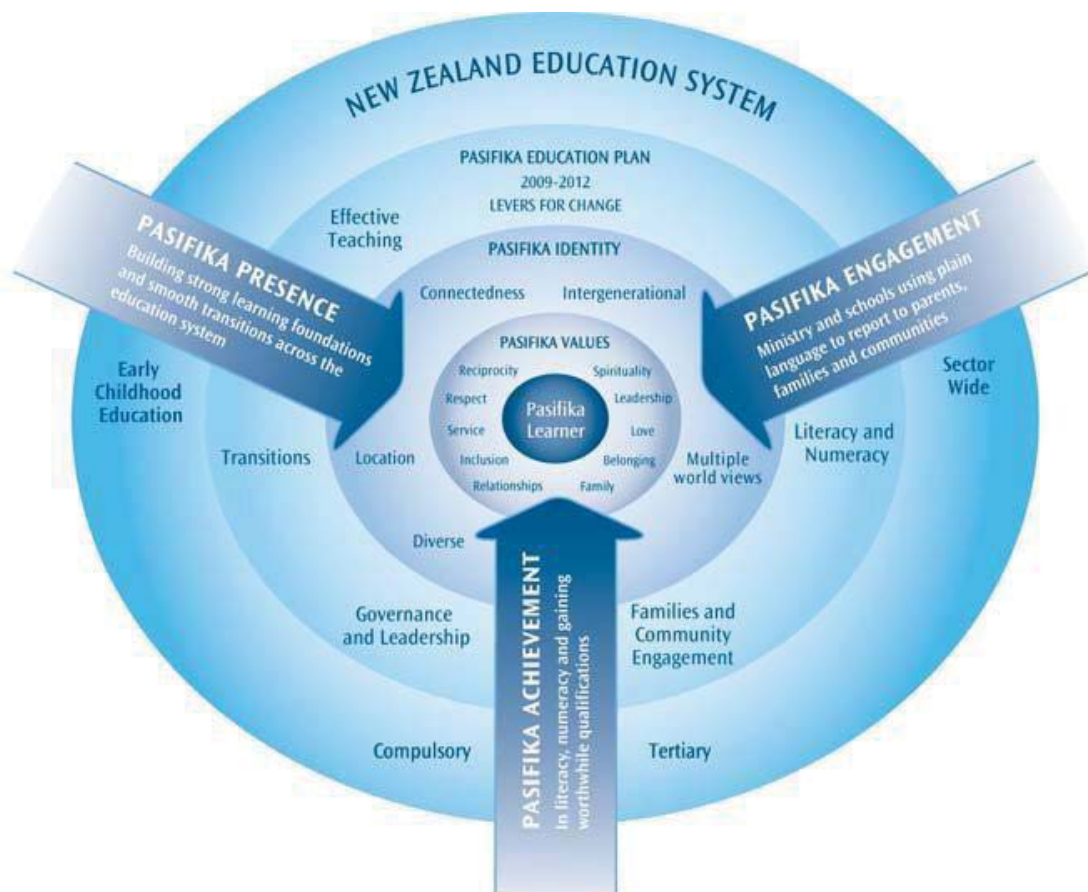


Figure 2: Compass for Success. (Reprinted from Pāsifika Education Plan (p. 5), by Ministry of Education, (2009), Wellington: Author)

According to the Pāsifika Education Plan Monitoring Report (2009), a successful system for Pāsifika students requires the education system, school leaders and those responsible for curriculum development to acknowledge the Pāsifika student as central to the process, while drawing on “strong cultures, identities and languages” (p. 3).

The Compass for Success Model follows an ecological approach in supporting Pāsifika people’s diversity and how they negotiate and operate through their spiritual, social, political, cultural and economic worlds. Although the Compass for Success Model provides a visual illustration of such an ecological process, the Tree of Opportunity metaphor provides the current research study with a Pāsifika theoretical framework. These models enable current

research that explores engagement factors ecologically while drawing on Pāsifika peoples' culture, identities and languages.

2.4 Theoretical framework

The Pāsifika Tree of Opportunity metaphor is the overarching Pāsifika framework used in the current research.

2.4.1 Pāsifika Tree of Opportunity

The current research in its ecological nature also has a Pāsifika student focus. It is, therefore, paramount to find a theoretical framework that encapsulates the ethnic diversities of Pāsifika communities in education ecologically. Coxon et al. (2002) support this notion stating the Pāsifika theoretical models “ensure that Pācific cultures are appropriately embedded within the processes and structures of formal education to provide the foundation of all learning” (p. 11). The Tree of Opportunity metaphor provides this Pāsifika theoretical basis for the current research because it underpins the values and belief systems of the Pāsifika communities in the education system and supports the ecological nature of the current research.

The Tree of Opportunity was originally used as a metaphor for reconsidering a new vision for Pāsifika education at a colloquium at the University of the South Pācific in 2001. In this metaphor, education, or the Tree of Opportunity is firmly “rooted in the cultures of Pāsifika societies” (“Tree of Opportunity”, 2002, p. 3).

According to Anae et al. (2001) Pāsifika education, or the Tree of Opportunity, gains “strengths and advantages from its root source “values, beliefs, arts and crafts, histories, worldviews, institutions, languages, processes and skills, knowledge” (p. 11). Being strong in this context implies Pāsifika education can allow contributions from multiple sources without compromising cultural identities or “changing its fundamental root sources” (“Tree of Opportunity,” 2002, p. 3). The Tree of Opportunity metaphor, according to Anae et al. (2001), promotes Pāsifika empowerment: Pāsifika students can take control of their education, through participation in setting educational goals within the contexts of their values, belief systems and knowledge. Pāsifika education will, therefore, become more “sustainable and self-managed” as Pāsifika peoples start to take greater control and greater ownership of the process (“Tree of Opportunity”, 2002, p. 3).

The primary goal of education, according to the Tree of Opportunity metaphor, is to ensure successful outcomes for Pāsifika students. Firstly, to support them to become full participants in the different settings they are involved in, such as “their groups, societies and the global community” (“Tree of Opportunity”, 2002, p. 3). A strong root source secures a strong education system, which ensures successful outcomes for Pāsifika students. Pāsifika contribute to the root source again as they become full participants at various levels of their community involvement. These levels of contribution and participation suggest bi-directional relations between factors within these settings for participants as illustrated in Figure 3 (“Tree of Opportunity”, 2002, p. 3).

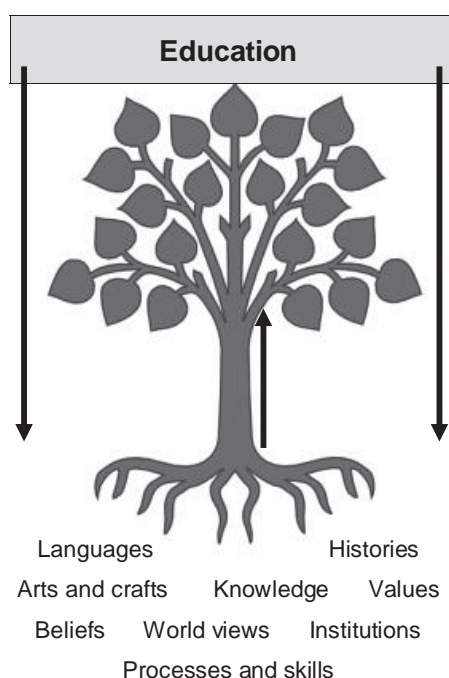


Figure 3: Tree of Opportunity. (Adapted from Tree of Opportunity: re-thinking Pacific education (p. 3), (2002). Suva, Fiji: University of the South Pacific Institute of Education)

These levels of contribution and participation in the Tree of Opportunity metaphor suggest bi-directional relations between factors within these settings for participants. In the context of the current research, the root sources are integrated with the different ecological settings in which the Pāsifika student operates. The root sources are related to the Pāsifika cultures, parents, school, relational components (parent-school, parent-child, teacher-child), and the wider external influences of the curriculum and Ministry of Education initiatives. Pāsifika peoples are drawing on the strength from these root sources so a powerful education system can be

created. A strong, independent, sustainable education system will empower Pāsifika peoples, who will in return contribute to their root system. This cycle of influence and empowerment will continue to strengthen the Tree of Opportunity (Education system).

The current research aims to identify barriers and enablers to the engagement in learning of Pāsifika students at intermediate school level. It ultimately hopes to provide teachers, students and parents with new knowledge (without compromising Pāsifika identities, values and belief systems) when they collaborate on goals related to engagement and academic outcomes of Pāsifika students. This new knowledge draws on the original goals set at the colloquium and how the Tree of Opportunity was used as a metaphor for empowerment. The current research, therefore, aligns with the metaphor of the Tree of Opportunity (Figure 3, “Tree of Opportunity”, 2002, p. 3).

2.5 Summary

In the first chapter, existing research was linked to the engagement in learning of Pāsifika students. In this chapter, literature that provides global definitions of engagement was reviewed. The chapter foregrounded the shift that has occurred in definitions about engagement from factors previously perceived as being inherent to the person, to current definitions acknowledging engagement as multi-dimensional and influenced by systemic variables.

When engagement was applied in the Pāsifika context, it became apparent that Pāsifika students had been disadvantaged and marginalised by education systems that did not acknowledge critical aspects such as cultural diversity, values and identities. Historical approaches have created mismatches and discrepancies that contributed to bias, misconceptions, under-achievement and ultimately disengagement from education.

The multi-dimensional nature of engagement was applied within the ecological context of Pāsifika students enrolled in schools in Aotearoa New Zealand. Students operated across three ecological layers (perceptions of barriers and facilitators of Pāsifika student engagement, the role of teachers and their teaching practices and the contribution of the wider community). Major contributors to student engagement have been identified within each layer.

In the first layer, the individual perceptions of students, teachers and parents of the enablers and barriers to Pāsifika student engagement were discussed. The individual perceptions,

interpretations and personal views (teacher, parent or student) are shaped by a person's unique and individual life experiences, which can create misinterpretations, low expectations and wrong perceptions about Pāsifika students, resulting in academic failure and disengagement. Culturally responsive teaching practices, which incorporate Pāsifika identity and values, make provision for language barriers, foster positive parent-teacher relationships, and acknowledge the role of the family and factors within the wider community, have the opposite effect on student engagement, contributing to high levels of engagement and positive student outcomes.

In the second layer, the focus was on engagement factors such as the role of teachers in supporting Pāsifika students to construct their identity in classrooms, for example, considering what is important to them, belonging to social groups and ethnic groups, and how stories and narratives are incorporated in teaching approaches. The value of allowing Pāsifika students to create their identities within school settings lies in helping students to form positive perceptions about being successful. Furthermore, it establishes a sense of belonging, improves confidence levels, increases pride and motivates students towards greater engagement and higher academic achievement levels.

Teaching practices and the role of teachers when students disengage from education and how they contribute to building positive relationships with Pāsifika parents were discussed next. Teachers, students and parents who collaborate, work together, and learn from each other are empowered to create culturally responsive teaching environments, with appropriate resources where Pāsifika students can experience a sense of belonging. Pāsifika students will find these environments supportive, stimulating and respectful of their identities and values (Nakhid, 2002; Gorinski, & Fraser 2006; Hunter, 2013). While this is the ideal model for Pāsifika student engagement, teachers, students and parents continue to be challenged. Most of these challenges are linked to a historical approach of adhering to the educational needs of one particular dominant ethnic group in the education system. This unrepresentative approach has, over the years, complicated attempts to cater for ethnic diversity and creating Pāsifika identity within the education system.

The third ecological layer involves the wider community, for example the Ministry of Education, as a key role player in policy changes and initiatives to enhance Pāsifika student engagement and outcomes. In this layer, various initiatives were discussed: The Best Evidence Synthesis (BES), Quality teaching for diverse students in schooling, the National Standards and the

Pāsifika Education Plan, which create more opportunities to positively influence Pāsifika student engagement and outcomes in schools. Despite these efforts, many Pāsifika students still leave school without any formal qualifications to support them into the workforce or tertiary education. There is however, also evidence of positive shifts towards greater student engagement and higher education levels. Some reasons for these changes relate to changes in teaching practices, which consequently create better systems for engaging Pāsifika students in their learning, and parents becoming more empowered to support their children towards better academic outcomes. The Tree of Opportunity being the overarching Pāsifika basis, provides “strong roots” and a vision for the current research. Similarities between the aims of the current research and the original objectives of The Tree of Opportunity create a solid basis for integrating it into the ecological framework of the current study. The model is explained in more detail in Chapter Three.

Chapter Three will outline the methodology and research design framework for conducting the current research. It will include the rationale and research questions, followed by an explanation of the integrated method that was used: Bronfenbrenner’s approach, the Tree of Opportunity model and case study approach.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY (FA'AFALETUI)

A fia vave oo lou va'a, alo na o 'oe, ae a fia tuli mamao le taunu'uga tatou 'alo'alo faatasi
(If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together)
Samoan proverb

3.1 Introduction

In Chapter Two, definitions of engagement were explored and most applicable to this study were those offered by Gibbs and Poskitt (2010) and Fredricks et al. (2004). Gibbs and Poskitt (2010) acknowledged engagement as “multidimensional” and “interconnected” (p. 2), while Fredricks and colleagues stated it should be studied as a “multi-faceted construct” (p. 59). As a result, multidimensional factors impacting on Pāsifika student engagement at intermediate school level were considered in this study. Both behavioural and emotional dimensions of engagement were considered. The interconnectedness of these dimensions of engagement was explored within three ecological layers: factors affecting Pāsifika students’ engagement in learning; in the school setting; and within the wider community. Finally, the Pāsifika Tree of Opportunity metaphor was presented as it supported the ecological nature of the current study within a Pāsifika theoretical framework.

In Chapter Three, the methodology used to investigate factors facilitating the engagement in learning of Pāsifika students at an intermediate school in South Auckland is presented. A case study is used as the main approach to explore the engagement factors impacting on learning of a particular cohort of Pāsifika students. The case study approach is used in conjunction with Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory and the Pāsifika Tree of Opportunity, as they both align well with the ecological, Pāsifika orientation of this study. As Anae et al. (2001) state, “the primary role of Pāsifika researchers is to develop a uniquely Pācific world view that is underpinned by Pācific values, belief systems and ways of structuring knowledge” (p. 8).

Chapter Three outlines the initial planning and consultation stages, followed by the data collection and finally the data analysis and presentation stages. The research question and sub-questions are outlined in Section 3.2. This is followed by an explanation of the focus and significance of the current study in Section 3.3. In Section 3.4, the integration of the Pāsifika Tree of Opportunity model, Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory and case study as a research strategy is briefly explained. In Section 3.5, the research methods (the planning, consultation and negotiating, data gathering methods and data analysis) are described. Section

3.6 outlines the research setting and provides a description of the school and participants, including how the different participants are identified and approached for their participation in the research. Section 3.7 contains details of the preparation stages for data collection, for example, consultation with the Pāsifika Reference Group and obtaining permission from an external source to use imageries from its website in the data collection material. Participant demographics are described in section 3.8, followed by a description of the data collection procedures that were utilised for this study (3.9). In Section 3.10, ethical considerations are presented, which includes gaining approval from the Massey University Human Ethics Committee (MUHEC), obtaining informed consent and addressing issues related to anonymity and confidentiality. Section 3.11 explains the permission sought for use of images and section 3.12, reflection and exit from the school. A description of data analysis and data presentation (3.13 and 3.14) is followed by considerations to optimise validity, reliability, trustworthiness and generalizability (3.15), and Section 3.16 concludes with a summary of this chapter.

3.2 Research Question and Sub-questions

Exploring student engagement as a “multidimensional, interconnected, multi- faceted construct” (Gibbs, & Poskitt., 2010, p.2) requires a holistic approach, as recommended by various researchers (for example, Fredricks et al., 2004; Gibbs, & Poskitt, 2010; Skinner, & Pitzer, 2012). Aligned with this orientation, this study explored engagement factors within three different ecological layers in which Pāsifika students operate. These layers are represented by Pāsifika perceptions of engagement factors on (1) a personal level, (2) within the school setting and (3) within the wider community. The research question and sub-questions are designed to provide information about the engagement factors within each of these three layers.

Research question

What are the facilitators of Pāsifika students’ engagement in learning at intermediate school level?

Sub-questions

- 1. What are the personal perceptions of students, parents, teachers and other education professionals of the enablers and barriers to Pāsifika students’ engagement in learning at an intermediate level school?*
- 2. What are the current teaching and learning practices at an intermediate level school that support Pāsifika students’ engagement in learning?*

3. *What are the multidimensional, socio-cultural and ecological understandings of engagement in learning for Pāsifika students at an intermediate level school that emerges from this study?*

The research questions were designed for a particular purpose. The layered questions guide the research design through three ecological layers (individual perceptions, teaching and learning practices, and multi-dimensional, socio-cultural and ecological understandings of student engagement). Responses to these layered questions will provide new knowledge to support Pāsifika and non-Pāsifika teachers towards wider understanding of curriculum delivery within an ecological framework of Pāsifika people's values. The questions provide structure and consistency and maintain the focus on Pāsifika students at intermediate school level.

3.3 Significance and focus of the current study

Early disengagement from learning or disengagement from learning prior to transitioning to secondary level poses risks for many Pāsifika students. Identification of disengagement factors has the potential to prevent such risks. These include leaving school prematurely or leaving with inferior qualifications – qualifications that do not support Pāsifika students to transition into the workforce or tertiary education.

The current study focuses on exploring factors that are barriers or enhancers to Pāsifika students' engagement in learning at intermediate school level. These present an important opportunity to create understanding of engagement factors facilitating Pāsifika students' engagement in learning prior to their secondary years of schooling. The research outcomes are strengths-based and aim to utilise this new knowledge to help change negative perceptions about Pāsifika students' engagement in learning. They also support teaching and learning practices that optimise Pāsifika student engagement and their academic achievement. Lastly, it could contribute to future research studies related to engagement and curriculum development for Pāsifika students.

These main features of this study, therefore, can be associated with a presentation of a multi-dimensional, multi-layered process, in which student engagement is explored using a case study approach, informed by the Tree of Opportunity metaphor and Bronfenbrenner's ecological approach.

3.4 The Pāsifika Tree of Opportunity, Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory and a Case Study approach

This section describes the integration of a case study approach, with the Pāsifika Tree of Opportunity and Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory. The Pāsifika Tree of Opportunity metaphor is explained first as it encompasses all aspects of the current study. This is followed by an explanation of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory and then the case study approach.

3.4.1 The Pāsifika Tree of Opportunity metaphor

At a Colloquium on Rethinking Pāsifika Education in Suva, Fiji (in 2001), questions and concerns were raised about the effectiveness of current teaching models and philosophies in their delivery of education to Pāsifika students. Key issues included the language of instruction and how the students’ mother tongue was valued in education, the appropriateness of the curriculum content, assessment and teaching methodologies. School structures, school cultures and school management were questioned, as was early school dropout and the inability of Pāsifika youth to secure employment. A group of attendees also articulated the need for appropriate research to provide solutions to the above issues.

To make sense of the issues, the Tree of Opportunity was used as a metaphor to create a vision for Pāsifika education (“Tree of Opportunity”, 2002). According to Anae et al. (2001), Pāsifika education through the Tree of Opportunity gains “strengths and advantages from its root source (values, beliefs, arts and crafts, histories, worldviews, institutions, languages, processes and skills, knowledge)” (p. 11). Being strong at its root source implies Pāsifika education can allow contributions from multiple sources (external and internal) without compromising cultural identities or “changing its fundamental root sources” (“Tree of Opportunity,” 2002, p. 3). For Anae et al. (2001), these also promote Pāsifika empowerment so Pāsifika can take control of their education.

The Colloquium on Rethinking Pāsifika Education focused on goals of “greater sustainability, self-management, control and ownership of Pāsifika education through Pāsifika peoples setting educational goals within the contexts of their values, belief systems and knowledge” (“Tree of Opportunity,” 2002, p. 3). These goals align with a vision for Pāsifika education held by the Ministry of Education, which states, “the education system must work for Pāsifika so they gain the knowledge and skills to do well for themselves, their communities, Aotearoa New Zealand, the Pācific Region and the world (Ministry of Education, 2012, p. 1).

The Tree of Opportunity encourages Pāsifika peoples to become full participants in the different settings they are involved in, for example, “their groups, societies and the global community” (“Tree of Opportunity,” 2002, p. 3). This implies reciprocal relationships between the *root source* and education. As evident in Figure 3.a, a strong *root source* acknowledges Pāsifika contributions to education, and “feeds up” to secure a strong, independent education system, which secures successful educational outcomes for Pāsifika students at various levels. Effective education systems “feedback” to the root source again as students become successful participants at various levels of the Pāsifika society. Taking these principles into consideration, the Tree of Opportunity model, being firmly “rooted in the cultures of Pāsifika societies” (“Tree of Opportunity,” 2002, p. 3) also underpins their rights and responsibilities in the education system.

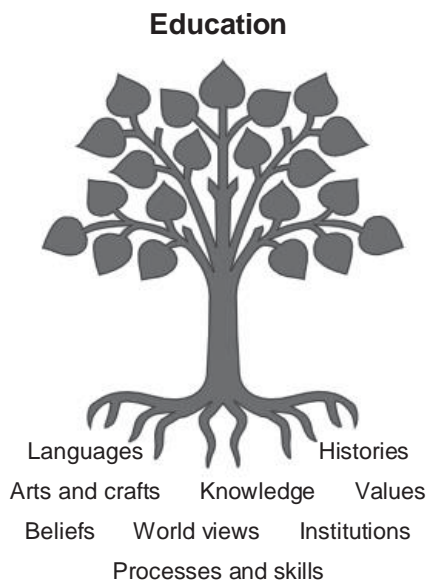


Figure 3.a: Tree of Opportunity. (Adapted from Tree of Opportunity: re-thinking Pacific education (p.3), (2002), Suva, Fiji: University of the South Pacific Institute of Education)

3.4.2 Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Theory

Bronfenbrenner’s approach claims that a child’s development is influenced by his or her relational experiences within different environmental layers or systemic settings. These systems include the immediate (family and school) as well as the wider social and cultural systems a child is involved in (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Berk, 2000). According to Oswalt (2010) the ecological systems theory describes how factors within a child and factors in the child's environment affect how the child grows and develops. Bronfenbrenner (1979) distinguishes

between the microsystem (immediate family), mesosystem (school, home), exosystem (parents' work place, services in the community), and macrosystem (values, laws).

In the *microsystem*, the bidirectional relationships between parents and their children mean parents influence their children's behaviour and vice versa. The nature of these reciprocal relationships will have an enduring effect on a child's development.

In the mesosystem the interaction between home, school and neighbourhood help shape a child's development. In these settings child development is promoted by factors such as the parents' involvement in their child's school life, parents supporting their children with homework, parent-teacher relationships and the sharing of information between home and school (for example, in school newsletters).

The *exosystem* refers to settings such as a parent's workplace, external community services (social welfare), and extended family members. Although children are not present in the exosystem, they are affected by it (For example, flexible work hours, which allow a parent to spend time with children when they are unwell).

The *macrosystem* consists of resources, values and rules or laws within the culture in which a person lives and how these affect all the other inner layers. For example, childcare benefits, national standards for childcare facilities, and educational policies (Annan, 2005; Berk, 2000; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; den Outer, Handley, & Price, 2012).

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), child development and behaviour is based on the child's perception of his/her experiences within a particular setting. These experiences do not happen in isolation but are part of reciprocal interactions between the child, others and the different ecological settings in which he/she operates. Culture being one of these experiences fulfils a critical role in child development. Bronfenbrenner, according to Annan (2005), refers to culture as a "blueprint that determines each layer of the ecology and ...when challenged or altered, results in changes in the actions of individuals" (p. 136). The child therefore becomes an inseparable part of his/her social system. In the current study, Pāsifika students, as participants, are perceived as an integral part of the social systems in which they operate. Bronfenbrenner's ecological approach is illustrated in Figure 4.

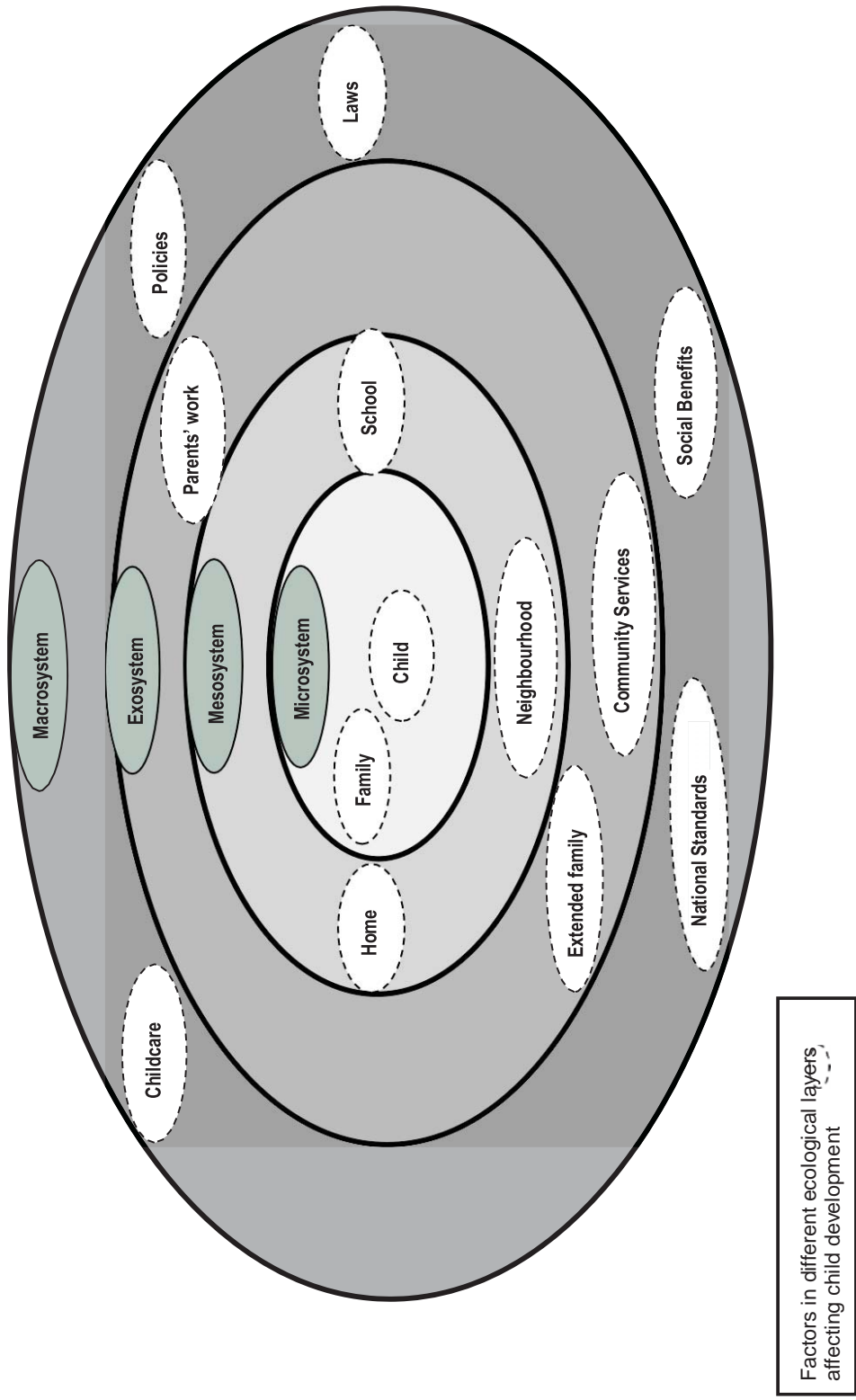


Figure 4: Bronfenbrenner's ecological approach. (Adapted from U. Bronfenbrenner, (1979). *The ecology of human development: experiments by nature and design* (p.), Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press)

3.4.3 A Case Study Approach

A case study approach is an empirical inquiry that investigates a phenomenon (e.g., a case, situation or event) in its real life setting (Hancock, & Algozinni, 2006; Yin, 2003, 2009). The current research follows a case study approach, to investigate factors facilitating Pāsifika students' engagement in learning at an intermediate school in South Auckland. The case, situation or event is studied during a specific time frame and in a particular context (Yin, 2003; Hancock, & Algozinni, 2006). The current research involved a case study of a cohort of students at an intermediate school over a period of two years.

Case studies (as in the current research) are explorative and seek to identify themes, patterns, and types of behaviour, allow progressive gathering of information and encourage the use of multiple data sources. These include interviews, surveys and observations (Berg, 2004; Hancock, & Algozinni, 2006; Yin, 2009; Baxter, & Jack, 2008). Multiple data sources include qualitative and quantitative data gathering techniques, which allow for positive contributions to case study research. Evidence derived from multiple data sources can be explored much wider and in more depth. Additionally, multiple data sources add to construct validity and create a chain of evidence (for example, data derived from surveys provides some information about a particular event, which can be further explored using data from observations and interviews). Multiple data sources contribute to valid, reliable data, which defines the quality of a research design (Yin, 2009, 2014). The mixed qualitative and quantitative approaches used in the current study for each research question, provide an in-depth understanding of the engagement factors facilitating Pāsifika students' learning, and support triangulation of the data to create greater validity and reliability.

The case study research design used in the current study serves a dual purpose. Firstly, it creates an environment in which the Pāsifika participants can feel heard as “authorities on their own experiences, on the procedures involved, in the analysis of their accounts and in the reporting of results” (Nakhid, 2002, p. 150). Secondly, it connects the empirical data to the research questions and conclusions, and allows a holistic research approach (Yin, 2003, 2009, 2014).

3.4.4 Integration of Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, the Pāsifika Tree of Opportunity and the case study approach

In this section the integration of the Tree of Opportunity and Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory are explained. For the purposes of this study the four layers in Bronfenbrenner's approach are collapsed into three to align it with the research questions and Pasifika values while maintaining Bronfenbrenner's philosophy of ecological understandings and systems theory. The research questions focus on outcomes that could extend current understandings of Pāsifika student engagement across the ecological settings within which they operate. These include, for example, perceptions (first layer), teaching and learning practices (second layer), and social and cultural factors in the wider community (third layer). According to the The Tree of Opportunity metaphor, Pāsifika values and belief systems are at the core (root source) of their culture ("Tree of Opportunity" 2002, p. 3). Values and belief systems have therefore been moved from the fourth layer in Bronfenbrenner's model to the first layer of the integrated model of this study because factors in the first layer of the integrated model were interpreted as 'closest' to the Pāsifika student, who were at the center of this study.

There are various similarities between Bronfenbrenner's approach and The Tree of Opportunity metaphor, which enabled an integrated model. Both involve:

- a systemic orientation
- focusing on optimising student outcomes
- factors at the "root source" of the Tree of Opportunity and those Bronbrenner identified within the different ecological layers

Yin (2009) refers to a case study approach as relevant when you believe contextual conditions are relevant to the topic under study. For the current study integration of the case study approach, Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory and the Pāsifika Tree of Opportunity model is of relevance. Here, the case study, being the main approach is associated with a multi-layer, holistic investigation of behavioural and emotional dimensions of Pāsifika student engagement in learning at an intermediate school in South Auckland. According to Yin (2014) a case study offered an in-depth analysis of quantitative, qualitative data. In this study an in-depth analysis is used to identify facilitators and barriers to student engagement. Therefore, a case study approach provided this study with a structured research framework that facilitated the design of research questions in a systemic manner.

In summary, this integration is important for the current study as the ‘cross- pollination’ of engagement dimensions continuously influences and shapes the case study approach by providing a strong Pāsifika theoretical basis and an ecological focus. Section 3.5 explains the research methodology, focusing on how Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model and the Pāsifika Tree of Opportunity are used to inform the integrated case study approach chosen for this study.

3.5 Research Methodology

The research methodology chosen for the current study consists of a case study informed by Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory and the Pāsifika Tree of Opportunity model.

3.5.1 Case study informed by Bronfenbrenner’s ecological approach and the Pāsifika Tree of Opportunity

Bronfenbrenner’s ecological approach is part of the integrated research lens chosen through which to view the current study. There are various reasons for including this approach in the research method. Firstly, the multidimensional nature of the definition of engagement that is relevant to the current study extends the engagement factors across the different ecological systems/layers in which Pāsifika students operate. One of the objectives of the current study is to create new understandings about factors facilitating the engagement in learning of Pāsifika students at intermediate school level. To acquire this new knowledge, it is important to obtain a good understanding of these engagement factors across all the systems, followed by how these factors affect the engagement in learning of the target population of Pāsifika students at intermediate school level.

Similar to Bronfenbrenner’s approach, the current study is also interested in bi-directional influences; between engagement factors within different ecological settings and how these affect the engagement of Pāsifika students in their learning. The bi-directional, reciprocal relations in a systemic framework are also of relevance in the Tree of Opportunity model. In this model as illustrated in Figure 3 (“Tree of Opportunity”, 2002, p. 3), education is firmly “rooted in the cultures of Pācific societies and the strengths and advantages it gains from its root source (values, beliefs, arts and crafts, histories, world views, institutions, languages, processes and skills, knowledge)” (Anae et al., 2001, p. 11). The Tree of Opportunity metaphor fits well with the underlying approach of the current study as it acknowledges Pāsifika diversity within the education system, and foregrounds the different settings Pāsifika students operate in, which

supports the ecological nature of the current study. The Tree of Opportunity, for example, affirms Pāsifika participation and contribution within their groups, societies and the global community, which can be associated with the three ecological layers of this study.

The Tree of Opportunity, similar to the current study, is interested in contributions from Pāsifika and non-Pāsifika participants (external sources) without compromising Pāsifika “identities or root sources” (“Tree of Opportunity,” 2002, p. 3). The Pāsifika Tree of Opportunity metaphor focuses on the cultural context of the Pāsifika participants within various ecological systems; Pāsifika values and beliefs are therefore accommodated within a systemic framework that continuously relies on a sound Pāsifika theoretical base (Anae et al. 2001; “Tree of Opportunity,” 2002).

The rationale for the selection of an exploratory, single case study approach for the current study is that it provides “a much broader view...using multiple sources of evidence” (Hancock, & Algozzini, 2006, p. 15). To design, organise and conduct case study research successfully researchers recommend the following steps: determine the research questions, select the focus of the case study, determine the data collection protocols, analyse the data, draw conclusions, and prepare a report for feedback (Blatter, & Haverland, 2012; Hancock, & Algozzini, 2006; Soy, 1997; Yin, 2003, 2009, 2014). These steps were used in the current study.

Mixed quantitative and qualitative data gathering tools helped determine the factors which facilitated engagement in learning of Pāsifika students at intermediate school level, in relation to the various ecological settings they were involved in. Mixed quantitative and qualitative approaches, according to Anae et al. (2001) are “integral to the refinement of a Pācific research methodology” (p. 31). Anae et al. (2001) state both methodologies are useful from a Pāsifika perspective because of their complementary nature and because they can be used simultaneously in research studies.

Quantitative research approaches are useful when specific variables are measured and access to participants is limited due to time constraints and limited resources (Berg, 2004; Hancock, & Algozzini, 2006). These factors were a reality in the current study, and quantitative measures such as rating scales on a survey were used. In qualitative research methodologies, the goal is to explore different worldviews and interpret social occurrences through the meanings that people bring to their daily lives (Anae et al., 2001; Berg, 2004; Perese, 2009). Hancock and Algozzini (2006) refer to this as the “insider’s perspective” (p. 8) where understanding of a situation is created by considering the perspectives of the participants, not the researcher.

Considering these, the current study drew on qualitative research approaches including interviews, observations and open-ended survey questions.

Thus, an integrated case study approach best aligns with the orientation to engagement identified for the current study. In summary, it aims to accommodate the current study's multi-dimensional, holistic, ecological orientation while providing a sound Pāsifika base. Here, the ecological layers in Bronfenbrenner's ecological approach are integrated with the *root sources* of the Tree of Opportunity. The first layer involves those factors closest to the Pāsifika student, for example language and knowledge; the second layer the school setting; and the third layer the wider community. Bi-directional relationships between the layers 'feed up' to 'Education,' which 'feeds back' to the various ecological settings the students are involved in. A case study approach, informed by Bronfenbrenner's ecological model and the Tree of Opportunity is utilised to investigate engagement factors within these layers (factors facilitating the engagement in learning of Pāsifika students at intermediate school level). What these engagements might look like is explained later in this chapter.

3.5.2 Epistemology

Anae et al. (2001) and the Health Research Council of New Zealand (2005; 2014) have outlined specifications and guidelines for Pāsifika research. Perese (2005) argues that these specifications are based on Pāsifika "cultural values, principles, understandings, practices and epistemological underpinnings" (p. 105). These authors strongly believe that research methods should serve the concerns of Pāsifika peoples, and that the outcomes must benefit all participants. According to Perese (2009), the Pāsifika epistemology or theory of knowledge seeks to answer the following questions: How do we generate knowledge? Where do we use it? How do we use it? What does new knowledge teach us? Who teaches us? Authors such as Airini, Anae and Mila-Schaaf (2010) describe Pāsifika epistemology as interpretive. This study is based on a social-constructivist approach, which aligns with the Pasifika orientation of co-constructing knowledge based on values, belief systems, and social collaboration. These include the principles of community and reciprocity at the core of knowledge creation and understanding for Pāsifika.

Perese's questions of who and how knowledge is generated, and where and how it is used is underpinned by notions of social co-constructivism, reciprocity, systemic thinking and ecological understandings. This epistemology underpins this thesis.

3.6 Preliminary stages: setting up the study

Significant planning and consultation occurred prior to the commencement of this study. In her role as a psychologist in schools, the researcher had several preliminary discussions with teachers about Pāsifika student engagement. These highlighted varied levels of engagement in learning. While some Pasifika students were actively engaged in learning, and achieving high academic outcomes, others found engagement in learning complex and challenging, hence achieving at a much lower level. Although this is true for most students, factors facilitating learning outcomes for Pasifika students at intermediate school level are of particular interest to this study.

Consultation with members of the Pāsifika community has been an important aspect of this study. Anae et al. (2001) emphasise the importance of consultation in the Pāsifika research process and link this to the following benefits:

- it will help resolve “possible contentious or difficult issues in the research process before the project starts” (p. 19)
- it can help with recruitment strategies
- it can lead to research partnerships (with participants and other researchers)
- help clarify the research topic
- it can also provide mechanisms for overcoming problems that may develop
- it provides channels of communication before any decisions are made

For the researcher, it was important to sustain a research partnership with Pāsifika researchers and the relevant communities, as their support and guidance helped minimise the reported “mistrust and suspicion of researchers and research amongst many Pāsifika communities” (Ibid. p.19). Anae et al. (2001) stated that most “non-Pasifika researchers will find it extremely difficult to recruit Pasifika participants because of their lack of knowledge about Pasifika networks and Pasifika protocols regarding contact processes” (p.22). The researcher was aware of this and wanted to be respectful of Pāsifika protocols, hence the desire to establish appropriate Pāsifika networks of support, for example via a cultural reference group.

Building sustainable, trusting relationships with the Pāsifika community is paramount for the researcher and the research study. To achieve this, the researcher drew from current

established relationships with Pāsifika co-workers, colleagues and other professionals in the field of education. The researcher also considered negotiating with relevant Pāsifika community leaders, Pāsifika academic staff at Massey University, and staff at the Ministry of Pāsifika Island Affairs about their availability to provide cultural support as members of a reference group.

3.7 Research method

The research method consists of three stages, planning and consultation, data preparation and collection and data analysis as illustrated in Figure 5.

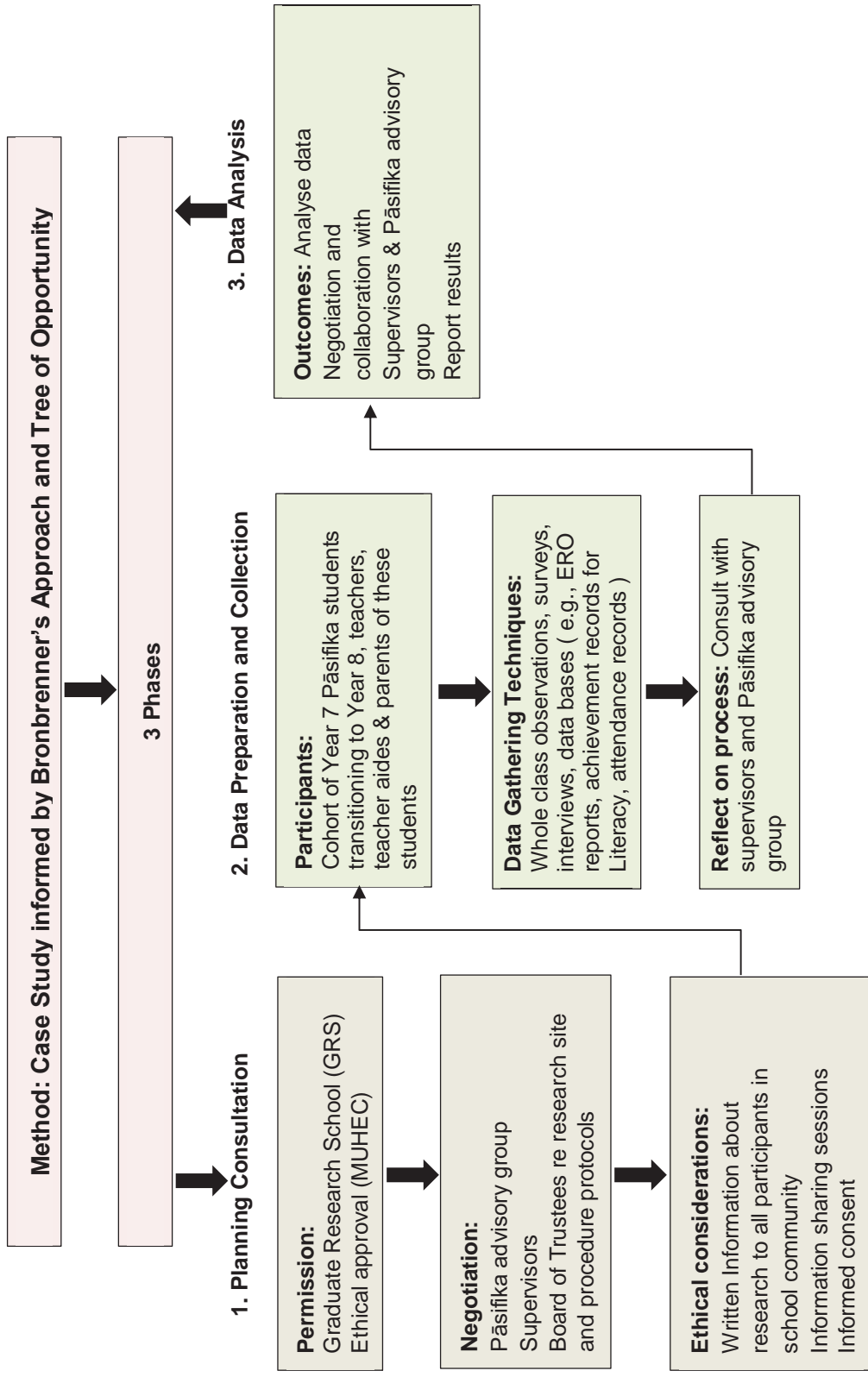


Figure 5: Research method

3.7.1 Planning and consultation

❖ Permission

Following approval from the Massey University Graduate Research School and the Massey University Human Ethics Committee (Appendix 1, Approval Letter MUHEC) consultation with the Pāsifika Reference Group and supervisors continued to be an integral part of the current study.

3.7.2 Negotiation

❖ Reference Group, Supervisors, Board of Trustees

According to Anae et al. (2001), consultation is an important step in the Pāsifika research process as it can help resolve “possible contentious or difficult issues in the research process before the project starts” (p. 19). It can further assist with recruitment strategies, lead to research partnerships (with participants and other researchers), provide mechanisms for overcoming problems that may develop and provide channels of communication before any decisions are made. The role of Pāsifika research, according to the *Health Research Council of New Zealand Guidelines* has a dual purpose: to generate knowledge and understanding of Pāsifika peoples and seek ways to obtain their active involvement (Pācific Health Research, 2004).

The researcher has developed key relationships with those who accepted to become Supervisors and members of the Pasifika Reference Group. Anae et al (2001) cautioned against “Palagi” monocultural research methods (p.21). The researcher therefore engaged with the supervisors and members of the reference group through regular meetings / fono to seek collaborative advice and guidance as the current study progresses. Consultation with the Pāsifika Reference Group occurred through regular fono (meetings) with the whole group or with individuals as required. This approach is also in line with the principles of the Tree of Opportunity metaphor as it acknowledges Pāsifika ‘voice’ in building knowledge and skills.

The rationale for the Pāsifika Reference Group was to direct the researcher to local contact people, relevant Pasifika organisations, and to advise the researcher on appropriate Pāsifika protocols. These protocols included consultative support for information sharing meetings with participants; designing the information sharing documentation; gaining informed consent;

designing data gathering instruments (surveys and interview schedules); translating of data gathering tools; feedback sessions and interpreting findings and presenting results.

❖ **Board of Trustees and Principal**

The researcher presented an outline of the current study to the Board of Trustees' and principal and was given permission to undertake the study (Appendix 2, Board of Trustees and principal information sheet and consent form).

❖ **The Research Setting**

Pacific Intermediate School, in an urban area of Auckland city, was identified as the research case for this study. This decision was based on a high enrolment number of Pāsifika students. The school and parent community were notified about the study in the school's newsletter, and information sharing meetings took place. As a result, the researcher was able to introduce the study to the Pāsifika parents, students, teachers, teacher aides and Resource Teachers for Learning and Behaviour (RTLB).

❖ **Description of the School**

Pacific Intermediate School (pseudonym used to protect anonymity) is a state, co- educational, intermediate school situated in urban Auckland city. The Board of Trustees consist of a 45% Pāsifika representation. The school's decile ranking of two reflects the low socio-economic status of individual families within the community. A school's decile rating indicates the extent to which state and state-integrated schools draw their students from low socio-economic communities. The lowest decile rating is 1 and the highest 10. The indicator measures the socio-economic level of a community and is not indicative of the quality of teaching in a school (Ministry of Education, 2015). According to the principal (Interview, March 2012), transient students are a reality for Pacific Intermediate School, (for example, 160 students had changed schools between February, 2012 and April, 2012) and as a result the school roll fluctuates between 500 and 749. In 2012, when the majority of the data was collected, Pāsifika students represented 57.4 % of the school's total student population; other ethnicities in the school included Maori 16%, European/Pakeha 4%, Asian 3%, Other 5% (Education Review Office, 2011).

The school is well resourced to cater for student diversity, for example there are learning support programmes for students with identified learning needs and provision is made for

students who have English as a second language through the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programme.

Although the majority of the Pāsifika students attending Pācific Intermediate School were born in New Zealand and classified as bilingual, the students spoke English as an additional language in their homes. Altogether, there were eight Year 7 classes and eight Year 8 classes consisting of students in the 11 and 12 year age bands.

3.7.3 Recruitment, consent for participation and ethical issues related to consent

This section explains the protocols followed in recruiting participants for the current study and includes aspects such as participant identification, the number of participants recruited and how ethical matters related to obtaining consent were addressed.

Recruitment protocols for this study were aligned with: the guidelines provided by the Anae et al. (2001); the *Health Research Council of New Zealand*; the steps in the case study process (p. 16); collaboration with members of the Pāsifika Reference Group and supervisors. The various groups of people who were contacted were the parents of Pāsifika students, Pāsifika students, teachers, teacher aides, Resource Teachers of Learning and Behaviour (RTLB), principal and members of the Board of Trustees.

The 'Information Sharing' evening for parents was combined with a Parent Open Evening organised by the school. Combining these two events accommodated parents who worked long hours or did shift work, hence finding it difficult to attend meetings at school. Thirty-nine parents consented to participate in the research and were given copies of the information sheets (Appendix 3). Information sheets and consent forms for non-participating parents (Appendix 4) and translated copies of the information sheets (Appendix 5) were available. Parent information sheets were translated in Samoan since the majority of the student population were identified as Samoan.

The students were approached about this study at a school assembly. Since non-Pāsifika students also attended the assembly, the researcher utilised this as an opportunity to explain why only Pāsifika students were invited to participate and that non-Pāsifika students, at the bottom of their information sheets (Appendix 6), had the opportunity to indicate whether they "agree/disagree" with the whole class observations.

All Pāsifika students were provided with copies of the information sheets and consent forms (Appendix 7), and asked to take them home, to discuss their participation in this study with their parents. Pāsifika students whose parents had already consented to the research were provided with the option to sign their consent forms on the day or return it to their teachers at a later stage.

Obtaining the Pāsifika students' independent informed consent for participating in this study was paramount as they were at an age where they could fully comprehend the nature of the study (The Massey University Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations involving Human Participants, 2015). The students returned their signed consent forms to the deputy principal who stored them in a secure area for later access by the researcher. Forty Pāsifika students consented to participate in the research.

The researcher was given a time slot at a staff meeting to present the current study to the teachers. Teachers raised concerns about time and availability; others were concerned about their pedagogical expertise being judged. Reaching a collaborative solution began a partnership in which teachers had a 'voice', were listened to and could contribute to this research without judgement. The needs (concerns) voiced by this particular group of participants were addressed, which is an important aspect of Pāsifika research (Anae et al., 2001). The solution offered included avoiding observations in the classes where students who had not agreed to be included, were present. The researcher also confirmed her role as unobtrusive, non-threatening and a non-participant observer who was there to collect data to explore factors facilitating the engagement in learning of students at Pācific Intermediate School. The teachers were invited to look at the observation schedules so they could have some understanding of the goals and objectives of the various observations. They were provided with information sharing sheets and consent forms (Appendix 8). Sixteen teachers indicated their willingness to engage in this study as participants.

After consultation with the deputy principal and Special Education Coordinator (SENCO) the researcher met with a group of teacher aides who support Pāsifika students with their learning and provided information about the current study. They were provided with information sheets and consent forms (Appendix 9) and given the opportunity to ask questions. Their concerns related to anonymity and confidentiality, and the attendees were assured that the current study's only intent was to gather data to determine factors facilitating the engagement in learning of the Pāsifika students enrolled in Pācific Intermediate School. Furthermore, they

were given the assurance that their names would be replaced with code names to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. Nine teacher aides consented to participate in this study.

Over the years, Pācific Intermediate School has had learning and behaviour support from the local Resource Teachers of Learning and Behaviour (RTLB) cluster. They supported students with moderate behaviour and learning needs towards greater social and academic engagement, and knew the school well. After information about the current study was shared, one of the RTLB raised the issue of Pāsifika students not born in New Zealand and wanted to know if this research would focus on this group of students too. The researcher explained the goals and objectives of the research and emphasised that it would focus on Pāsifika as a group; but that this might be a recommendation for future research depending on the outcomes of this study. Five RTLB members consented to participate in the current study and were given copies of the information sheets (Appendix 10).

In the next section participant demographics is discussed. This is followed by an outline of data collection methods, which includes the aims, format, administration, advantages and disadvantages

3.8 Participant demographics

3.8.1 Participants

The majority of students participating in the current study were born in Aotearoa New Zealand. Six Pāsifika ethnic groups were represented: Samoan (17), Tongan (13), Cook Island Maori (5), Nuiean (2), Fijian (2), and Other Pācific Islands (1). As indicated in Figure 6, the Pāsifika students constituted one of the six respondent groups who participated in this study. At the onset of the study (last term of the school year) there were sixty one student participants. This number decreased to forty in the following school year due to transiency and three students transitioning to High School. This resulted in the number of participant changing (from 131 to 110). These changes only affected the student interviews.

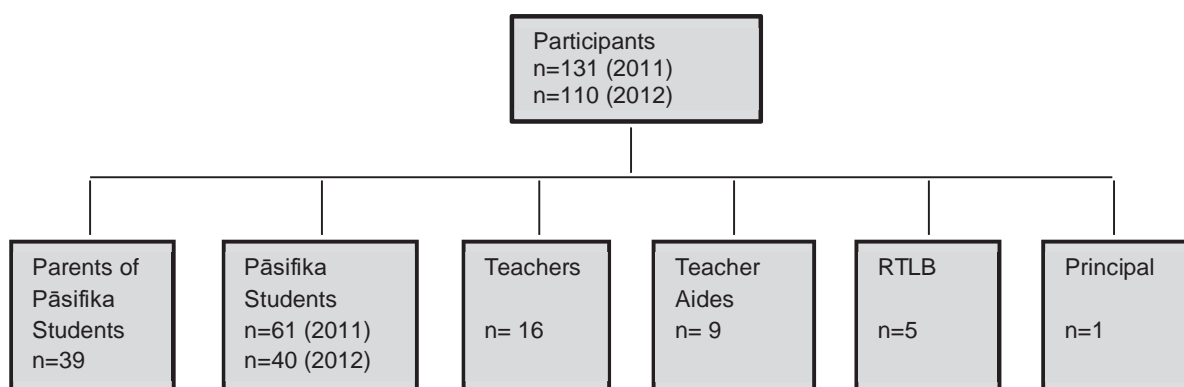


Figure 6: Total number of participants

3.8.2 Students

The gender, ethnicity and total number of student respondents who participated in the study (since February 2012) are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1: Student respondent demographics

Ethnicity	Gender		Total number of participants (N)	Percentage of participants %
	Male	Female		
Samoan	8	9	17	43
Tongan	8	5	13	33
Cook Island Maori	2	3	5	12
Niue	1	1	2	5.0
Fijian	2	0	2	5.0
Other Pācific Island	1	0	1	2.0
Total	22	18	40	100
Percentage male, & female students	55%	45%		

Table 1 illustrates the participating Pāsifika student respondents (n=40) categorised into two groups: gender and ethnicity. The respondents are arranged from highest to lowest percentage of participation. As illustrated in Table 1, the Samoan student respondents represent the highest number of participants in this study (43%) and the *Pāsifika other* the lowest number (n=1). Twenty-two male students (55%) and eighteen female students (45%) represent the different Pāsifika ethnicities: Samoan, Tongan, Cook Island Maori, Niuean and Fijian. One student identified as “Other Pācific Islands” (“Other Pācific” was an option available on Pācific Intermediate School’s enrolment form).

3.8.3 Teachers

The staff at Pācific Intermediate School included thirty teachers, nine teacher aides, a Special Education Needs Coordinator, four senior management members and the principal. Subjects offered at the school comprised mathematics, literacy, social studies, information literacy, technology, physical education, music, art, drama, Hauora and Te Reo Māori. Additional support programmes for the students comprised ESOL support (English for Speakers of Other Languages), numeracy and literacy support programmes for those students who achieved below National Standards, and a Lalaga Team (seven teachers of Pāsifika origin providing support to the Pāsifika parent and student community in achieving academic and behaviour goals they set collaboratively).

Sixteen staff members (57% of the total percentage of staff members) agreed to participate in this study. This number included four senior management team members and twelve teachers. Table 2 differentiates between their gender, percentage of participation per ethnic group and whether they were trained in New Zealand or overseas.

Table 2: Teacher respondent demographics

Ethnicity	Gender		Total participants		Trained	
	Male	Female	(N)	%	New Zealand	Overseas
Pāsifika other	1	1	2	18	2	
South African	3		3	18		3
British		3	3	18		3
New Zealand European	1	2	3	18	3	
South African Indian		1	1	6		1
Samoan		1	1	6	1	
Chinese Samoan		1		1	1	
Irish			1	1		1
Indian			1	1	1	
Total		6	10	16	8	8
%	37	63	100		50	50

#: percentage N: number of participants

Table 2 illustrates that the six male and ten female teachers who participated in this study represent nine ethnic groups. The teacher respondents are arranged from highest to lowest

percentage in terms of ethnic representation. Eight of the teacher respondents (50%) were trained in New Zealand and eight (50%) were trained overseas.

3.9 Data collection methods

This section describes how the data collection methods were used in this research. A time line explains timeframes for data collection from July 2011 to the point of exit or withdrawal from the school in May 2012. The researcher spent an average of two hours per negotiated week at the school until all the required data was collected.

To answer the research questions, mixed quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were used such as surveys, interviews, observations and data from the school's database. According to Yin (2003) "various sources are highly complementary and a good case study will want to use as many sources as possible" (p. 85).

❖ Preparing for data collection

The data gathering instruments were designed to answer the research questions, which placed a strong emphasis on continuously considering the ecological nature of the current study and its Pāsifika theoretical framework. As a result, the researcher consulted members of the Pāsifika Reference Group for feedback regarding the language, format and content of the data gathering instruments, for example the expression of interest letters, information sharing sheets, surveys and interview schedules.

❖ Trialling the whole class observation schedules

The observation sheet was trialled (at ten minute intervals) during various lessons at Pācific Intermediate School. This showed that there was a need for a comments column and some adjustments to the frequency and timeframe indicators. The data collection began in July 2011 and was completed in May 2012.

3.9.1 Sources of data collection

According to Yin (2003) construct validity is ensured through multiple sources of data collection. In this section the mixed quantitative/qualitative data collection methods used in the current study included whole class observations, interviews, data from Pācific Intermediate School's data base and surveys.

❖ Whole Class Observations

Three pilot trials were undertaken to finalise the format and content of the whole class observation checklist (Appendix 11). Following on from this, eight whole class observations were conducted over a period of four months. No observations were undertaken in the classrooms of eight non-Pāsifika students who did not give consent. According to the information in Table 3, the class sizes in which the observations were conducted varied between 13 and 32 students per class. Subjects A1 and A2, represented the same subject area but different teachers. For Subjects B1 and B2 the class size numbers were reduced for health and safety requirements.

Table 3: Frequency distribution of whole class observations

Subjects per class	Class size	Frequency of pilot trials	Frequency of whole class observations
Subject A1	32	1	1
Subject A2	27		1
Subject E1	27		1
Subject E2	27		1
Subject B1	13	1	
Subject B2	15		1
Subject C	30		1
Subject D	25	1	1
Subject F	28		1
Total (n)		3	8

❖ Aims of Whole Class Observations

Whole Class Observations aimed to explore the interaction between Pāsifika students and their learning environments. Observations, according to Hancock and Algozzine (2006) are frequently used in case study research to provide answers to questions being investigated. They argue that observations are one of the best ways to collect data in case study research. In the current study observation checklists were used to provide answers to research question two which refers to teaching and learning practices and their impact on Pāsifika students' engagement in learning. It explored the interaction between behavioural, emotional and ecological engagement factors (of Pāsifika students) and the learning environment.

❖ **Format: Observation Checklists**

The format of the observation checklist was based on information and examples of observation schedules provided by Clay (2002), Jolly and McNamara (1992) and Hintze, Volpe and Shapiro (in Thomas and Grimes, 2002).

A literature review assisted the researcher to apply definitions of on-task and off-task behaviour in the context of the observation checklists, while considering the ecological, multidimensional nature of this research in classrooms. In the observation checklist categories of on- and off-task behaviours (Appendix 12) were used as frequency indicators when the researcher observed behavioural and emotional engagement factors in classroom settings. For example, when the teacher was pre-teaching to a task, the observed frequency of the various on-and off-task behaviours was measured.

Whole class observations were designed to be unobtrusive, which created opportunities to focus in particular on a variety of engagement and learning situations in the different classroom settings. They allowed for teaching and learning practices in the school to be associated with expected culturally specific Pāsifika factors based on suggestions by the Reference Group and literature on student engagement.

The observation checklists provided opportunities for investigating ecological engagement factors, and classroom management strategies, which allowed the observer to reflect on qualitative experiences such as teacher awareness of Pāsifika culture and values, and teachers showing interest in students. Emotional and behavioural engagement factors were observed in terms of “student off-task and student on-task” behaviours utilising two 10 minute intervals per observation. The frequency of these behaviours was measured against categories such as, “pre-teaching to task”, “when the task is set”, “student-directed engagement” (students engaged in set task activities) or “teacher-directed engagement” (teacher directed instruction to the whole class), “working individually”, “working in small groups” and “student reaction to set task, to peers and to teacher” (Appendix 12). Some examples of different categories of on-task and off-task behaviours are listed below. A comprehensive list of these categories is in the observations schedules in Appendix 12.

Off-task behaviours include:

- Inappropriate in-seat behaviour (turn around, fidgety, talking)
- Out of seat behaviour (walking around classroom)

- Shouting out (non-task related: to attract attention of another student, joking)
- Inappropriate talking (social conversations)
- Disturbing other pupils (interfering with, humming)
- Arguing with / challenging teacher (backchat, refusing to follow instructions)
- Distracting teacher (non-task related comments)
- Inattentive to task (attending to other student's behaviour)

On-task behaviours include:

- Focusing on the teacher
- Remaining seated and motivated to start set task
- Completing set tasks
- Following instructions
- Ignoring negative behaviour of peers / external distractions
- Not interrupting teacher / peers inappropriately
- Clear understanding of the expectations and goals of lesson
- Asking for assistance when required

❖ **Administration**

Whole class observation responses were systematically recorded in two timeframes of no longer than 10 minutes per observation. Responses included on/off task behaviour in relation to various classroom dynamics. These included, for example: classroom layout, differentiated teaching, co-operative learning, teacher-pupil-interaction and additional support provided to students (student-teacher aide interaction and learning support programmes). The researcher used systematic, direct observations of emotional and behavioural engagement factors in terms of "student off-task and student on-task" behaviours.

The whole class observations were conducted in naturalistic settings (classrooms) to measure the frequency of occurrence rates and to reflect on experiences. Frequency was used rather than duration because it was easy to administer and measured what needed to be measured; student responses to teaching and learning practices. As explained in the format of the Observation Checklists (see p. 87), the frequency of these behaviours was measured against various categories. These categories included for example, "pre-teaching to task", "when the task is set", "student-directed engagement" (students engaged in set task activities or contribute via peer support or general discussions) or "teacher-directed engagement" (teacher directed instruction to the whole class), "working individually," "working in small groups" and "student

reaction to set task, peers and teacher.” The researcher, a non-participant observer, used the formula below for calculating on and off-task behaviours:

❖ **Scenario:**

The teachers provided the researcher with the total number of students present for each observed lesson. Students displaying the different categories of on-and off-task behaviours were tallied against the various categories in two 10 minute intervals (one interval for emotional and one for behavioural), for example in a class of twenty-five students, three students displayed “out of seat” behaviour and 7 interrupted the teacher during the pre-teaching to task phase of the observation. The following formula was used in calculating these scores into percentages:

STEPS:

1. Calculating the frequency of on- and off task behaviours
2. Converting the total number of behaviours in each category to averages
3. Averages were calculated as percentages:
$$\frac{(\text{number of students on-task/off-task})}{(\text{total number of students in classroom})} \times 100 = \% \text{ of students (on-task/off-task behaviour)}$$

Applying the formula to the above scenario will therefore generate the following percentage of students displaying off-task behaviour:

1. $7+3 = 10$
2. $10/2 = 5$
3. $5/25 \times 100 = 20\%$ were off-task

❖ **Options for participants**

The Deputy Principal at the school arranged dates and times for the observations with the teachers. Since the focus of the study was on answering the research questions (perceptions, teaching and learning, social and cultural factors contributing to student engagement), no particular subject area was targeted for observations. All participants were informed of the date, time and objective of observations. They had the opportunity to accept or decline observations. No observations were conducted in classrooms where those who were approached for the study indicated “NO” as an option on the consent forms. The content of the Observations Schedules were shared with teachers.

❖ Advantages and disadvantages of whole class observations

The observations allowed research data to be gathered in a naturalistic setting of Pācific Intermediate School. The items in the observation checklists were associated with various multidimensional, cultural and ecological components of this research, for example teaching and learning practices and how these linked with expectations set in the curriculum and the Pāsifika Education Plan. The observation checklists provided detailed information, which was used to triangulate data generated by the other data gathering instruments. This contributes to valid, reliable results. The observations helped to investigate systemic engagement factors hence furthering knowledge about factors that were enablers or barriers of Pāsifika student engagement in learning.

The researcher limited bias or manipulation of events by using the Robinson (2002) observation/reflection cycle. Robinson's Observation/Reflection Cycle is adapted to provide this study with process and structure in relation to the whole class observations. Bias was limited because the cycle took the observations through pre- and post-collaboration with the Reference Group. The Observation Schedules were piloted to address processes and potential issues related to cultural appropriateness. Ongoing reflections with supervisors provided another layer of awareness of the importance of cultural appropriateness during the observations, which further minimised bias. The adapted version of Robinson's observation cycle is illustrated in Figure 7.

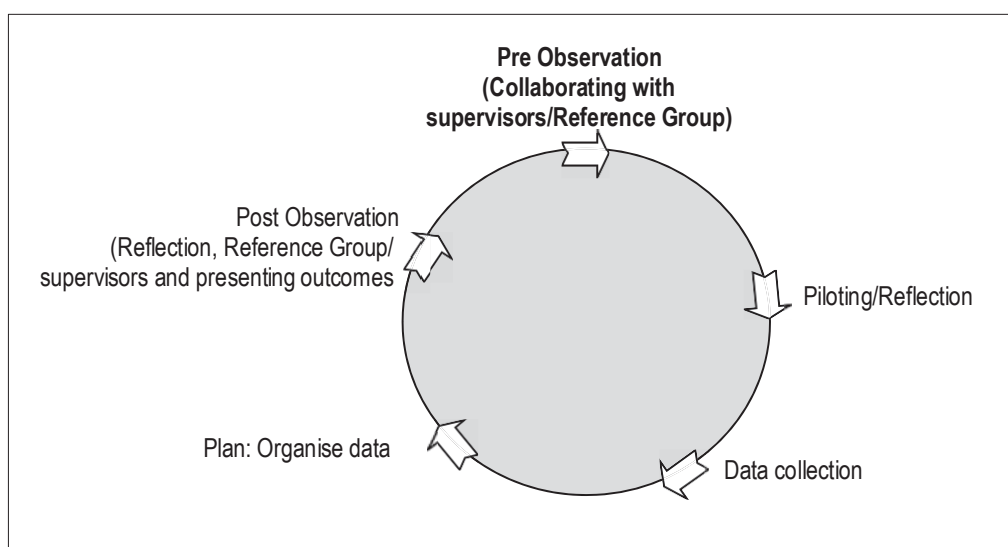


Figure 7: Observation / Reflection Cycle. (Adapted from Robinson, 2002)

❖ **Aims of interviews**

In this study, interviews were used to gain further understanding of the participants' perceptions of the engagement in learning of Pāsifika students at Pācific Intermediate School. The interview questions were designed to provide answers to research questions one and two. Question one refers to the perception of the participants of factors that are enablers or barriers to Pāsifika students' engagement in learning. Question two relates to teaching and learning practices. The interview questions were designed to support with the triangulation of data. For example, results of the survey show a high percentage of students who indicated they would leave school early. A second round of interviews with a randomly selected group of students helped to clarify the survey responses about leaving school early.

❖ **Format of the interviews**

Interviews were conducted at Pācific Intermediate School in a negotiated interview room. The interview schedules were designed so that timeframes did not exceed 30 minutes per adult and 15 minutes per student, and consisted of similar open-ended questions. Slightly more time was allowed for small focus group interviews. None of the interviews exceeded 30 minutes. This approach, according to Valenzuela and Shrivastava (2010), facilitates faster interviews that can be more easily analysed and compared.

❖ **Semi-structured interviews**

Anae et al. (2001) state that the most effective type of qualitative interviews for Pāsifika peoples are face-to-face interviews, whether with individual or groups. Semi-structured focus group (students, teacher aides, parents and RTLB) and individual interviews (teachers, principal) were conducted in this study. In the individual interviews, students reluctantly responded to the interview questions. This was discussed with a member of the Reference Group, who suggested small focus groups as an option. The choice was given to students who all agreed to small focus group interviews which resulted in an "explosion" of information sharing. The interview method was therefore adapted to the needs of the participants; individual interviews evolved into 16 small focus group interviews for students (n=56), one group for teacher aides (n=9), one for parents (n=6) and one for RTLB (n=5). The researcher continuously gave participants the choice - they determined their preference for either individual or small focus group interviews. Notes were taken to record interviews.

❖ **Conducting the interviews**

Separate interview schedules were used for students (Appendix 13), teachers (Appendix 15), teacher aides (Appendix 16), parents (Appendix 17), principal (Appendix 18), and RTLB (Appendix 19). At this stage of the study there were more student participants. Provision was made for research assistant support with one set of student interviews. The research assistant signed a confidentiality agreement (Appendix 14), was given a copy of the interview questions, and practiced phrasing questions so as not to lead the interviewee to preferred responses. This was done for the sake of consistency in the interview process and to ensure reliable responses. The research assistant interviewed four focus groups, and kept notes of the student responses. These were discussed with and handed to the researcher immediately after the interviews. The students were randomly divided into small groups (between 3 and 4 students per focus group). Each focus group was interviewed, separately, in a venue the Deputy Principal arranged.

❖ **Options for participants**

The participants had the option to choose between individual or group interviews. Students, parents, RTLB and teacher aides participated in group interviews, while teachers and the principal participated in individual face-to-face interviews. The researcher used strategies such as humour, sharing common experiences (having food together), being a good listener to build rapport with participants. These are suggested by Anae et al. (2001) - building a relationship of mutual trust and respect, took high priority throughout the current study.

One of the members of the Pāsifika Reference Group suggested the researcher arrange the interview dates once all the other data had been collected. This was valuable advice as the researcher by this time had established a reasonably good relationship with participants, which impacted positively on the interview outcomes as participants were relaxed and keen to share their knowledge. One of the female students requested an individual interview, which was granted.

Parents were invited to a second information sharing evening at the school. The invitation informed parents that part of the evening was going to be spent on data gathering. On this occasion, they were interviewed as a small focus group.

❖ Participation rates

All the participants were invited to participate in the interview process. The teacher respondents and principal were individually interviewed, while small focus group interviews were conducted with the remainder of the participant groupings, except for one student who requested and individual interview. The small focus groups consisted of a maximum of four members.

Student interviews were conducted at the onset of the study, in the last term of the school year. Fifty-six of the sixty-one students who agreed to participate in the study in 2011, were interviewed. In the following school year, the number of student participants decreased to forty. Reasons for the decline were linked to transience where three Year 8 students transitioned to High School. Interviews with the remainder of the respondents were conducted later in the data collection process, which resulted in a relaxed atmosphere as respondents were more familiar with the researcher. The information in Table 4 illustrates the interview participation rates compared with the number of respondents who were approached to participate.

Table 4: Respondent participation rates for interviews: comparative results

Participant group	Participants Approached: (PA:I)		Participation Rates (PR:I)	
	(N)	% of total number of participants	(N)	% of participants per individual group
Teacher Aides	9	7	9/9	100
RTLB	5	4	5/5	100
Principal	1	1	1/1	100
*Pāsifika students (2011)	61	46	56/61	92
Teachers	16	12	6/16	38
Parents of Pāsifika Students	39	30	6/39	15
Total	131	100	83/131	63

N: number of participants approached and number of participants in interviews

% = percentage

PR: Participation Rates

PA: Participants Approached

**Note: 61 students applied to the student interviews of 2011. For the remainder of the study student numbers=40*

As can be seen from the results in Table 4, 83 of the 131 participants who were approached participated in the interviews. The participants are presented from the highest to the lowest percentage of participation. The highest participation rates are achieved by the teacher aides, RTLB, principal and Pāsifika students. As shown in Table 4, 38% of the teacher and 15% of the parents of the Pāsifika students who were approached participated in the interviews.

❖ **Advantages and disadvantages of interviews**

Interviews are “one of the most important sources of case study information” (Yin, 2003, p. 89). According to Knoster and McCurdy (2002) interviews are valuable to determine the effect of environmental factors on behaviour as well as “discovering potential reinforces” (p. 1016). Other advantages included that the researcher could repeat or rephrase the questions to ensure responses were properly understood.

This study provided participants with opportunities for group or individual interviews, which minimised risk for those who perceived individual interviews as threatening. Some of the disadvantages of interviews according to Opdenakker (2006) relates to the time consuming nature of note taking, which could result in researchers not taking notes. In the current study, the interview protocol and schedules kept the interview process manageable. Another disadvantage identified by Opdenakker is the interviewer’s ability to guide the interviewee in a special direction by the nature of the questions. The literature research on interviews and discussions with members of the Pāsifika Support Group created a heightened sense of this effect, which assisted the researcher to avoid this as much as possible.

Anae et al. (2001) explained the importance of cultural introductory protocols. The researcher was provided with cultural advice prior to the interviews. When interviews were closed, the participants received a small token of appreciation/meaalofa to express the researcher’s appreciation and respect for their time spent on this project. It was also an opportunity in which stories could be shared and relationships built.

❖ **Documentation analysis - School Data Base Aims of documentation analysis**

Documentation from the school database included academic and attendance records. This assisted the researcher to gain insight into Pācific Intermediate School’s systems policies, curriculum planning and student performance. These documents indicated the type of support Pāsifika students at Pācific Intermediate School received from external agencies and assisted with hypotheses about how these related to their engagement and learning. Documentation analyses provided answers to research questions two and three. (Question two refers to teaching and learning practices and their impact on Pāsifika students’ engagement in learning, while question three refers to the socio-cultural and ecological understanding of engagement in learning of Pāsifika students at Pācific Intermediate School, which includes curriculum engagement).

❖ **Procedure and format of document analysis and options for participants**
Procedure and format

The deputy principal and principal downloaded the necessary data from the school's database upon request by the researcher. Documents requested included attendance records, Education Review Office (ERO) reports and school achievement records such as reading literacy levels, cross comparisons (ethnic group, school year level) for data related to National Standards, and Pāsifika students receiving teacher aide, literacy and ESOL support.

❖ **Options for participants**

On the consent forms, permission was obtained from the parents/caregivers, principal and Board of Trustees to collect data from the school database. None of the participants objected to the request. Number coding was used to ensure anonymity.

❖ **Advantages and disadvantages of documentation analysis**

Weber (1990) states that the use of documents can be a useful technique as it allows researchers to discover and describe the focus of individual, group, institutional or social attention. This related well with the ecological nature of this research, which explored individual aspects of student engagement in relation to systemic factors. Document analysis formed part of a triangulation process as data obtained from the school was compared with findings from interviews and observations to clarify or confirm hypotheses. Being one of multiple sources of data collection and forming part of the triangulation process, document analysis contributed to valid, reliable results.

Yin (2003) cautions quantitative records “should not automatically be considered a sign of accuracy” (p. 89), and reminds researchers that these documents are not designed for the purposes of their case studies. Another concern is that documents may hold sensitive information that is not publicly available (Yin, 2003). The researcher therefore only requested information related to research questions two and three, for example academic records and attendance registers. Any irrelevant information was ignored.

❖ **Surveys**

➤ **Aims of Surveys**

Surveys were used to gather quantitative and qualitative data from the participants and formed part of a triangulation process. According to Yin (2003) triangulation is used to validate responses and to determine patterns or trends in an anonymous, non-threatening way. The surveys provided answers to research question one and two, which referred to participants' (students, parents, teachers, teacher aides) perceptions of factors that are enablers and barriers to Pāsifika students' engagement in learning. Hancock and Algozzine (2006) supported the connection between research questions and data gathering instruments saying, "Instruments created by the researcher often provide a powerful means by which to collect information pertaining to the researcher's questions (p. 52).

➤ **Format: Surveys**

Items in the surveys were direct and specifically related to the research topic and research questions. Careful consideration was taken to avoid any statements that could be culturally offensive. Anae et al. (2001) for example, caution against questions containing references to sexuality or physical/sexual abuse, as they are perceived to be offensive. Draft copies of the surveys were distributed to members of the Pāsifika Reference Group for feedback before administration.

The surveys consisted of a five-category Likert rating scale based on a format suggested by Peterson (2000). The items were linked to behavioural and emotional constructs of engagement and the research questions. Time to complete the surveys was estimated between 10 – 15 minutes. Towards the end of the surveys were a set of open-ended questions related to participant perceptions of the school setting in general.

➤ **Administering surveys and options for participants**

Individual copies of the surveys were made available to participants. These include surveys for parents (Appendix 20), students (Appendix 21), teachers (Appendix 22) and teacher aides (Appendix 23)

➤ **Administration**

Anae et al. (2001) suggested researchers should assist participants and present them with a small token of appreciation to help build trust and rapport and express appreciation for their time – in this case the time they spent completing the surveys. The researcher was therefore present when the surveys were administered and participants received a small token of appreciation/meaalofa afterwards. This took the form of refreshments and provided an opportunity to talk to participants, share stories and build relationships.

➤ **Options for participants Parents**

Parents were invited to attend an information session on the parent survey at Pācific Intermediate School. On this occasion the researcher also provided an update on progress with the research. Parents were given the options to receive their surveys in the mail and return them to a designated area at Pācific Intermediate School or complete the survey on the night.

➤ **Students, Teacher and Teacher Aides**

Students indicated on the consent form whether they wanted to complete the surveys online or via hard copy. All the student participants opted for the hard copy option. Since it was only possible to meet with the students, teachers and teacher aides for the first time in November 2011, the researcher postponed the survey completion date to March of 2012. This decision was based on the numerous events that marked a busy the end of the year on the school's calendar, and the fatigue levels of the staff and students.

Participating students completed the surveys in small groups because it was their preference to participate in small groups rather than individually. Taufe'ulungaki (2003) who argued Pāsifika students' strong orientation towards peers and their strong preference for group work in learning and teaching situations, supports the group preference. Copies of the surveys were distributed to teachers and teacher aides. They returned their completed surveys to the deputy principal who stored the surveys in a safe area in her office.

➤ **Return rates**

The return rates of the surveys are displayed in Table 5. Respondents are arranged from highest to lowest percentage of returned surveys. It is important to note that the number of student participants (40) is different from those for interviews (61). Reason for the difference is explained in the interview section (see p. 92).

Table 5: Return rates: surveys

Respondent group	Respondents Approached (RA:S)		Return Rate (RR:S)	
	(N: RA)	% (P)	(N:RR)	% (RR)
Pāsifika Students	40	38	40/40	100
Teachers	16	15	12/16	75
Teacher Aides	9	9	6/9	67
Parents of Pāsifika Students	39	38	6/39	15
Total	104	100	64/104	62

N:RA: total number of respondents approached

N:RR: total number of surveys returned

% (RA)= Percentage respondents approached

% (RR): Percentage of surveys returned

Table 5 illustrates the number of Pāsifika students, teachers, teacher aides and parents of Pāsifika students who were approached to complete surveys. As can be seen in Table 5, the Pāsifika students who represent the highest number of participants (N=40 and 38% of the total number of participants) also achieved the highest response rate (100%). In Table 5, 75% of the teachers who were approached returned their surveys, the teacher aides achieved a return rate of 67% and the parents a return rate of 15%. These numbers show 64 participants (62%) returned their surveys. All hard copies of the completed surveys were stored in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher's study.

➤ **Advantages and Disadvantages of Surveys**

Surveys are an inexpensive way to gather data from a potentially large number of respondents. Statements were used to gather information from respondents on their perception of the general school system and specific factors that engaged them in school learning. Risks associated with misunderstanding and misinterpretation of statements, especially for those participants whose first language was not English, was limited by requesting members of members of the Pāsifika Reference Group to review the design and to pilot it before it was administered.

Answering the research questions required mixed quantitative and qualitative data gathering techniques, which included surveys, interviews, observations and data from the Pācific Intermediate School's data base. The advantage of using both qualitative and quantitative data gathering techniques means information about a particular topic could be more widely explored and in more depth. For example, the surveys generated data about the students' perception of

classroom management, but when additional data was gathered through observations and interviews, numerous other features about classroom management were revealed and understood. As a result, more in depth information relating to the current research was provided contributing to new knowledge about factors facilitating Pāsifika students' engagement in learning at Pācific Intermediate School.

3.10 Ethical considerations

According to the Massey University Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations involving Human Participants (2015), the safety and protection of participants, researchers and Institutions are paramount when conducting research. These were considered throughout the different stages in which the current study was conducted.

The Code is an expression of the basic human rights of respect for persons, autonomy, privacy and justice (p. 3). Cognisance was therefore taken to minimise harm and risk to all participants at all times. For example, when consent was sought, issues related to privacy, anonymity, confidentiality and cultural sensitivity were addressed. This is in line with recommendations by Berg (2004) and the Massey University Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations involving Human Participants (2015).

A research assistant was used for a very small section of the data gathering (interviews). This person had extensive experience in postgraduate studies. He was familiarised with the interview questions and procedure used for this study and asked to sign a confidentiality agreement (Appendix 14).

On the principle of 'protection', Anae et al. (2001) state, "the starting point of any research proposal should also be pro-Pācific and reflect a non-exploitative research and research process environment" (p. 13). According to Perese (2004) 'protection' also includes the "safe and responsible use of Pācific people's knowledge and wisdom" (p. 109). This implies that the primary ownership of knowledge belongs to the Pāsifika participants, and aligns with the theoretical framework of this study, which is encompassed in the Tree of Opportunity model and states the need for Pāsifika to have greater ownership of their educational processes ("Tree of Opportunity," 2002). The 'participation' of Pāsifika peoples in education and research projects is another principle acknowledged by the current study. In the Tree of Opportunity model 'participation' is linked to success, empowerment and sustainability in education.

3.10.1 Steps taken to discuss and analyse the ethical issues arising in this study

The researcher consulted the following as a basis for analysing ethical issues in the research: The Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations involving Human Participants and the Pāsifika Education Research Guidelines (Anae et al., 2001). Ongoing discussions with supervisors resulted in continuous analysis and reflection of the setting, research processes and participant engagement. These were measured against the specifications within the Code of Ethics. Continued discussions with the principal and deputy principal and members of the Pāsifika Reference Group helped clarify ethical issues, which needed to be taken into consideration for example: that Pāsifika should be acknowledged as separate, diverse ethnicities; the appropriate use of language in all communication; and the importance of respect (faa'aaloalo) in building relationships.

Communication is an important aspect of the Pāsifika culture, particularly when fostering positive relationships (Gorinski, & Fraser, 2006). The researcher negotiated with the deputy principal for her to become the research liaison person at Pācific Intermediate School as she was very knowledgeable about the Pāsifika culture, the parents, students, systems and processes, and well connected to various communities. This arrangement provided structure and clear boundaries, which minimised confusion for the participants.

Regular communication with participants created a greater awareness of aspects related to cultural preferences, family commitments, timetables and events in the community and on the school calendar. This was helpful when dates and times for information sharing and data gathering sessions were negotiated. For example, one of the data gathering sessions with parents was cancelled when the Tongan King, George Tupou V, passed away in March 2012. This was an expression of respect towards the Tongan community, in particular the Tongan participants, and supported the principles of 'participation' and 'protection'.

3.10.2 Informed consent

The principles of 'rights', 'protection' and 'participation' were strongly adhered to in the consent process of this study. In relation to the principle of "rights," Berg (2004) acknowledges informed consent as a process that informs participants of their right to participate in research because it is their choice. The Massey University Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations involving Human Participants (2015) states that participants have the right to withdraw from any research without losing dignity or respect. The current study also

acknowledged Berg's recommendation that participation should not be based on 'deceit, manipulation or unfair inducement" (p. 64).

In the current study, prospective participants had the 'right' to have a clear understanding of the research processes as it included multiple data gathering techniques such as interviews, whole class observations, surveys and data from the school's data base. The Pāsifika Reference Group was provided with a draft copy of the information sheets and consent forms for feedback before they were used to gain informed consent and share information in the current study. This support assisted the researcher to use culturally appropriate language and relevant processes.

To create a clear understanding of the current study, expression of interest, information sharing sheets and consent forms were designed for the various groups of participants. Under the principle of 'protection', protocols were established for the information sharing and consent processes. These included: set timeframes (the length of meetings did not exceed 30 minutes to accommodate those who worked long hours or were involved in shift work); and meetings with set agendas (welcome, introductions, explanation of the purpose, of the research, opportunities to ask questions, and clarify concerns and address ethical issues). Attendees were given the option to sign the consent form on the day or return the form to a designated person or area at Pācific Intermediate School at a later stage (two-week timeframe) to accommodate those who needed additional time to process the request for participation. This process ensured consistency, and showed respect for the rights of proposed participants.

Separate information sharing meetings were arranged with the different groups of participants. No participants indicated the need for interpreter services or for the documentation to be translated into their first language. At the information sharing sessions, participants were told that they had the right to: decline to answer any particular question; withdraw any data they had provided to the study up to two weeks after the researcher had completed the data gathering process; ask questions about the study at any time; provide information on the understanding that no names would be used; confidentiality in the research report of the findings; request access to a summary of the project findings when the doctoral study was concluded.

3.10.3 Anonymity and confidentiality

Anonymity and confidentiality are key ethical issues that were considered in the current study. Berg (2004) outlines how confidentiality and anonymity are sometimes used as synonyms in research projects. Although both are concerned with 'protecting' the privacy of participants,

there is a clear distinction between anonymity and confidentiality. Confidentiality is an active attempt to remove from the research records any elements that might indicate the subjects' identities. In a literal sense anonymity means that the subjects remain nameless (p. 65).

In this study, although pseudonyms were used for the school, coding was used as another layer of protection. Ensuring anonymity was challenging given that the participants in Pācific Intermediate School were known to each other. Confidentiality became a particular challenge for the whole class observations and small group parent and student interviews. Besides this, the specific contributions of individuals could not be traced back to individual participants. Coding was used where possible to ensure that all information collected outside of interviews and observations remained confidential.

3.11 Permission for use of images

The researcher obtained permission from the Dartwood Museum in Queensland (Appendix 23: Permission from Dartwood Museum in Queensland) to use Pāsifika images from their website on the information sharing sheets.

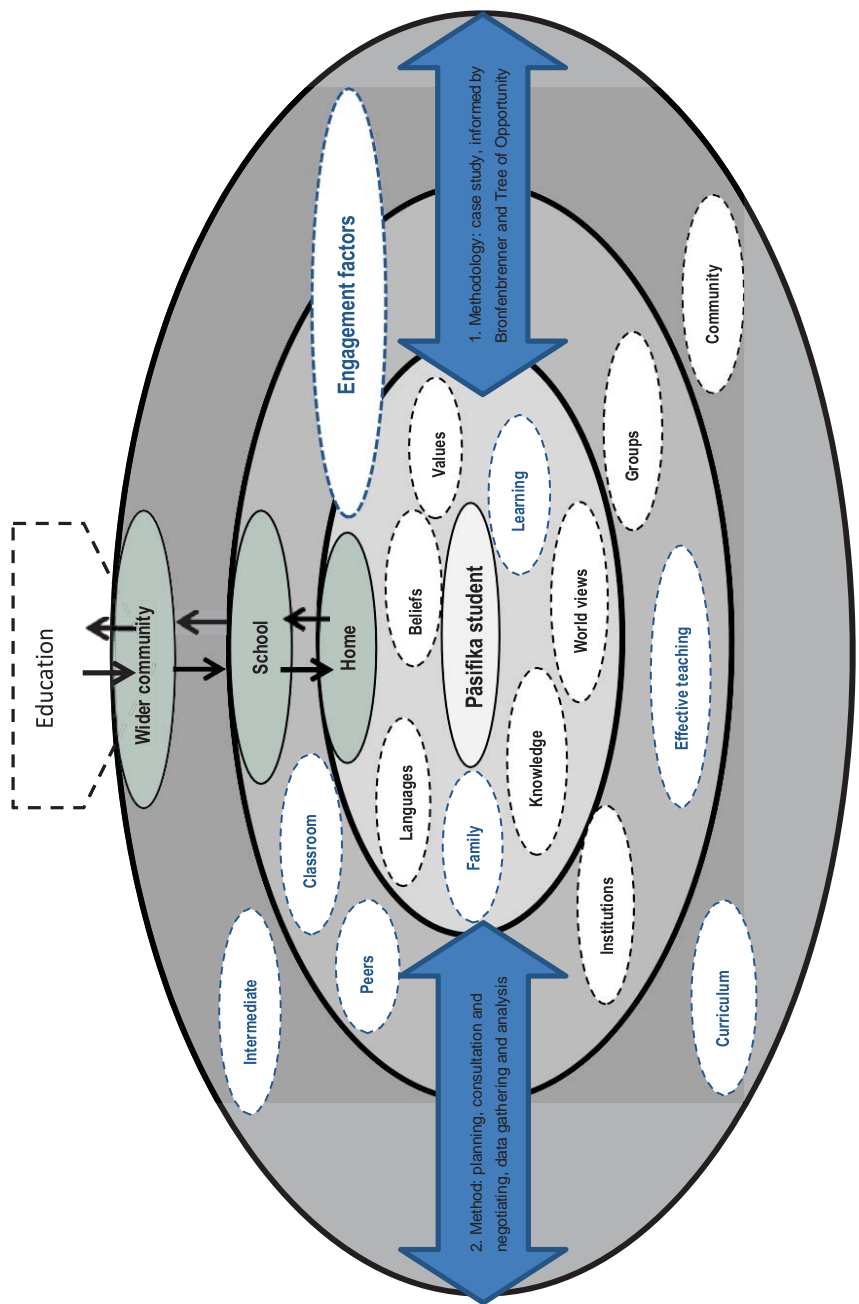
3.12 Reflection and exit from the school

Withdrawing from the school after a year of information sharing and data collection was an important process. The researcher met with members of the Pāsifika Reference Group and supervisors to debrief and discuss options. Exit events were arranged with the participants where the next steps (analysis of the data and writing the thesis) were explained.

The planning, consultation, data gathering and exit from the school stages were informed by Bronfenbrenner's ecological approach and the Pāsifika Tree of Opportunity. Both were used as a framework for applying an integrated case study approach: allowing data to be gathered in all the ecological settings, the participants were involved in and linking the data to the research questions while facilitating a Pāsifika theoretical framework.

Figure 8 is another development of Bronfenbrenner's diagram in Figure 4. While Figure 4 illustrated Bronfenbrenner's approach that represents four ecological layers, Figure 8 illustrates how these theories are integrated with the particular areas of focus utilised for this study. Figure 4 specifies the areas of focus across the different ecological settings in more detail (personal level, school level and the wider community).

The areas of focus for the Tree of Opportunity (indicated in black broken lines) are now supporting the areas of focus for this study (indicated in blue broken lines). The adapted version of Bronfenbrenner's ecological layers (three layers a, represented by solid black lines) provide the ecological settings for the various areas of focus. It therefore shows engagement factors were explored across all three layers, through the particular method and methodology explained earlier.



Area of focus: ○

Bronfenbrenner: ○

Tree of Opportunity: ○

Figure 8: First Integration: Integrated approach and areas of focus

Figure 8 demonstrates that Bronfenbrenner's four layers are collapsed into three layers. The reasons for the adaptation of Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory are explained earlier in this chapter (see Section 3.4.4). However, to further explain Figure 8, a summary of the reasons for the adaptation involves:

- The integration of the Tree of Opportunity metaphor and Bronfenbrenner's approach enabled this study to prioritise factors at the core of the Pāsifika culture and move them closer to the student at the center of the ecological system. For example, values and belief systems (factors at the 'root source' of the Tree of Opportunity) were moved from the fourth layer (Bronfenbrenner's model) to the first layer in the integrated model.
- The second reason for collapsing Bronfenbrenner's four layers into three was to align it with the research question design, while sustaining the ecological focus of the study. The research questions included, perceptions (first layer), teaching and learning practices (second layer), and social and cultural factors in the wider community.

3.13 Data analysis

Data analysis, according to Yin (2003), consists of "examining, categorizing, tabulating, testing or otherwise recombining both qualitative and quantitative evidence to address the initial propositions of a study" (p. 109). In the current study data gathering and data analysis held complementary roles in that the one informed the other, while maintaining a focus on providing answers to the research questions. Question three is answered using information from both the literature and the analysed results from questions one and two. Emerging cultural specific factors in the school setting are compared with those factors expected/suggested by the literature, the National Standards and the Pāsifika Education Plan. This study therefore considers factors applied and those not applied in the school setting – all within a Pāsifika socio-cultural, ecological framework.

Snyder (2012) claimed that qualitative data "have no initial intrinsic organizational structure or meaning by which to explain the events under study, researchers...must then create a structure and impose it on the data" (p. 3). In this study, the researcher created structure by continuously examining the collected data in the light of the research questions, which provided tentative answers to the research questions and allowed data gathering and data analysis to begin simultaneously. The initial stages of data analysis (especially the qualitative data) were based on the *Stage Model of Qualitative Content Analysis* suggested by Hancock and Algozzine

(2006). This model provides systematic progressive steps that researchers should consider to organise, categorise and contextualise data. Additional to this model, the researcher also used number coding, labelling and memos to organise the raw data into different categories. These provided the researcher with easy access, for example when data analysis showed a need for further exploration and sense-making. While coding supported confidentiality and assisted with establishing patterns, the memos helped develop various interim hypotheses about incidents, events and frequency rates recorded in the raw data and in the participant responses (see Table 6).

Table 6: Example of coding and patterns emerging

Student number	Room number	Data source	Patterns / themes emerging	Hypothesis (H)	Cross analysis	(H) Confirmed?
1	X	Interview Documents	7/10 students reported anxiety re Y8	National Standards	Academic Records show 61% of Pāsifika in Rm xx achieve below National Standards	Yes
89	Xx					
3	Xxx					
4	Yy					

Once the data was organised and categorised, Excel spreadsheets and SPSS software programmes were utilised to categorise the data across particular theme areas and to formulate graphs, spreadsheets and tables, which showed research patterns and trends. Anae et al., (2001) argue that computer generated data creates opportunities for discussions and debates over “cultural nuances” (p. 42) and how these might be written up in a final report. The researcher consulted with two members of the Pāsifika Reference Group and the research supervisors about the analysed data. In relation to Pāsifika nuances, one member offered to read the relevant chapters and make some recommendations, while the other was keen to have a face-to face discussion. The data analysis process followed in this study is summarised in Figure 9.

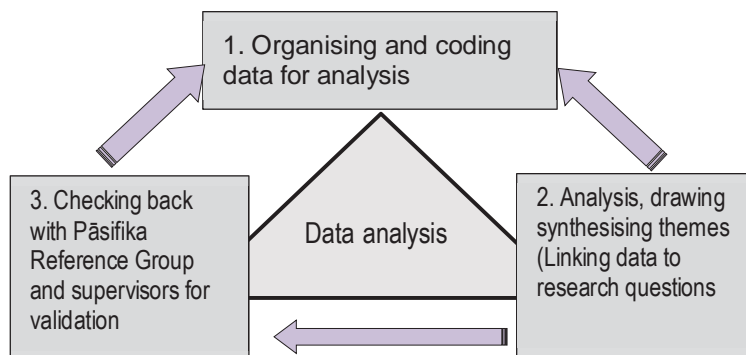


Figure 9: Steps in analysis of research data

❖ **Step 1. Organising and coding data for analysis**

In this study, the researcher continuously organised the collected data into different categories in preparation for analysis. A few examples of categories include: perceptions, teaching practices, cultural knowledge, and student and parent voice. Number coding was used on consent forms, surveys and information from the school data base to maximise confidentiality for participants. Curriculum subjects areas were coded (for example, Subject A) to further ensure confidentiality and anonymity. These codes were utilised when data was analysed through SPSS software and Excel spreadsheets.

❖ **Step 2. Analysis, drawing synthesising themes - Descriptive Statistics**

In Step 2 the researcher focused on describing the basic features of the data that had been collected in reference to the research questions. The researcher provided simple summaries and measures about the data gathered from interviews, observations and documents collated from the school database. According to Trochim (2006), this relates to descriptive statistics. Trochim (2006) claims that descriptive statistics help researchers present various measures of quantitative data into formats that are more manageable, hence reducing a lot of data into simpler summaries. Descriptive statistics, he claims, is a way to describe what the data shows, which enables cross comparisons. The researcher used frequency distribution bar charts, frequency distribution tables, which described the degree of relationship between variables, for example, between student perception of classroom management and engagement. Summarising these enabled comparisons across the different ecological settings in which participants were involved.

❖ **Step 3. Ongoing collaboration and consultation with the Pāsifika Reference Group and supervisors re outcomes**

The Samoan practice of fa'afaletu draws together a range of perspectives (Anae et al., (2001). It was important that research results contributed to positive Pāsifika development. It was therefore important for the researcher to consider how the results of the intended research would be reported and distributed. Appropriate consultation ensured collaboration happened within the fa'afaletu framework.

Applying the three steps (organising and coding data for analysis, analysis, drawing synthesising themes – descriptive statistics – and ongoing collaboration with the Pāsifika support group, & supervisors) in data analysis kept the focus on relevant information, since irrelevant information is counterproductive and wastes valuable time (Hancock, & Algozzine, 2006). Hancock and Algozzine (2006) refer to this process as thematic analysis and recommend that researchers continue with this procedure until patterns emerge to support the available information. Yin (2003) refers to this as “pattern matching” (p. 116) and claims established patterns strengthen the internal validity of case studies. In this research, the underlying patterns and themes were used to develop conceptual understanding of factors facilitating the engagement in learning of Pāsifika students at Pācific Intermediate School. In data analysis, the tables and figures supported the exploration and sense making of themes in the earlier draft versions of the findings and these were continuously linked to the research questions.

The researcher consulted with the Pāsifika Reference Group once the data was analysed and linked to research questions. Emerging patterns were the result of a range of perspectives, for example the perspectives of the school staff, literature, and those of the researcher. Members of the Pāsifika Reference Group often aligned these perspectives to a Pāsifika cultural context, which was invaluable and in line with the fa'afaletu framework discussed earlier.

3.14 Data presentation

The outcomes of this research will be presented at conferences, and published in academic journals and relevant online databases. This will make the research outcomes accessible to future researchers, and Pāsifika teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand and also the wider Pāsifika nations. For this to be appropriate, it is essential then that the data was analysed and presented

within the ecological framework of this study, and considered within the Pāsifika theoretical basis as illustrated in Figure 8.

The researcher intends to hold a workshop with staff at Pacific Intermediate School to report back on the key findings of the study. The Feeding the Roots Model of Pāsifika Student engagement, generated by the current study, will be shared as a model of 'service' to the school. Whether the Roots Model is implemented in their setting will be the prerogative of staff, senior management members, parents, students and the Board of Trustees. An appointment will be booked with the principal to arrange feedback sessions with the Board of Trustees and staff. As all the students have transitioned to various high schools across South Auckland, reporting the results to them is not feasible.

Feeding the Roots Model will be further developed as a resource for teachers to develop culturally appropriate and culturally responsive communities of learning. In these communities, Pāsifika students' engagement in learning will be enhanced if schools acknowledge critical cultural components and their potential to culturally enrich the different ecological layers within their education systems.

3.15 Validity, reliability, trustworthiness, generalisability and transferability

According to Yin (2009,) case studies should be well designed to include construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability. In this study, construct validity was established through multiple sources of data collection that was used to create a "chain of evidence" (Yin, 2009, p. 41). Mixed qualitative/quantitative methods were used to collect data. Hesse-Biber (2010) suggests that linking these two methods can enhance the reliability and validity of research findings. As discussed earlier (see 3.13, p. 108) in this study, patterns and themes were used to develop conceptual understanding of factors facilitating the engagement in learning of Pāsifika students. This has created internal validity for this study, which according to Yin (2009), includes "pattern-matching, and explanation building" (p. 41). External validity in case studies is created when case studies can be generalised to theory (Yin, 2009, p. 44). The current study generated a Roots Model of Pāsifika student engagement that will be tested in other school environments in the future.

Validity was also achieved through the use of triangulation, which determined if the results in one data gathering method agree with the results in other methods. For example, results from the interviews and observations (qualitative) were compared with results from the survey

(quantitative and quantitative) to investigate the students' perceptions of their *most favourite subject*. Here triangulation was utilised to create valid findings and to establish a chain of evidence to determine if it was actually measuring what it intends to measure.

In case study research reliability refers to how stable, accurate, and precise measurement happened, and how well protocols, and procedures were documented (Yin, 2003). Reliability was addressed at two levels to ensure the data gathering tools produced stable, consistent results. Firstly, data collection protocols for the researcher were established early on in the planning stages of this research. These protocols included the same instructions and timeframes for the different groups of participants when surveys and interviews were completed. Observations were all conducted within the same timeframes, and the same protocols for arranging the observations, engaging in and exiting from the observations were utilised. Secondly, it involved the "extent to which research findings from similar questions yield similar responses" (Hesse-Biber, 2010, p. 466). Similar questions in the various data gathering resources referred to (for example) the participants' knowledge of the *Pāsifika Education Plan*. The responses consistently confirmed a low percentage of participants were aware of its existence.

Trustworthiness and credibility for this study firstly involved the relationships the researcher established throughout the current study. These relationships included: that between the researcher and the participants, the researcher and the all important sourcing of appropriate literature reviews, the researcher and those consulted to provide cultural support, the researcher and those who helped co-construct knowledge and understanding during the data-anylis stages, and lastly between the researcher and the analysis of the collected data. The consultation processes related to co-constructed and cultural knowledge were only activated after the researcher had analysed data and wanted confirmation about her interpretation of the outcomes. For example, once the researcher asked teachers to confirm her interpretation of reading outcomes (National Standards) supplied by the school.

The researcher followed the research guidelines by Anae et al. (2001), the advice and guidance from the Pāsifika Reference Group and the research supervisors to create a research environment of mutual trust and respect. The ethical considerations of this study furthered these relationships, as participants contributed knowing their rights to anonymity and confidentiality took priority.

Shenton (2004), Yin (2003) and Anae et al. (2001) claim credibility is determined when a researcher uses well-established research methods. The mixed qualitative/quantitative research method chosen for this research was based on case study research, informed by Bronfenbrenner's ecological approach and the Tree of Opportunity metaphor. Although the research method utilised for this study was critical to credibility, the researcher also relied on the principles of building trusting, respectful relationships – a shared commonality between the cultural values of the researcher and the participants, particularly that of Pāsifika. Although the researcher was familiar with the culture of Pācific Intermediate School, cultural support was sought to ensure cultural appropriateness for engaging with the diversities of the Pāsifika peoples.

Other approaches that were followed to promote credibility included the use of triangulation, debriefing sessions and reflections on the research processes. Other methods utilised included peer scrutiny of the different phases of the research (mainly members of the Pāsifika Reference Group) and processes to ensure openness in respondents (participants knew they could withdraw from the research at any stage). The researcher therefore made every effort to establish a researcher- participant rapport.

Lastly, the researcher aimed to provide “thick descriptions” (Shenton, 2004, p. 10) or detailed descriptions of the answers to the research questions, which lead to identifying factors facilitating the engagement of Pāsifika students at Pācific Intermediate School. These ‘thick descriptions’ could enhance future sharing of the research outcomes with professionals, who could use these outcomes in their practice and research studies. Transferability, according to Polit and Beck (2010), is a “third model of generalizability that was proposed by Firestone (1993) in what he called *case-to- case translation*” (p. 1453). In transferability, the researcher provides thick descriptions (Shenton, 2004, p. 10) about research findings and allows readers to make “inferences about the findings to other settings. It is therefore the readers and users of research who ‘transfer’ the results” (Polit, & Beck, 2010, p. 1453). Although generalisability was supported in this research through the careful detailing of participants, the Pāsifika theoretical basis and the integrated research method, it is anticipated that transferability will become a bigger focus in the future.

3.16 Summary

This chapter began by outlining the research questions used in this study. It explained the research methodology as a case study informed by Bronfenbrenner's ecological approach and the Tree of Opportunity metaphor. The mixed qualitative/quantitative data gathering methods were described including interviews, surveys, whole class observations and documentation analysis of information from the school's database.

The chapter outlined the three stages of planning and consultation, data collection and analysis of this research. The first stage was concerned with permission for the research at various levels: Massey University, school level (The Board of Trustees) and at individual participant level. In the second stage, the participant demographics and strategies for data collection were explained. These included the preparation stages for data collection and the actual data collection approaches that were used in this research. The surveys' interview schedules, observation schedules, and use of documents from the school's database were described in terms of aims, format and procedures for administering. This was followed by the options to participants and the advantages, disadvantages of using these approaches. This section concluded with reflection on the research processes and exiting from the school. The third stage described the data analysis stage, focusing on the ecological, Pāsifika nature of this study and providing answers to the research questions. Although data analysis is the main focus in the third stage of this study, there is also a focus on data presentation and reporting.

The roles of the Pāsifika Reference Group and research supervisors (consultation, negotiation and for reflection purposes) are evident in all three stages.

The following three chapters present the findings of this research. Each chapter responds to a research question. Chapter Four focuses on participant perceptions of factors that are barriers and facilitators of Pāsifika student engagement in learning. Chapter Five presents information related to teaching and learning practices that influence student engagement. Chapter Six explains how this wider understanding of engagement (derived from information from Chapters Four and Five) has extended the research into the social and cultural environment as the wider communities in which the students are involved. This wider, socio-cultural understanding of engagement factors also represents the discussion of the outcomes of this study.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

RESEARCH QUESTION ONE: PERCEPTIONS OF ENGAGEMENT FACTORS

E kai venevene te tuatua a te monomono korero.
(Delicious food is the word of the teacher. Correct teaching is given by the wise men.)
Cook Island Māori Proverb (Short, 1951)

4.1 Introduction

Previous chapters highlighted that disengagement from learning before transitioning to secondary level poses risks for some Pāsifika students. Early identification of engagement factors could, therefore, address these risks of disengagement and, as a result, reduce the incidence of Pāsifika students leaving school early or without the qualifications that will support them into the workforce or tertiary education. The current study contributes new knowledge about engagement factors and highlights the actions that need to be taken to ensure engagement in learning of Pāsifika students at intermediate school level.

In Chapter Four, the focus is on analysing the results of the gathered data systematically and ecologically in response to research question one, which represents the first ecological layer. In this layer, the engagement factors relate to the participants' perceptions of enablers and barriers to Pāsifika students' engagement in learning. Participant perceptions include proximal factors (factors in the classroom, at school and home), and distal factors, which include the National Curriculum and factors within the wider school community (see Figure 8, Chapter Three). Three teachers, two of whom were Pāsifika, and two members of the Pāsifika support group were used on a consultancy basis during the analysis stages of this study. In doing this, knowledge were co-constructed, which strengthened the authenticity, triangulation and cultural responsiveness of the current study. To further strengthen the validity of the study it is important to provide a table that maps the research question to the data collection methods. Table 7 therefore highlights questions and items related to research question one across six participants

Table 7: Mapping the alignment between research question one and data gathering tools (RQ 1)

Alignment Between Research Question One and Data Gathering Tools: Chapter 4				
Data gathering tools and questions/items/sections related to research question one				
Research question (RQ) 1	Interviews	Surveys	Whole class observations (Researcher perception)	Data base
	Related questions	Related items	Related items	Students
<p>What are the perceptions of students, parents, teachers, and other educational professionals of the enablers and barriers to Pāsifika students' engagement in learning at an intermediate school?</p>	<p>Students (16 focus group) 1-6, 8-11, 13-16</p>	<p>Students 1-5, 11-20, 29, 34, 35 Reflective / open-ended questions: 3, 4</p>	<p>Student engagement Sections: Behavioural and emotional engagement factors, Ecological</p>	<p>Students Attendance ERO report on transiency Academic outcomes</p>
	<p>Parents 2-4, 6, 8, 10-12, 14</p>	<p>Parents 4, 6-9, 11, 14, 15, 17, 18 Reflective/open-ended questions: 3, 4</p>		
	<p>Teachers 1-5, 7-9, 11-13</p>	<p>Teachers 2, 6, 9, 12-14, 17-25, 29 Reflective / open-ended questions: 3, 4, 5</p>		
	<p>Teacher Aides 3, 6-10, 12-14</p>	<p>Teacher Aides 2, 5, 13, 1-20, 24, 26 Reflective/open-ended questions: 3, 4</p>		
	<p>Principal 2, 4-14, 16</p>	<p>Principal</p>		
	<p>RTLB 2-10</p>			

In Section 4.2, the focus is on describing participant perceptions of proximal engagement factors. As a result, classroom and teacher-related factors are linked to the students' levels of on-task and off-task behaviours per subject area. In addition, participant perceptions are associated with engagement factors as they relate to the physical classroom environment, teaching practices, Pāsifika student diversity, relational factors and student attendance.

In Section 4.3, the focus is on distal engagement factors, which include factors within the wider school environment, and those related to the National Curriculum (National Standards and Pāsifika Education Plan) and the wider community in which Pāsifika students operate, which also includes the risk of youth gangs for Pāsifika. Section 4.4 offers a summary of Chapter Four.

Several factors, which affect student engagement, were identified in this study. The whole class observations focused on engagement as multidimensional and multifaceted and examined the behavioural and emotional factors that impact on Pāsifika student engagement. In the whole class observations, the researcher gathered data on emotional engagement factors, such as positive and negative reactions to peers, teachers and set tasks. These were analysed alongside participant perceptions, which were obtained from interviews and surveys. For example, the data showed an relationship between teaching practices (observation data) and the students' perception of the role of teachers in their learning (interviews and surveys).

The behavioural (different categories of on-task and off-task behaviours) and emotional (positive and negative reactions to teacher, peers and set tasks) dimensions of engagement were measured against various teaching practices. Here, the behavioural and emotional dimensions encompassed student reactions to teaching practices such as pre-teaching to task, when teachers set the tasks, student-directed activities and teacher-directed activities, and when students were required to do individual or group work. Student-directed activities imply students achieved their learning goals through a variety of options created by the teacher, for example, research topic areas or problem-solve through peer tutoring or buddy support. Teacher-directed activities refer to direct teaching of curriculum content to the whole class. Table 8 illustrates a teacher information and a summary of the observation results.

Table 8: Teacher information and summary of observation results

Teacher information, & Summary of Observation Results: behavioural and emotional dimensions of engagement												
Subject area	Teacher Information				Class size	Frequency of observations	Behavioural Engagement			Average percentage		
	Gender		Pāsifika Ethnicity				Teaching qualification obtained in New Zealand		Behavioural Engagement		Emotional Engagement	
	Male	Female	Yes	No			Yes	No	On-task behaviour	Off-task behaviour	Positive reaction to teacher, peers, task	Negative reaction to teacher, peers, task
1. Subject A2	✓	✓	✓	✓	27	2/3	100 PTT, TS, TDL	0.2 TS	100			
2. Subject B	✓			✓	15	1	99 PTT, TS, TDL, IW	1 TS	100			
3. Subject D2	✓	✓	✓	✓	25	1	96 SDL	4 PTT, TD	100			
4. Subject C	✓	✓	✓	✓	30	1	92 TS, SDL	8 PTT	97(P) 100 (Tch, & Task)	3.0 Peer, SDL		
5. Subject E	✓	✓	✓	✓	27	2	89 PTT, SDL, TDL, GW	11 TS, SDL, GW	100			
6. Subject D1	✓	✓	✓	✓	32	1	86 SDL, & IW	14 PTT, TD, TS	99	1.0 Peer, TD		
7. Subject A1	✓	✓	✓	✓	32	1/3	81 TDL, TS	19 TDL, TS	91 (Tch, & Task) 100 (P)	9 Task, SDL		
8. Subject F	✓	✓	✓	✓	28	1	75 IW	25 PTT	100 Peers 30 (Tch, & Task) 100(T,P)	70 (Tch, & Task) (TS, IW)		
9. Subject A3	✓	✓	✓	✓	30	3/3	27 TDL	73 SDL	27 (Task)	73 Task, SDL		

On-task behaviour: Highest average percentage= 100% and lowest= 27% Off-task behaviour: Highest average percentage = 73% and lowest =0.2%

Definitions and Key:

SDL - Student-directed learning: Students achieve their learning goals through a variety of options created by the teacher, e.g. research topic areas, or problem-solve through peer tutoring or buddy support

TDL - Teacher-directed learning: Direct teaching of curriculum content to the whole class

To explore participants' perception of factors of engagement information from interviews, data from the surveys and the school's database were linked to observed on-task and off-task behaviours (behavioural engagement factors) and student reactions to teachers, peers and set tasks (emotional engagement factors). Some of the observed ecological factors, for example class size and its effect on student engagement, were also taken into consideration. The results from these are grouped according to home, school and external factors to inform further the emerging engagement factors.

4.2 Proximal factors of student engagement

In response to research question one, the observation results identified several proximal factors that contributed to student engagement. These included teacher-related factors (ethnicity, gender, whether teachers received their teaching qualifications in New Zealand or elsewhere), and factors within the classroom (class size, behavioural and emotional dimensions of student engagement, equipment and resources). Furthermore, proximal factors included awareness of Pāsifika student diversity, school-parent partnerships, and relationships in their contributions to student engagement (Table 8).

4.2.1 Teacher-related factors

This study explored teacher-related factors as contributors to student engagement. These included teacher gender, ethnicity and whether they received their teaching qualifications in New Zealand or elsewhere. At the same time, their roles also involved creating inclusive classroom environments through classroom management and teaching practices that impacted on the behavioural and emotional engagement of students (Table 8). Classroom and teaching practices are discussed in more detail in Chapter Five.

According to the interview data from Resource Teachers of Learning and Behaviour (RTLB), the ethnic diversity of the teachers provided a wealth of cultural experience. In the interviews with RTLB, they stated that although teachers at Pācific Intermediate School were from different ethnic backgrounds and in many cases originally from different countries, they were passionate about teaching in South Auckland. The RTLB were of the opinion that the different cultural backgrounds, beliefs and values of the teachers contributed in particular ways to their interaction with students and parents, and subsequently also their teaching practices. For example, in some cases, teachers understood cultural diversity and showed compassion for different values and belief systems of students they were teaching.

As discussed earlier, teachers utilised particular approaches (pre-teaching to task, when the task was set, student-directed activities, teacher-directed activities and when students were required to do individual or group work) to manage their classrooms. These contributed to varied levels of student engagement across subject areas. In the next section, the focus is on factors within the classroom and how they affected student engagement. This is the first step towards exploring the different teaching approaches in more detail.

4.2.2 Factors within the classroom

Factors within the classroom included student perceptions of subject areas, their behavioural and emotional engagement, resources that were available to students and the physical classroom environment.

When reviewing the results for all the subject areas about levels of on-task behaviour, the first subject area of focus is writing. Although an important subject, writing also encompassed every other subject in the curriculum and students held strong opinions about it. Linking the results with the survey and focus group interview results illustrated that student perception about writing as a subject varied. When asked in the focus group interviews how they would feel if “writing as a subject disappeared from the curriculum,” 70% (n=56) of the students said they would be “sad, angry, upset and shocked” because it was important to help them express their feelings and to express themselves verbally. In contrast, in the focus group interviews, 29% of the students (male students only) indicated writing was their least favourite subject. They used statements such as, “I hate it”, “it is too difficult”, “there is too much of it in the school”, “my writing is ugly”, “there are other ways to do it” and “not good at it” to describe their dislike. Despite these negative perceptions by the male participants in the focus group interviews, the student survey results (Appendix 27) demonstrated more male (72%) than female students (61%) “...liked writing.” Overall, in the focus group interviews, 57% appreciated it as an important contributor to their futures, which encompassed future studies and employment. It is important to note the difference between interview and survey results of particularly the male students. Despite their negative perceptions of writing in the focus group interviews, more males than females indicated they enjoyed it in the surveys results. These results could relate to their desire to conform and be similar to their peer group, taking into account their age group and entering puberty. Consequently, different results for individual preferences were achieved in the student surveys.

The observation results for all the subject areas about levels of on-task behaviour indicated teacher gender, ethnicity and country of training did not have an effect; neither did the size of the classroom. High levels of on-task behaviour occurred when students had access to resources to complete set tasks, group work and teacher support. Although the classrooms were mostly spacious, this was not a pre-requisite for on-task behaviour. For example, the observations demonstrated that students displayed the highest levels of on-task behaviours in a classroom that was small in size, and the highest levels of off-task behaviours in a spacious environment. Despite these outcomes, in the interviews, 18% of students suggested bigger chairs and desks, and more spacious classrooms, as some of the things they would like to see changed about the school. Although there were marginal differences in student numbers (apart from the subject area, technology), the observation results indicated high student numbers did not determine high levels of on-task behaviours. However, it was interesting to note that teachers and teacher aides (in the interviews and responding to the open-ended question at the end of the survey) identified high student numbers as one of the barriers to student engagement. Rather than student numbers, the observation results instead demonstrated a relationship between high levels of off-task behaviour (behavioural engagement), negative student reactions towards teachers and tasks (emotional engagement), and lack of teacher knowledge about factors that are related to cultural diversity of Pāsifika students. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter Five.

Additional factors also included participants' perceptions as to whether school staff had knowledge of the Pāsifika students' ethnic diversity, background and home circumstances. Teachers in the interviews reported that they utilised various means to identify students and to build relationships to enhance student engagement in learning. The interview and observation results indicated that the various methods teachers used to gain knowledge about the cultural diversity of Pāsifika students, either created barriers to student engagement, or it contributed to positive engagement as discussed in 4.2.3.

4.2.3 Knowledge of Pāsifika student diversity

The interview results illustrated that, in the school setting, students identified several classroom-related factors that created barriers to their engagement in learning. These included subject areas that required excessive amounts of writing and reading, subjects that were considered too "hard" (for example science) and subjects in which teachers did not prioritise positive relationships. This student emphasis on subjects, quantity and valuing positive

relationships, indicated a mismatch between student expectations and the realities of what they experienced in the school setting. The results indicating this mismatch in student expectation were further illustrated in discrepancies between male and female student survey outcomes. In the survey results (Appendix 27), 78% of the female and 57% of the male students agreed that everyone at school was familiar with the Pāsifika culture. The discrepancy between male and female survey results indicated male students had a different experience and perception of how well they were understood and how much their culture was valued.

This study further explored how teachers obtained knowledge and understanding about the cultural identity, values and belief systems of the Pāsifika students. The teachers indicated in the interviews that they primarily obtained information about students from the school's student folder system, class lists, discussions with senior management members, and staffroom conversations with each other. Other sources of information came from the students' writing, School Journals, and projects that focused on different cultures, parent interviews and students who confided in them as teachers. Four teachers (n=6) indicated that they were most knowledgeable about the home circumstances of those students who presented with negative behaviour, medical conditions and who were experiencing domestic violence. Additionally, two teachers said their knowledge of facial features and family names assisted them to differentiate between Pāsifika and other students. Individually the other teacher participants responded to the interview question asking whether teachers were familiar with the Pāsifika culture as follows:

Yes and no...not a 100%, I would say 40:60,

I learn from the kids as time goes on... and

It doesn't matter because I don't think in terms of colour.

The above results indicate a reliance on external resources, rather than collaborative, consultative student-teacher and school-parent partnerships on providing information about Pāsifika student culture. Although two of the teachers (n=6), in the interviews, stated they had a good understanding of the Pāsifika students in their classrooms, the limited partnership contributions could explain why only 52% of students (in the survey outcomes) perceived that teachers understood them (48% male compared to 56% female students).

Lastly, in the surveys, teachers (n=16) were asked to indicate whether they drew on parental knowledge of their children to learn more about their background and culture. Sixteen percent

responded, “Yes,” twenty-five percent “No” and twenty-five percent responded with “I don’t know.” These results suggested a missed opportunity as 84% of teachers and parents did not engage and collaborate to learn more about their Pāsifika students’ culture and identity — important contributors to their engagement in learning as perceived by Gorinski and Fraser (2006), Thaman (1999), Hunter (2013) and Nakhid (2002).

The teacher aides who were not familiar with the Pāsifika culture, in the interviews, said they consulted one of their Tongan colleagues for constructive advice and guidance when needed. They all expressed a need for some professional development to enable them to engage in more culturally responsive interactions with the Pāsifika students. When asked (in the interviews) if the school shared information about students so they could have better insight and understanding of student background, home circumstances, culture and other relevant factors the teacher aide responses varied as follows: 44% said, *sometimes*, 22% said, *not always* and 33% said, “We often don’t know about it, but we would like to know.”

The teacher aide interviews indicated that they used professional development, school and one of their colleagues who was familiar with the Tongan culture to obtain more knowledge about the Pāsifika students they were supporting. This focus on external factors was similar to that of the teachers. It suggests a lack of understanding of the value of reciprocal relationships of trust and respect where they (teacher aides and students) could learn from each other about cultural values and belief systems.

Interview results indicated that the RTLB group operated on the periphery of the classroom unless the school referred individual students to them for moderating behaviour and learning support. RTLB interview data showed that, as a group, they were of the opinion that teacher knowledge of the cultures and ethnicities of the Pāsifika students varied from teacher to teacher. One said, “there is a certain amount of valuing what students bring to their learning,” another said, imported teachers needs more support in how to understand Pāsifika students” and lastly, teachers needs to understand the benchmark of ethnicities and scaffold according to the multi-cultural societies in their classrooms.” The RTLB that were interviewed commented that the school should provide students with a “forum to express and celebrate their different ethnic and cultural ranges.” The group said teachers’ knowledge about student background and home circumstances was limited because it is school policy that teachers do not do home visits. Therefore, teachers have to rely on the amount of time spent with parents at parent interviews. However, the RTLB members were of the opinion that some teachers were committed to

building positive relationships with parents and students, and would go out of their way to obtain as much information about their students as possible. For the RTLB participants it was imperative that “learning happens through shared opinions and shared learning experiences rather than only focusing on the teacher.”

In the interviews, the RTLB members (like teachers) also referred to the class lists as a source of information about students but added that they have observed other means of information gathering teachers used. They drew attention to “how interested teachers are to remember which students belong to the various Pāsifika ethnic groups and practise the correct pronunciation of their names.” These teachers, according to RTLB, experienced no problems with student behaviour or issues with engaging students in learning.

In summary, the above results demonstrate that some school staff focused on various external resources to become more knowledgeable about the ethnic diversity of the Pāsifika students in the school. The RTLB perspective shifted the focus from external resources to student-teacher relationships, where there was respect for student diversity, ethnicity, and cultural and social identity. Triangulating this finding with student survey results, showed that 63% (n=40), and more female than male students, were of the opinion that the school staff had a good knowledge and understanding of the Pāsifika culture. These survey results (Appendix 27) indicated that 37% of all students and 24% of male students, held a different perception that school staff did not have a good knowledge and understanding of the Pāsifika culture. RTLB interview results highlighted the limited knowledge that most teachers had acquired about the culture and ethnicities of the students in their classes. A reason for this was that the school policy restricted teachers from doing home visits, so communication with parents mainly happened at Parent Interviews or when parents were called in to discuss their children’s incidents of negative behaviour. Despite these limitations and restrictions, teachers who valued positive relationships and respected student culture and identity, achieved higher levels of student engagement in their classrooms, as identified by the observation results of on-task behaviour. The inconsistencies in knowledge about the Pāsifika culture created tensions and suggested that school staff were at differing points on a continuum of understanding cultural responsiveness.

Since relationships played an essential role in school-parent partnerships, as indicated in participants’ reported expectations, the next section explores participants’ perceptions of

relational factors and their impact on student engagement. These include student-teacher, student-parent relationships and the perceptions from RTLB members.

4.2.4 Relational factors

In the school setting, support from teachers and parents, and respect, were perceived by students as the main contributors to student engagement in learning, as indicated in interview data. The support from these significant adults included: learning support; when parents talked to the students about their futures; affirmative and trusting relationships and student attitudes towards subject areas.

The students' interview data revealed that they were very clear about factors that created barriers to their engagement in learning at school. Factors that were consistently shared were associated with curriculum content, teaching practices and student-teacher relationships. For example, the interview responses indicated that students' explanation for why the work was sometimes too difficult was because, "teachers don't explore it well, they don't always give us the information we need," "we get confusing information," or "teachers did not explain the work properly." Excessive talking from teachers created frustration amongst some of the students. When asked in the interviews what they would like to see changed about the school, ten students (n=56) brought up excessive talking from teachers. All students reported that it was hurtful when teachers talked about their families in a negative, derogatory manner.

Positive teacher-student relationships were an important factor in the students' engagement in learning. One student interview response was, "I don't listen if I don't like the teacher" (the rest of the interview group the student was in, supported this statement). More specifically, survey responses illustrated that thirty-two percent of the students attributed "growly" teachers, those who were "too strict" and "getting angry over nothing," as factors that impacted poorly on their relationships with teachers. While considering the above, the surveys showed some contradictory results in that 82% of the male and 89% of the female students agreed that their teachers do indeed support them with their learning. Furthermore, it seemed that some of the students were prepared to take some ownership of the role they played in creating some of the barriers to their relationships with teachers and their engagement in learning. In the interviews, a group of students said, "sometimes we don't listen" and "sometimes we don't pay attention."

Therefore, from the survey and interview results, it was clear that the students had a desire for positive relationships at three different levels. Firstly, they desired relationships with their

teachers at a level of teaching practice. Secondly, at a more personal level, students had a desire to be treated with respect as individuals and when teachers were referring to their families. A third level of the student relationships in school was that of the power of friends and peer groups. In the focus group interviews, for example, the students indicated a higher preference for friends than for learning (see Figure 10), which created a negative cycle in student-teacher relationships. As illustrated in this example, and as identified through interview and observation results, a teacher who treated students with disrespect, created a cycle whereby students would disengage from the teacher and his/her teaching in support of each other. In the focus group interviews two groups shared that they would “stand up for their friends” if teachers treat them unfairly.

Teachers’ responses to survey and interviews listed the following factors they considered critical to student engagement: positive response to rewards, praise, success, realistic goals, feeling safe at school, and when academic work was interesting and at their level. Other engagement factors included using practical examples, building positive relationships, learning through fun, games and laughter, for example, “turn learning into something they enjoy.” One teacher said it was important to “create links with the students and their families as it opens many doors for teachers.” These included parents helping with homework, being engaged in their children’s learning, having positive relationships with teachers and being involved in school activities. The important role of parents in their children’s learning is further illustrated in the following teacher’s interview response, “Some parents think education is the responsibility of the teachers and that they have no role to play,” but “those students who have the support of their parents stand out.”

Some of the teachers’ responses to the open-ended survey questions identified “negative attitudes from teachers who refused to open up new ways of teaching” as barriers to student engagement. Two of the teachers responded that better attitudes from all staff regarding new approaches to teaching would enhance student engagement. The teachers further responded that enhanced professional care would prevent negative attitudes and resistance, particularly when considering the induction and support of new staff.

From the open-ended survey questions results, the teacher aides (n= 9) rated lack of respect from students and negative student behaviour as some of the barriers to student engagement. For some of the teacher aides (44%), the lack of respect, in particular from the year 8 students they supported, was problematic. They reported that students did not think teacher aides were

“paid professionals.” In contrast, the survey results (Appendix 27) showed 83% of teacher aides were of the opinion students were indeed respectful, but a minority group (17%) indicated this was not the case for Pāsifika students. The teacher aides were in a predicament. Their lack of knowledge about Pāsifika culture and the limited time they spent with the small group of students they supported did not always provide sufficient opportunity to build respectful relationships.

Factors within the home, which contributed to student engagement, as identified in the survey, and interview results (by the students and parents) involved collaborating, support and conversations parents had with their children about their schooling and futures. Interview and survey results revealed that the parents defined their support as talking to their children about their future, listening to their children’s needs, and being involved in their children’s schooling as much as possible. The survey results, triangulated with interview data indicated students also had conversations with their parents about their future. A smaller focus group was randomly selected to investigate further the kinds of topics parents and their children discussed. From the interview results, their responses indicated a snapshot of topics discussed as illustrated in Table 9.

Table 9: Interview results: randomly selected focus group on student-parent discussions

Topics: Student discussion with parents about their futures		
Topics parents discuss with their children	Individual responses from randomly selected group of students	
	Males (n=8)	Females (n=8)
Doing well in school – our parents expect us to do well in school	5	8
Finding a job	1	1
Going to University	5	8
My future is my choice	2	1
Leaving school early	0	0

The female students from this sample had more conversations with their parents about doing well in school and about entering tertiary education than did the male students. This difference in male/female student outcomes was also illustrated when the interview results from this randomly selected focus group were triangulated with student survey results. The triangulated (interview and survey) results indicated that although parents wanted all their children to do well

in school, more female than male students reported their parents were proud when they did well in school and talked to them about it. This difference in male and female perception about parent responses to their successes is reflected in the survey results in Appendix 27 (female: 89% and male: 86%). The interview results illustrated that 68% of male and 72% of female students agreed that they would leave school as soon as they reach the rights age. When this was triangulated with the focus group interviews the results show significant discrepancy as none of the students in the focus group interviews indicated that they would leave school early. This was confirmed by the above results in Table 9 as none of the students indicated that they would be leaving school early.

The RTLB interview responses identified the following engagement factors, which related to internal school structures: the “recognition of success (on academic and sports levels), celebrating each little success, setting realistic goals and relationships with their teachers”. However, in the interviews, the RTLB also identified certain barriers to engagement. They said students proceeded through their primary years of schooling believing they could achieve anything they wanted to. However, this became a demoralising factor when students moved to higher grades and began to realise how progressively difficult it was to achieve. These realisations created self-esteem issues, particularly for Pāsifika students, which teachers needed to understand so they could address it in their relationship building with students as part of their teaching practices.

From the interview results, relational factors played a key role in students’, teachers’ and RTLB perceptions about student engagement. Students in the interviews identified several factors that impacted on their relationships with teachers, which influenced their engagement in learning. Correspondingly, the interview results illustrated that teachers were well aware of barriers and facilitators to student engagement. Although teachers acknowledged the importance of student-teacher, teacher-parent relationships, some continued to seek factors within students as the main contributors to their disengagement in learning. The RTLB re-iterated in the interviews the importance of positive student-teacher relationships linked to the celebration of successes, setting realistic expectations and understanding challenges students encountered. Since relational factors also contributed to student disengagement from learning, this study explored student attendance (discussed in the next section) to further triangulate and confirm the interpretation of results.

4.2.5 Student attendance

The school's database (Appendix 24) provided information related to student attendance and academic achievement levels according to the National Standards. From the school's database, the Year 7 Pāsifika students who participated in this study had a regular attendance record of 95%. Sixty-eight percent of these students showed an attendance record of 90% and higher. Two students had a 100% attendance record, and one student had an attendance record of 75% – the lowest score. When this cohort of students transitioned to year 8, their attendance records showed 60% achieved an attendance record of 90% and higher. Four students achieved a 100% attendance record. The lowest attendance percentage was 67%. These statistics suggested more students became disengaged in learning in their year 8 of schooling (Appendix 25, Student absences).

In the interviews one of the questions related to how students feel about coming to school. Their responses are reflected in the following group responses (n=16):

“Cool”	(38%; n=6 focus groups)
“We like it a lot”	(56%; n=9 focus groups)
“It is the best time ever”	(25%; n=4 focus groups)

Three of the focus groups (19%) said they were “scared to come to school if they had done something wrong.”

From these responses, it appears as if the majority of students who were interviewed, perceived coming to school an enjoyable experience. Being positive about coming to school would certainly contribute to higher levels of attendance. Attendance is certainly a clear indicator of student engagement or disengagement, and would ultimately be a factor that influences the academic achievement levels of students. Attendance as an additional factor extends the results of this study to the third ecological layer, which focuses on distal engagement factors.

4.3 Distal engagement factors

Section 4.2 described the proximal factors of student engagement, within the second ecological layer, and encompassed factors related to participant perceptions of the teacher, classroom, Pāsifika student diversity, school-parent partnerships, relationships and student attendance. In

this section, the distal engagement factors are described. These include participant perceptions of factors that are enablers or barriers to student engagement from within the wider school environment, the National Standards (school curriculum) and the wider school community.

4.3.1 The wider school environment

Participants presented various perceptions about engagement factors within the wider school environment. Students, in surveys and small focus group interviews, identified various engagement factors and their impact on their engagement in learning. For example, in the student surveys, 18% of the students (n=40) considered the school uniform should be optional and that more lunchtime sports would be a good option. Additionally, 94% of female and 91% male students stated they had good friends at school, which confirmed the importance of constructive relationships, friends and peer groups at this age. The survey results (Appendix 27) also showed that 43% of the students valued learning and identified it as one of the components they liked most about the school. In the focus group interviews, 11% of the students stated that they would like to see some teacher behaviour changed. The focus group interview results of factors students identified as what they “liked most and least” about the school were triangulated with survey results to confirm interpretation and presented in Figure 10.

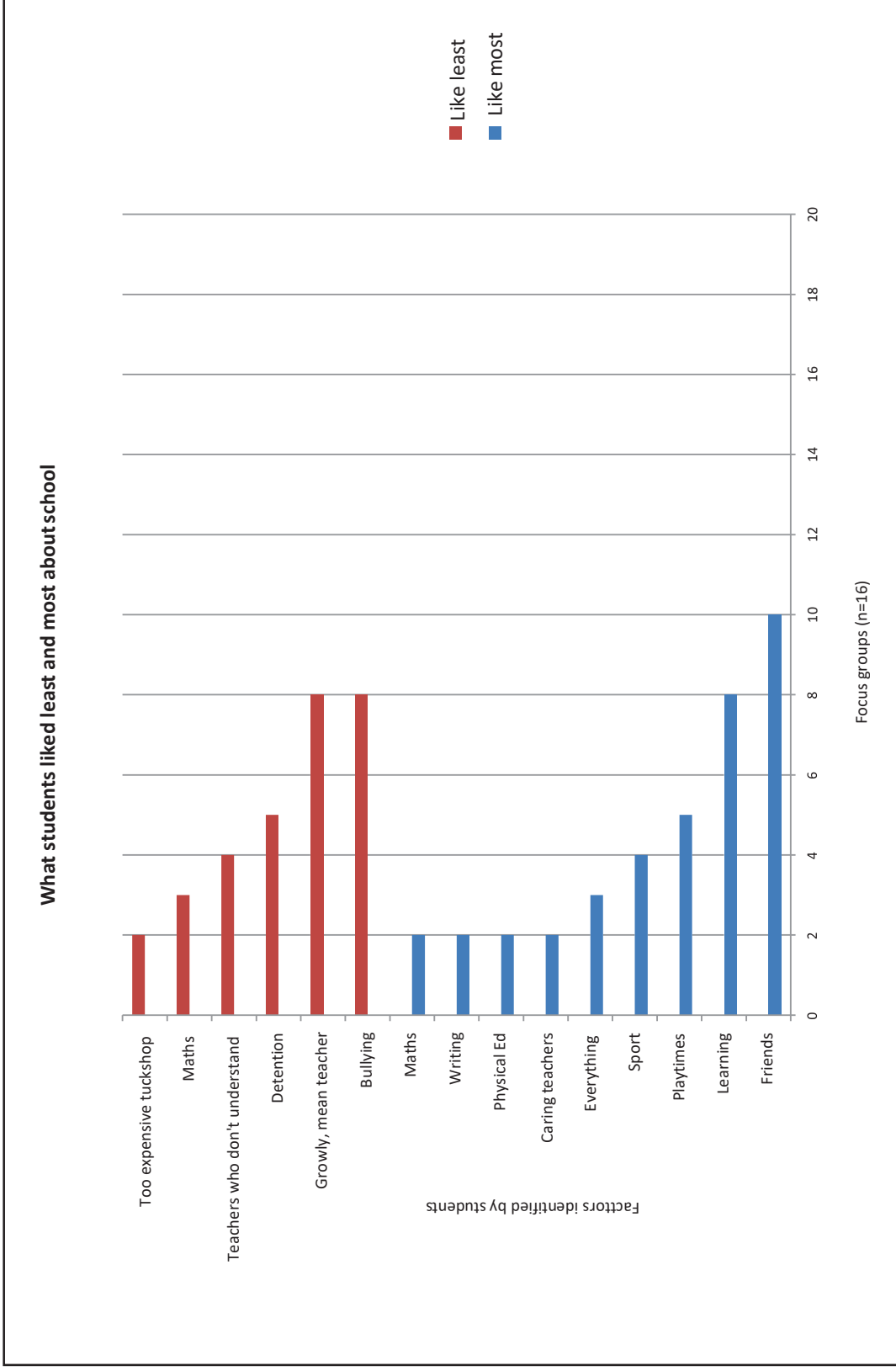


Figure 10: Student perceptions about what they liked least and most about school

The confirmed focus group interview results are summarised in Figure 10. The results show that students rated negative teacher behaviour and bullying behaviour from their peers as highest factors of what they liked least about their school community. These results indicated that 50% of students identified “growly, mean teachers” and “bullying behaviour” as factors least liked. In contrast, positive peer relationships and learning were identified as aspects they liked most about the school. Sixty three percent of students who participated in the focus group interviews indicated the importance of having friends as the one thing they liked most about the school. In the surveys 94% of female and 91% of male students stated that they had good friends at school, which conformed the importance of constructive relationships, friends and peer groups at this age. In Figure 10, 50% of students valued learning and identified it as one of the components they like most about the school.

A question in the survey, which explored attitudes towards leaving school as soon as students reached school leaving age illustrated that 68% of male and 72% of female students agreed that they would do so. However, in the focus group interviews, no students indicated that they wanted to leave school as soon as they reached the school leaving age. The inconsistency in students’ responses was another example of the difference in student responses when they were in small focus group situations versus requiring providing individual responses on surveys. To further explore this particular difference in response, the question about leaving school early was repeated to the randomly selected small focus group discussed earlier (see p.130). All members of the randomly selected focus group said “no” when asked if they would be leaving school early.

Teachers, in the interviews, outlined their satisfaction with the curriculum advice and guidance provided and identified these as factors that they appreciated most about the school. Furthermore, they valued the support they received with student behaviour and the student teacher aide support the school offered. They perceived their interaction with students, teaching, students who engaged in learning and achieving good results as most enjoyable in their roles as teachers. Also, they valued being able to establish home-school networks and positive relationships, and utilise their teaching strengths to make a difference in the lives of their students. One teacher identified teaching extension classes as most rewarding.

The teachers’ interview responses indicated that what they would like to see changed about the school was having more knowledge about the students’ home circumstances so they could

build positive relationships with students and parents. They also wanted to help Pāsifika students create a greater belief in their academic ability.

The interview results indicated that teachers considered lower student-to- teacher ratios were a necessity for better student outcomes. They argued that students who were well below National Standard levels would be better supported in classes with lower student numbers, because larger mainstream classes prevented students from getting the individual attention they needed. Previous discussions (in Section 4.2), showed that teaching practices and teacher-student relationships rather than student-teacher ratio affected the engagement levels of students.

Managing negative student behaviour was one of the teaching responsibilities teachers did not enjoy. Although 92% of the teachers indicated that the students were respectful, on the teacher survey all teachers said Pāsifika students became more challenging in year 8. One of the teachers said that the current timetable allowed students' access to some teachers for only three weeks, which prevented him from building rapport with pupils. Subsequently, he suggested timetable changes to allow teachers to have at least a term with their classes. Lastly, they said they would like to change the heavy demands on teacher time for meetings.

Towards the end of the surveys, participants were presented with four open-ended questions. In the teacher survey, teachers were asked to list what they perceived as facilitators and barriers to student engagement. They identified several factors that included the wider community, school, parents and students. One stated that establishing cooperative partnerships with primary schools in their geographic area would improve the amount of academic data and other relevant information they received when students were transitioning from primary to intermediate level. Most of the other comments related to student behaviour, smaller class sizes, buddy systems for lower achievers, improved ICT equipment, and resources. The principal's interview responses indicated that the networking he established with some of the local principals and other stakeholders had contributed to some of their success in student outcomes. The teachers' interview responses highlighted that continued access to adequate resources and professional development (at various levels) was essential to enhancing student engagement. They expressed a need for additional computers and textbooks in classrooms but said they preferred these alongside professional development to ensure effective implementation and student engagement. For the majority, regular professional development for all staff was important to keep up with changes in technology but also to create positive attitudes towards new approaches and changes in education.

When teacher aides were asked to list (as part of the open-ended questions on the survey) what they would like to change about the school, one (n= 9) commented on the demand on Pāsifika parents to change their parenting styles once they had immigrated to New Zealand. She said she would like a greater awareness amongst teachers of this as it affected how parents disciplined their children. For example, in New Zealand, new immigrant parents are submissive to new laws and policies related to parenting. These new demands required parents to adopt new parenting styles that could create confusion for Pāsifika families and their children, and teachers should be aware of this.

Parents were interviewed about what they considered were facilitators to student engagement within the wider school setting. They said the school was geographically quite within proximity of primary and high schools in their area. Being nearby supported parents financially as they did not have to travel long distances to get their children to and from school. Another geographical advantage was the easy access to after school programmes and events. Moreover, for parents, the school offered opportunities for students to excel. It provided a safe learning environment and the efforts to improve teaching practices put their minds at ease; mostly because their children were doing well and enjoying their schooling experience. Some of the parents thought it was important to attend parent evenings or significant events that involved their children because it showed their support. One of the parents said she contributed by being a Board of Trustees member at one of the local primary schools.

The interview results furthermore indicated that parents perceived education as being important for their children, commenting that:

It is the platform for the future,

Education leaves him with more choices,

It will help him to get a good job, and

If they have a good job then they can look after mum and dad.

These results linked with survey results (Appendix 27), in which 95% of the male and all the female students indicated their parents wanted them to do well at school. The school staff, similar to the parents, also wanted students to do well and excel. The principal, when interviewed, explained that the strong focus on improving student outcomes over the past four years had benefited in particular the students from the Tongan and Samoan communities. He said that most of these students now “arrive at school well prepared, and the majority now bring

lunch.” Due to their successes, suspensions had decreased significantly. Some structural changes, such as the introduction of the School Wide Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) Initiative, allowed the school to operate more systematically. Students spent more time in their homerooms, which created greater consistency as there was now less movement between classes. Lastly, he said the evidence of improved student outcomes was a testimony to the school’s commitment to a greater focus on mathematics and literacy.

Although the parents’ initial interview responses indicated that they were content with what the school offered their children and that there was nothing they wanted to change about the school, two (n=6) parents later commented that “things are too expensive” and “children receive too much homework.”

The interview results illustrated that the RTLB members considered relationship building, in general, should be a bigger focus in the school. On a more systemic level, they reported that teachers had difficulty changing learning plans to be responsive to student and classroom needs because they had to hand their photocopying in two weeks in advance. This arrangement, according to RTLB, created the impression that class time pursuit was not always student-centred as pre-planned worksheets was a focus in subject areas such as science and social studies.

4.3.2 National Curriculum and Pāsifika Education Plan

From the interview and survey results, participants (teachers, parents, RTLB, teacher aides and principal) in this study had various perceptions about the contribution of the National Curriculum and Pāsifika Education Plan to student engagement.

❖ Engagement in the curriculum

Teacher interview responses showed that they attributed student disengagement to negative student behaviour, the “extremes of student levels in one class” and language barriers. To accommodate these, the school database and observation results indicated the school offered various categories of support to students who experienced difficulty with learning and behaviour. Clearly the parents were aware of these as three of the parents (n=6) indicated in the parent survey that they knew what kind of support their children received. One teacher commented in the interviews that students benefitted from programmes that offered supplementary literacy and mathematics support, and strategies to cope with severe and

challenging behaviour. The school's database provided information about the different categories of support offered to students. Table 10 illustrates the categories of support to Pāsifika students who participated in this research.

Table 10: School database: categories of support to Pāsifika students

Ethnicity	Number of students	Category of student support						
		Reading	RTLb	ORS	ELL	SLS	LS	Teacher Aide
Fijian	1	1					1	Yes
Samoan	11	4			4	1	4	Yes
		6					6	
Cook Island Māori	2	2					2	Yes
Niuean	1	1					1	Yes
Tongan	8	6			2		6	Yes
		2					2	
Total	23	23			6	1	23	

Key: Resource Teachers of Learning and Behaviour (RTLb), Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS), English Language Learners (ELL), Supplementary Learning Support (SLS) and Learning Support (LS)

As indicated in Chapter Three, the school population was predominantly represented by Māori and Pāsifika students. The school's database indicated that Pāsifika students constituted fifty-two percent of the total school population. A high proportion of students used English as an additional language and this aligned with the teachers' perceptions, from their interviews, that factors within students were creating barriers to their engagement in learning. When reviewing language support on the database (as the first of these internal factors mentioned by teachers) the results indicated that only 0.8% of Pāsifika students received ELL support. Teachers furthermore referred to behaviour as another contributing factor to student disengagement. The data in Table 10 shows that none of the Pāsifika students was on the RTLb register. In the interviews, the RTLb confirmed this outcome, stating that the school should make more use of the RTLb services as they were a resource that could provide support with academic and appropriate social integration.

The principal emphasised in his interview that teachers who challenged students created opportunities for students to "glimmer at the next level." When asked about teaching practices and learning practices, the principal responded that students were at their best when teachers

followed a hands-on and less teacher- directed approach to learning (for example digital movie making). He furthermore stated that “talking only is not working” and that engagement could be improved if the “IT world becomes a bigger focus.” For him, the school was “a channel for students” and a place where students and parents should experience a sense of belonging. He strongly promoted that teachers work harder and smarter to make students and parents feel they belong – as according to him, “Nation building is important.”

As discussed earlier (Section 4.2.2), students interview responses indicated that they perceived reading, writing and mathematics as main contributors to their futures. The academic achievement levels of Pāsifika students in writing, reading and mathematics (obtained from the school’s database) demonstrated some concerning trends (see Figures 11, 12, 13¹, 14).

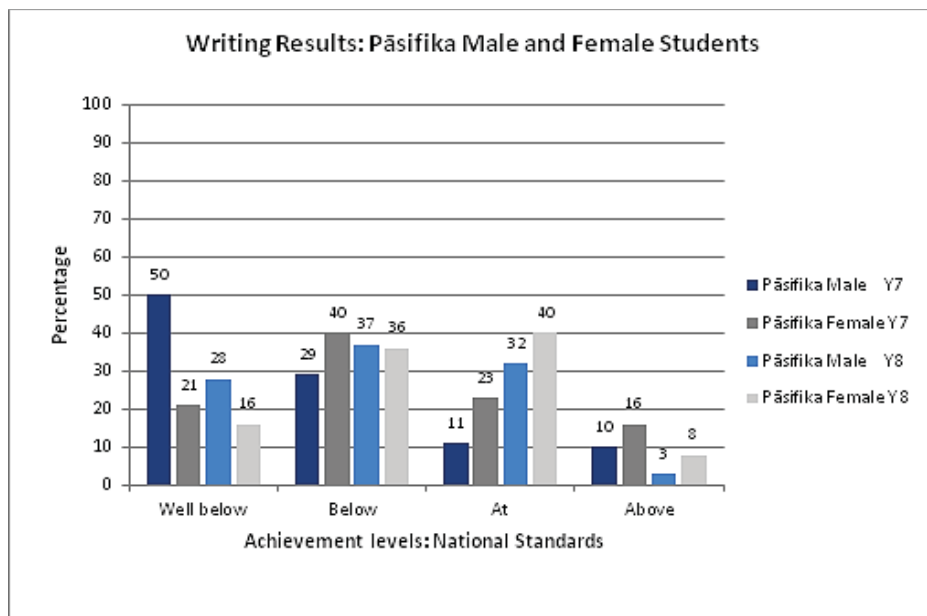


Figure 11: Writing results; comparison across gender and school year level. (Reprinted from Pacific Intermediate School’s database, 2012)

The writing results (Figure 11) illustrate that 79% of male students compared to 61% of female students were “Well Below” and “Below” National Standard level in year 7. Towards the end of their year 8 year of education, the scores were converging from “Well Below” and “Above” to “Below” and “At” National Standard levels. Of concern was the trend that students who were achieving “Above” National Standard level in year 7 had not sustained their academic

¹ 1 The academic results (writing, reading and mathematics) for Pāsifika students enrolled at Pacific Intermediate School are organised to present male and female results as well as the results of the same cohort across two years (year 7 and year 8). The student numbers decreased from 229 (in year 7) to 214 (in year 8). The figures identify the percentage of students who achieved “Well Below,” “Below,” “At,” and “Above” National Standard levels.

achievement levels in year 8. Although making better progress, in general, there were 70% less male, and 50% less female, students who achieved “Above” National Standard level towards the end of year 8 of their schooling. These lowered achievement results could be linked to a level of disengagement from students (particularly boys) who achieved “Above” National Standard level the year before. It is interesting to note that contrary to these outcomes, in the survey, 72% male students and 61% of female students stated that they liked writing.

Figure 12 illustrates the reading results for Pāsifika students in year 7 and year 8.

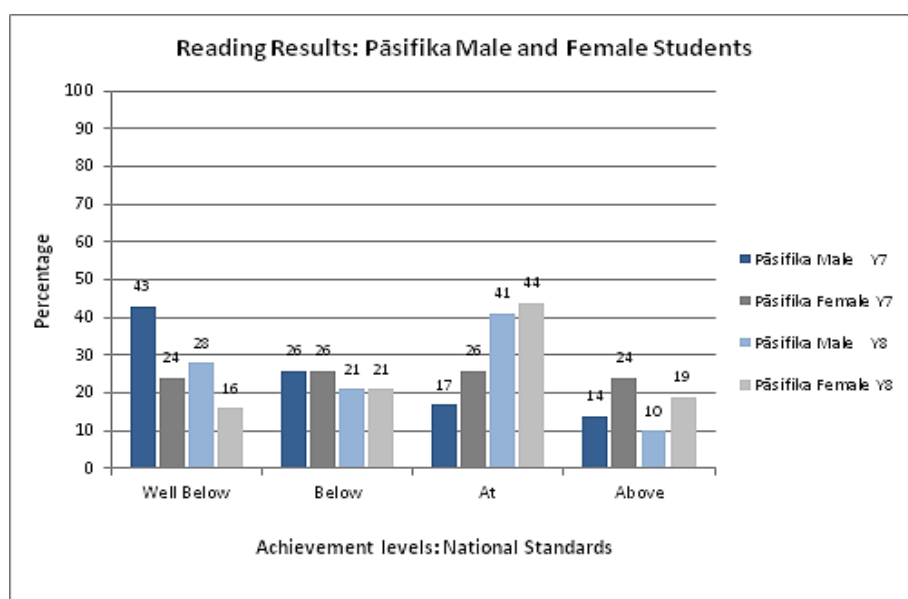


Figure 12: Reading results; comparison across gender and school year. (Reprinted from Pacific Intermediate School’s database, 2012)

In the interviews, one of the teachers said that reading was “the hardest” subject to teach. It appeared that the students had benefitted from the reading support the school offered because a bigger cluster of students shifted from “Below” to “At” National Standard levels. Although more students sustained their “Above” National Standard achievement levels in reading compared to the reading and writing results discussed earlier, there remained a downward trend (between the year 7 and year 8 results) for both male and female students. When triangulated, the results illustrated that similar to the survey results (Appendix 27) for writing, more male than female students “liked” reading (91% male students and 83% female students), yet they consistently achieved lower outcomes.

The principal, in the interview, stated that the school had a strong focus on improving the achievement levels of students who were “Well below” and “Below” National Standard levels. Although the results in Figures 10 and 11 demonstrated a trend towards the categories, “Below” and “At” National Standard levels, the downward trend of students achieving “Above” National Standard levels towards the end of Year 8 remained a concern.

The mathematics results for both genders (see Figure 13) indicated greater consistency (than that of reading and writing) across all four areas of National Standard measurement.

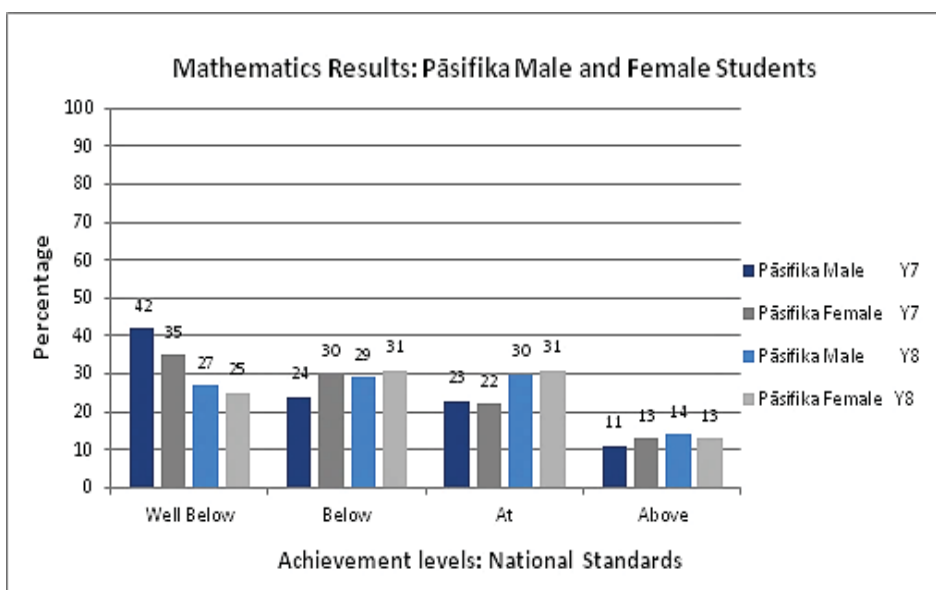


Figure 13: Mathematics results; comparison across gender and school year. (Reprinted from Pacific Intermediate School’s database, 2012)

Figure 13 illustrated that more male than female students demonstrated a shift towards the “Below” and “At” National Standards category of achievement. Although the male student results showed this trend, the results for female students remained more or less consistent. Lastly, there was an increase in the percentage of male students who achieved “Above” the National Standards level when comparing the year 7 results with those of year 8. The student survey results (Appendix 27) indicated slightly more male than female students were positive about mathematics as a subject (85% male and 83% female students).

One teacher in the interview stated that students found it rewarding to achieve at/above the expected levels. Although this was true, achieving at this level was a reality for a minority. A concerning trend was that not all students who achieved at this level in year 7 could sustain it

through to the end of year 8. The majority achieved “Well below” and “Below” National Standards. Although there were other factors to consider that reflected on these figures, the most important factor was the transient pattern of schooling the students experienced. The principal, when interviewed, stated that 160 of the 720 students had changed schools in the year the academic outcomes were measured. He explained that although 80 enrolments did not eventuate, other students who came to live in the area replaced them.

Figure 14 illustrates the end of the year reading results for Pāsifika compared with that from students from other ethnicities (All Students and Māori). From these outcomes, more Pāsifika students at Pācific Intermediate School were “Well Below” and “Below” National Standards.

When comparing students’ results with those who were “At” National Standard level, Māori students achieved slightly higher results (34% compared to the 32% accomplished by both Pāsifika students and “All Students”). In the category “Above” National Standard level “All Students” achieved the highest result (20%), Māori students (18%) and Pāsifika students (17%).

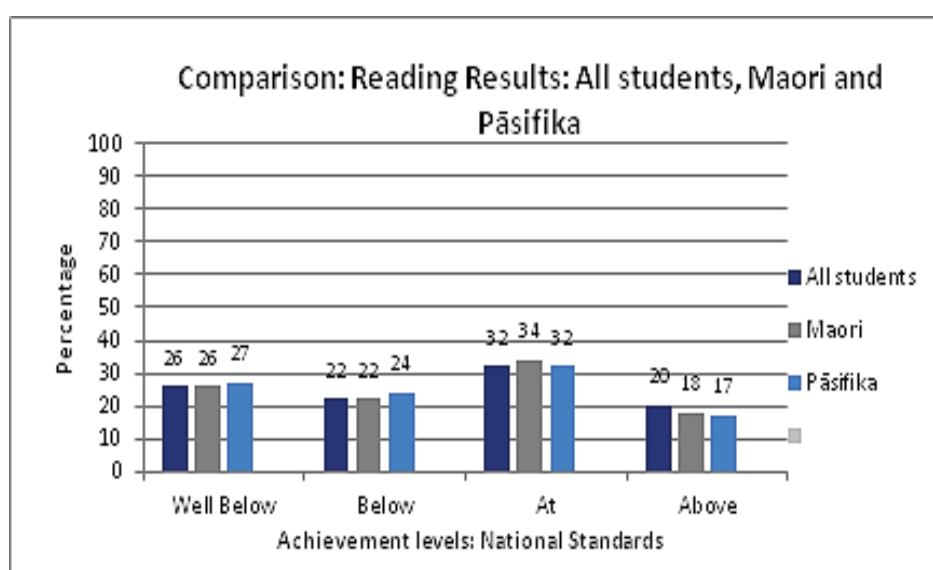


Figure 14: End of the year results; comparison across other ethnicities. (Reprinted from Pacific Intermediate School’s database, 2012)

When interviewed, the principal stated that staff at his school focused on acceleration of academic outcomes before the introduction of the National Standards. They “targeted the bottom groups and were successful in improving their outcomes,” and when they separated and

compared the different ethnic groups in the school, there was no significant difference between their academic outcomes.

The teachers' interview and survey results showed different opinions and perceptions about the National Standards as a medium for reporting student achievement in literacy and mathematics. One teacher said, "It doesn't give a true representation of student achievement as it is based on the judgement of an individual." Three teachers (n=6) stated that it contributed to teachers' professionalism and provided them with goals, structure and routine to which Pāsifika students responded well because they "like to know where they are at with their work." Other teachers commented on the National Standards roll-out timeframe in 2012. One of the teachers said, "It is a good thing, but just happened too fast." Two teachers (n=6) noted it was very time-consuming, and that the administration and assessment processes took priority over learning. One teacher argued that learning should be the essence, not the administration. Four of her colleagues (n=6) alleged that the National Standards and its strong focus on administration took teachers away from teaching time with students. In this regard, the principal, when interviewed, said he would have wanted more teacher support to consolidate the principles of the National Standards for teachers before they were expected to implement it.

The survey results show that, the majority of teachers (92%) believed that school supported them sufficiently in the delivery of curriculum expectations. However, this contradicts the support they received, the actual curriculum delivery, and the subsequent student outcomes as discussed in Section 4.3. The teachers' perceptions that the National Standards provided positive contributions to student engagement were an additional contradiction. Teachers indicated that the National Standards set specific goals for students to achieve, that it raised literacy and mathematics levels and motivated students to aim higher. Other contributions of the National Standards listed by teachers included that it aligned resources with the curriculum, assisted with knowledge about students, and enhanced teacher accountability. For example, the teachers found the mathematics textbooks helpful. One teacher explained, "it helped me to know my students before the work begins, which is a bonus." Lastly, they said it ensured that "all teachers were accountable for teaching." Despite the professional support and positive contributions of the National Standards that teachers mentioned, the Pāsifika students performed poorly across the different curriculum areas as illustrated in Figure 11, 12, 13 and 14.

The interview, observation and survey results indicated a number of reasons for the above contradictions in curriculum/teacher intent and student outcomes. For example, whether teachers prioritised positive relationships with their students, and how committed they were to acquiring sufficient cultural knowledge about Pāsifika values and ethnic diversity to help them sustain respectful relationships with their students and parents – respect being one of the cornerstones of all the different Pāsifika ethnic groupings. These contradictions are explored in more detail in Chapter Five.

The interview and survey results illustrated that none of the teacher aides were aware of the curriculum expectations within the National Standards or the Pāsifika Education Plan. However, three teacher aides (n=9), in the survey results, reported that the National Standards were “clear, concise and easy to understand and implement.” Individually they identified the following barriers to effective implementation of the curriculum:

Class sizes that is too large, Language barriers, and

Because we work on a one to one basis, sometimes we get an understanding of the child’s needs and their problem area. When our opinion is expressed, it is not always listened to.

When asked about the value of the Pāsifika Education Plan (PEP) to support curriculum planning for Pāsifika students, teachers, teacher aides and parents all indicated (in the interview and survey results) that they had no knowledge of it. According to the principal, schools were not familiar with the principles of the PEP. He said implementing it was mostly left up to individual schools as planners sent out documents and expected outcomes without providing the necessary training within the schools with teachers, teacher aides or parents.

Teachers’ had varied perceptions when asked in the survey results about the parents’ involvement in curriculum expectations. One teacher said parents who were born in New Zealand had a better understanding of the school system and the curriculum expectations. However, for parents new to New Zealand it was more challenging to engage with the curriculum as they were overwhelmed by all the new information, systems, expectations and information. One of the examples used related to teachers who tried to explain the curriculum expectations of the National Standards. Teachers reported that the National Standards provided regular updating of content knowledge for parents but that “parents were not clear on it despite reporting results twice per year.” One teacher said he found it difficult to add to student reports that they performed below National Standards because, “...I didn’t want to give

them low levels...at parents' evening parents wanted to know what it meant, and it was difficult to deal with." Summary statements from all the teachers supported this view. They said that it was "disheartening for teachers, parents and students if students are below expected levels."

When interviewed about the National Standards, parents stated that they mainly talked about their children's behaviour at Parent Interviews. The comments that the focus was on behaviour at parent feedback events triangulates with the teachers' interview data that parents preferred discussing behaviour to discussing academic or learning goals. Clearly, their children's behaviour was of equal importance to the National Curriculum. Also, the parents' preference to discuss behaviour fits well within the Pāsifika values where respect for elders is an expected outcome. From the interview results the parents' focus on behaviour could also be indicative of the limited opportunities the school system allowed for relationship building, and the lack of opportunities the parents have had towards engaging in reciprocal discussions about their children's learning. Another contributor could be the open plan venue at Parent Interviews, which made it difficult to prioritise the confidentiality and privacy concerns parents might have had. The format of the Parent Interviews provided them with limited time to discuss their children's learning. However, within the Pāsifika setting, extended time to talk and discuss is an expected norm within a reciprocal respectful relationship.

The RTLB interviews showed that they, as a group, were knowledgeable about National Standards. Their support to school and students made them fully aware of the complexities related to aligning teaching practices in culturally appropriate ways. When asked if they were aware of the principles of the Pāsifika Education Plan (PEP), one said she had no knowledge of it, and four said it could be useful for consideration in future curriculum planning.

Although the interview results indicated RTLB perceived the PEP as a helpful tool to create cultural responsive teaching practices for Pāsifika students, there was no evidence to suggest efforts were made to learn more about it. Observation, survey and interview results illustrated that despite the PEP being a fundamental document that outlines key Pāsifika values that should form the basis of culturally responsive practices, it was not a living document in the school. Like the school staff, the RTLB expected the PEP planners to distribute content and provide training rather than leaving the school to take the initiative.

4.3.3 Factors within the wider community

Factors within the broader community, which is part of the third ecological layer, affected student engagement through home-school partnerships, youth gangs and socio-economic factors. Previous discussions (see Section 4.2) indicate the importance of reciprocal partnerships to obtain cultural knowledge about Pāsifika students, which influences student engagement. Participant perceptions of school-parent partnerships as a contributor to student engagement is discussed in the next section.

❖ School-parent partnerships

The school made several attempts to establish school-parent partnerships in the school community. These included: Pāsifika events organised by the school, Parent Interviews, teacher-parent contact about their children's learning, and parent support with homework. However, the results from the Parent Interviews indicated that sustainable school-parent partnerships required certain levels of reciprocity. For the parents, in the survey results (Appendix 27), it was important that the school considered and respected their opinions. They also valued reciprocal relationships with teachers, in which there were opportunities to discuss concerns about their children's schooling.

However, sustaining these relationships presented some challenges. The parents, students and teachers described similar unforeseen circumstances that limited the parents' involvement in school events. These included work commitments, not receiving school notices, working long hours, working double shifts, often working late and the size of the families. The size of the families made it difficult for parents to attend all school events, especially if their children were attending different schools. Parents supported their children's schooling mainly through Parent Interviews and sports tournaments according to the majority of students. Parents considered one of their main contributions was to ensure their children had the resources they needed so they could optimise their learning experiences.

School notices and newsletters were intended to inform parents about events at their children's school. In the interviews, two parents (n=6) said they were not always familiar with the content of school notices because these were either not brought home or too difficult to read. One parent (n=6) said her children read notices to her. However, in the survey, five (n=6) parents stated that the notices were easy to comprehend. The students and parents in the interviews reported that the newsletter did not always contain useful information. The school's reliance on

the newsletter to communicate with parents undermined school- parent partnerships since students did not always deliver these to their parents. Subsequently, some parents missed out on important information and dates for events. This indicated that communicating with parents via newsletters could be a barrier rather than a facilitator to engagement as it was inaccessible.

Homework was another potential way to create home-school partnerships. Although the survey results indicated that the school offered opportunities where parents could learn about learning, to better support their children with their schoolwork, some barriers existed that made this challenging. Parents interview responses referred to language barriers and with English as an additional language, described their difficulty in supporting their children with homework. Four of the parents (n=6) concurred that, “maths is very difficult” and “We need help so we can help our children.” For these reasons parents relied on older children to support their younger siblings with their homework. All parents held individual perceptions about homework. They said they helped, but that it was important to them that their children became independent. In the student interviews, 11% of the focus groups (n=16) said their parents helped them with their homework. The student surveys indicated 95% of males and 67% of female students received homework support from their parents. When teachers were surveyed about parent awareness of teacher expectations and reinforcing these expectations at home, 58% agreed that parents were aware. In response to whether parents supported their children with homework, 50% of the teachers said ‘Yes’, 17% responded, ‘No’ and 33%, ‘I don’t know’.

Despite the school’s open-door policy to creating school-parent partnerships, parents and teachers continue to rely on Parent Interviews to celebrate successes and discuss issues of concern. The interview results illustrated that very few teachers had regular contact with the parents, even though they believed that parental involvement contributed to greater academic outcomes.

One of the teachers stated that she tried to establish relationships by inviting parents to observe how she taught, but got no response. In the interviews, 7% of the students reported their parents talked to their teachers about their learning. The same percentage of students said their parents only communicated with their teachers when they were in trouble. In contrast, the survey results indicated 77% of the male and 83% of the female students agreed their parents talked to their teachers about their learning. Again, these show inconsistencies between student focus group interview responses and survey results. The positive student responses in interviews were consistently lower than those of individual responses in surveys.

In this instance, the lower responses related to how much homework support students received from parents and whether their parents talked to their teachers about their learning. Pressure from their peer group in the focus group, the students' desire to impress their peers and their fear of negative comments appeared to be factors that influenced their focus group interview responses.

The interview and survey results illustrated that the school system excluded teacher aides from school-parent partnerships, even though they supported Pāsifika students who experienced behaviour and learning difficulties. They had no contact with the parents and did not attend Parent Interviews. According to the interview results, the teacher aides stated that attending parent evenings or Parent Interviews would serve no purpose as they shared information about the students with the teachers who then fed back to the parents. None of the teacher aides had knowledge about homework support from parents and the majority (68%) did not know about school events to promote school parent- partnerships.

Two of the parents (n=6) in the interviews said that more events at school would help them become more comfortable with the school environment. They made some suggestions in this regard. One example was that more tickets be made available for cultural nights. Another example was for the school to ask parents to help organise events such as bingo nights, trivia nights or an Amazing Race, music festivals, dance evenings and gala events. One of the parents said that she would like to contribute, but was waiting for someone from the school to approach her. The above contributions from parents suggested the need for the school to consider asking the parents what they would attend and involving them in the organisation of such events.

The principal's interview response to school-parent partnerships (particularly with Pāsifika parents) had three layers. Firstly, the principal indicated that the deputy principals connected with families when they did home visits and gathered data about support the school could offer their children. He perceived this as an important step towards creating home-school partnerships. Secondly, he explained that they were trialling a "no timetable" approach to engaging parents in parent evenings because many parents held two jobs, which meant that they found it difficult to arrive on time for an interview. This arrangement was aimed at illustrating to parents that they "understood and were willing to facilitate their circumstances." The principal lived locally and placed a high value on the respect of the parent community. He explained that living in the local community shaped his understanding of issues related to

“poorly heated houses, economic struggles and those parents who could not all turn up for school functions for reasons beyond their control.” Lastly, when referring to multi-ethnic representation on the Board of Trustees (BOT), the principal said three members represented the Pāsifika community in the school setting.

When interviewed about engaging Pāsifika parents, the RTLB participants said that some parents came to cultural nights, but more attended the Parent Interviews. Although it was difficult to engage Pāsifika and Māori parents, “teachers who rang parents got more parents coming to school.” Subsequently, they said, teachers needed to keep exploring creative ways to engage parents, and suggested that the school explore options such as the value of “food, informal chatting and contacting local churches” to engage parents.

The interview results indicated that the principal strongly encouraged extra-curricular student interests to provide students with a sense of pride, success and belonging. He explained the school won an “Auckland title at the J-Rock festival and was awarded Gold at the Visual Garden Show.” The RTLB, in their interviews, also identified extra-curricular activities such as sports (interschool competitions) as an opportunity to create belonging and enhance student engagement. Extra-curricular events, according to RTLB, provide a non-threatening environment, away from the stressors and demands of the classroom environment. Parents were motivated and keen to attend extra-curricular activities such as sports events, as previously discussed (see Section 4.3.3) because it provided a terrain where they could experience greater equity and it was non-threatening.

The RTLB interviews revealed that they perceived a “lot of fluidity between the different cultures.” As an example, they referred to Tongan students who had recently arrived from Tonga compared with Tongan students raised in New Zealand, and Tongan students raised by mixed couples (where in these families children can have biological parents who are from different ethnic backgrounds, for example, a Tongan father and European mother). The RTLB interviews identified the need for the school to shift beyond traditional forms of contact with parents and engage with those which directly connected them to the community. The RTLB members further referred to the following underpinning principles about students, and said teachers need to understand these when they engaged Pāsifika students in learning:

*The student’s own opinion is not valued as the younger people of their communities,
Asking questions are not valued,*

Pushing their own agenda is not valued, Blowing their own horn is not valued, and Critiquing is not valued.

From a Pāsifika perspective, it is not that individual student's opinions, agenda, questions, and critique are not valued, but rather that the Pāsifika values of communalism and collectivism are more valued. Within this framework, a Pāsifika child is not seen as an individual but representing the family as a group. Therefore, an individual only acts in ways that are acceptable within the group, which includes not asking questions because it is perceived as disrespectful. From the interview results, the RTLB considered that understanding these values was an area for further development for teachers.

School-parent partnerships are based on relationships of trust, respect, communication and mutual understanding. Although the data of this study showed that there were "pockets" of understanding of the ethnic diversities within the Pāsifika community, there were also some mismatches. These included the limited knowledge of the Pāsifika values of communalism and collectivism and the perception that Pāsifika students were expected to be more independent than other students of different ethnicity at the same age. Conversely, independence was something families celebrated because it contributed positively to their family units. Although there was some understanding of the complexities around parental involvement and school-parent partnerships, some teachers still believed that student success relied on the parents, and how involved they were in their child's schooling.

❖ **Socio-economic factors**

The principal referred to numerous socio-economic challenges that affected family and student engagement in schools. For example, families moved in together and lived in garages (in one instance three families lived in a standard three-bedroom house). Students left school prematurely and were unable to find work, which "further created socio-economic challenges for families." In many other cases, young people enrolled in the Manukau Institute of Technology and moved to Australia following completion of their qualifications, which impacted on the family network of support. Overall, the principal believed that "engaging Pāsifika parents is difficult mostly for reasons beyond their control."

The realities of the school's location in a low socio-economic community also posed certain barriers to healthier food options. Parents were not always available to prepare school lunches for their children due to their demanding, long work hours. As a result, students were

responsible for preparing their own food or parents provided money that they could spend at the local dairy or school's tuckshop. The students (11%) in the interviews said that items from the tuckshop at school were too expensive. The local dairies sold unhealthy lunchtime packs at very low prices, which further limited healthy food choices. The teachers' survey results (Appendix 27), revealed that between three and thirty-two students per class brought junk food to school on a daily basis and, that between four and twenty students per class brought no morning tea or lunch to school. While the school offered breakfast to all students, only a small number (n=3) of students made use of this service (Appendix 26, Food at school) because students were too proud to accept help. As a result, staff said that they had to find creative, yet culturally appropriate ways to provide students with breakfast and lunch.

The principal's response to the interview questions about what could be improved suggested that the schools near each other should work together to improve the engagement of Pāsifika parents in school related activities. For example, he proposed a crèche to look after young children while parents attended school events such as parent interviews. On a wider community level, he explained that previously (for five years) there had been a Pāsifika designated person among four schools in the area who acted as a spokesperson for the Pāsifika parents and supported them to attend Pāsifika specific meetings within the four local schools. However, this arrangement had now ceased.

Socio-economic factors can create barriers to parents' and students' engagement that are beyond the control of the families. These barriers, in some cases, can result in disengagement from education. Once disengaged from education, young people, in pursuit of acceptance and belonging, are at risk of joining youth gangs as discussed next.

❖ **Youth gangs**

All the teacher aides (n=9), in the interviews, raised concerns about the exposure of young Pāsifika people to youth gangs. They explained that those joining youth gangs disengaged from school, thus defeating their parents' purpose for immigrating to New Zealand, which was to give their children a better future.

The RTLB interviews revealed that students who did not feel accepted at school and home would seek acceptance elsewhere. One avenue of finding this sense of belonging, according to RTLB, related to having affiliations with youth gangs, as mentioned earlier by the teacher aides.

This linked to the RTLB's view that Pāsifika values were associated with family and groups rather than individuals.

4.4 Summary

In this chapter, the results were related to research question one. Here, the participants' perceptions of both proximal and distal factors that facilitated or created barriers to Pāsifika students' engagement in learning were identified. The results indicated that perceptions of proximal factors affected student engagement in various ways. Students held various perceptions of teacher related factors (e.g., ethnicity) that created barriers to their engagement in learning. The results demonstrated that students sustained higher levels of engagement in learning when teaching and learning practices incorporated respectful relationships between teachers and students, and when the diversity that exists in student culture is acknowledged.

To identify distal factors of engagement, participants highlighted what they liked least and most about the wider school environment. Distal factors also included the kind of support the school offered to students, an overview of curriculum outcomes and factors within the wider community in which Pāsifika students operate. From these results, students, parents and school staff prioritised various factors they perceived as significant for Pāsifika student engagement in learning. Facilitators include friendships, learning, curriculum support, the school's management of student behaviour, positive student outcomes, geographical advantages of the school and the opportunities for students to excel. Participants identified negative relationships, negative student behaviour, high student numbers per classroom and lack of resources in certain subject areas as some of the barriers to student engagement. In the wider community, parent partnerships, socio-economic factors and youth gangs were presented as factors that could be associated with student engagement.

In this chapter, perceptions of the enablers and barriers of Pāsifika student engagement in learning are highlighted as essential, yet also complex and multi-layered, especially when looking at them through an ecological lens. Chapter Five will continue to explore their influence by aligning participant perceptions with teaching and learning practices—in response to research question two.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

RESEARCH QUESTION TWO: TEACHING AND LEARNING PRACTICES

"Tuvalu tau gana ko tou lagaifakalaga Tuvalu,
(Your language keeps your culture and identity afloat)
uvula Phrase (Ministry of Education, 2013)

5.1 Introduction

Chapter Four focused on the results of research question one, the first ecological layer, and participants' perceptions of enablers and barriers to Pāsifika students' engagement in learning. These included their perceptions of engagement factors in the classroom, school, home, the NZ Curriculum and factors within the wider school community. Keeping in mind that perceptions are complex and multi-layered, the potential tensions that could arise with differing perceptions related to other areas of student engagement are an aspect of the findings considered in Chapter Five.

In this chapter, the main area of focus is answering research question two (the next ecological layer), which encompassed teaching and learning practices that affected student engagement (Table 12). The behavioural (different categories of on-task and off-task behaviours) and emotional (positive and negative reactions to teacher, peers and set task) dimensions of engagement that were observed, were measured against teaching and learning practices teachers utilised in their classrooms.

The observations results (Table 12) are linked with results from interviews, surveys and data from the school's database to triangulate and further verify outcomes. The SPSS software programme was used to summarise the frequency of quantitative participant responses in the surveys and certain areas of the interviews and observations. In addition, one member of the Pāsifika Reference Group helped with the interpretation, which supported the current study to gain authenticity and greater cultural appropriateness. Similar to Chapter 4, a table that maps research question two to the data gathering tools is provided below (Table 11).

Table 11: Mapping the alignment between research question and data gathering tools (RQ 2)

Alignment Between Research Question One and Data Gathering Tools: Chapter 4					
Research question (RQ) 1	Data gathering tools and questions/items/sections related to research question one				
	Interviews	Surveys	Whole class observations (Researcher perception)		Data base
	Related questions	Related items	Related items	Related items	
<p>What are the perceptions of students, parents, teachers, and other educational professionals of the enablers and barriers to Pāsifika students' engagement in learning at an intermediate school?</p>	Students (16 focus groups)	Students	Student engagement	Student engagement	Students
	1, 2, 4, 8, 8.1, 10, 11, 12, 16	4, 5, 6, 21-34 Reflective / open-ended questions at end of survey	Sections: Behavioural, emotional engagement and ecological factors...and ... classroom management section		
	Parents	Parents			
	9	4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 20			
	Teachers	Teachers			
	1, 3, 9, 10, 13	1 – 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 24 - 30			
	Teacher Aides	Teacher Aides			
	12,14	1, 3, 6, 8, 10, 13, 15, 25, 30 Reflective/open-ended questions: 3			
	Principal	Principal			
	12				
RTL B					
	2, 3, 4, 5, 9				

Table 11 outlines the data on teaching and learning practices that support Pāsifika students' engagement in learning. The researcher organised the data into different categories linked to classroom management, and coded these under categories associated with student engagement across classroom and playground experiences. The results, similar to that of Chapter 4, was based on analysis and ongoing collaboration with the Pāsifika Reference Group, & supervisors. Section 5.2 describes this process.

In section 5.2, analyses of the data from observations as well as participant perceptions of aspects of the teaching and learning practices are presented. This section describes classroom management, which includes teaching and learning practices associated with student engagement, and is affected by numerous factors across classroom and playground situations. These practices include (1) structure and routine, (2) the culture of the classroom, (3) perceptions of trust and respect and (5) general management of student behaviour in the school. The results are grouped under different themes that emerged during the analysis process. The themes are associated with areas of focus in the observation schedules and the ecological layers of Bronfenbrenner's approach and the Tree of Opportunity. Section 5.3 provides a summary of this chapter.

5.2 Classroom management

In response to research question two, the observation results indicated teachers used different teaching and learning practices and styles to manage their classrooms (Table 12). The students responded to these practices by displaying behavioural and emotional dimensions of engagement. The behavioural dimensions ranged between high levels of on-task and high levels of off-task behaviours, and the emotional dimension, reactions towards the teacher, their peers and the set tasks (Table 12).

Table 12: Observation results: Summary of Classroom Management and Teaching Practices

Subject Area	Classroom Management		Teaching Practice:				
	Observed factors related to culturally appropriate teaching a. Respect b. St opinions (belonging) c. Community d. Positive relationships e. No Pāsifika Education Plan f. Collaborate g. Communicate h. Work displayed (belonging)	Observed teaching strategies teachers used a. Equipment (easy access) b. Praise, & acknowledge students c. Structure, Routine d. St's knew expectations, & goals e. Well prepared f. Pro-active g. St monitors (independence) h. Humour i. Re-direction j. Low noise levels k. Consistent seating arrangements (belonging) l. Differentiated teaching (i) / streaming (ii) m. Calm relaxed atmosphere n. Point system (PB4L)	Behavioural Engagement		Emotional Engagement		
			List of factors used per observed lesson	Number of students per observed lesson	Average percentage, & teaching practice	Average percentage, & reaction to peers, teacher, task	
1. Subject A2	All factors were observed	All strategies were observed \ l(i)	27	100% PTT, TS, TDL	100%	Observed average percentage of students displaying on-task behaviour per teaching practice used in observed lesson	Observed average percentage of students displaying negative reactions to teacher, peers, task per observed lesson
2. Subject B	a, e, g	a, b, c, d, e, g, j, k, l(i), m	15	99% PTT, TS, TDL, IW	1% TS	Observed average percentage of students displaying on-task behaviour per teaching practice used in observed lesson	Observed average percentage of students displaying negative reactions to teacher, peers, task per observed lesson
3. Subject D2	a, b, e, f, g, h	a, b, d, e, j, k, l(ii), m	25	96% SDL	4% PTT, TD	Observed average percentage of students displaying on-task behaviour per teaching practice used in observed lesson	Observed average percentage of students displaying negative reactions to teacher, peers, task per observed lesson
4. Subject C	All factors were observed	a, b, e, j, k, l (ii), m	30	92% TS, SDL	8% PTT	Observed average percentage of students displaying on-task behaviour per teaching practice used in observed lesson	Observed average percentage of students displaying negative reactions to teacher, peers, task per observed lesson
5. Subject E	a, b, e, f, g	a, b, e, j, k, l(ii), m	27	89% PTT, SDL, TDL, GW	11% TS, SDL, GW	Observed average percentage of students displaying on-task behaviour per teaching practice used in observed lesson	Observed average percentage of students displaying negative reactions to teacher, peers, task per observed lesson
6. Subject D1	a, b, e, f, g, h	a, b, d, e, j, k, m	32	86% SDL, & IW	14% PTT, TD, TS	Observed average percentage of students displaying on-task behaviour per teaching practice used in observed lesson	Observed average percentage of students displaying negative reactions to teacher, peers, task per observed lesson
7. Subject A1	a, b, e, g, h	a, b, c, d, e, k, l(ii), m	32	81% TDL, TS	19% TDL, TS	Observed average percentage of students displaying on-task behaviour per teaching practice used in observed lesson	Observed average percentage of students displaying negative reactions to teacher, peers, task per observed lesson
8. Subject F	a, b, e, g	b, c, d, e	28	5% IW	5% PTT	Observed average percentage of students displaying on-task behaviour per teaching practice used in observed lesson	Observed average percentage of students displaying negative reactions to teacher, peers, task per observed lesson
9. Subject A3	a, e, g, h	K	30	27% TDL	73% SDL	Observed average percentage of students displaying on-task behaviour per teaching practice used in observed lesson	Observed average percentage of students displaying negative reactions to teacher, peers, task per observed lesson

Definitions and Key:

SDL – Student directed learning: Students achieve their learning goals through a variety of options created by the teacher, e.g. research topic areas, or problem-solve through peer tutoring or buddy support
TDL – Teacher-directed learning: Direct teaching of curriculum content to the whole class
PTT – Pre-teaching to task IW – Individual work GW – Group work TS – When task is set

5.2.1 Teaching and learning practices

This section describes the different approaches teachers used to manage their classrooms. The observed teaching and learning practices, in each of the subject areas, are linked to the on-task, and off-task behaviour students displayed, as indicators of engagement in learning.

In this study, the observation results illustrated that the delivery of the curriculum to students was affected by student engagement teaching, and learning practices. Teachers had varied views about the curriculum (Chapter Four, section 4.3.1). In relation to teaching practices, the survey and interview results indicated teachers were of the opinion that senior management supported them well in their delivery of the curriculum by providing professional development, which updated them on curriculum developments and changes. There were, however, factors affecting their delivery of the curriculum to students. In the surveys, 92% of teachers reported that although students were respectful, for some (50% of teachers) it was difficult to engage Pāsifika students in learning. This study further explored classroom management by evaluating teaching practices, and factors that contributed to the highest levels of on-task behaviours in the different subject areas, and those that contributed to higher levels of off-task behaviours. The observation results (Table 12) focused on the variety of approaches teachers used in their classroom management and teaching practices, which included the following stages:

- the pre-teaching to task stage,
- when teachers set tasks,
- the student-directed stage (students achieve their learning goals through a variety of options created by the teacher, for example, research topic areas, or problem-solve through peer tutoring or buddy support),
- the teacher-directed stage (direct teaching of curriculum content to the whole class), and
- when students were required to do individual or group work.

Triangulating the results of the presence of these practices in the classrooms illustrated that in the summary of the survey results (Appendix 27), 96% of male and 89% of female students agreed that they do group work in class. When surveyed about working individually, 68% of male and 72% of female students agreed. The student survey results for providing peer support to each other concluded 68% of male and 67% of female students agreed. The whole class

observations (Table 12) across a range of subjects, illustrated how students responded to the above teaching practices.

The observation results (Table 8 and Table 12) illustrated that classrooms for the Subject A2 area had the highest levels of on-task behaviour. The teacher in these classes utilised a flexible, pro-active approach and acknowledged student contributions throughout the lesson as evidenced by the observation results as illustrated in Table 12. The observation results showed that when students disengaged, she managed their behaviour promptly using questioning, humour and re-direction, which maintained low noise levels appropriate to the nature of the lesson. In this class, students, grouped according to their academic achievement levels, had the options to work individually, in small groups or utilise peer support.

All the students, when observed, reacted positively towards the teacher (Subject A2), their peers and the set task (emotional engagement). The summary of the observation results in Table 12 demonstrated the teacher's (Subject A2) teaching and management style did not cause any negative reactions (emotional engagement factors) towards her, their peers, or the set task. The observation results (Table 12) further illustrated she used strategies such as affirming the students' efforts to sustain positive relationships, partnerships, and participation with constructive feedback. She also utilised a class and school-wide (PB4L) reward system, which consisted of a points system for appropriate behaviour. The PB4L is a school-wide framework that enables schools to change the environment, systems and practices so students can make positive behaviour and learning choices. The framework allows schools to tailor-make changes to their own environmental and cultural needs (Ministry of Education, 2016). The strategies the teacher used encouraged and sustained on-task behaviour with all the students (Table 12). From the above observation results, the teacher managed to establish a community of learning in which the students attended to the academic goals that were set. She created a sense of belonging in how she managed and structured her classroom. The observation results demonstrated the students assisted each other, spoke respectfully, confidently asked for clarification, and took responsibility and ownership by starting and completing the set task within the given timeframes. Students also applied self-management skills. Those who finished early accessed library books from their desks and read in an area of their choice while they waited for their peers to complete the task (Appendix 27).

Based on the observation results (Table 12), the teacher for Subject B followed a teacher-directed and student-directed approach and illustrated that while the teacher taught new

content, the students listened passively to the expectations and learning goals. After he had set the task, his teaching style changed. He became more flexible and used humour throughout the lesson to redirect students. As demonstrated in the summary of the observation results in Appendix 28, the manner in which he managed the students' behaviour did not allow any talking. The teacher set silence as one of the goals while explaining to the students the level of concentration that was required to adhere to the safety requirements of the task. The students worked individually (student-directed) on the set task and received individual support when required. The teacher was well prepared for the lesson. He was familiar with lesson content, and goals, and had set up the equipment needed for the before the students' arrival (Appendix 27). The teacher acknowledged student efforts by offering positive praise throughout the lesson, and all the students displayed on-task behaviour as illustrated in Table 12. The observation results in Table 12 indicated that the teaching strategies used differed from that used by the teacher for subject A2 as it did not include student opinion or student voice, peer support or collaboration.

Observations of teacher interaction in the classes on Subject C indicated that the teaching style was student-directed (Table 12). Students performed individual research and exploring of the set task, shared new learning with their peers, and supported each other as evidenced by the teacher valuing student contributions and sharing opinions. For example, one of the students had trouble with a particular part of the set task, and a fellow student shared how he had resolved a similar issue a few days before at home. These behaviours created a collaborative community where students experienced a sense of community and belonging. According to Lemke, Sen, Johnston, Pahlke, Williams, Katsberg and Jocelyn (2005), a sense of belonging in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) outcomes is associated with regular school attendance, and positive academic outcomes, and includes positive relationships with teachers and other students, in a setting where "they feel they belong" and "make friends easily" (p. 57). Walker and Green (2009) argue that sense of belonging exists in schools where students experience engagement and achievement. The summary of the observation results (Appendix 28) showed that in the classroom for the Subject C area, the observations illustrated this sense of achievement supported by positive relationships. The teacher was well prepared for the lesson as evidenced by the summary of the observation results; for example, all the equipment was set up, she confidently explained the lesson content and goals and applied her technological expertise in support of the lesson topic. The observation results in Table 12 further illustrated that she provided positive feedback to reward students for their efforts and contributions, and created a calm, relaxed atmosphere with noise levels appropriate to the

lesson. Based on the teaching practice and management style the teacher applied, 92% of students sustained on-task behaviour in this class and all the students showed positive reactions towards the teacher, set task and peers (Table 12). From the above results, the teacher created a community of learning in which students learned from each other through shared opinions, sharing individual experiences and new learning, applying collaborative problem solving and individual support offered to each other throughout the lesson.

Observations in Subject D2 class indicated that the teacher used a combination of teacher and student-directed teaching approaches (Table 12). She utilised available technology and resources (electronic whiteboard and computer) to display an animation about embalming practices used in ancient Egypt (teacher directed). In her teaching approach, she used a quiz, which not only sustained student engagement but also assisted them to reflect on their newly acquired knowledge (student-directed). As illustrated in Table 12, high levels of on-task behaviour were observed, with low noise levels throughout the lesson. In the interviews, 38% of students stated that they liked teachers who “taught them new things” most about the school. From the observations, the teacher played an important role in high levels of on-task student behaviour. In this class, the teacher valued the opinions of the students, spoke respectfully, listened to what they had to contribute, and provided them with praise and consistency (students were familiar with the routine and expectations). How she managed the students and structured her classroom created a sense of belonging for the students through consistent seating arrangements, valuing opinions, displaying the students’ work on the walls and asking students to contribute to the lesson from within their cultural experiences (Appendix 28). The results in Table 12 indicated that the majority of the on-task behaviour occurred during the student-directed stage of the students’ learning. For example, when students participated in the quiz and when they were required to complete a worksheet. The observations results in Appendix 28 illustrated that the teacher was well prepared for the lesson. She was familiar with the lesson content, prepared worksheets and the quiz in advance, and provided a teacher aide (who supported three students) with worksheets that were adapted to their level of learning. Throughout the observed lesson, 96% of the students maintained on-task behaviour; 4% of the students displayed some off-task behaviour during the pre-teaching to task and teacher-directed stages of the learning (Table 12).

Observations of classes in the Subject E area indicated the teacher used a combination of teacher-directed and student-directed teaching approaches (Table 12). The teacher reviewed past learning goals before introducing new learning and curriculum expectations (teacher-

directed). In his approach, the students' opinions were asked for and well listened to, the teacher was respectful towards the students, continuously confirmed that students understood the task expectations, provided specific support when required, and maintained a calm, friendly, relaxed atmosphere. The teacher grouped the students according to their academic achievement levels, allowed small group collaboration, peer support (student-directed), and praised students for their efforts (Appendix 28). The results (Table 12) illustrated that in this class, the on-task behaviours (89% of students) were observed during the pre-teaching to task, student-directed, and teacher-directed stages of students' learning and when the students engaged in small group discussions. The off-task behaviour (11% of students) occurred during the student-directed stage, when the task was set and when students were required to engaged in group work (some of the observed conversations were unrelated to the task).

During the whole class observations in Subject D1, the teacher used a combination of student-directed learning, pre-teaching to task and teacher-directed learning (Table 12). She encouraged student participation in conversations by asking appropriate questions and when she set the task, continuously confirmed students understood the expectations. She spoke respectfully to students and showed an interest in students by asking about the well-being of their families. She allowed students to discuss the task with their peers and roamed to ensure students understood the expectations. To manage the noise levels, she verbally reminded students of the class rules to which they responded positively. The teacher, being well prepared for the lesson (as evidenced by the observation results), was familiar with the curriculum content, had pre-prepared worksheets related to the topic and asked relevant questions, which sustained the engagement levels of the students (Appendix 28). The measured on-task behaviour (Table 12) of 86% of the students was observed during the student-directed learning stage and when students were required to do individual work. The off-task behaviour (14% of students) was observed during the pre-teaching to task, teacher-directed stages and when the task was set (for example, the results in Appendix 28 illustrated five students had conversations that were unrelated to the task, and one student continuously shouted out).

Observation results (Table 12 and Appendix 28) from the classes observed for Subject A1 illustrated that the teacher used a flexible teacher-directed, student-directed approach. The students discussed the topic with each other (student-directed) and engaged in peer support. The teacher confirmed that the students understood the expectations, provided personal support, then roamed and discussed the task with individual students who were unclear about the learning goals. She showed the students examples of their peers' work to confirm everyone

understood the set task (student-directed). A teacher aide supported a small group who experienced learning difficulties and one student with complex behaviour. Although the teacher spoke respectfully to the students, and created a community in which students collaborated and supported each other, there was no evidence of positive praise for student efforts (Appendix 28). The observation results illustrated that 81% of the students sustained on-task and 19% off-task behaviour for this lesson (Table 12). Some of the off-task behaviour included talking and shouting out behaviour (one student). Both on-task and off-task behaviours occurred during the teacher-directed stage of the students' learning and when the task was set.

The teacher in the classes for Subject F followed a slightly different teaching approach from the other teachers already discussed. Although she used teacher-directed and student-directed approaches, from the observations (Appendix 28) she spent minimum time with the students during the two observed stages of their learning. She gave students two instructions, "Open your books" and "Write a paragraph about yourself." Although she acknowledged the students for their contributions, she only engaged with the students when they needed clarification. Her teaching approach therefore limited communication and engagement with the students. The observation results (Table 12) indicated 75% of the students displayed on-task student behaviour (while they were required to do individual work). The off-task behaviour (25% of students) occurred during the time the teacher gave the instructions and included, for example, behaviours such as shouting out (one student), talking to each other about unrelated topics, (twenty-one students). Seventy percent of the students showed a negative reaction towards the teacher and task and when required to do individual work and made comments like, "Do we have to do it?", "This is boring!" and ignored the teacher when she reminded them to complete the task and be quiet (Appendix 28).

Based on the summary of the observation results (Appendix 28), there was a strong focus on Māori culture in the classroom context of classes observed for the Subject A3 area. The teacher used a combination of teacher and student-directed approaches, but similar to the teacher for Subject F spent a limited amount of time engaging with the students. She wrote the task on the whiteboard (teacher-directed), explained to the students that they had about 30 minutes to complete the task (student-directed), and asked students to line up at her desk so she could mark their work from a previous lesson. After about 10 minutes, she reminded students verbally that there were 20 minutes left to complete the task (student-directed). There were three verbal prompts to remind students the noise levels were too high. The observations illustrate minimal teacher engagement with students about the topic; most of the teacher

engagement related to verbal prompts to complete the task and to manage noise levels. The observation results in Table 12 illustrated that the observed on-task student behaviour for this lesson was displayed by 27% of the students, while 73% of students were off-task during the student-directed stage. Although all the students showed positive reactions towards the teacher and their peers, 73% demonstrated an adverse reaction towards the task during the student-directed stage of learning (Table 12). Some of the off task behaviours included riding chairs, talking about unrelated topics (twenty-seven students), throwing pieces of paper, six students were out of their seats, one student threw an eraser at one of his peers, and three students were giggling, which distracted some of their peers (Appendix 28).

The above observation results illustrated there were similarities, yet also contrasting differences in the various teaching practices teachers utilised. Students responded to these by displaying emotional and behavioural dimensions of engagement and behaviours that varied between high levels of on-task and high levels of off-task behaviours. Focus groups in the student interviews said they “liked” teachers who were “good role models”, communicated well with them, rewarded them for their achievements and who were “interesting and good at their subjects.” From the observation results discussed above (Table 12 and Appendix 28), students displayed high levels of on- task behaviours when teachers were well prepared, confident about their subject areas, communicated with students during the lesson, and were knowledgeable about their subject areas.

Based on the above outcomes, students demonstrated high engagement through their participation and contributions when teachers presented new learning in a co-constructed (shared knowledge and experiences only), co- operative manner. Higher levels of on-task behaviours were also associated with classroom environments in which the noise levels were kept at a low level or appropriate to the requirements of the lesson. Other factors related to on-task behaviour were classrooms in which teachers created a calm, relaxed atmosphere, used humour and consistently acknowledged student-opinion and student voice. It is important to note that although low noise levels were associated with observed high levels of on-task behaviours, they were not a pre-requisite. However, in a report by the Ministry of Education (2008), students perceived environments that were not conducive to their learning as environments that were “too noisy or disruptive” or where there were “relationship issues with teachers or other students” (p. 4). In the student interviews, two of the focus groups (13% of students) reported disrespectful students (for example, students who interrupted their learning and disrespected teachers) were some aspects they liked least about the school. Other factors

associated with on-task behaviour were clear, succinct, realistic expectations and teachers who promoted positive relationships and partnerships, for example, by providing students with options to either work individually or problem-solve with a “buddy” or small group (Table 12).

Teachers who promoted positive teacher-student relationships and those who followed a flexible, pro-active approach also achieved higher levels of on-task behaviours (Appendix 28). Other strategies that kept students on-task were the efficient use of informative questioning to redirect students towards engagement in set tasks. In this regard, there were two levels of questioning, which included questions about unrelated yet topic areas students were interested in, or questions about family to show some personal interest. More on-task behaviours included teaching strategies such as active teacher listening skills, consistent communication with students, teacher involvement during lessons, the efficient use of humour, encouragement, praise, and linking the classroom reward system to the behaviour goals associated with the Positive Behaviour for Learning (school-wide PB4L) system discussed earlier (see p. 4).

The above observation results further indicated that in subject areas where students displayed high levels of on-task behaviour, teachers had set expectations, created some predictability about the work and made connections to prior learning experiences. Students were aware of what curriculum areas teachers were going to focus on, they were familiar with the learning goals and success criteria, and subsequently arrived at classes well prepared with the necessary gear and equipment. The teachers had reviewed previous and new learning goals before the lessons commenced. The teaching strategies in subject areas where there were high levels of off-task behaviour contrasted with those observed in subject areas where there were higher levels of on-task behaviour. For example, teachers who encouraged high levels of on-task behaviour communicated with students throughout the lesson and allowed opportunities for collaborative problem solving and peer support. Subject areas where there were high levels of off-task behaviour were characterised by minimal teacher and peer involvement.

Triangulating the above observation results with interview and survey findings from various participants including the RTLB group, students and teachers outlined engagement factors such as participants’ views of teaching and learning practices. The sections below outline participants’ perceptions of teaching and learning practices, and illustrate how their philosophies, views and opinions have created tensions that affected student engagement at the various ecological levels in which they operated.

The RTLB group in the interviews raised three issues about disengaged students or those displaying high levels of off-task behaviour. They said that teachers should utilise visual resources more to accommodate the various “learning styles” of Pāsifika students, and further claimed that teachers did not apply the principles of “kinaesthetic and co-operative learning.” Although these opinions supported the philosophies of the RTLB members, they were also generalisations and biased reflections of Pāsifika students in a learning context. It is important to note that recent research studies do not support the term learning styles. However, this was a participant perception (evaluated, and therefore discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven), with reference to literature. Lastly, the RTLB argued that some teachers gave instructions without explaining the success criteria or following up whether students understood the set tasks.

The students had varied opinions about understanding the new learning they received from teachers. For example, In the focus group interviews, 42% stated that they understood the work presented by teachers. However, the majority (59%) did experience some levels of difficulty. While they stated that teachers continuously reminded them to ask if they did not understand the work, they described the barriers that prevented this from happening. For example, individual students commented that:

The words teachers use are sometimes too hard to understand.

The work is not explained properly.

The teacher talks too much.

Teachers grow up in different backgrounds and use different words.

We can't always ask if we don't understand.

Some teachers are too strict.

The teacher shouts if I don't understand.

Although the above statements can be applied to students from all ethnicities, teachers need to know the values of students in their class and that having positive relationships with their students is critical (Ferguson, et al., 2008). According to R. Mose and R. Hunter (personal communication, October 9, 2015, & January 12, 2016), viewed through a Pāsifika cultural lens, the above results illustrated the tensions Pāsifika students encountered, and can be linked to issues of cultural identity and the respect for their elders that often preclude them approaching an adult. In the interviews, students acknowledged teachers came from different social, and

cultural worlds. Mose and Hunter explained the demands for social, emotional and academic engagement at school (school world) was, therefore, something the students and teachers had in common, as the expectations were similar for everyone and mainly determined the school's policies and curriculum guidelines. However, at home (home world) the demands on their social, academic (homework and discussing school with their families) and emotional integration were different from those at school as they were more related to expectations that were in line with their cultural values and belief systems.

Triangulating the above student interview statements with survey results (Appendix 27) identified some contrasting views. The survey results demonstrated all the female and 90% of the male Pāsifika student respondents agreed they understood the *work* presented by teachers. In reference to this, all the female and 87% of the male students responded that they asked teachers for clarification. Despite the varying results about seeking help from teachers, in the surveys 82% of the male and 89% of the female students further agreed that their teachers supported them with their learning. Parents held similar views about teacher support. In the interviews, they stated that the teachers were supportive, and had high expectations, of their children. It is important to note that the triangulated results of this study show frequent occurrences of contradictions in the student interviews and survey responses. The inconsistencies indicate that students responded differently when they were with their peers in small focus group situations (interviews) than when required to provide individual responses (surveys). This outcome is discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven.

When the focus shifted from learning to curriculum delivery, teachers, in the interviews, reported that parents experienced difficulty understanding them when they discussed the National Standards' goals and success criteria. Consequently, they avoided explaining and discussing academic outcomes in detail. Instead, they focused on discussing behaviour, which resulted in parents assuming their children were doing well in school when they were behaving themselves. These responses were in contrast with National Standard data discussed in Chapter Four and illustrated a mismatch in perceptions.

The National Standards (curriculum) requirements have created a system in schools that mainly provides for the academic and socio-emotional needs of the dominant group of students in New Zealand. Focusing on the dominant group creates unequal learning opportunities for Pāsifika students as a minority group (Nakhid, 2002; Gorinski, & Fraser, 2006).

At the school level, the RTLB group suggested, when interviewed, that there were insufficient Pāsifika-centred learning experiences. For example, they said that not many teachers used opportunities to link his or her students' learning experiences to the successes of role models such as "Manu Vatuvei (League player: New Zealand Warriors) and Jonah Lomu (Rugby player: All Blacks)." Using positive role models, students aspire to, serves a dual purpose. Firstly, it is motivational and encouraging for students, and secondly, it assists teachers to create diversity in their teaching, hence making learning more interesting and relevant for students.

Positive role models were, however, not the only means to make learning more interesting for students, as teachers could also link curriculum related topics culturally. From the observation results, a good example to make new learning more relevant for students was the opportunity to associate embalming practices in Egypt (discussed earlier in the subject area for Subject D2), with bodies that were embalmed and held at houses for Pāsifika people.

The next areas of focus in relation to classroom management and teaching practices explored factors such as structure, routine, teacher expectations, sense of belonging and a classroom culture of trust. These factors, from the above study results, affected student engagement as discussed in the next section.

5.2.2 Structure, routine, expectations

The observation results indicated that structure, routine, and teacher expectations were closely associated with student's on-task behaviour and engagement in learning. These factors were evident in classrooms where students displayed high levels of on-task behaviour as evidenced by the observation results in the following subject areas: Subject A2, Subject B, Subject D2, Subject C, and Subject E (Table 12 and Appendix 28).

The observation results indicated that in Subject A2, where students displayed the highest level of student engagement, there was evidence of consistent strategies that created structure, routine and expectations, which affected student engagement (Appendix 28). The students were familiar with the routines and expectations; they knew what to do when the lesson started, for example where to find their books, and stationery (all students had stationery and the required resources). They also knew that they had a choice of activities when they completed the set tasks early. The observation results, therefore, illustrated that the teacher encouraged a sense of independence (students self-managed their learning) and were provided easy

access to resources and equipment (students returned books and resources to designated areas afterwards so the teacher could have easy access when she marked their work). The teacher maintained an appropriate, well-paced teaching routine and achieved smooth transitioning through consistently applying a thirty-second counting down strategy before transitioning to the next activity. Another teaching strategy included setting time limits. The students responded well to these as evidenced by their on-task behaviour and ability to complete set tasks within negotiated timeframes. The teacher used verbal reminders to help the students stay on task. The students knew putting their hand up signalled that they required assistance, needed instructions clarified or indicated they had completed the set task.

The observation results indicated that the teacher in the Subject A2 area had pre-planned all the worksheets, set up the required equipment for the lesson, and organised the marked workbooks into different categories in a workbook station. It appears as if the observed structure and routine she created provided students with a sense of predictability. The students knew the expectations and routines and came to class well prepared. They experienced a sense of belonging as they contributed to their learning, classroom monitors supported their peers, students were asked for their opinions, and had consistent seating arrangements. In the summary of the survey results (Appendix 27), a higher percentage of male to female students agreed that they “like” Subject A2 (Male: 72%; Female: 61%).

The summary of the observation results (Appendix 28), illustrated that the teacher in the classroom for Subject B, utilised teaching practices that achieved high levels of on-task student behaviour. The students were familiar with the structure, routine, and teacher expectations. They knew where to sit, what to do while they waited for the lesson to start, and how to access the equipment. For example, since the equipment posed a safety risk, students knew to wait for the teacher’s instructions. The teacher was well prepared. All the equipment was set up before the students entered the classroom, and he had set some safety goals and requirements for safety gear in the previous lesson. These goals were reviewed before the lesson commenced. The students worked individually on the set task and knew how to get the teacher’s attention (raise hand) when they required individual support. The activity required concentration, which kept the noise levels to a minimum. He acknowledged all the positive efforts of students and used humour throughout the lesson to redirect and keep students engaged. The teacher used a ten- minute countdown strategy to indicate the end of the lesson to the students. Students seemed to be positive about their learning experiences in this subject area. The survey results

indicated that 86 % of the male student respondents compared to 83% of the female respondents were reported to “like” Subject B (Appendix 27).

The observed classroom management style of the teacher for the Subject D2 area also included structure, routine and clear expectations to which the students responded by displaying high levels of on-task behaviour (Appendix 28). The students’ seating arrangements were consistent and facilitated individual, and peers support options for task completion. Students knew how to access the stationery (all the students had stationery) and books required for the lesson. The teacher praised students for their efforts, while using appropriate questioning, and inquiry teaching methods to encourage conversation. The teacher explained unfamiliar concepts using the cultural contexts of the students and encouraged students to apply the new learning to their different cultural experiences, values and beliefs. The students were given a quiz and worksheets to consolidate their new learning. Students knew a visual cue such as raising a hand would provide them with teacher support; they also used this option to answer questions. Verbal reminders from the teacher helped the students remain on task. The students were familiar with the learning goals and were able to complete the set task within the given timeframe. The teacher displayed the students’ work on cultural diversity (Maori and Pāsifika) on the classroom walls.

Observations of the Subject C area (Appendix 28), illustrated that the teacher had established structure, routine and expectations to which the students responded positively. The classroom was set up so all the students could access the equipment needed for the lesson. Seating was consistent and made provision for students to access peer support or individual work. The teacher used a musical instrument (maraca) to manage the noise levels. Two students who returned to class from elsewhere knew what to do (for example, they went to their desks, accessed the equipment, while the teacher praised them for being sensible and not interrupting the learning of their peers). She explained the learning goals and continued to monitor and provide support as required. The teacher used a one-minute countdown strategy before transitioning to the next teaching topic and a ten-minute countdown to indicate the end of the lesson to the students. In the interviews, students were asked how they would feel if Subject C disappeared. All the students responded that they preferred Subject C, above all the other subjects, to remain part of the curriculum. Some of the reasons individual students provided included:

We use it to communicate and get answers. It’s good for research.

It is part of the 21st century.

The observation results for the Subject E area (Table 12 and Appendix 28) indicated that the students displayed high levels of on-task behaviour to the structure, routine and expectations the teacher had established. He utilised a strategy in which students encouraged each other to complete tasks. For example, he would say, “Hands up to show me you are ready” – this seemed to motivate students to complete tasks within the given timeframes as they then engaged in competitive, friendly rivalry with each other. This strategy did not only hold a motivational factor, but it also appeared to allow students time to process, be on task for longer and take ownership for task completion. The seating arrangements allowed for peer support and individual work. The teacher used a ten-minute countdown strategy, which supported student transitioning to new activities or tasks. The students were familiar with group work activities. At the time of the observation, the teacher introduced the new learning goal and then requested the students to divide into their different groups. The groups engaged in problem-solving activities that were differentiated versions of the curriculum expectations and learning goal while the teacher monitored their progress and provided support as required. From the observations, students appeared to have positive experiences and enjoyed the challenges set by the teacher. The survey results (Appendix 27) illustrated that 82% male and 83% of female students rated Subject E as their “favourite” subject. When asked in the interviews how they would feel if Subject E disappeared as a subject, 92% of the students said they preferred Subject E to remain. Some of the individual students included reasons such as:

It helps you to get a job.

It helps when you go to shops. It's cool because it has games.

It's practical, and you can use it throughout life. We need it for high school.

It helps with problem-solving.

Those teachers who managed to sustain high levels of on-task behaviours maintained consistency in boundaries, routines and expectations as evidenced by the observation results. However, teachers who did not incorporate one or more of these strategies in their teaching and general classroom practices experienced higher levels of students who were off-task. For example, a teacher would provide individual support when required, and create some boundaries and routines but then fail to praise students for their efforts, which resulted in more off-task behaviour and lowered student engagement. The observation results evidenced both these outcomes for factors associated with on-task and off-task behaviours (Appendix 28 and

Table 12). In one of the other subject areas, the teacher grouped students according to their academic achievement outcomes – a teacher aide supported those who achieved lower outcomes. However, the expectations, boundaries, routines, and student-teacher contact were lacking. The teacher reminded the students about the set task that she wrote on the whiteboard. While she was at her desk marking some of the students' work, she used verbal prompts to manage noise levels and to remind students they had twenty and ten minutes to finish the task. Less teacher-student contact time implied less monitoring of student progress, lack of interest in students, less opportunity to clarify expectations and apply pro-active teaching strategies (such as re-direction); all factors associated with student engagement from previously discussed lessons. Not all the students had stationery, which resulted in them roaming the classroom in search of pencils, which encouraged behaviours such as talking and distracting their peers.

Triangulating the above observation results with information obtained from interviews, raised the issue of inconsistencies related to teachers' interpretation of the National Standards. Three of the teachers (n=6) said the National Standards provided much-needed structure and routine to which Pāsifika students responded well, but said there was also the issue of inconsistent application of teacher expectations, which created barriers to student engagement. They referred to the variance in "targets that were set to challenge student thinking." They argued that there should be greater consistency in how teachers challenged student thinking. Greater coherence, they said could be achieved if there was a standardised set of success criteria and academic goals. Another suggestion relating to consistency and student thinking related to creating systems to "buddy up lower ability students," which, the teachers claimed, could improve student outcomes. Despite their concerns about inconsistencies in teacher expectations, all the participating teachers agreed that the school staff had high expectations for the students. These views were similar to the views four parents (n=6) shared in the interviews. They agreed that teachers had high expectations for their children. To further explore perceptions about teacher expectations (as part of a triangulation process), a random focus group of students (n=8) was asked to comment on their view of teacher expectations. Although the results were not representative of all the student participants, it provided a bird's eye view of student perceptions as illustrated in Table 13.

Table 13: Interview results: randomly selected focus group on student perceptions of teacher expectations

Questions	Number of individual responses: male students (n=4)		Number of individual responses: female students (n=4)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Some Māori teachers have higher expectations for Maori students	4		4	
Pāsifika teachers have the same expectations for everyone	4		4	
Most teachers want us to do well and have high expectations of us	4		4	
Teacher expectations are the same for all cultures	2	2	3	1

As can be seen from the results in Table 13, all the students were of the opinion that some Māori teachers have high expectations for students of Māori descent. They further stated that Pāsifika teachers have high expectations for everyone and that most teachers want them to do well. On the question if teacher expectations are the same for everyone, 2 of the male (n=4) and 3 of the female (n=4) said “yes.”

5.2.3 Culture of the classroom

From the observation results, some classrooms showed characteristics of caring, supportive, cohesive environments through structured teaching practices to which the Pāsifika students responded in various ways. For example, the nature of the curriculum topics, teaching approaches, and the respect, trust, and differentiated teaching strategies, which established particular classroom cultures. It is important to note that these factors did not contribute to the classroom culture in isolation, but rather through their interrelatedness with factors discussed in 5.2.1 and 5.2.2.

A caring, inclusive, non-discriminatory, and cohesive learning environment From the interview (Appendix 28) and survey results (Appendix 27), students had clear perceptions of what they considered were caring inclusive, non- discriminatory, and cohesive learning environments. In the interviews, 27% of the students said they appreciated teachers who were helpful, and 11% appreciated teachers who were funny, interesting, good at their subjects, and awarded them for their achievements. Also, the survey results illustrated the following results, which reflected the students' perceptions about their learning environments (Table 14).

Table 14: Survey results: student responses to supportive school environment

Survey items students agreed to	Student response in percentage (n=40)	
	Male responses	Female responses
There is someone at school I can talk to when I am upset	72	83
I have good friends at school	91	94
Everyone at school understands my culture	57	78
There are activities at school that are all about the Pāsifika culture	71	42
There are people at school I can trust	82	83

The interview results also indicated that most students were positive about attending school. They described their school experience as, “It is cool”, “It is the best time ever,” and “We like it a lot.” Five focus groups (31%) referred to coming to school as important because it provided their learning needs and created pathways for their futures. When students were asked (in the interviews) to describe their school to an imagined foreigner, their responses included:

There are lots of different cultures.

It is easy to make friends.

There are some helpful teachers. There are lots of sport.

There are awesome subjects.

Students who participated in the interviews had clear perceptions of what they liked least about the school. In the focus group interviews, 44% of the students reported “teachers who are mean, growl or yell” and 31% detention that required them to stay inside during lunch times. Thirteen percent indicated that one of the things they liked least about the school was, “teachers who don’t understand,” “teachers who treated them unfairly” and “teachers who did not care when they (the students) cried.” One group (6%) said some of their teachers’ comments and behaviour embarrassed them.

From these varying responses, it was evident that students had particular preferences about teachers. They responded positively towards teachers who used humour, and acknowledged their culture by provided a caring, inclusive, non-discriminatory and cohesive learning environment where they felt safe, understood, treated with respect, cared for and supported. In other words learning environments that provided them with equity and equal opportunities to excel. Teachers who practised in this manner achieved higher levels of on- task behaviour, and higher levels of positive reactions to the task, teacher and peers (emotional engagement)

engagement, as evidenced by the previous discussion (sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.2) and the results in Table 12.

The observation results and earlier discussion about structure, routine and teacher expectations (section 5.2.2) indicated that the classroom environments some of the teachers created could be regarded as caring, inclusive, non-discriminatory and cohesive. For example:

- The classroom environment for Subject A2 was characterised as a community of learning in which the teacher had the expectation that students should take responsibility for their own and each other's learning, and help manage each other's behaviour. The students were familiar with the routines, confident to contribute to their learning, and their opinions were valued and acknowledged.
- The teacher for Subject D2 acknowledged the students' culture. Students were encouraged to share how they would apply and explain new learning concepts that were based on their cultural experiences. The students were furthermore confident to ask questions, and engage in conversations about the curriculum topics.
- The teacher of Subject C area created a classroom environment that was based on whole group problem-solving. For example, one student had a question about accessing a link on his computer, which was solved by contributions from the bigger group rather than the teacher (student-directed learning). Students, therefore, contributed to the lesson by sharing their ideas and previous experiences.

The above expectations that students took a shared responsibility and engaged in collaborative problem-solving concerning each other's learning fits in with the Pāsifika values of service, reciprocity and within notions of family (R. Hunter, personal communication, January 12, 2016). It was interesting to note that despite these outcomes, all the teachers (n=6) who participated in the interviews reported that they did not treat Pāsifika students differently from any other ethnic grouping in their classes. Although this was true for teachers who participated in the interviews, some teachers created differences because of their actions as identified in the observation results. Although they did not treat students differently, they used practices that were either culturally appropriate or inappropriate. Teachers who used culturally appropriate practices in their classrooms achieved high levels of on-task behaviour (behavioural engagement) and positive reactions to the task, teacher, and peers (emotional engagement). Those who used approaches that were culturally inappropriate achieved lower levels of on-task behaviour

(behavioural engagement) and higher levels of negative reactions to tasks and teachers (emotional engagement) as evidenced by the observation results (Appendix 28).

In the interviews, some of the school staff acknowledged the need to develop and enhance Pāsifika student potential. One said, “to allow the students a fair chance in life” the environment should be “supportive, inclusive, and non- discriminatory”. Although this view promoted unbiased, equity and equality for students, it is in contrast with comments from some of the teachers in the interview results and the observation results discussed earlier. The teachers’ perspectives about inconsistencies in how teachers challenged student thinking and the variances in the observed teacher expectations and (as mentioned earlier in section 5.2.2) illustrated that these practices excluded students from quality learning opportunities, hence also creating inequities. These views did not match the principal’s view of providing “fair chances” and illustrated the tensions between the senior management espoused intent and the enacted teacher practice in some classrooms.

The RTLB, in the interviews, stated that teachers at the school were from different ethnicities, yet passionate about teaching in South Auckland. They explained that although different ethnicities could contribute to a wealth of cultural knowledge and experiences, specific concepts could contribute to enhanced student engagement. These included how these teachers related to the cultural diversity of students, and how successfully they incorporated principles of unbiased, inclusive and culturally appropriate teaching approaches in their practices. According to the observation results, students reacted to these practices in various ways. For the RTLB, student- teacher relationships and classroom environments where students experienced safety, care and acceptance, were critical.

❖ **Reactions towards teachers, peers and set tasks**

From the observation results, it was clear that there was a relationship between the different levels of on-task behaviours and the positive reactions of students towards teachers, peers and set tasks. Most students who displayed high levels of on-task behaviour also displayed positive reactions towards their teachers, peers and set tasks. However, this pattern was inconsistent. For example, all the students were positive towards teachers, peers and set tasks in subject areas where high levels of on-task behaviour occurred (Subject A2, Subject B, Subject D2, and Subject E). These positive student reactions decreased when the levels of on-task behaviour decreased. In Subject F, where students displayed lower levels of on-task behaviours, all the students were positive in how they reacted towards their peers, but 70% showed a negative

reaction towards the teacher and task. As evidenced by the observation results (Appendix 28) students made comments such as “Do we have to do this?” “This is boring!” and ignored the teacher when she reminded them to complete the task and to be quiet. Although students exhibited the lowest levels of on-task behaviours in the classroom of Subject A3, all of them reacted positively towards the teacher and their peers, but 73% showed a negative reaction towards the task. As evidenced by the observation results in Appendix 28 and Table 12, none of the students attempted to complete the task and displayed behaviours such as talking, throwing an eraser and riding chairs.

The observation results (Table 12) showed that the majority of on-task behaviour occurred during teacher-directed and student-directed stages of student learning and when teachers set tasks. Most of the off-task behaviours happened during the pre-teaching to task stages and when the teachers set tasks. These results indicated a link between the positive student reactions and teaching practices applied in the different subject areas. Firstly, there were those teachers who created well-established routines and provided individual student support, showed personal interest in student’s families, checked in with students while they were busy completing set tasks, offered praise and consistent affirmation. Secondly, there were those teachers who were well prepared and confirmed that students had a real concept of the expectations and boundaries.

The observation results illustrated an example of the value of positive praise and affirmation. In Subject F, 70% of the students reacted negatively initially towards the task of, “Write a paragraph about yourself.” However, after the teacher offered some positive praise to the group of students who started the task and confirmed that everyone understood the expectations, the initial animosity towards the task was reduced, and 75% of the students started engaging in the required individual work.

❖ **Streaming versus Differentiated Teaching**

The interview, survey, and observation results identified differentiated teaching as one of the factors that influenced classroom cultures. The observation results indicated that in creating a classroom culture, teachers enhanced student diversity and learning experiences when they allowed students to contribute to their learning through sharing their values and cultural experiences. All the teachers who participated in this study said in the surveys and interviews that they used differentiated teaching in their classrooms. These included, according to the teachers, an adaptation of the curriculum content to meet the diverse needs of students as well

as individualised support and resources, and how these were used to help students who were achieving at different levels of the curriculum.

The observations confirmed that some teachers used the principles of both differentiated teaching practices and streaming. For example, content was adapted to meet students' individual needs, teachers grouped students according to their levels of achievement. In some classes, teacher aides assisted a small group of students with task interpretation and completion. In the interviews, teachers reported on differentiated teaching. A few of the individual teacher responses focused on some advantages of differentiated teaching and included:

The students love dancing, drama, art and accelerant classes – they don't like too much structure and routine, the work is, therefore, varied to keep students interested.

It offers opportunities to enhance skills and potential, so the work is not boring.

It is a must.

It is the only way to go.

Teachers identified barriers that affected implementation of adapted curriculum and application of differentiated teaching. These included the lack of teacher aides and the time it took them to adapt the curriculum. Three (n=6) teacher aides agreed that everyone involved in curriculum delivery knew the expectations in their support of learners with individual needs. The RTLB in the interview referred to systemic changes within the school. They explained, for example, how some teachers had tried new strategies such as developing adapted resources to engage and meet the diverse needs of students. According to the RTLB, those teachers who did it well had huge success with student engagement, but they were of the opinion that staff still needed help to scaffold to accommodate different levels in classrooms across all subject areas. According to the RTLB, Assistive Technology could be a valuable resource to promote differentiated teaching across all disciplines, for example, to engage students who “struggle” with writing. They claimed the school could better facilitate this process if teachers understood the value and role of Assistive Technology in their curriculum planning and classroom management.

The principal, when asked about differentiated teaching in the interviews, acknowledged its advantages and said it brought about some changes in the school, as indicated in the following statements about differentiation:

It made us realise that there was not enough scaffolding (but this was improving),

*that there should not be too much talking while teaching, and
that students should be challenged more.*

Although some of the teachers (in the interviews) promoted differentiated teaching as “a must,” there were also some ecological challenges that occurred at the various levels in which students operated. From the observation results (Table 12 and Appendix 28), and information from the school’s database, the Pāsifika student population presented with diversity in cultural beliefs and value systems, identity, language, and academic outcomes, which affected their on-task and off-task behaviours. The interview results demonstrated that some of the participants (teachers, RTLB, principal and teacher aides) were operating within the principles of differentiated teaching while the thinking of others related more to the principles of streaming. Although streaming could be perceived as a form of differentiated teaching, according to Tapaleao (2008) and Adams (2014) streaming is more related to ability grouping and mostly benefitting students in the higher ability groupings, not those students in the middle and lower groupings. Differentiated teaching, according to D’Amico (2008) modifies material so all students can have access to the same content and includes differentiated worksheets that help students reflect on presented material, hence reinforcing their new learning, and different stations for different students in classrooms. From the observation results, the lack of clarity associated with streaming and differentiated teaching created misperceptions about inclusive practices. This created tensions in factors associated with student engagement, for example, some students who received support from teacher aides were withdrawn from their classrooms, while others worked with the teacher aide in the back of the classroom. The teacher aides supporting these students said they knew what was expected when they supported students in the classrooms but that they did not always liaise with the teachers. They perceived their support as ensuring the students understood the work and stayed on task. The majority of the group said, “Teachers leave it to the teacher aides to simplify the work for the students.” In the interviews, the teacher aides shared that they were not familiar with the curriculum expectations of the National Standards. The lack of communication between teacher aides and teachers could potentially create confusion, mismatches, and inconsistencies in teaching and learning practices, expectations, and ultimately, student outcomes.

❖ **Shared learning experiences**

The observation results (Table 12 and Appendix 28) illustrated that certain learning experiences in the classrooms facilitated opportunities for shared learning experiences. When surveyed

about peer support in classroom settings, 68% of male and 67% of female students said it was used to help them with their engagement in learning. In the observations, for example, this was applied in the Subject A2 classes where student monitors provided peer support where needed. In the Subject C classes, students applied their knowledge from previous experiences to situations where peers needed problem-solving support. A whole class approach ensured students learnt from each other when they were unclear about accessing websites or links. When surveyed, 96% of the male and 89% of the female students agreed they were doing group work while 68% male and 72.2% of female students agreed they were working individually (Appendix 27).

The practice of shared learning was in line with the RTLB group's perception of teaching practices that would meet the cultural pedagogies of Pāsifika students' learning. In the interviews, RTLB stated that it was important for teachers to acknowledge that learning happened through "shared opinions and shared learning rather than only focusing on teaching." These perceptions demonstrated their recognition of cultural values such as shared experiences, contributions, collectivism and collaboration.

❖ **Ethnic diversity of students**

Observation and survey results illustrated that within the culture of each classroom, there was not only ethnic diversity across the different groups of Pāsifika students, but that teachers also brought to their classrooms their individual ethnic background (see Table 1 and 2 Student and Teacher Respondent Ethnicity, Chapter Three), belief systems, values, and identities. Within these 'layers of culture' therefore also existed perceptions about each other and the wider communities in which they operated.

All the students (n=56), in the focus group interviews, stated that they related better to Pāsifika teachers, and when they explained their reasons, they said:

They can relate to us because they have been through what we have been through.

They have had similar experiences.

They are able to show us easier education pathways.

They listen, care, and understand our families and us.

It seemed from the above responses that not all teachers were able to fulfill student expectations related to cultural diversity. As discussed earlier (see 5.2) the students stated that

some of the barriers to their engagement in learning were teachers who “grow up in different backgrounds and use different words.” Other barriers students identified included teachers who talked about their families in a derogatory manner, teachers who “don’t understand” and teachers who embarrassed them with their comments. These identified differences created the impression that some teachers from different backgrounds did not understand the cultural values and belief system of Pāsifika students. As a result, the students who were interviewed felt that they could relate better to teachers from their culture. Clearly, creating reciprocal relationships based on trust and respect would have better served the celebration of cultural differences rather than perceiving it as a barrier to engagement.

The interview and observation results indicated that from a cultural perspective, communication was instrumental in building mutual trust, respect and understanding. It is interesting to note that ‘how teachers said what they said’ affected student-teacher relationships in two different ways. It either created the perception amongst students that teachers were uninterested in their culture, values, and belief systems or it fostered relationships of mutual trust and respect.

From the interview and observation results, teachers who lacked knowledge of the cultural values of Pāsifika students restricted not only their student-teacher relationships but also opportunities to support their students academically, socially and emotionally. For example, the above statements students shared in the interviews, illustrated their perception that teachers were unable to relate to them regarding their families, background, and socio-cultural experiences, hence were unable to provide culturally appropriate advice and guidance. The observation and interview results demonstrated that teachers who were unaware of these student perceptions continued with teaching practices that led to tensions creating low levels of on-task behaviour and negative reactions towards teachers and tasks. For example, the teachers in Subjects F and A3, (as discussed earlier in section 5.2.1) were not attending to factors such as ongoing communication, showing interest, collaborating, acknowledging cultural contributions from students, goal setting and praising students. These teaching and classroom management practices resulted in the highest levels of off-task behaviours and negative reactions towards the teachers and set tasks (emotional engagement). Although students said (in the interviews) they affiliated more strongly with teachers from similar ethnic backgrounds, the observations demonstrated that the highest levels of on-task behaviour and positive reactions to teachers, tasks and peers were not associated with teacher ethnicity. The teaching practices and classroom management styles of teachers were the main contributors to on-task behaviour and included a caring, inclusive, non-discriminatory, and cohesive learning

environment characterised by sense of belonging, mutual respect, trust, positive role modelling, and cultural understanding. Students experienced these in classrooms that were represented by teachers from various ethnicities (see Table 1 and Table 2, Teacher and student demographics, Chapter Three).

However, observations showed that when teachers attended to the cultural diversity of their students in their classrooms, very few of the above tensions existed. For example, as earlier discussed (section 5.2.2) in the Subject A2 classroom the teacher explained some of the unfamiliar concepts using examples that were within the cultural context and life experiences of the Pāsifika students. The students were keen participants in this lesson and demonstrated high levels of on-task behaviour and positive reactions to the teacher, and the task (emotional engagement). In the Subject B classroom, the goals, safety rules and lesson expectations were explained using language and terminology appropriate to the English proficiency levels of the students. In the Subject C class, the teacher acknowledged the Pāsifika students' knowledge of their culture by asking them the meaning of certain words and their assistance with correct pronunciation. She also allowed the students to share stories about their cultural experiences. These shared learning experiences provided students with a sense of belonging, as was evident in students' comments about teachers valuing and respecting their knowledge, experiences, and contributions. When this occurred, students displayed higher levels of on-task behaviour in an environment where they reacted positively towards the tasks, teachers and each other.

The teacher in the Subject A1 class aligned her teaching practices in a culturally appropriate manner, yet student engagement levels were third lowest; the results in Table 12, illustrated the students' behavioural engagement (19% of students were off-task) and emotional engagement (9% showed a negative reaction towards task). An observed difference between her practice and that in other classrooms was the extensive verbal reminders about routines and expectations, and the absence of praise.

From the responses on the surveys, it was evident that there were different perceptions about the ethnic diversity of the Pāsifika student community. Seventy-eight percent of female and fifty-seven percent of male students agreed that everyone at school was familiar with the Pāsifika culture. These results contrasted with the high number of students who said (in the focus group interviews) they related better to teachers of Pāsifika origin (see p. 182) because these teachers understood them better. In the interviews 42% of the teachers agreed that the school's

induction process provided newly appointed staff with information about the cultural diversity of the Pāsifika students and informed them on how to engage these students effectively. However, of some significance to this study is the high percentage of teachers (83%) who, (in the interviews) attributed academic outcomes to home circumstances, yet remained reluctant to value teacher-parent partnerships. For example, in the survey results (Appendix 27), only 42% of teachers said parental knowledge about their children was essential. Results like these inevitably affected the teachers' ability to create teaching environments that aligned their teaching practices in culturally appropriate ways.

The teacher aides and parents in their support of Pāsifika students have the potential to contribute to creating culturally appropriate learning context. However, the way in which the current school system excluded them from contributing in ways other than the individual student or homework support (section 4.2.3) did not support this. For example, the surveys showed that 50% of the teacher aides were not always familiar with the Pāsifika culture. To compensate, according to the interview results, they relied on what the school shared with them about the students and sought the advice and guidance from one of their Tongan colleagues. In contrast, the parent survey indicated that five parents (n=6) believed the staff at Pācific Intermediate School had a good understanding of the Pāsifika culture. As previously discussed, both parental respect for teachers as authority figures and the limited reciprocity in parent- teacher partnerships that existed in the school excluded parents from contributing to their children's schooling. In the interviews, parents might have held the view that the staff had a good understanding of the Pāsifika culture but in reality, the observation results suggested an inability to create equal partnerships, which reduced opportunities to support Pāsifika students in a culturally appropriate manner. The lack of supporting students in a culturally appropriate manner affected the students' engagement in learning.

In the interviews, there was a contradictory view from the RTLB group. One member stated that "the pedagogics does not suit the Pāsifika culture" and that, the school should make a greater effort to support teachers towards culturally appropriate teaching practices. According to the RTLB group this could have been achieved if the school assisted teachers towards a better understanding of the various cultural beliefs, values, and traditions. Referring to the mismatch in pedagogy, the RTLB in their interview used "Speeches" in the Year 7 and Year 8 curriculum as an example. They stated that delivering a speech in front of a class was not an enjoyable activity for students of Pāsifika ethnic origin. It illustrated the lack of concern on the part of the school towards changing 'taken as normal' practices of the middle class New Zealand schools.

They claimed, in the interviews, that excluding visuals further complicated “Speeches” for many Pāsifika students “who are visual learners.” They proposed teachers find alternative ways to assess how well students could speak. Although there was some credibility in this view, there is also some concern about the generalisation that many Pāsifika students are visual learners. This view was, therefore, another possible misconception about Pāsifika students that held implications for their engagement and learning in a cultural context.

From the observation results, consistent culturally appropriate classroom management and teaching practices that were inclusive, caring, cohesive, and non-judgemental contributed to positive student engagement, both behavioural and emotional. The observation results, however, also indicated that the participants’ perception of respect and trust were additional factors that affected student engagement, as in 5.2.5.

5.2.4 Perceptions of trust and respect

The interview results illustrated that respect and trust are some of the cornerstones of the Pāsifika values. These values of trust and respect are therefore also important components of positive relationships, whether student-student, student teacher or teacher-parent. Students had different perceptions of respect and its impact on their engagement with peers, teachers and academic work. In the interviews, six percent of the students stated that disrespectful students were something they liked least about the school. Similarly, students stated one of the things they liked most about school was teachers who respected them within their view of respect within a family.

The Pāsifika community has a high regard for family and respect (Alton-Lee, 2003). In the interviews, the students’ perception that they appreciated teachers who respected them like family resulted from the belief that their identity and successes came from within the family context of partnerships, expectations, support, and encouragement. The interview results illustrated that most students this age would share with their family news about school and would be getting help with their homework from their older siblings. Most parents were involved in their children’s schooling and talked to their children about their futures. All student successes were celebrated within the family context and gained the young individuals the respect of their families. For example, in the surveys 86% of male and 89% female students reported that their parents were proud of them when they did well at school and talked to them about it (Appendix 26). Successes at school, therefore, would have little meaning unless interpreted within this context. Students would feel safe, secure and more motivated to engage

in learning if the school staff reciprocated their cultural beliefs and values (Alton- Lee, 2003). School and their achievements, therefore, fulfilled an important part of developing the students' socio-emotional identity, enhancing their self- belief and meeting family expectations about their futures. Clearly, respect was a critical factor for Pāsifika students since all of the above factors were affected by the respect they experienced. The Pāsifika Education Plan (PEP) aims to enhance student participation, engagement and achievement by putting learners and their families at the centre and creating stronger home- school partnerships and stronger relationships with the various cultural communities (Pāsifika Education Plan, 2009). Through this network, the Ministry of Education, and its Education Partners work together to ensure parents, families and communities engage in their children's learning. Similar to the students' perceptions about the school, in the PEP context, reciprocity, trust and respect are also included as essential Pāsifika values.

When surveyed, 92% of the teachers reported students were respectful towards them (Appendix 27). These results were contradictory to the off-task behaviours students displayed during observations. The observation findings, discussed earlier, illustrated higher levels of off-task behaviours associated with higher levels of negative student reactions to teachers, peers, and tasks.

Another contrast, was the disrespectful student behaviour towards teacher aides. As indicated in teacher aides interviews, where in response to whether they were respected, they replied:

Some do,

Many don't think teacher aides are paid professionals,

Some have a funny attitude and

Year 8 students are most disrespectful towards teacher aides.

Teacher aides perceived talking to the students about their expectations created a mutual understanding, which contributed to some changes in the disrespectful attitudes. Another factor that supported students towards a more positive attitude of respect, according to the teacher aides, were teachers who presented the students with set guidelines related to showing respect towards teacher aides.

The above interview and observation results indicated that school staff misinterpreted Pāsifika students' behaviour at times. For example, in the interviews, teacher aides perceived students

as disrespectful. In contrast student behaviour could be seen as linked to their perceptions of trust, personal image, and social acceptance. Another tension, which emerged, related to student behaviour. Pāsifika students who were expected to be independent at home, transferred this to the school environment and were reluctant to accept assistance from adults they had no trusting relationship with in the school setting. The school database and observations indicated the students were also at an age where peer acceptance had become progressively more important. The students could, therefore, have been concerned that their peers would perceive accepting support from a teacher aide as 'failing,' 'not coping,' 'not good enough' and 'bringing shame,' which could have affected their academic and socio-emotional interaction with their peers. Observations illustrated that students who needed additional support worked away from their peers or were withdrawn. These actions caused students to be excluded from the group work and peer support teachers used with the other students. Students who refused teacher aide support because they were reluctant to be withdrawn from class, were perceived as disrespectful, while the function of their behaviours was more related to conveying a message of embarrassment, shame, fear of humiliation and exclusion from peers.

Respect, as mentioned earlier is a critical factor, for not only the students but also the Pāsifika community. In the interviews, all the teachers commented that parents were very respectful at the parent interviews. Parents said in their interviews that they were respectful of the school and teachers and held both in high regard. They were content with the support their children received; the expectations teachers had of their children, and that there was some understanding of the Pāsifika culture in the school setting. There was a sense of admiration for school staff. Parents also perceived teachers as having superior knowledge to contribute to their children's learning. These perceptions contrast sharply with the expectations of the PEP. The goals and objectives in this document are for parents to become partners and greater contributors to their children's schooling (Pāsifika Education Plan, 2009). The interview, survey, and observation results illustrated that some institutionalised school practices are barriers to achieving equal parent-school partnerships.

In general, decile rating is associated with socio-economic status, which suggested lower decile rated schools were environments experiencing multiple socio-economic, socio-emotional, and socio-cultural challenges. Although state and state-integrated schools of low decile rating draw their students from low socio-economic communities, the rating is not indicative of the quality of teaching in a school (Ministry of Education, 2015). In the interviews, the principal alluded to a

public misconception that students from these areas did not achieve well. The principal, passionate about enhancing student potential and outcomes, already had the respect of the local community to achieve this. Respect and improved student outcomes should, therefore, be expected, and not affected by the decile rating of the school.

Trust was another essential factor in developing a classroom culture where student engagement was a focus. When surveyed, 82% of male and 83% of female students said there were people at school they could trust (Appendix 26). During the interviews, some of the individual teachers also recounted how they constructed trusting relationships:

The kids will feel safe if teachers have boundaries and control of classrooms.

The kids come to trust you and then grow to love and bond with their teachers.

Not everyone has this mutual understanding with their kids.

If you say you will do something you need to follow through, so kids can believe and trust you.

From the interview, survey and observation results it became apparent that trust is important within the Pāsifika culture and vital across all the different ecological layers. For example, families trust the school, trust existed in teacher-student, teacher-parent relationships, and then there was the kind of trust that existed in relationships with peers and friends. Teachers in the interviews added another dimension to trust. They stated that the “trust model” senior management in the school followed was something they appreciated most about the school as it supported them to trial new ideas. Trust was identified as the cornerstone of reciprocal relationship building and establishment of collaboration and mutual sharing. It also occurred at levels that affected teaching practices and classroom management as evidenced in the observation results.

5.2.5 Student behaviour

The observation results showed that student behaviour differed in the classroom and playground, and the management of it had a different impact on student engagement. Participants in this study had certain perceptions about the existence and management of incidents of negative behaviour. In the interviews, all the parents (n=6) were content with how Pācific Intermediate School managed incidents of negative behaviour.

The school's behaviour policy (guided by the PB4L principles) stated that teachers would deal with daily incidents of minor inappropriate behaviours (behaviours that were of low intensity and high frequency) as part of their daily classroom management. This level of behaviour did not require the involvement of senior management members or parents. In the interviews, all the teachers (n=16) and 6% of the students rated these behaviours as one of the key barriers to successful engagement in curriculum related activities. The effect on teachers was that managing these behaviours was stressful and time-consuming while students saw it as disruptive to their learning (according to the interview results) and regarded it as one of the things they wanted to see changed about the school. Teachers and students identified in the interviews that the consequences for incidents of minor behaviour were student detentions and restorative practices. Although a systemic practice used by all the teachers, 31% of the students said that detentions were one of the factors they liked least about the school. There was a sense of unfairness as 13% of the students stated that teachers "sometimes don't ask what happened and get facts wrong because the other students tell lies". In the interviews, one of the teachers who said that teachers could investigate reasons for behaviour incidents more thoroughly supported this statement. In contrast, according to the interview results the majority of the teachers stated that,

Behaviour incidents were followed up well and justly.

Students are aware of consequences.

PB4L has been implemented with a focus on positive reinforcement.

PB4L is helping students to be aware of and reflect on their actions.

School is pretty supportive about major incidents.

Teachers and teacher aides reported in their interviews that the behaviour of Year 8 students became more challenging as the school year progressed. Two of the teachers referred to the school's statistics with the highest levels of positive academic and behaviour outcomes reported as occurring in the second school term but worsening in the third term. In the fourth term, he said, there was a slight improvement in academic outcomes, but student behaviour continued to deteriorate.

The school behaviour policy (which is based on the Schoolwide Positive Behaviour for Learning initiative) stipulated that extreme student behaviours in the classrooms (behaviours that were of high intensity, yet low level of occurrence) be managed at a different level. When these

behaviours occurred, parents, members of senior management, and in extreme cases, members of the Board of Trustees became involved. At this level, the severity of the behaviours determined consequences such as stand-downs, suspensions, and/or exclusions.

From the interviews and survey results, it was important to note that negative behaviour also occurred in other areas of the school. For example, in the surveys, 46% of male students and 50% of female students agreed that bullying happened on the playground. Despite a high percentage of students who reported that bullying happened at school, the majority of students (76% male compared to 67% female) stated that they were not afraid to come to school. In the interviews, 50% stated bullying, mostly associated with Year 8 students, was one of the things they liked least about the school. When asked what they would change about school in the interviews, 63% of the students proposed the school should keep the Year 7 and Year 8 students separated in the playground as the Year 8 students were “mean”, and “there is lots of bullying and fighting”.

Teacher and student interview results, illustrated that the end of the academic year created various levels of student apprehension, which resulted in some form of disequilibrium and disengagement. Seventy-five percent of the Year 7 students said they were excited and ready to transition to Year 8 while 19% expressed some anxiety related to the new and unknown that awaited them in Year 8. Thirteen percent were excited to step up to leadership roles and act as role models for younger students. Transitioning to Year 9 also created some anxiety. In the interviews, 81% of Year 8 students said they were “scared and nervous” because they did not know what to expect and would be “sad to leave” the school. Those who were not anxious about leaving (13%) said they “could not wait and were looking forward to it” and that they were not afraid as they had older siblings who would take care of them.

From the interview and survey results, it is interesting to note the difference in student attitude and experiences that started in Term 3. These changes aligned with the point in time when the behaviour, particularly of Year 8 students started deteriorating (according to teachers, student and teacher aide interview results. From the interview results, most Year 7 students were ready to transition to Year 8, which suggested a positive mindset and willingness to contribute and engage with an already familiar environment. However, the Year 8 students faced important decisions about their futures, which could explain their heightened anxiety levels according to the information in their interview results.

The teachers in the interviews shared that college staff visited to explain learning opportunities and prospects of their new learning environments and urged these students and their families to discuss and finalise enrolment for the next school year. This suggested the new school experience that awaited the Year 8 students also contributed to a sense of detachment from their current environment. The Year 8 students were also at an age where they experienced physical and psychological changes due to puberty, which could be associated with the questioning and challenging of their identities and authority figures. In the interviews, one of the teachers (n=6) said the Year 8 students became less focused as “pleasing their peers” took priority. As a result students this age were vulnerable and at risk of various influences as they explored new and different ventures, which could affect their engagement, not only academically, but also socially and emotionally—at several levels of society.

Interview and survey results showed that the Year 8 students started to disengage from their teachers and younger peers in Year 7, as they prepared (mentally and physically) to transition to college level. For example, as discussed earlier, two of the teachers reported that the school’s statistics showed Term 2 produced the highest level of academic and behaviour outcomes, in Term 3 these outcomes deteriorated while in the last term there was a slight improvement in academic outcomes but worse behaviour outcomes. The Year 7 students in the interviews reported bullying behaviour from the Year 8 counterparts and suggested the school keep the Year 7 and Year 8 students apart on the playground. Obviously, these challenges at school would have an impact on home-school partnerships and student-family relationships. According to the school’s behaviour policy, parents were notified when incidents of extreme behaviour occurred. Frequent notifications from school would create much anxiety for parents since they associated their children’s success in school (as discussed in 4.3.2) with positive behaviour rather than the curriculum goals and success criteria. If family stressors, school disengagement, and vulnerability due to psychological and physiological changes were evident for some students, then indeed they might also be more susceptible to negative influences within the wider communities. For example, the influences of youth gangs where they would be seeking acceptance and a sense of belonging, which related to the concerns raised by teachers and teacher aides in section 4.3.3.

This chapter has signalled multiple possible factors for the severe and challenging behaviour evidenced by the students. Management of these factors affected student engagement within three ecological layers; at the classroom, school community, and governance levels.

5.3 Summary

Chapter Five focused on perceptions related to teaching and learning practices, which influenced student engagement. As can be seen from the results in Chapter Five, teaching and learning practices affected student engagement at various levels. Clearly, in some classes, there were higher levels of on-task behaviour (on-task behaviour being one aspect of student engagement) from students because the learning environments were culturally more appropriate and responsive. Higher levels of on-task behaviour / student engagement were associated with comprehensive preparation and planning of the lessons, developing sustainable relationships through mutual trust and respect, and maintaining consistent, effective classroom management and teaching practices. Teachers who knew their students well were familiar with the cultural values and beliefs of their students and incorporated this knowledge into their daily engagement with students and their families. These practices created safe learning environments where students experienced a sense of belonging, independence and predictability. It is important to note that teachers, whose teaching practices contrasted with these, experienced higher levels of off-task behaviour and negative reactions towards tasks in particular.

Although most participants agreed in the interviews that the school provided a safe, caring, inclusive, cohesive environment, some teacher approaches did not always match with the above inclusive, cohesive intent. From a students' perspective, there was a sense of unfairness as they were of the opinion they were not listened to and hence unfairly penalised during incidents of negative behaviour. From the teachers' perspective student behaviour became progressively more challenging throughout the year. However, results indicate that from an ecological viewpoint, reasons for these behaviours could be associated with tensions in relationships and misunderstanding the value of critical cultural components such community and reciprocity and establishing relationships of mutual trust and respect.

Although most participants considered that the school staff were familiar with the Pāsifika culture, some raised specific barriers to student engagement. For some students, the 'words' some foreign teachers used created language barriers. Others raised the issue of negative teacher attitudes and claimed that it affected their confidence to ask for clarification across various subject areas, and furthermore stated that it also affected positive student-teacher relationships. Further examination through interviews and observations showed that language

was not a barrier as such; rather it was a lack of understanding of the importance of incorporating Pāsifika values and beliefs into teaching and learning practices.

This chapter, similar to Chapter Four, demonstrated that factors associated with student engagement were multi-layered, complex and integrated. The results, therefore, illustrated that when the needs of students were not appropriately met, behaviours were generated that created biased perceptions about culture, ability and behaviour. These perceptions supported findings that tensions in one ecological layer affected engagement factors in the next layer. This study therefore shows that student engagement will be better accommodated in an ecological, Pāsifika oriented framework.

Chapter Four focused on perceptions related to engagement factors in the first layer (research question one), and Chapter Five on teaching and learning practices (second layer and research question two). Both these chapters generated results to inform research question three in Chapter Six. As a result, Chapter Six emphasises the multi-dimensional, socio-cultural and ecological factors of engagement that have emerged from this study.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

RESEARCH QUESTION THREE: MULTIDIMENSIONAL, ECOLOGICAL FACTORS OF ENGAGEMENT

Noqu vosa, Noqu iyau tale My language, my treasure
Fijian proverb (Ministry of Education, 2013)

This chapter provides an overview of this thesis in response to research question three and integrates the findings with literature that relates to the topic, “factors facilitating the engagement in learning of Pāsifika students at intermediate school level.”

The current study identified key issues to develop understandings of the engagement of a cohort of Pāsifika students at Year 7 and Year 8 (Chapter Two). Findings highlighted that numerous factors affected Pāsifika students’ engagement in learning at intermediate school level as they participated in settings and situations across home and school. These engagement factors are integrated and strongly influenced by knowledge and understanding of cultural dynamics including values, sense of community, reciprocal relationships, and diversity. Results from Chapters Four and Five pointed to tensions between engagement factors across all three ecological layers, and the potential for misunderstandings and misconceptions, which can affect perceptions about Pāsifika and student engagement in various ways. Linking the results from these two chapters with research question three will provide a wider lens for looking at, and understanding of student engagement. This wider understanding of engagement is significant as it focuses on barriers and enablers to student engagement from a multi-dimensional, social and cultural, and ecological context. Ultimately, in this chapter the findings are integrated with Bronfenbrenner’s approach and the Tree of Opportunity to explain the importance of adopting this wider understanding of the barriers and enablers of engagement factors to include the social and cultural communities in which Pāsifika students operate.

6.1 Introduction

Chapter Six has eight sections. The emerging barriers and enablers of student engagement from this study are interpreted and contextualised alongside factors indicated in the literature. The term engagement is firstly revisited by interpreting it through the findings and literature

(6.2). The use of an ecological and Pāsifika framework to analyse the findings of this study is explained in section 6.3. The perceptions of students, parents, teachers, and other educational professionals of Pāsifika students' engagement in learning engagement. This section explains how perceptions affect equal opportunities through cultural understanding. Furthermore, how teachers' cultural knowledge created a continuum of cultural awareness in a school, which affected student engagement in various ways (6.4). Findings related to the current teaching and learning practices (second ecological layer) that support Pāsifika students' engagement in learning are discussed in section 6.5. The emerging institutional factors in the school setting provides insights into engagement factors in the third ecological layer (6.6). Through integrating the Tree of Opportunity metaphor and Bronfenbrenner's approach, the Feeding the Roots Model of Pāsifika Student Engagement was generated to explain the effect of the multidimensional, socio-cultural, ecological factors that are creating barriers and enablers to student engagement (6.7). Finally, section 6.8 provides a summary of the results.

6.2 Revisiting 'engagement'

❖ Interpreting the term 'engagement' through the findings and literature

In the current study, student engagement is described as a multidimensional construct that is influenced by factors across three ecological layers. Therefore, the factors associated with Pāsifika students' engagement in learning can also be described as multi-layered. They should be considered within an ecological framework, supported by an equitable pedagogical approach, which incorporates learning opportunities that accommodate student diversity.

In the current study, key factors were identified that facilitated student engagement as well as instances of tensions which created barriers to the engagement of Pāsifika students and their parents. The effect of enablers and barriers to student engagement was evidenced by a bi-directional effect across the various ecological layers in which the Pāsifika students operated. Although the ecological factors that play a role in the engagement in learning of Pāsifika students appear to be similar to what would be expected for students from any ethnic group, for Pāsifika students there are additional levels of consideration as will be outlined below.

School systems need to prioritise teachers' cultural understanding and knowledge about Pāsifika diversity (the ethnic differences that exist within the group Pāsifika) to facilitate Pāsifika students' engagement in learning. Important cultural cornerstones such as Pāsifika values, belief systems, and student and parental 'voice' should be factored into every aspect of the

school including relationships, curriculum planning and curriculum delivery. This study showed that Pāsifika students achieved higher levels of engagement when teachers created opportunities in which students could contribute to their learning by linking their unique cultural experiences to new learning. Higher student engagement was also evident when teachers created opportunities in which students could identify and share parallels between the new learning and their own cultural experiences.

Respectful and reciprocal relationships were also key to student engagement. Merely linking cultural experiences to new learning was not enough. Higher levels of behavioural and emotional engagement were associated with teachers who demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the Pāsifika culture but also delivered high-quality teaching. They, consistently had high expectations, demonstrated positive attitudes towards their teaching practices and the students, and collaborated with students, showing a real interest in them and their families.

Positioning student engagement as a multidimensional construct is central to this study. The term 'multidimensional' is identified as a concept within an ecological framework in which there are participants (students, teachers, and parents), at the first, second and third ecological layers. Participants contribute across various situations and settings in each of these layers, hence creating bi-directionality across the three layers. Evident in the results is how engagement was affected by the teachers' knowledge about the Pāsifika culture that occurred on a continuum (as noted in Chapter Five). This continuum represented the different views and knowledge teachers held of the Pāsifika culture and the parents' and students' experiences of the provisions the school made for their cultural values and belief systems. Tensions between these factors demonstrated, for example, that some students had higher levels of off-task behaviour because their learning needs (from a cultural lens perspective) were not appropriately met. Further evaluation of engagement factors on this continuum suggests that these factors influence each other, and create a particular ethos within the classroom and wider school environment about Pāsifika students and their parents (Chapters Four and Five).

The Pāsifika students in the current study were disadvantaged and marginalised when the education system did not acknowledge their cultural diversity, values, and identities. Studies by Nakhid, (2002) suggest that historical approaches have created mismatches and discrepancies that result in bias, misconceptions, under-achievement, and ultimately disengagement from education for Pāsifika students. Factors at this level are associated with the Pāsifika values of trust and respect, whether cultural diversity is taken into consideration in curriculum planning

and delivery, and how much parents are acknowledged and invited to contribute to their children's learning (Hunter, 2013; Nakhid, 2002). Researchers (e.g., Mahatmya et al., 2012; Zepke et al., 2010) have identified the following factors as being critical for successful engagement and outcomes for students: personal factors, the family, the role of teachers as well as social and cultural factors. Adding student 'voice' as an additional factor for educational opportunities in schools, is according to Nakhid (2002) an important "identifying process," as it allowed Pāsifika students to explain their perceptions of school, their peers and teachers. Similar factors and outcomes were evident in the current study.

Other documents, such as the Education Review Office's (ERO) report on Promoting Pācific Student Success in Schools (2010) defined engagement as "a range of factors that combine to produce conditions where students are motivated to achieve and learn" (p. 10). The report listed critical factors for student engagement as "high-quality teaching and assessment, students' involvement in their learning, morale, and perceptions about school, participation in decision-making, attitudes, and behaviour" (p. 10). As discussed in Chapter Two, the above ERO report acknowledged Pāsifika student diversity, the role of positive relationships, the commitment of teachers to learn about the Pāsifika background, and their willingness to connect the curriculum with the life experiences of the Pāsifika students they teach. This view relates to that of Wendt-Samu (2006) who claims that there are strong correlations between Pāsifika student engagement, academic success, and positive relationships with their teachers.

From a curriculum perspective, Thaman (1992, 1999) suggests that cultural analysis is a critical component in creating curriculum content that is appropriate for Pāsifika students. In the New Zealand education context, there have been some attempts to encourage changes to the education system at national level. For example, the Pāsifika Education Plan launched in 2001, and more recently, changes to the Education Legislation Bill 2015, aim to accommodate Pāsifika student diversity alongside the National Curriculum (National Standards), and to improve the support provided to the education of Pāsifika students in New Zealand.

The above overview illustrates how Pāsifika students can be disadvantaged by factors that affected their engagement in learning at a classroom level and within the wider school system. The current study aims to contribute to the above current understandings of engagement by extending student engagement into the socio-cultural context in which the Pāsifika students learn.

6.3 An Ecological and Pāsifika framework of analysis

The current study, informed by the multi-layered, multidimensional nature of engagement used an integration of Bronfenbrenner's approach and the Tree of Opportunity to analyse the data and research findings. New and original findings are discussed using this ecological analysis of the impact of engagement factors, which, while also identified in previous studies, are in this study extended into the socio-cultural context in which Pāsifika students learn. This study extends existing understandings of engagement through using a wider ecological lens through which to view factors that are potential barriers or enablers of engagement of Pāsifika students' learning at their intermediate years of schooling. How these engagement factors are contextualised within an ecological and Pāsifika framework within this study, is discussed in the following sections.

6.4 First ecological layer: Perceptions of engagement

The participants held differing perceptions of the barriers and enablers of engagement within the school setting, which created tensions. The tensions around understandings of engagement factors within each of the three ecological layers resulted in bias, misperceptions, and misunderstandings that affected engagement across all three ecological layers. In the first layer, it affected the teachers' cultural knowledge and understanding of Pāsifika student diversity, and the Pāsifika principle of reciprocity – an element critical to Pāsifika for establishing partnerships and relationships of mutual trust. Missing this key element resulted in some school staff members holding a misconception that parents were not contributing to their children's schooling. Likewise, they perceived the students as disrespectful and unwilling to be engaged in learning. Similarly, the lack of relationships and partnerships also affected student perceptions. They perceived that teachers from other ethnicities were unable to see things from their perspective, and therefore were unable to provide advice and guidance.

Perceptions about Pāsifika also exist in the wider community. For example, in a Tagata Pāsifika television broadcast discussion about education in New Zealand, Efiso Collins (Chairperson of the Otago-Papatoetoe Local Board) maintained that Pāsifika students continue to improve their academic outcomes (Stehlin, 2016). However, some of the key messages to emerge from the literature review in Chapter Two, highlighted various challenges the students, parents, and teachers experience related to the engagement of Pāsifika students in New Zealand schools. According to Whelan-Arisa (2010), there are students who are at risk of under-achievement and

behaviour difficulties due to biased perceptions, misinterpretations, misconceptions and “cultural mismatches between teachers and students” (p. 24). Thompson et al. (2009) claim that knowledge about students’ cultural needs informs the teachers’ responses and expectations. They link the teachers’ lack of cultural knowledge to low expectations, and biased or unfair assumptions, which result in low levels of academic success and students leaving school early.

This literature, similar to the findings of this study suggests that Pāsifika students are potentially at risk of disengagement from learning when there is no acknowledgement of their cultural diversity, values, and belief systems. To mitigate against this, this study proposes the value of exploring engagement through an ecological lens, using the principles of Bronfenbrenner’s approach and the Tree of Opportunity. This lens highlights the tensions between engagement factors across all three ecological layers and can overcome the potential risks and disadvantages, which are directly linked to misperceptions and misunderstandings due to a teachers’ lack of cultural knowledge and understanding.

Other risk factors involve excluding parents and students from contributing to various areas in the school community. At a classroom level, teachers who did not acknowledge student contributions focused on negative student behaviour, which suggests they linked poor engagement with factors within the student. In contrast, teachers who encouraged student contributions sustained higher levels of emotional and behavioural engagement and created positive relationships of mutual trust as a focus in their teaching practices. The findings of this study showed that teachers who encouraged student contributions also modelled the principles of reciprocity, trust and a sense of collectivism and community for the Pāsifika students in their classrooms. Their focus on these principles suggests that they perceived that factors within the wider system are associated with student engagement.

The next section will explore the role of teacher knowledge and understanding about the Pāsifika culture as a means of addressing student diversity and creating equal learning opportunities for all learners.

6.4.1 Creating equal opportunities through cultural understanding

Caring, cohesive, culturally responsive, culturally appropriate, inclusive classroom environments are important to address the cultural differences between Pāsifika and other students in the school. Teachers need to understand the value of cultural knowledge and cultural understanding and be able to incorporate these into their daily teaching and classroom

management. To obtain this cultural knowledge and understanding, it is important that teachers acknowledge not only parents but also students as reliable sources of information about the differences that exist amongst the different Pāsifika ethnicities.

Contextualising cultural knowledge to learning environments and understanding its value in Pāsifika student engagement appeared to be challenging for some school staff in this study. One challenge involved establishing trusting, reciprocal relationships with parents. The findings demonstrated that the parents operated on the periphery of the school system (for further discussion see Section 6.5, p. 12). The peripheral position of the parents suggests that tensions existed, which impacted on opportunities for reciprocity in which teachers could have had opportunities to learn more about the culture and experiences of their Pāsifika students. These tensions created several missed opportunities. Firstly, it prevented the establishing of relationships of mutual trust and respect with parents. Secondly, it limited opportunities for all parties to discuss and establish pro-active steps to resolve concerns about students' learning. Thirdly, and most importantly, it restricted opportunities to celebrate successes. These missed opportunities, and the peripheral position of parents suggests that the school did not model the principles of community (working together), collectivism (following a group approach), and reciprocity (collaborating and co-sharing) that are important to Pāsifika. Involving and consulting parents rather than excluding them can change negative, judgmental perceptions about the Pāsifika students and support a constructive relationship. The findings highlighted that the higher levels of emotional and behavioural engagement students displayed in learning environments happened where positive relationships and non-judgemental, unbiased, and culturally informed approaches were a focus.

Researchers (e.g., Alton-Lee, 2003; Arini, 2013; Nakhid, 2002; Nakhid, 2003) consider the importance of recognition and respect for student diversity. For some like Nakhid (2002) it starts with the relationship between students, teachers and parents. For example, she suggests teachers involve Pāsifika parents, so they learn about the Pāsifika culture, break down stereotypical barriers, obtain a better understanding of Pāsifika parents' contributions to their children's lives, and start rating them higher and more positively. For Arini (2013) this process needs to start with those who are training teachers. Arini reflects on this stating, "Teacher educators have critical pedagogical choices to make if they are to assist and educate prospective teachers to produce equitable outcomes for children of different ethnic, racial, cultural, class and language groups when they become practicing teachers" (p.59).

Although this study identified ‘good intent’ on behalf of the school staff, it also detected several challenges towards creating equal, inclusive, culturally appropriate learning environments. One of these challenges involved the inconsistencies in how teachers drew on and used their cultural knowledge in their teaching and learning practices. The following section discusses the challenges teachers encounter in acquiring and applying their cultural knowledge.

6.4.2 Continuum of cultural awareness

There are many challenges, which teachers encounter as they acquire cultural knowledge about Pāsifika students. Acquiring cultural knowledge is in the first instance complicated by its interrelated nature. It involves understanding the many different Pāsifika ethnicities, individual student learning requirements, challenges related to reciprocal relationships of mutual trust and respect, and engagement factors across the various ecological layers in which Pāsifika students operate. Tensions between the various factors also create additional barriers for teachers to obtain cultural knowledge.

The following example demonstrates how tensions not only shape perceptions but also create inconsistencies in participant perceptions of engagement factors across the different ecological layers. A group of students perceived that some words foreign teachers used in their teaching created barriers to their engagement in learning. Individual comments included:

The words teachers use is sometimes too hard to understand. Teachers grow up in different backgrounds and use different words.

The students further identified that the teachers came from different cultural backgrounds, which meant they held particular individual cultural preferences and expectations, which affected how they, as students, could relate to them. However, analyses of the results of this study indicated that the teachers’ cultural backgrounds and countries of origin had no effect on the Pāsifika students’ engagement in learning. It was their cultural knowledge of the Pāsifika students and how they enacted the Pāsifika values, for example, how the teachers maintained respectful communication that was more important (see Chapter Five, Section 5.2.3).

The perceptions teachers had about the Pāsifika culture, placed them on a continuum of cultural awareness and responsiveness. Identifying this continuum of knowledge about the Pāsifika culture is critical because it illustrates that the inconsistencies in teachers’ knowledge about the Pāsifika culture, rather than their use of language (unfamiliar words), their ethnicity,

or countries of origin affected student-teacher relationships, and student engagement in learning. The placement of the teachers on the continuum depended on their individual commitment to enacting pedagogy in culturally appropriate ways. Also of influence were student perceptions of how well the teachers incorporated their cultural knowledge in their daily teaching and learning practices.

The findings of this study showed that the inconsistencies in how teachers applied their cultural knowledge in their teaching and learning practices either created tensions that put students, and parents (and teachers) at risk, or created learning environments that optimised engagement and success. The teachers, who were knowledgeable about the diversity of the Pāsifika students in their classrooms, perceived that culturally appropriate and culturally responsive teaching practices were important. Their commitment to culturally supportive learning environments is evidenced by individual comments. For example, one stated that it was important to *create links with the students and their families as it opens many doors for teachers* while another referred to the higher levels of student and parent engagement they achieve. In contrast, teachers at the other end of the continuum perceived that it was important to treat all students the same. Thus, their focus was away from student diversity and culturally appropriate and culturally responsive teaching practices. In these classrooms, there were high risks of misinterpretations, bias, incorrect judgements and misconceptions about Pāsifika students and their parents. The potential risk factors suggest that tensions amongst engagement factors in the first ecological layer (knowledge about culture) affect engagement factors in the second layer (student engagement learning, partnerships and relationships). Students displayed higher levels of off-task behaviour in these learning environments and made comments such as

I don't listen if I don't like the teacher.

Boring, the teacher talk too much.

The work is too hard.

I don't like it.

I haven't listened properly.

Evidence is provided in the findings of this study that the continuum of cultural knowledge also distinguished between a group of teachers who relied on external resources (for example, class lists, curriculum areas about culture, Journal Readings, facial features and discussions with

colleagues) to gain a better understanding of the Pāsifika culture. Relying on external resources suggested that the Pāsifika students and their parents were not considered a valuable source of cultural information. Teacher reliance on external resources resulted in missed opportunities in which teachers could have built reciprocal relationships of trust and respect, and obtain valid, reliable information about student identity, culture and external factors that affected the students' engagement in learning (for example, church, funerals, family circumstances and family events). These missed opportunities created perceptions about the Pāsifika parents and students (and teachers), which resulted in mismatches, misunderstandings, and misinterpretations (see Chapter Four, Section 4.2.3). In this study, perceptions of the lack of cultural teacher knowledge are identified with risks that include mismatches, misunderstandings, and misinterpretations, which create tensions that affect student engagement in learning in various ways. In the context of this study, the above risks are mostly associated with teaching and learning practices and factors within the wider school system.

6.5 Teaching and learning practices

The previous section highlighted perceptions of factors that are barriers and enablers to Pāsifika students' engagement in learning. This section discusses perceptions about learning as associated with teaching and learning practices in classroom settings. In this study alongside teaching and learning practices, certain factors are identified that may cause Pāsifika students' to disengage from learning. In contrast, factors such as partnerships, trust and respect consistency, predictability, and co-constructed learning are enablers of learning if utilised within culturally appropriate and culturally responsive learning communities.

❖ Risk of disengagement

From an ecological perspective in this study, it is contended that policy changes at national level influence teachers' instruction and curriculum delivery at school level. The argument, therefore, is that changes at a higher or national level may either create barriers or facilitate the teachers' commitment to addressing the cultural differences Pāsifika students pose in a culturally appropriate manner. Clearly, there is a link between curriculum development, curriculum expectations, and culturally appropriate and culturally responsive teaching and learning practices at the local school level. The findings showed that disregarding critical cultural components in the curriculum to teaching process created tensions that are related to misinterpretation, misunderstanding, and bias (for teachers, parents, and students). These tensions were linked to risks that are associated with student disengagement from learning.

The literature review in Chapter Two drew attention to particular concerns for Pāsifika students' achievement outcomes. For example, the Education Review Office Report on Improving Education Outcomes for Pācific Students (2012), signalled concern. It stated that “results from national and international assessments show that the learners most at risk of not achieving in New Zealand schools are Pāsifika students” (p. 1). Other researchers (e.g., Brown et al., 2007; Thaman, 1990; Gorinski, & Fraser, 2006; Nakhid, 2003; Wendt- Samu, 2006) identified that issues related to student achievement are school-based. However, Wendt-Samu (2006) identified an additional layer of complexity. She explained that Pāsifika students and teachers “interact at the interface of two culturally embedded, yet different worlds” (p. 46). She described the worlds as that portrayed in formal education (the classroom or school) and the individual world of the Pāsifika student. This study demonstrates how lack of partnership, reciprocity, collaboration and relationship (between school staff, students and parents) continue to keep these two worlds separate, which has an effect on student engagement. Other researchers (Thaman, 1990; Guthrie et al., 2003; Nakhid, 2002) highlight that changes are needed at the level of curriculum development. These views highlight factors that create risks for Pāsifika student achievement, which potentially could result in their disengagement from education. The above views also demonstrate that the problem is not only school-based but also includes the importance of understanding and acknowledging the cultural world of Pāsifika students at school level and in curriculum and policy development at national level.

In summary, the link between curriculum and culturally appropriate practices in which teachers appreciate the value of partnerships, relationships of trust and respect, and opportunities to co-construct learning with Pāsifika students are recognised in the current study. However, evident in the findings is the way in which school systems experienced challenges to create learning environments in which expectations, cultural knowledge, and understanding are consistently applied.

❖ **Perceptions about Pāsifika students as learners**

Some participants in this study held the perception that Pāsifika students are visual learners (see Chapter Five, section 5.2.1). This perception suggests a belief that different learning styles needed to be accommodated in curriculum planning and teaching practices to include more visual resources. The reference to learning styles provides another example of possible misinterpretations and mismatches for Pāsifika students. It illustrates generalisations of Pāsifika students as visual learners.

Numerous studies draw attention to the problem caused by students being analysed as having a specific learning style; and how this is a barrier particularly for the Pāsifika learner. Some of the studies include the Best Evidence Synthesis findings that cautioned against the effect of using the “learning style” approach to address student diversity in Māori and Pāsifika students (Alton-Lee, 2003). Researchers such as Dilworth and Brown (as cited in Alton-Lee, 2003), argue that the learning style approach cause harm through stereotyping students and creating the impression that certain students (for example, Pāsifika) can only learn one way. Higgins (2001) states that incorrect ethnically-based assumptions about learners impact negatively on student engagement and academic outcomes because it perpetuates learning opportunities that are least effective for these pupils.

The next sections discuss how factors such as partnerships and relationships, homework, trust and respect, streaming, consistency, predictability, and co- constructed knowledge either facilitate or create barriers to student engagement. A discussion then follows of the socio-cultural, ecological factors associated with student engagement.

❖ **Partnerships and relationships**

Although the school had sound intentions to establish school-parent partnerships (see section 6.4.1), parents remained on the periphery of the school system. Teacher-parent partnerships are an important contributor to student engagement, and the absence of a balanced partnership has an adverse effect on student engagement. The negative effect on student engagement was evidenced by tensions that were created by teachers who relied on external sources (for example, class lists, and the facial features of students) rather than through collaborative, reciprocal relationships with parents as a way to gain knowledge and understanding about their students and their culture. Although the exclusion of parents at this level was unintentional and implicit, the students, school staff, and parents were affected in a number of ways. A high percentage of Pāsifika students perceived that teachers misunderstood them, which affected teacher-student relationships. In turn, teachers perceived that factors within the students and their parents were key to the lack of partnerships, and limited academic success of some students – a view that related to the deficit, uni-dimensional model of thinking. In contrast, the parents stated that they wanted to contribute to their children’s schooling, but were waiting for someone from the school to approach them.

Clearly, the parents wanted reciprocal relationships with the teachers (see Section 4.3.3, p.30). Reciprocal, collaborative relationships with teachers are important contributors to Pāsifika

students' engagement in learning according to Gorinski and Fraser (2006), Thaman (1999), Hunter (2013), and Nakhid (2002). Alton-Lee (2003), identified core values and outlined how a value-like reciprocity is important for social relationships as well as being a key aspect of decision-making, building consensus, demonstrating regard for community and social structures as well as spirituality, which encompasses religious practices and church affiliations. Knowledge and understanding of these core values not only supports building trust as a crucial component of creating and maintaining relationships with Pāsifika Peoples but also builds on the principles of community, collectivism and reciprocity as suggested by Hunter (2013).

One of the teachers in the study attempted to establish partnerships with parents by inviting parents to observe how she taught, but she got no response. Evaluating the lack of parent responses in this context through a cultural lens suggests three possible explanations. Firstly, demanding work commitments could have prevented parents from accepting the teacher's invitation. Secondly, this could be an unfamiliar concept for parents, considering their previous knowledge and experiences of education systems. Thirdly, if teachers are unaware of the value of the principles of reciprocity and how important establishing relationships of mutual trust first is for Pāsifika, then there justifiably would have been a reluctance to engage in invitations like this. Gorinski and Fazer (2006) stated in their report on the effective engagement of Pāsifika parents and communities in education that relationships are "key to the effective engagement of parents" (p. 1). Researchers such as Fletcher et al. (2008) add another dimension to teacher-parent partnerships. They argue that "the Pāsifika tradition of showing respect for people of high status, such as teachers and principals, by remaining silent and not challenging or questioning them may contribute to them not seeking consultation with teachers about their children" (p. 30). It is possible that this also was a reason why the parents did not respond to the teacher's invitation.

The lack of partnerships created several barriers for teachers. Not only did it affect opportunities for the teachers to gain cultural knowledge of their students but also they lacked opportunities to obtain knowledge about the future aspirations of the students they were teaching. Knowledge of the students' future aspirations is important because it has the potential to create opportunities for informal conversations that can strengthen teacher-student relationships. It also helps address student misunderstanding and misperceptions about teachers. For example, a group of students (see section 5.2.3, p. 30) stated that they related better to Pāsifika teachers because,

They can relate to us because they have been through what we have been through,

They have had similar experiences,

They are able to show us easier education pathways, and

They listen, care, and understand our families and us.

When reviewing partnerships through an ecological lens, there were factors identified within the wider Pāsifika community that created barriers that affected the establishment of teacher-parent partnerships. The reality of regular student transiency (see Section 4.3.2 p. 20) is a barrier to student engagement, academic achievement, and teacher-parent partnerships. It denies the school the time and opportunity to encourage students and their parents to establish their roles and contributions at the different levels of what the school has to offer.

Trust and respectful relationships, built over time, are a cornerstone of the Pāsifika culture. A number of studies support the importance of trusting, respectful teacher-parent relationships as key to student engagement. Gorinski and Fraser (2006), for example, supported the concept of school-parent partnerships where teachers and parents, through collaboration, learnt from each other. Invaluable learning opportunities were constructed which enhanced knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity associated with Pāsifika students' engagement in learning. Podmore, et al. (2003) maintained that a better understanding of culture is a critical aspect of a young child's learning. Similar to Gorinski and Fraser (2006), they also claim that effective learning relationships are essential and should parallel teacher understandings of the cultural contexts of students. Evidence is provided in this study to suggest that student engagement is not only enhanced by positive teacher-parent partnerships, but also by the learning relationship between students and their teachers, alongside knowledge and understanding of the Pāsifika culture through these partnerships.

This study identifies that contextualising relationships and partnerships to the school setting continues to present challenges and tensions, which limit opportunities for parents and school staff to establish sustainable, reciprocal relationships and partnerships. Results previously presented in (see Section 4.3.3, p. 34) referred to the financial pressures that necessitated groups of families to live together. Although collective advantages exist, such as family networks of support, and a sense of community with such living arrangements, they also present challenges. The challenges included the engagement demands of schools. One such engagement demand involved homework support for students.

❖ Homework

Evidence was provided (see Section 4.3.3, p. 31) that family dynamics sometimes required the older siblings to look after and help younger siblings with homework. The reasons for this arrangement related to the parents' work commitments (working long hours, working double shifts, and often working late). There were also issues regarding the difficulty levels of certain subject areas (see Section 6.4), as well as challenges for those parents who use English as an additional language. Some of the comments from parents included,

The Maths is very difficult, and

We need help so we can help our children.

The parental responses suggest that they found it difficult to monitor and support their children consistently with homework completion. Additionally, the parents stated that the size of their families made it difficult to attend all school events, especially if their children were attending different schools. Although the above challenges required families to rely on older children to support their younger siblings with their homework, it also encouraged the Pāsifika principle of collective success through independent hard work (R. Mose, personal communication, February 5, 2016).

A study by Fletcher et al. (2008) stated that students have access to extended family to support them with homework if their parents are busy or unavailable. However, these researchers note that this network of support is not available to all families in New Zealand, which makes it difficult for busy parents to provide homework support. Homework support is an important extension of collaborative expectations set by the national curriculum. According to these standards, parents, school staff and students need to collaborate on academic goals and as a way forward discuss co-ownership and responsibilities, for example, how some of the schoolwork could be reinforced at home via homework (Ministry of Education, 2007). It is unclear from previous findings (see Section 4.3.3, p. 31) whether parents understand notions of this partnership because they all held individual perceptions about homework. Moreover, only approximately fifty percent of teachers agreed that parents were aware of teacher expectations and reinforced it at home.

Communication, feedback and collaboration between parents, school staff and students (at least twice per year) are another curriculum expectation that encourages partnerships between home and school (Ministry of Education, 2007). However, the findings provide contrasting

results. In the interviews, (see Section 4.3.3, p. 31) a small group of students (7%) reported that their parents talked to their teachers about their learning. In contrast, the survey results (see Section 4.3.3, p. 31) indicated the majority of the students (80%) agreed that their parents talked to their teachers about their learning. This conflicting finding between data sources could suggest confusion or ambivalence when it comes to student's perceptions about parent-teacher partnerships.

Interestingly, conflicting results (see Section 4.3.3, p. 31) were presented in response to whether parents supported their children with homework. Only approximately half of the teachers were aware of the homework support parents provided to their children. The student interviews illustrated that a small minority group of students said their parents helped them with their homework but the surveys indicated a high percentage of students (male students in particular), who said they received homework support at home.

When comparing the responses from focus group student interviews, individual interviews and survey results, there were consistent inconsistencies. Positive student responses in focus group interviews were consistently lower than the individual survey responses. In this instance, the lower responses related to how much homework-support students received from parents and whether their parents talked to their teachers about their learning. Considering these responses and the Pāsifika principles of community and collectivism suggest that peer approval and friendships were important to the Pāsifika students (R. Mose, personal communication, February 5, 2016). Students at this age are also susceptible to pressure from their peer group. Linking this to a desire to impress their peers, or try to live up to everyone else's expectations (Montero, 2015), are all factors that need to be considered as potential influences on the interview responses.

❖ **Trust and respect**

Teachers need to not only have cultural knowledge but also understand the value of cultural knowledge as this knowledge has a flow-on effect on the establishment of cultural values in classrooms. Cultural knowledge is associated with constructing relationships of mutual trust and respect, two of the shared values, and cornerstones, of the Pāsifika ethnic groupings. The teachers who understood the value of cultural knowledge created trust and respect, by setting them as expectations for everyone involved in the learning communities they created. These teachers, as role-models for expected behaviours, extended expectations to the students

aligned with the following classroom management and teaching practices (see Section 5.2, teaching and learning practices):

- communicating in a respectful manner with students
- providing a calm, relaxed atmosphere in classrooms,
- having sound teachers' knowledge about Pāsifika diversity,
- showing personal interests in students and their families,
- consistently having high expectations of themselves as professionals (being well prepared, confident and knowledgeable about their subject areas) and of their students (through student engagement, work completion and delivering work of a high standard)
- constantly encouraging the students to support each other in a respectful manner,
- creating opportunities in which students worked collaboratively with their peers on problem-solving curriculum related topics,
- giving students ownerships and responsibility for their learning, and displaying students work in the classroom,
- allowing students to contribute to their learning from within their cultural experiences, which encouraged student 'voice' in their learning (respect for culture and creating identity), and
- applying new learning to the students' cultural understandings (respect for culture and creating identity – see Sections 4.2.3 and 5.2.1)

Although these teaching strategies highlighted relationships of mutual trust and respect, they also related to the Pāsifika principles of community (see Section 4.3.3, p. 35 – 37), collectivism (see Section 4.3.3, p. 34), and reciprocity (see Section 4.3.2, p. 29 – 31). From the above results in Chapter Four, it is evident that these principles were associated with learning environments that were inclusive, non-judgemental, unbiased, and accommodating of student diversity. Students responded to these environments by displaying high levels of on-task behaviour (behavioural engagement) and positive reactions towards teachers, set tasks, and peers (emotional engagement).

In contrast, in some learning environments, the findings show that tensions existed in the teacher-student relationships. Students stated that disrespectful teachers (teachers who were

“growly and mean”) and disrespectful peers (those whom they referred to as bullies who interrupted their learning by being disrespectful towards teachers) were some factors things they like least about the school. Participant perceptions illustrated in Chapter Five (see Section 5.2.1) suggest that classroom environments where students lacked a sense of reciprocity, collaboration, and community could be associated with barriers to student engagement and barriers to student-teacher relationships. These perceptions were evidenced by a group of students who stated that they had difficulty establishing positive, trusting relationships with teachers whom they felt treated them unfairly. The student perceptions include (see Section 5.2.3):

growly teachers,

teachers who were too strict and

teachers who were getting angry over nothing.

All students reported that it was hurtful when teachers talked about their families in a negative, derogatory manner. In response, some students stated, “I don’t listen if I don’t like the teacher.” The students acknowledged that barriers were created in their relationships with their teachers and peers. This confirmed that respectful communication and respectful relationships with adults and peers clearly affected their engagement in learning.

From an ecological perspective, the findings in Chapter Four (see Section 4.2.4) illustrated the students’ desire for positive relationships at three different levels. Firstly, at a more personal level, students had a desire for respect towards them as individuals and for teachers to refer to their families. Secondly, they desired relationships with their teachers at a level of teaching practice. A third level of student relationships in school was at the level of friends and their peer groups. The students’ preference for friends rather than for learning, added another dimension, which created a negative cycle in student-teacher relationships. Evidence is provided (see Section 4.2.4) that showed that when a teacher treated students with disrespect, it created a cycle whereby students would disengage from the teacher and his/her teaching in support of each other. It is important to note that in such classroom environments, a sense of community, collectivism and reciprocity was absent, and there was limited evidence of culturally appropriate or culturally responsive teaching practices. In addition, lower levels of behavioural and emotional student engagement were apparent in subject areas where these perceptions about teachers existed.

Community, collectivism, and reciprocity according to Hunter (2013) are invaluable if teachers use them to help Pāsifika students' make sense of their reasoning and arguments. According to researchers such as Airini, 2013, Alton-Lee (2003) and Hunter (2013), the students experience greater equity, positive student engagement, and higher academic outcomes within these culturally responsive teaching practices. Hunter (2013) and Thompson et al. (2009) also explained that those teachers who are knowledgeable about student identity, values, and culture incorporate a broad range of teaching strategies in their daily interaction with students in their classrooms. These teachers also show awareness of culturally appropriate classroom management styles, and culturally adequate resources to accommodate the learning needs of Pāsifika students in their teaching practices.

❖ **Streaming versus differentiated teaching**

Some of the school staff attributed negative student reactions (emotional engagement) and poor student engagement to factors within the students and their parents (see Section 4.3). Such perceptions foster deficit thinking rather than consideration of the possibility that poor student engagement could also be associated with factors within teaching practices (for example utilising the principles of streaming) and the wider school system. In this study, it was clear that classroom management that lacked reciprocity, collaboration, and a sense of community was associated with misinterpretations about Pāsifika students. Pāsifika student behaviour was misinterpreted as disrespectful when they refused to be withdrawn to receive additional learning support from teacher aides (see Section 5.2.5, p. 190). However, an alternative lens suggests that the students' behaviour was not related to disrespect. Evaluating these behaviours through a cultural lens allows a view that students who engage with their peers in curriculum related activities experience a sense of community, collectivism and reciprocity, which helps them make sense of their reasoning and arguments as earlier suggested by Hunter (2013). As can be expected, students then would be reluctant to leave these communities of learning, especially when they have no trusting relationship with the person who withdraws them for learning support. It is in these learning communities that Pāsifika students also experience the value of the principles of collective success through independent hard work (R. Mose, personal communication, February 5, 2016). Consideration must also be given to the importance of peer approval and friendships. Their reluctance to be withdrawn and their refusal of assistance, therefore, could be considered as related to conveying a message of embarrassment, shame, fear of humiliation and exclusion from peers when withdrawn (see Section 5.2.5, p. 190).

The confusion that existed between the principles of 'differentiated teaching' and 'streaming' was another factor that affected student engagement. Nakhid (2003) drew attention to the way that 'streaming' in school systems prevents students from creating their identity. He also explained that it creates "racial and class differentiation" (p. 302). According to Tapaleao (2008) and Adams (2014), streaming is more related to ability grouping and mostly benefiting students in the higher ability groupings, not those students in the middle and lower groupings. Differentiated teaching, according to D'Amico (2008) modifies material so all students can have access to the same content and includes differentiated worksheets that help students reflect on presented material, hence reinforcing their new learning, and different stations for different students in classrooms. Nevertheless, in the context of this study, it is important to note the tensions that particularly 'streaming' created as teachers tried to accommodate the diverse learning needs of students.

Since 'streaming' places the students' sense of community, reciprocity, and collectivism (and possibly their identity) at risk, this study, therefore, contends that student engagement is better facilitated through teaching practices that focus on positive relationships with students and parents. It furthermore contends that these relationships should also be characterised by mutual trust and respect, cultural knowledge, cultural understanding, and inclusive communities of learning. Evidence is provided (Table 12) that illustrates that the highest levels of on-task behaviour occurred in subject areas where teachers used the principles of differentiated teaching within a culturally appropriate and culturally responsive learning environment.

In this study, the argument is made that while partnerships, trust, respect and differentiated teaching are strongly associated with student engagement, consistency and predictability also form part of culturally appropriate and culturally responsive learning environments. In Chapter Five, data was provided that showed that consistency in expectations, and in structure, routine, and classroom management procedures were equally essential in sustaining higher levels of student engagement.

❖ **Consistency and predictability**

Quality teaching and high levels of student engagement are associated with teachers' commitment to creating culturally responsive and culturally appropriate learning environments. Furthermore, consistency and predictability in the teachers' classroom management and teaching practices were complementary to culturally responsive and culturally appropriate

learning environments. Teaching practices that promoted consistency and predictability included teachers who,

- presented new learning consistently in a variety of interesting ways,
- consistently praised students for all their efforts,
- were available so clarify issues students might have with curriculum related activities
- communicated and actively listened to student opinions throughout lessons,
- were well prepared for lessons,
- ensured all students have access to resources
- followed a preventative approach when managing student behaviour, and use humour and appropriate questioning to re-direct students,
- used a flexible approach and provided opportunities for students to problem-solve topic related issues individually or through peer and group support to each other, and
- maintained noise levels appropriate to the learning expectations.

Although noise levels can be associated with active student engagement and collaborative problem-solving situations, Fletcher and colleagues (2008) identify that Pāsifika students who were underachieving in reading raised concerns about noisy classroom environments and the misbehaviour of some of their peers. In a report by the Ministry of Education (2008), students also identified noise levels that were too high as influencing their engagement in learning in a negative manner. The findings of the current study were similar. The highest levels of on-task behaviours were associated with noise levels that were consistently managed to suit the learning requirements and expectations of the lesson. Furthermore, the students identified disruptive peers as a barrier to their engagement in learning (see Section 4.3.1).

Clear evidence was provided in this study that learning environments in which Pāsifika students displayed high levels of engagement were associated with teachers who incorporated consistent, predictable strategies that promoted a sense of community, reciprocity and collectivism. These learning communities also included the all-important Pāsifika values of respect and trust, and the culturally appropriate and culturally responsive teaching practices discussed earlier.

An article in the *Talanoa Ako* (Ministry of Education, 2013) explained the importance of teachers creating consistency in strategies that work for Pāsifika students and create opportunities for positive learning outcomes for Pāsifika students. An article in the *New Zealand Education Gazette* explained how three schools in Mt Maunganui used the principles of consistency to promote positive student behaviour. According to this article, consistency generated trust. According to Jones, Jones, and Vermete (2013) consistency is one of the eight components of effective classroom management, particularly when setting expectations and classroom routines. However, they claimed that consistency in expectations not only applies to classroom settings but also to the wider school environment.

In summary, the findings of the current study outlined how the students' access to equal learning opportunities and sustainable levels of engagement were associated with high quality, culturally responsive and culturally appropriate teaching practices. Tensions between engagement factors were almost non-existent in these learning environments. However, within these high-quality learning communities, additional factors were noted that are associated with engagement in learning, and learning outcomes of Pāsifika students. Findings strongly advocate for the significance of Pāsifika student 'voice' and co-constructed knowledge (see Section 5.2.1, p.11) as it encouraged students towards high engagement in learning through their participation and contributions.

❖ **Co-constructed knowledge and Pāsifika 'voice'**

Teachers' knowledge and understanding of culture were identified in the current study as associated with culturally appropriate or culturally responsive teaching practices, which helped shape safe learning communities characterised by student-teacher partnerships and positive student-teacher relationships. Examples were provided in Chapter Five (see Section 5.2.3) which showed that it is within inclusive learning communities, characterised by a strong focus on student diversity, that Pāsifika students had access to high- quality teaching and equitable opportunities for learning. These associations with high quality, equitable learning communities, furthermore demonstrated the importance of teachers' cultural knowledge and understanding of culture in student engagement.

Evidence was provided in the current study that teachers who drew on the knowledge and cultural experiences of the students to contribute to their learning, experienced higher levels of student engagement, as noted by high levels of on-task behaviour (behavioural engagement) and positive reactions towards set tasks, teachers and peers (emotional engagement).

However, of notable interest was the absence of parental voices in teaching and learning practices. The findings illustrated that although parents perceived that their opinions should be valued and respected, they saw their main contribution to their children's schooling as providing resources needed for their learning, supporting homework and attending parent interviews. These views aligned with the previous discussion (see Section 6.3.1) in which it was stated that parents operated on the periphery of their children's schooling. This affected partnerships between parents and the school, as well as teacher-parent partnerships. Clearly, equitable, culturally appropriate learning environments are also dependent on relationships of trust and respect in which teachers acknowledge and value 'student voice' and 'parent voice' as a contributor to their students' learning.

In the current study, the school staff, students, and parents did not always create processes through which they could collaboratively contribute towards greater knowledge of each other's culture, identity, values, and belief systems. Creating this process of reciprocity could have not only assisted with relationships of trust and respect, but also provide reliable information and mutual understanding of each other's cultures, and the roles they held in promoting student engagement. However, these processes are only possible if all parties work together in order to minimise and eliminate unnecessary bias, judgement and misconceptions about students, parents, and school staff. The missed opportunities to establish these relationships created tensions and had bi-directional effects on engagement factors across the different ecological layers. For example, factors in the second ecological layer (a lack of cultural understandings due to limited teacher-student, teacher-parent partnerships) had a direct impact on factors in the second (teaching practices) and third ecological layers (school support to parents). Bi-directionality was created when curriculum content (third layer) only focused on the learning needs of dominant cultures and this, influenced student-teacher relationships (second layer), and subsequently student engagement (second layer) and the students' sense of community (first layer).

Many researchers (Finn, 1989; Thaman, 1990; Hunter, 2013; MacIntyre, 2013; Nakhid, 2002; Wendt-Samu, 2006) emphasised the importance of Pāsifika student voice, culturally responsive teaching practices, and positive teacher-student relationships in Pāsifika student engagement. Researchers also identified classroom environments in which Pāsifika students thrive as those in which Pāsifika students contribute positively to their learning, and where partnership processes support students, teachers and parents to learn from each other about culture. The principles of culturally responsive teaching practices and the importance of positive teacher-

student relationships were also included in guidelines provided to schools in the New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007) and the Pāsifika Education Plan 2012 – 2017. The Education Review Office (2010) defined engagement as a process where students are “motivated and active participants in their learning” (p. 11). Alton- Lee (2003) and Wendt-Samu (2006) highlighted the importance of culturally responsive teaching practices in creating safe learning environments for Pāsifika students.

Teachers, students, and parents who collaborate, and learn from each other are empowered to create culturally responsive teaching environments, with appropriate resources where Pāsifika students can experience a sense of belonging. Pāsifika students find these environments supportive, stimulating, and respectful of their identities and values (Gorinski, & Fraser, 2006; Hunter, 2013; Nakhid, 2002). Hunter (2013) described how students were told that asking questions added their voice to classroom discussions and added to pride in their ‘fono’ (family). As a result, the students engaged in justification through mathematical argumentation and generalised their knowledge to more complex problems. The culturally responsive teaching practices, encouraged student's voice, greater equity, positive student engagement, and higher academic outcomes.

Simich-Dudgeon (as cited in Gorinski, & Fraser, 2006) highlights that a high percentage of Pāsifika parents believe that “teachers have not only the qualifications but also the responsibility to educate their children” (p. 23). Gorinski and colleague stated that parents would subsequently perceive any contributions they made to their children’s schooling as more of a hindrance than a help. These researchers state that it is important that parents understand the role they can hold in their child’s education. They maintain that schools should take responsibility for initiating engagement processes as well as invest time in fostering positive school-partnerships. Chu et al. (2013) concur and say that Pāsifika families should gain sufficient understanding and knowledge “that will enable them to provide sound input regarding their children’s academic and career choices” (p. 3).

❖ **Curriculum**

While teaching and learning practices are important, the effect of curriculum development and implementation on student engagement needs consideration. From an ecological perspective, the current study distinguishes between curriculum-related factors at school and at national level and shows how both affect Pāsifika student engagement in learning.

The New Zealand curriculum influences and guides the teaching and learning practices of teachers. However, an argument made in the current study, is that inequities will continue unless school systems and school staff commit to taking ownership and responsibility for creating inclusive, equitable, high-quality teaching communities that accommodate Pāsifika student diversity in a culturally appropriate manner. In this regard, Jones et al., (2013) maintain that expectations related to student achievement are not only the responsibility of teachers but also the wider school systems. Moreover, this study contends that while consistent learning expectations are critical, incorporating values and belief systems that are at the core of Pāsifika students and their families should also be key elements.

Changes to teaching and learning practices and the systemic changes in curriculum content delivery are associated with multi-dimensional, multi-level approaches, which is in line with the ecological, Pāsifika orientation of this study. This multi-dimensional view is important in the way in which it can create another pathway towards greater consistency in the school system. If more teachers applied the principles of multi-dimensional thinking about student learning, the less they would use uni-dimensional thinking and the belief that issues with engagement and poor student outcomes are associated with factors within students and their families. Wendt-Samu (2006) claimed that Pāsifika student success depends on the nature of interactions between teachers and their pupils. Likewise, Guthrie et al. (2003) addressed the need for changes in instruction and curriculum content delivery to raise student achievement and student engagement.

Pāsifika students continued to achieve low academic outcomes despite the professional development teachers received in support of curriculum implementation and curriculum delivery. The highest percentage of students who achieved 'Below' and 'Well Below' national standard levels belonged to the Pāsifika ethnic group (see Section 4.3.2, p. 26). These results suggest that factors, other than curriculum expertise, influenced Pāsifika students' engagement in learning. From an ecological perspective, these factors existed in the learning environments teachers created in their teaching and learning practices, and their perceptions about Pāsifika in the wider school community.

The teachers held varied opinions and perceptions about the National Standards as the primary means of reporting student achievement in Literacy and Mathematics. Their comments (see Section 4.3.2.) included concerns about objectivity, because the judgement of individual teachers determined the assessment outcomes of the students. Other concerns included the

extended time teachers spent on administration and concerns that evaluation took priority over learning and difficulties encountered in engaging parents to contribute to collaborative goal setting.

The National Standards were also seen as positive. Teachers considered that it enhanced teacher professionalism, and supported setting learning goals, structures, and routines for students. The teachers stated that:

they like to know where they are at with their work

it had aligned resources with the curriculum,

it helps us to get to know the students better before starting academic work at the beginning of the year, and

it creates greater teacher accountability.

No member of the school staff raised the issue of a need to accommodate cultural diversity in their curriculum delivery. It appeared that they accepted the enactment of a national framework that catered for dominant cultural groups in schools in New Zealand.

Evidence provided in this study argues that teachers and students were familiar with the National Standards' goals and expectations, but parents and teacher aides were less informed about the value of collaborating, contributing and negotiating academic goals based on the curriculum content. Overlooking the importance of empowering parents and teacher aides with this level of curriculum knowledge reduced opportunities to establish consistency in the support to students; particularly about subject areas such as literacy and mathematics. For example, teachers reinforced the academic goals as part of their teaching but excluded parents (who could support with homework), and teacher aides (who supported students with learning difficulties). This challenged consistency, and the sense of collaborative communities the National Standards aimed to create in schools. As a result, the role of parents remained that of supporting their children's schooling through attending parent interviews and sports tournaments and ensuring their children had the resources they needed. Excluding the teacher aides at this level added little value to the perception of their roles and maintained a perception that the students thought the teacher aides were "not paid, professionals."

If the dominant cultural groups dominate curriculum development, then there are potential risks for mismatches across all the different ecological layers in which Pāsifika students operate. The

findings parallel the literature (e.g., Thaman, 1999; Mahatmya et al., 2012; Zepke et al., 2010) in that school systems and practices that do not attend to key elements such as Pāsifika values, belief systems, sense of community, collectivism, and reciprocity, and create misunderstandings about Pāsifika students. Whelan-Arisa (2010), warned about cultural mismatches that can result in “cultural bias, misconceptions, and misinterpretations, which can lead to underachievement and students displaying behaviour difficulties” (p. 24). These views suggest that if curriculum development and curriculum delivery in schools focus on the dominant culture only, the engagement and academic achievement levels of Pāsifika students’ as a minority group are compromised.

In the current study, it is contended that it is important not to limit co- construction of knowledge to the classroom situation, but to extend it to the national curriculum. The findings in Chapter Four (see Section 4.3.1) identified the challenges teachers and parents experienced when they attempted to set collaborative academic goals at parent interviews. Teachers distinguished between Pāsifika parents born in New Zealand and those who were new to New Zealand. They claimed that parents born in New Zealand had a better understanding of school systems, and, were, therefore, easier to engage with about the curriculum goals and expectations. Those new to New Zealand were considered harder to engage, as the new expectations, and all new information overwhelmed them.

Clearly evident in the findings is the moral dilemma teachers encountered when required to explain to parents the negative concept of “below national standards.” They also described the complexities related to engaging parents as collaborative partners in their children’s’ education were all barriers created by the National Standards. These obstacles all involved acknowledging the cultural diversity of Pāsifika students and their parents and encouraging culturally appropriate practice, rather than following an approach that catered for the dominant group of students in the system. The Pāsifika Education Plan (PEP) could have been a valuable resource to support the school in this regard. The PEP aims to enhance student participation, engagement, and achievement by putting learners and their families at the centre. The intent is to create stronger home-school partnerships and stronger relationships with the various cultural communities. Through this network, parents, families, and communities engage in their children’s learning.

In the PEP context, reciprocity, trust, and respect are portrayed as essential Pāsifika values. However, no member of the school staff (apart from the principal) knew about its existence

(Section 4.3.1). This demonstrates another missed opportunity to gain an understanding of the importance of cultural knowledge in creating learning environments that accommodate Pāsifika student diversity ecologically. The principal stated that Ministry of Education PEP planners sent out documents to schools; however, feedback from staff stated that professional development was not given, which suggested individual schools had to take responsibility for its implementation. There appeared to be an expectation from the school that implementing the PEP was the sole responsibility of the PEP planners rather than the school taking some of the initiatives (Section 4.3.2).

In considering the mixed messages related to the implementation of the PEP ecologically and through a Pāsifika cultural lens, it appears that similar factors to those identified in school-parent partnerships have created barriers for its implementation. In the current study, the relationships of mutual trust and respect, which are at the core of parent-school partnerships, are equally important in relationships of mutual trust and respect between the school and PEP curriculum planners. Therefore, similar to the commitment expected from the school staff to establish trusting relationships and partnerships with students and parents, there should also be a commitment to building these relationships at the level of school with PEP planners as a critical first step towards collaborative implementation of the PEP. This view is further justified by the similar findings concerning the parent and student perceptions about relationships with the school and the principles of community and collectivism that are promoted in the PEP. Both contexts (findings from this study and the PEP) value reciprocity, trust, and respect, which aim to enhance home-school partnerships, and subsequently promote Pāsifika student engagement and raise Pāsifika student achievement. The implementation of the PEP is therefore clearly something that needs to be addressed at a higher institutional level.

6.6 Institutional factors

Findings in this study identify several institutional factors that are associated with student engagement in learning. These include support offered to students, extra-curricular events, the format of parent interview, and communication with parents and students. In this context, findings suggest that equitable outcomes can be achieved if students have equal opportunities to high-quality communities of learning. Although this applies to all students, for Pāsifika student engagement, it is important that their cultural diversity and core values become a focus across the different ecological layers within the school system.

❖ **Support to students**

The school system provided various categories of support to Pāsifika students: for example, English Language Learners (ELL), Supplementary Learning Support (SLS) and Learning Support (LS), which mainly involved specialist programmes coordinated by the Special Educational Needs Coordinator and were delivered by the teacher aides. Although the school might have had valid reasons for providing the different categories of support, it also indicated a seeming deficit view where students could be blamed for what they lacked. Removing students from class to attend the specialist programmes did not promote a sense of community as it removed them from their peers and the teaching their peers were receiving from their teachers. In this regard, findings from this study further show that there is not sufficient evidence to argue that the support programmes listed above accommodate the diversity of Pāsifika students or enhance their engagement in learning. Based on insights provided so far in this study, it is argued that all students operate in various ecological settings and communities, which affect their engagement in learning. These include the teaching and learning practices in classrooms, the wider school system, home, and other socio-cultural environments.

❖ **Extra-curricular events**

Findings in Chapter Four show that on a wider community level, students are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular events. As discussed earlier (see Section 4.3.3), a higher percentage of parents attend these extra-curricular events than attending parenting interviews. Findings suggest that parents are motivated to attend these events, as they can connect with teachers on an equal footing, which differs from discussing the academic goals of the National Curriculum at parent interviews, where parents perceive teachers to be the experts.

Being involved at these levels was important as it also created opportunities for students to participate in festivals that were culturally specific, for example, the annual Pāsifika Festival in Auckland. Individual participation at these events creates a sense of pride, respect, identity, belonging, community, and collectivism, which are important cornerstones of Pāsifika cultural values. Although these events are perceived as being a valuable avenue to establish school-parent partnerships, not all the teachers were involved, which suggests another potentially missed opportunity to learn more about Pāsifika culture.

❖ **Format of parent interviews**

Parent interviews are another institutionalised practice where the intention is to collaborate with parents about their children's learning. The format of the parent interviews in this study was associated with tensions in parent-teacher relationships and parent contributions to their children's schooling. Findings in Chapter Four indicate that the interviews are conducted in an open venue that potentially compromised privacy and confidentiality of what parents needed to discuss. Authors such as Mauigoa-Tikene et al. (2013) claim that "When relationships were poor, families found themselves agreeing with the professionals rather than asking questions or making their own needs known" (p. 33). The findings of the study support the above statement by Mauigoa- Tikene et al. (2013), as various factors were identified that affect teacher- parent relationships negatively and result in parents finding it challenging to ask questions about their children's learning. Additionally, at the parent interviews, where parents have the opportunity to discuss their children's academic achievement levels and ask questions within a given timeframe, the limited time allocated to discuss their children's learning can create more tensions. In the Pāsifika culture, extended time to talk and discuss is an expected norm within trusting, respectful, reciprocal relationships (R. Mose personal communication, February 5, 2016).

❖ **Communication**

The school mainly communicates with parents via school notices and newsletters (Chapter Four). For obvious reasons some of the parents, who use English as an additional language, have trouble accessing this form of communication. Subsequently, language and communication are potential barriers to school-parent partnerships and engagement, which according to the findings exists at three levels.

The first level involves accessing notices about school events. The implications of these language and communication barriers suggest that parents who miss important dates for school events are wrongly perceived as not supporting their children's schooling while the cause could be addressed at a systemic level. Interestingly, in a study conducted by MacIntyre (2013), similar stereotyping and expectations are noted.

The second level of language and communication barriers affect Pāsifika parents' (including those born in New Zealand or those new to New Zealand), who use English as an additional language. Their limited understanding of English and their limited knowledge and experience of

the 'new' education system create tensions, hence affecting the parents' engagement with teachers, and the role they could play in their children's schooling. According to R. Mose (personal communication, February 5, 2016), the roles of parents and teachers are more clearly defined in the 'Islands.' Parents know the teachers well, have a responsibility to get their children to school, provide lunch, and focus on behaviour while teachers take responsibility for education. In the New Zealand educational context, parents are expected to participate and contribute to their children's education without being provided with the necessary tools and resources.

A third level barrier, which creates tensions between the school and parent engagement, are non-Pāsifika teachers who are similarly limited in their ability to relate to the different Pāsifika languages and the different Pāsifika cultures. Their limited knowledge and understanding of Pāsifika diversity result in bias and unfair judgement unless there is a commitment to learning and being empowered with cultural knowledge and understanding. Literature from Thompson et al. (2009), Ministry of Education (2013) and MacIntyre (2013), supports these views. The findings in Chapter Four illustrate that the school staff have an intent to learn strategies that could support them to encourage students towards higher levels of student engagement. They highlighted the need for more resources and professional development in certain areas, and raised topics such as computer literacy and strategies that could help staff sustain positive attitudes and approaches when changes are introduced. It is interesting to note that only the teacher aides expressed a desire for professional development that could enhance their cultural knowledge of Pāsifika student diversity. These findings suggest that:

- some school staff are more focused on mainstream requirements for student engagement,
- some school staff are less focused on accommodating the needs of minority groups such as Pāsifika, which relate to the earlier discussion about curriculum delivery approaches that prioritise the needs of the dominant culture in New Zealand schools (Section 6.4), and
- there is a lack of awareness of the value of cultural knowledge, and cultural understanding teachers should have when engaging Pāsifika students in learning.

The focus on mainstream, dominant cultural factors is further evidenced by comments from the RTLB group who stated that the school should make a greater effort to accommodate the Pāsifika culture in staff training, professional development, and curriculum planning. In this

context, the RTLB members specifically refer to various cultural beliefs, values, and traditions such as White Sunday (which includes spending extended periods at church), and the cultural protocols around funerals (which could involve three to four late nights for students). This study argues that cultural knowledge and understanding is critical to assist teachers towards a better understanding of Pāsifika diversity, and to limit bias and prejudice when students are away or late for school during these events. This study furthermore contends that knowledge and understanding of the Pāsifika culture are invaluable as it can assist teachers to initiate discussions around family and events. Having these discussions can support teachers to establish reciprocal relationships of trust with parents, hence reducing barriers that are currently preventing the school from modelling a sense of community, and collectivism.

Findings in Chapter Four demonstrate that parents have identified email and phone contact as a preference to the newsletters the school is using to communicate. The difference in communication preferences indicates a mismatch between what parents want and what the school's system delivers. Getting the parent 'voice' heard so the school could incorporate their ideas into the current system would be challenging for parents due to lack of partnerships and relationships of mutual trust.

❖ **School policies**

The school's policies play a role in home-school partnerships. Findings (Section 4.2.3) illustrate that although designed with the best intent, some policies raise tensions and create barriers to home-school partnerships and relationships, which have a subsequent effect on student engagement. Findings in Chapter Four indicate that the school's policy is to limit home visits to the deputy principals. Although the principal in his interview said they will have to reconsider teachers doing home visits in the future, currently the responsibility remained with the deputy principals. This study argues that although the home visits from the deputy principals are an important first step towards school-parent partnerships, it excludes teachers who are at the forefront of students' schooling, hence limiting opportunities to consolidate teacher-parent partnerships.

Another consideration is that for Pāsifika parents 'behaviour' is an important component of their children's schooling and the one constant that placed them on equal footing with teachers. Coxon et al. (2002) and Ferguson et al. (2008) explain this by referring to the traditional model in which Pāsifika parents encourage their children to be respectful of authority figures, be obedient, and listen to teachers. Consequently, parents positioned their children's behaviour as

a main point of focus within their cultural lens. For parents, these views create the perception that their children are doing well in school if they are well behaved. However, for teachers, 'doing well' is associated with engagement and academic achievement. The difference between parent and teacher views can create tensions in expectations, and result in misunderstanding and misinterpretations, especially when teachers who have no knowledge about these Pāsifika views, engage with parents about their children's learning and wonder why parents keep referring to behaviour instead of discussing academic goals.

This study identifies various forums for discussing student behaviour, which includes meetings at school and parent interviews. According to the school's policy, parents are called to meetings with relevant school staff if their children's behaviour causes serious concern. This study argues that discussing their children's negative behaviour with teacher's they do not have trusting relationships with, will create barriers (and further tensions) to school- parent partnerships for various reasons. Fletcher et al. (2008) refer to the high expectations of Pāsifika fathers that their children would be respectful towards their teachers, and the disappointment they experience when schools inform them about incidents of negative behaviour. Behaviour is, therefore, just as important to the parents as the National Curriculum.

This study showed that students are aware of their parents' expectations about their behaviour towards adults at school. However, findings in Chapter Five show tensions between parents' expectations, the school's management of behaviour incidents, and the perceptions of a group of students. The students stated that school staff did not always investigate incidents of behaviour properly, they perceived that they were not listened to and that their peers were not always truthful about the facts. When considering the above student perceptions, this study suggests that additional tensions are created when parents, who have no or limited relationships with teachers, are called to attend meetings to discuss their children's negative behaviour. Fletcher et al. (2008) claim that parents, in their respect for authority figures, will remain silent and not challenge, question, or seek consultation with teachers about their children. This study, therefore, suggests that the school's behaviour policy is associated with potential barriers to establishing school-parent partnerships.

As discussed in section 5.2.7, the school's behaviour policy results in further tensions in teacher-parent, and teacher-student relationships. Parents hold particular beliefs about behaviour that include the high emphasis placed on respecting authority figures and their disappointment when their children do not meet behaviour expectations. On the other end,

findings show contradictory results with some of the school's processes for investigating behaviour incidents. Teachers were of the opinion that:

- Incidents are followed up well and justly,
- Students are aware of consequences,
- PB4L has been implemented with a focus on positive reinforcement,
- PB4L is helping students to be aware of, & reflect on their actions, and
- School is pretty supportive about major incidents

These comments, similar to the previous discussion (see Section 6.3.2, p. 10) on reliance on external resources, also illustrate a reliance on external sources. While in the previous section the external sources included Journal Readings and class lists, here, the external resources involve the guidelines provided by PB4L initiative and someone from the senior management team to communicate with parents and students about the incidents. While teachers believe incidents were fairly well managed, students expressed frustration with some of the school processes around investigating behaviour incidents at school. For students, the main issues related to unfair consequences and their perception that incidents were not properly investigated. These processes, which are linked to the school's behaviour policy, are creating tensions in relationships, which potentially could have a negative effect on student engagement.

The parent interviews are forums where parents have the opportunity to discuss their children's behaviour. As discussed earlier, the parents' preference to discuss behaviour is a familiar topic, and it fits well within the Pāsifika values where respect for elders is an expected outcome. However, the parents' focus on behaviour could also be indicative of the limited opportunities the school system (due to school policy guidelines) allow for relationship building, which results in a lack of opportunities for teachers and parents to engage in reciprocal discussions about their children's learning. As outlined in this study, limiting opportunities to build teacher-parent partnerships to parent interviews and when incidents of negative behaviour need to be discussed do not suffice. Placing limitations on establishing sustainable relationships ignores the fact that trusting partnerships develop over time, so clearly defined roles, and shared contributions can be established within a framework that value Pāsifika diversity at the school and in the communities in which the students and their parents operate.

From an ecological perspective, the above are all fundamental processes that rely on the time and consistent contact needed to build relationships of mutual trust and respect. Establishing these relationships first is necessary to create a sense of equal partnership, which would encourage parents to engage in higher-level decisions about their children's schooling (questioning, challenging, consulting and participating in shared learning experiences). School staff, students, and parents, need to understand mutually the value of what parents could contribute. Findings in Chapter Four demonstrate that parents and students trusted teachers to be responsible for most of the academic learning while teachers were of the opinion that one of the reasons students failed was due to the lack of parental involvement in their children's education. These mismatches create tensions in the perceptions of pupils, their teachers and parents, particularly about the role parents could play to improve their children's engagement in learning. Therefore, although the school system intended parents to become more involved, it also created some challenges that kept parents on the periphery of their children's schooling. Being on the periphery suggests school-parent relationships and partnerships will remain an 'intent' only and not develop into a reality where parents can become active participants and partners in their children's schooling. Excluding parents has definite implications for student engagement in learning. Skinner and Pitzer's Model of Motivational Dynamics (2012) and studies conducted by researchers such as Hunter (2013), Nakhid (2002), and Salanova et al. (2010) support the importance of parent involvement in student engagement in learning (see Section 2.2.1). The tensions the school system created extended the engagement factors into the third layer of the wider community, which further emphasises the value of the multi-dimensional, socio-cultural, ecological nature of this study.

The *Improving Education Outcomes for Pacific Students* report (Education Review Office, 2012), discussed in Chapter Two, states that schools should use collected data to analyse their current systems, and change policies, programmes, and teaching practices accordingly. The discussion in Chapter Two refers to Pāsifika students that have been disadvantaged and marginalised by education systems that did not acknowledge critical aspects such as cultural diversity. Of concern in the discussion in Chapter Two was the lack of data and the mismatches, discrimination, and discrepancies that historical approaches have created for Pāsifika students. Consequently, these views have created bias, misconceptions, under-achievement, and ultimately disengagement from education. Researchers such as Nakhid (2002) share that systems, which only cater for the needs of a dominant culture in schools, create a form of ethnic discrimination while the dominant group "through its ubiquitous representation remain in control" (p. 244). Gorinski and Fraser (2006) refer to the focus on

dominant cultures as a process of “acculturation,” which internalises the values and identities of the dominant culture to the detriment of minority groups such as Pāsifika. Acculturation, according to Gorinski and colleague, locates the problem of underachieving to factors within the student, hence ignoring the effect of systemic influences on Pāsifika student identity and parent-school relationships. Acculturation, therefore, takes a uni-dimensional approach and contradicts more contemporary theories and conceptualisation of engagement such as that by Archambault et al. (2009). Ferguson et al. (2008) support the concept of equitable achievement outcomes for Pāsifika students and urge educational systems to consider current “understandings, practices, and terminology” that could potentially prevent equitable achievement outcomes for Pāsifika students (p. 3).

Insights from this study and the literature illustrate the importance of school policies to create systems, processes and procedures to manage the operational running of the school. Findings of this study show that although the general intent was to create an inclusive community, some of these policies created barriers that are associated with tensions that affected student-teacher, and teacher-parent relationships. One of the reasons mentioned relates to the reliance on external resources rather than shared learning experiences, or co-constructed learning in which knowledge about culture could have been incorporated when school policies were developed.

6.7 Multidimensional, socio-cultural, ecological factors

As argued in this study, following an ecological approach is imperative since environmental factors play a key role in establishing communities of learning in which factors core to the Pāsifika culture are acknowledged and implemented. Cultural knowledge and understanding are critical in shaping teaching and learning perceptions and practices in the wider school system and are good examples of how these factors fit into an ecological framework. Anderson et al. (2007) state that environmental factors have a “more powerful effect on academic achievement and related behaviours” than exploring the various factors in isolation (p. 19). This study argues that engagement factors related to cultural diversity, teaching and learning practices, and factors within the wider communities (school and home) have shaped the perceptions of students, teachers, and parents at the various ecological levels in which they operate. In response to research question three, the main contribution of this study is the identification of multidimensional, socio-cultural, and ecological influences on the engagement of Pāsifika students at intermediate school level. This is discussed in the following sections.

To explain the multidimensional, socio-cultural, and ecological understandings of engagement in this study, Bronfenbrenner's approach and the Tree of Opportunity metaphor are integrated. While the previous discussion (Chapter Three) identified similarities between the two approaches and explained how they complement each other ecologically, this section illustrates how ecological factors within different settings have created certain associations (ecologically and culturally) that affect the engagement in learning of Pāsifika students at intermediate school level. This study contends that Pāsifika students are an integral part of the social systems within which they operate.

Revisiting the similarities between Bronfenbrenner's approach and the Tree of Opportunity metaphor briefly will serve as an introduction to applying the integrated approach. Bronfenbrenner, according to Annan (2005), refers to culture as affecting each ecological layer. According to Anae et al. (2001), the Tree of Opportunity promotes a bi-directional effect between its 'root source' and the settings in which Pāsifika operate. It is, therefore, important to set educational goals within the contexts of Pāsifika values, belief systems and knowledge. Firstly, it will support Pāsifika education to become more "sustainable and self-managed" as Pāsifika start to take greater control and greater ownership of the process (Colloquium on Rethinking Pāsifika Education, Institute of Education USP, 2002, p. 3). Secondly, a strong 'root source' secures a strong education system, which ensures successful outcomes for Pāsifika students. Bi-directionality is created when Pāsifika contribute to the root source again as they become participants at various levels of the communities in which they operate. These levels of contribution and participation suggest bi-directional relations between factors within these settings for participants, which create changes at the different ecological levels in which they operate.

It was found within this study that despite the school's intentions to establish partnerships and inclusive learning communities, different perceptions about the enablers of Pāsifika student engagement affected this inclusive intend in various ways. For example, the discrepancies in teaching and learning practices were mostly related to practices in which critical cultural elements were not incorporated, and those that did indeed acknowledge cultural diversity. Findings in Chapter Four show that teachers who utilised culturally appropriate and culturally responsive practices, incorporated critical cultural components (e.g., reciprocity, community) and sustained higher levels of student engagement.

This study shows that teaching practices that do not incorporate critical cultural elements are associated with a uni-dimensional, mono-cultural approach. Findings from Chapters Four and Five identify particular perceptions, and teaching and learning practices, which focus on factors within the child and families, and limited Pāsifika student outcomes. These views also limit changes and adaptations within the classroom and wider school systems to create culturally inclusive settings.

Fredricks et al. (2004), Reschly and Christenson (2012) and Shernoff and Schmidt (2007) all found a uni-dimensional approach limiting, as it failed to provide sufficient information to explain the dynamic, interrelated, multi-dimensional nature of engagement, and in turn, academic success. These researchers further state that the uni-dimensional approach defines non-engagement as a “problem” within the child, and disregards the contributions of factors within the various ecological settings within which students operate. This study concurs with the above research outcomes as well as with Gorinski and Fraser (2006) who explain that decisions related to Pāsifika student education and curriculum development are based on the perceptions and views of teachers and schools within the dominant culture only. This is known as operating from within a monocultural paradigm and is “underscored by Aotearoa New Zealand’s colonial past and highlighted by the dominance of an Anglo-European education system” (Gorinski, & Fraser, 2006, p. 1).

Focusing on factors within the child and family results in ecological factors, such as systemic factors within the school and critical cultural components, not being considered when teachers engage Pāsifika students in learning. Findings from Chapters Four and Five suggest that a disregard for critical cultural components in learning environments create tensions between the engagement factors across the various ecological layers. The tensions between the engagement factors show that there is less commitment to systemic changes in which critical cultural components for Pāsifika students are acknowledged, due to perceptions that change is the responsibility of students and families. It is argued here that these tensions sustain a learning environment characterised by mismatches, misunderstandings, and bias, which have a negative influence on Pāsifika student engagement. The lower levels of student engagement in classrooms, where there is a lack of awareness of the value of co-constructed knowledge and student ‘voice’, evidenced these (see Section 5.2.1). Considering the wider school community, findings in Chapters Four and Five show that the school operates from within national expectations. These expectations include curriculum delivery to all the students, a school-wide intent to create inclusive communities, support systems to meet the individual needs of

students, support to teachers and parents, extra-curricular and school events and some awareness of Pāsifika student diversity and the importance of parent involvement.

When aligning the above inclusive intent with a uni-dimensional thinking discussed earlier, findings suggest that certain teaching and learning practices (Section 6.4.1) and systemic factors (Section 6.6) create tensions and a 'static' effect between engagement factors. Figure 15 illustrates the tensions between systemic engagement ecologically within a Pāsifika framework. In this model, Bronfenbrenner's approach and the Tree of Opportunity are integrated to demonstrate the effect of the above lack of cultural consideration on student engagement. In this instance, there is a disregard for critical cultural components (the root source underneath the solid black line) due to uni-dimensional perceptions and thinking. When the 'root source' (Pāsifika Peoples strength) is disregarded, there is a subsequent negative effect on the bi-directionality, which affects parent and student engagement and changes the educational community's cultural inclusiveness. In such settings, the students are provided with what is required of an educational setting. For example, teachers use particular teaching and learning practices to help students access the national curriculum, discuss curriculum expectations with students, the school provides support programmes to cater for the individual learning and behaviour needs of students, staff receive professional development, there is an intent of support to parents, communication pathways such as newsletters are in place, students have access to extra- curricular activities, school events are organised on a regular basis and there is some involvement from external agencies such as the Ministry of Education.

However, this study found that systems that disregard critical cultural components due to uni-dimensional thinking, prevent Pāsifika Peoples from becoming empowered so they can not take ownership and control of the education community in which they operate. As illustrated in Figure 15, these environments are associated with tensions between engagement factors, and a subsequent 'static' effect on bi-directionality and change. This suggests that when the root system (critical cultural components underneath the solid black line) is not 'fed' (cultural components are disregarded), lower levels of Pāsifika engagement are sustained.

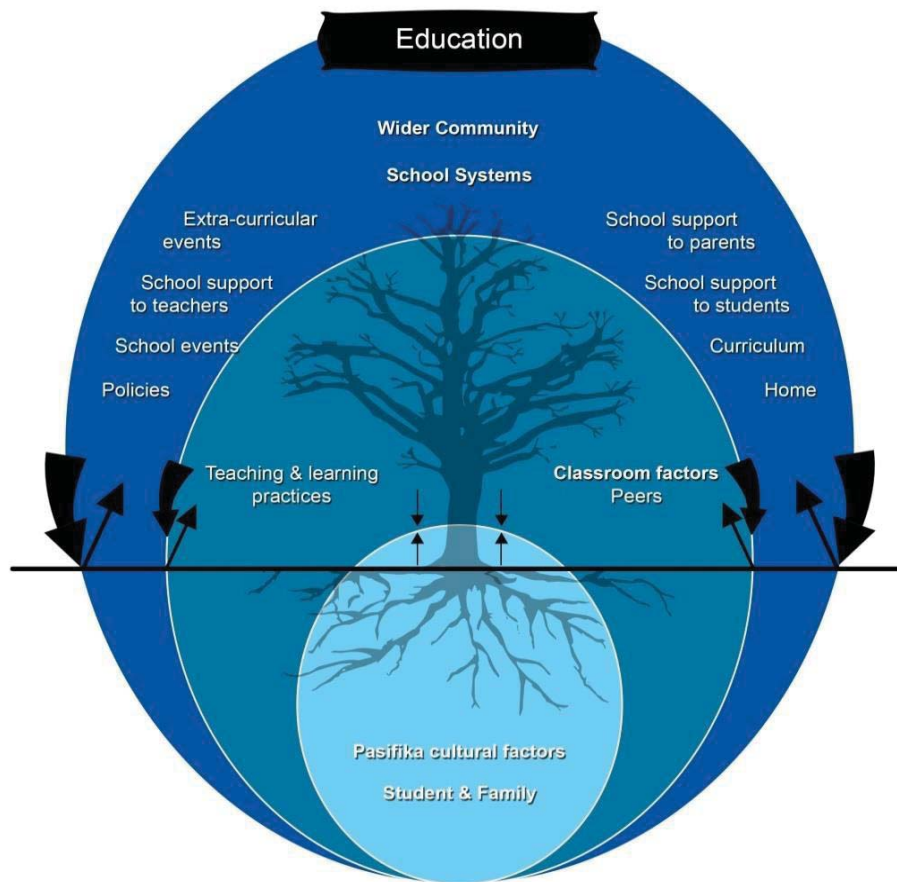


Figure 15: ‘Feeding the Roots’ Model of Pāsifika Student Engagement: Barriers

In contrast, findings from this study shift the focus from the uni-dimensional, ‘static’ model, to acknowledging that factors impacting on Pāsifika student engagement are associated with systemic, and critical cultural components. A systemic, ecological approach not only aligns this study with multicultural paradigms, but also acknowledges the roles of parents, students, teachers, and communities in their contributions to reciprocal communities of learning.

As discussed in Chapter Two, researchers such as Gorinski and Fraser (2006), Nakhid (2002) and Podmore, et al. (2003) support the incorporation of multicultural models in learning communities. Hunter (2013) refers to teachers who consider the background of students so they can draw on “culturally appropriate ways to structure the social norms of the classroom” (p. 3). Findings in this study, similar to that of Hunter (2013), demonstrate higher levels of student

engagement when teachers encourage student participation within a framework of culturally appropriate and culturally responsive teaching practices. These practices include:

- small group participation to problem-solve,
- real life experiences to explain curriculum content,
- Pāsifika 'voice,'
- co-constructed knowledge, and
- the awareness and application of cultural factors that are critical to Pāsifika (for example, trust, respect, communication, community, collectivism, reciprocity).

Findings in Chapters Four and Five illustrate that teachers who apply their knowledge and understanding of Pāsifika student culture appropriately, show a willingness to change and adapt their teaching and learning practices to accommodate Pāsifika student diversity. This study shows that teachers who embrace critical cultural factors, also acknowledge these factors as the 'root source' that strengthens and empowers students in the various settings within which they operate. These practices create equitable opportunities for Pāsifika students in which they have access to quality teaching, and through their contributions to their learning, experience a sense of community, collectivism and partnership. In these communities of learning the teaching and learning practices operate from within a multicultural, multidimensional mode of thinking.

As outlined in Figure 16, incorporating these above outcomes into an integrated model of Bronfenbrenner's approach and the Tree of Opportunity shows a 'fluid' effect between perceptions of engagement factors, teaching and learning practices and the wider community in which Pāsifika operate. The 'fluid' effect suggests bi-directional effects cause learning communities to embrace critical cultural components, to be susceptible to change and adapted environments to optimise Pāsifika student engagement and outcomes. The information in Figure 16, therefore, illustrates this sense of 'fluidity' between the ecological layers, various engagement factors and the critical cultural factors as related to the 'root source' underneath the solid line. Findings incorporated in Figure 16 clearly indicate that critical cultural components at the core of Pāsifika should be extended across the various ecological layers to sustain higher levels of student engagement. In some instances, these cultural components should be extended across all three layers, for example, Pāsifika voice, partnerships, communication strategies, community and collectivism on the left side of the diagram.

Additionally, extending some of the critical cultural components across two layers sustains higher levels of student engagement in the classroom. These involved, for example, acknowledging ethnic diversity and values of Pāsifika and being aware of the value of reciprocity between teachers and students as indicated on the right side of the diagram.

Figure 16 therefore represents a multi-dimensional, multi-cultural, 'fluid' model of thinking. In this model, the root source is 'fed' (critical cultural components) and integrated across the various ecological layers in which Pāsifika operate.

A strong root source firstly feeds into the classroom experiences of students. Higher levels of student engagement are achieved when teachers establish culturally appropriate and culturally responsive learning communities through incorporating critical cultural components in their classroom management and teaching practices. As a result, students have equal access to quality teaching and learning opportunities and can relate to the experiences of reciprocity, and community that teachers are creating. For example, teachers who acknowledge student 'voice' and include their cultural experiences in the co- construction of the students' learning, create a sense of belonging (community), and the Pāsifika value of reciprocity is evident in respectful relationships of trust teachers share in the classroom.

At the wider community level, Figure 16 illustrates that a strong root source assists the school to reciprocate values Pāsifika can relate to. This involves creating awareness of the effect of cultural appropriateness on school-parent partnerships. At this level, parents are empowered to share their 'voice' by contributing to their children's schooling. Since parents have the right to understand better their partnership role, school policies and systems should model a sense of community and collectivism through using culturally appropriate communication pathways, establishing reciprocal relationships of trust and respect and involving parents at all levels of their children's schooling. For example, the school should implement the curriculum in a culturally appropriate, and culturally responsive manner. In this instance, communicating with the Ministry of Education on introducing the Pāsifika Education Plan alongside the national curriculum might be a viable option as it provides cultural guidelines and support to schools.

The strong root system, therefore, creates a cycle that starts at the first level as indicated in Figure 16. Here, the critical cultural area below the solid line affects engagement at classroom and the wider community levels in which Pāsifika operate. The cyclic effect that is created by acknowledging critical cultural components at all three ecological layers, is associated with

higher levels of Pāsifika engagement. This model is in strong contrast with the uni- dimensional, 'static' model discussed earlier.

'FEEDING THE ROOTS' MODEL OF PĀSIFIKA STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

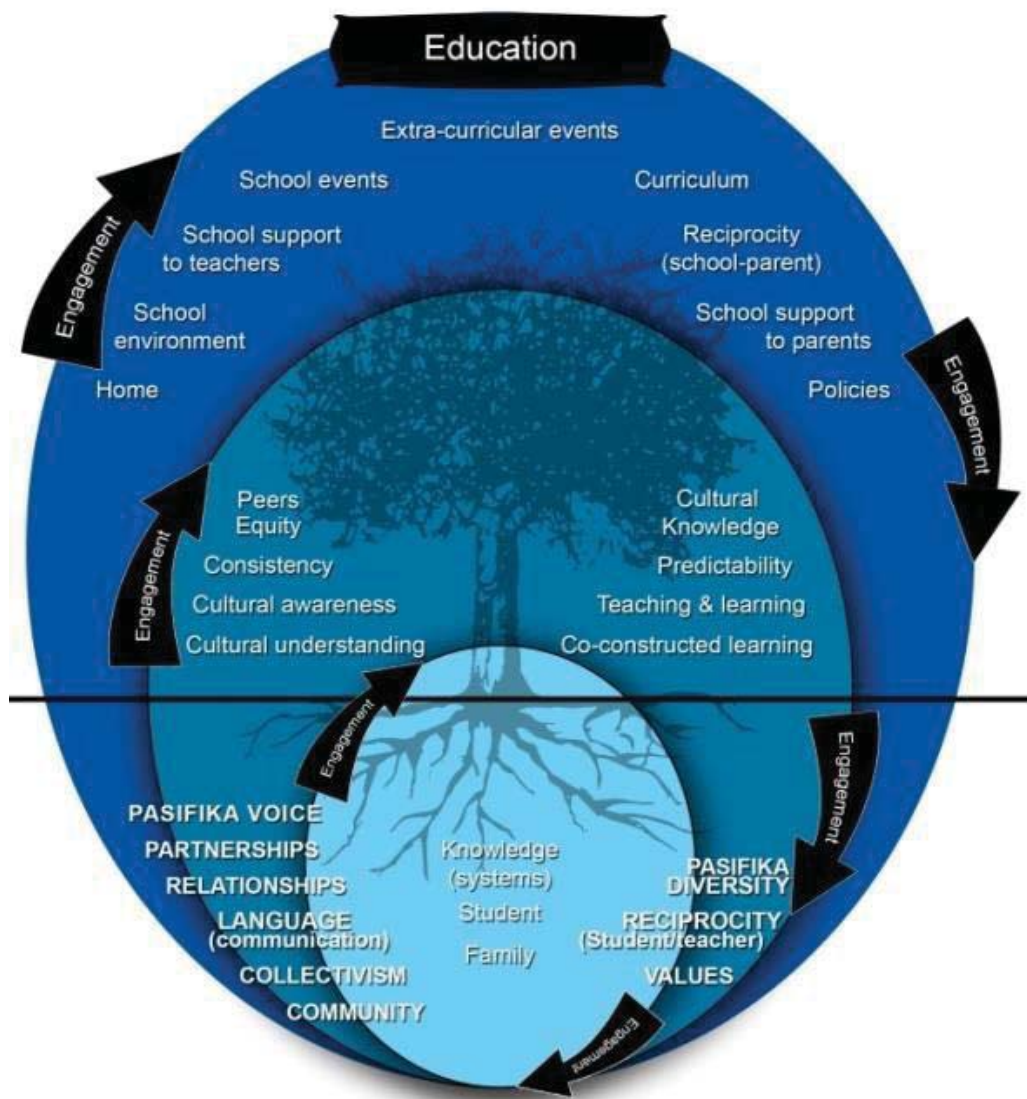


Figure 16: 'Feeding the Roots' Model of Pāsifika Student Engagement: Enablers

In this section, the multi-dimensional, ecological, and socio-cultural engagement factors have been integrated with Bronfenbrenner's approach and the Tree of Opportunity as illustrated in Figures 15 and 16. The contrast between the 'static' (Figure 15, Feeding the Roots Model of Pāsifika Student Engagement: Barriers) and 'fluid' (Figure 16, Feeding the Roots Model of Pāsifika Student Engagement: Enablers) interactions of engagement factors is a clear

indication that critical cultural components need to be taken into consideration within a multi-dimensional, multi-cultural, ecological framework to sustain higher levels of Pāsifika student engagement. The implications of this will be presented in the final chapter.

6.8 Summary

In this chapter, the multi-dimensional, ecological, and socio-cultural engagement factors generated by the first two research questions, were discussed in response to research question three. Third level factors facilitating and creating barriers to Pāsifika students' engagement in learning were identified.

Findings from this study show that following an ecological approach is imperative. They furthermore illustrate that engagement factors related to cultural diversity, teaching, and learning practices, and factors within the wider communities (school and home) shape the perceptions of students, teachers, and parents at the various ecological levels in which they operate. In response to research question three, the main contribution of this study is the identification of multidimensional, socio-cultural, ecological understandings of factors that influence the engagement of Pāsifika students at intermediate school level.

This study identifies how the school system in adhering to national operational requirements intends to create an inclusive, culturally appropriate community of learning. In addition, the school's infrastructure provides support to teachers, students and parents to set up avenues to contact and network with parents. However, findings show a lack of understanding of the importance of creating trust and respectful relationships before teachers attempt to engage parents in deeper level conversations about their children's schooling. Although the school intends to be an inclusive, culturally appropriate community, limitations and restrictions inherent in the institutional factors affect student engagement in various ways. Not only are trusting relationships between the school and parent community affected, but the school also does not consistently model a sense of community and the principles of collectivism and reciprocity. Since these cornerstones of the Pāsifika culture are not prioritised, partnerships, relationships, and communication with parents are compromised. As a result, tensions are created relating to teaching and learning practices and the perceptions of what parents could contribute to their children's schooling, which keeps parents on the periphery of the children's schooling.

This study integrates Bronfenbrenner's ecological approach and the Tree of Opportunity and distinguishes between settings characterised by a 'static' effect on engagement factors and that

characterised by a 'fluid' effect. A 'static' effect, as evident in Figure 15 is associated with tensions between engagement factors and uni-dimensional thinking in which critical cultural factors are not considered. In contrast, settings characterised by a sense of community, collaboration and reciprocity, generates a 'fluid', ecological effect between engagement factors as evident in Figure 16.

Environments such as these draw from the roots to provide culturally responsive and culturally appropriate learning communities associated with multidimensional and multicultural approaches.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Identity

Educate yourself enough

So you may understand

The ways of other people

But not too much

That you may lose Your understanding

Of your own Riches

Lemalu Tate Simi (Samoa, 2016)

7.1 Introduction

The intention of this study was to investigate factors facilitating the engagement in learning of Pāsifika students at intermediate school level. The literature review examined several ideal models of Pāsifika student engagement and the study then highlighted ongoing challenges that students, teachers, parents and schools experienced at various ecological layers. These challenges were identified as being a result of education systems that focus on the educational needs of the dominant cultural group and disregard the ethnic diversity of Pāsifika students. This was seen in systems that are not representative of factors at the core of the Pāsifika students' everyday lived reality, for example, identity and values.

In this study, engagement was considered as a multi-layered, multidimensional construct, and a model was developed that integrates Bronfenbrenner's ecological approach and the Tree of Opportunity metaphor into an ecological, cultural framework. This framework makes a unique contribution to our understanding of the engagement of Pāsifika students. Detailed descriptions are presented in which student engagement is acknowledged as a multilayered, multidimensional concept, affected by behavioural and emotional engagement factors, personal perceptions, teaching and learning practices, partnerships with parents and factors within the wider community. Positioning engagement as a multidimensional, multilayered concept concurs with views from other researchers. Archambault et al. (2009) positioned engagement as a multidimensional, "construct of school engagement, which reflects both cognitive and psychosocial characteristics..." (p. 1). In a school engagement context, Fredricks et al. (2004) refer to engagement as a "meta construct" (p. 60) in which the three constructs behaviour, emotion, and cognition are too interrelated to be studied in isolation. In line with the position

taken in the current study they argue that engagement is multidimensional because it “has the potential to link areas of research about antecedents and consequences of how students behave, how they feel, and how they think” (p. 82).

The distinctive contributions of this study are the extension of current understandings of engagement to include knowledge of the value of enriched cultural knowledge, at each of the ecological levels: (1) personal and classroom, (2) school and parents and (3) the wider community) in which Pāsifika students operate. Findings identified multidimensional, multi-layered, collaborative, reciprocal communities of trust as facilitators that created higher levels of engagement. By prioritising the Pāsifika principles of collectivism, reciprocity, and community at each of the three ecological levels, this study encourages a shift in thinking about Pāsifika student engagement. It is no longer appropriate for teachers, schools and agencies within the wider community to suggest that Pāsifika student engagement is related to factors within groups and individuals. For example, when engagement is poor the assumption is made that the problem lies with the Pāsifika student and that this needs to be fixed. Not only is this uni-dimensional approach deficit orientated, but it is also a barrier to the construction of effective partnerships and relationships of mutual trust and respect.

In this study, reconceptualising engagement as a multilayered, multidimensional construct is instrumental in informing the actions teachers, schools and external agencies (for example, the Ministry of Education) need to take to support the engagement in learning of Pāsifika students. A shift away from a deficit and uni-dimensional approach, to one that encompasses multidimensional, inclusive communities of learning, is in line with that of researchers such as Bolstad, Gilbert, McDowall, Bull, Boyd, and Hipkins (2012). Bolstad et al. (2012) explained that deficit views create educational inequities for diverse groups of learners. Similarly, Archambault and colleagues argue the need for a change in thinking that is distanced from the deficit view in which problems with engagement are related to issues within individuals or social groups that need to be fixed.

The study focused on one main research question, informed by three sub-questions to provide an ecologically layered response:

What factors facilitate Pāsifika students’ engagement in learning at intermediate school level?

1. *What are the personal perceptions of students, parents, teachers and other education professionals of the enablers and barriers to Pāsifika students’ engagement in learning at an intermediate level school?*

2. *What are the current teaching and learning practices at an intermediate level school that support Pāsifika students' engagement in learning?*
3. *What are the multidimensional, socio-cultural and ecological understandings of engagement in learning for Pāsifika students at an intermediate level school that emerges from this study?*

A key element in the research design was the integration of Bronfenbrenner's ecological approach and the Tree of Opportunity metaphor applied within a single case study. Each of these approaches was significant in contributing unique aspects of this study. The case study allowed for holistic, mixed qualitative and quantitative data gathering techniques. Bronfenbrenner's approach provided the ecological structure and framework, and the Tree of Opportunity metaphor was instrumental in providing the 'strong cultural root source' that fed into all the different ecological layers. This research method generated the 'Feeding the Roots' Model of Pāsifika Student Engagement as the distinctive contribution of this study. In this new model, Bronfenbrenner's approach and the Tree of Opportunity metaphor are integrated to provide ecological and cultural assessment guidelines as an aid to teachers, schools, and external agencies to reflect critically and appraise their interactive processes, which impact on the engagement of Pāsifika students.

Pāsifika students form an integral part of the student community in New Zealand. The introduction of this model is timely given that "it is predicted that over the next few decades, the majority of students in New Zealand primary schools will be Maori and Pāsifika" (Porter-Samuels, 2013, p. 17). There will be far-reaching implications for teachers and students if education systems continue to disregard culturally appropriate and culturally responsive ways outlined in the 'Feeding the Roots' Model to address the diverse needs of these students.

The 'Feeding the Roots' Model of Pāsifika Student Engagement is first illustrated below in Figure 17. This is followed by a discussion of its contributions and implications in section 7.2. Recommendations for future research studies are indicated in 7.3, followed by a discussion of the limitations of this study (7.4) and the conclusion of this chapter (7.5).

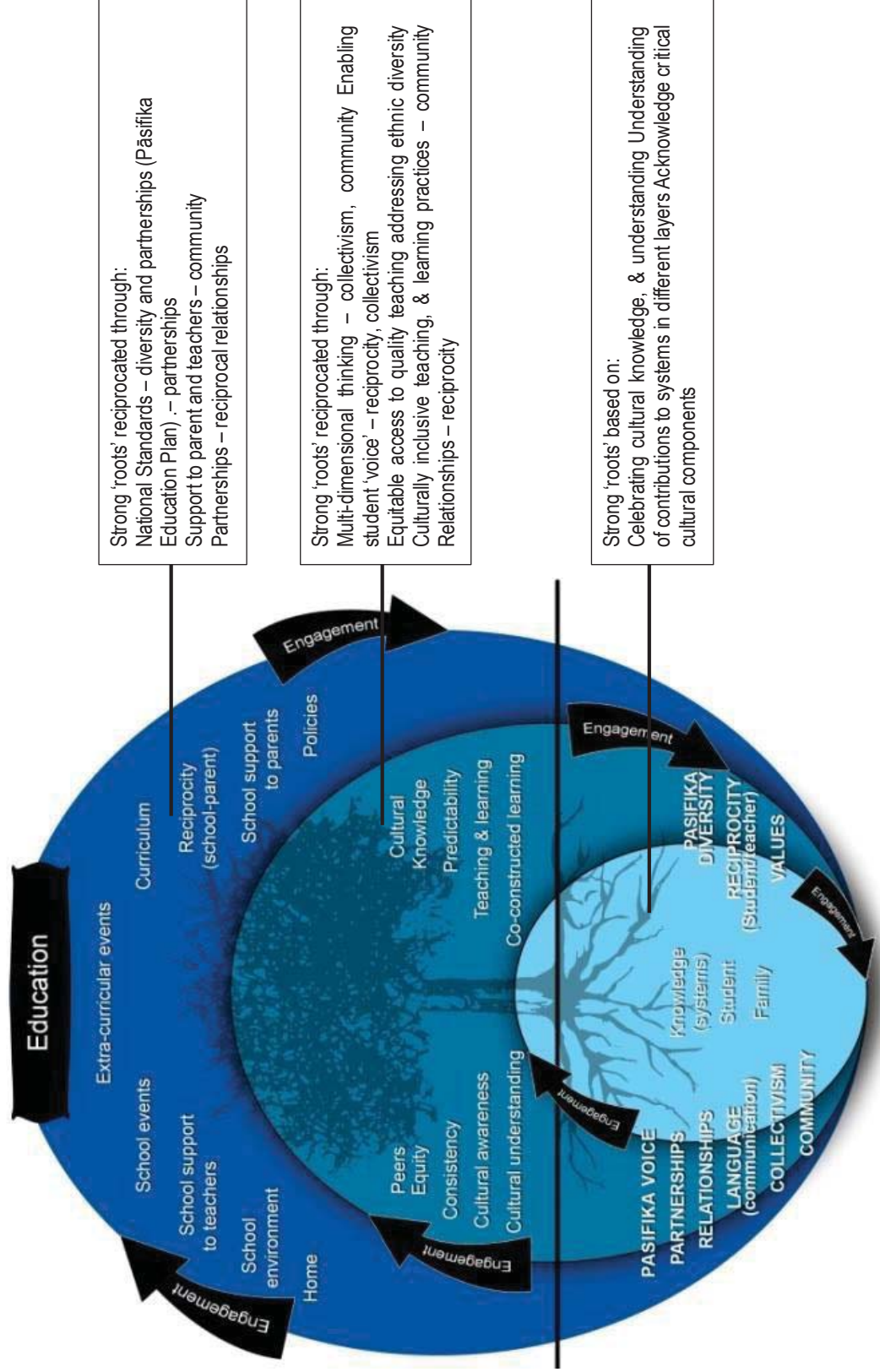


Figure 17: 'Feeding the Roots' Model of Pāsifika Student Engagement

7.2 Contributions of this study

In this study, clear evidence is provided that emotional and behavioural engagement do not operate in isolation but are interrelated, multi-layered, multidimensional constructs and part of a wider ecological system. The contribution of this study is the 'Feeding the Roots' Model of Pāsifika Student Engagement. This model acknowledges the complex nature of student engagement and provides a framework in which ecological and cultural factors across all three ecological layers are enabling student engagement.

7.2.1 'Feeding the Roots' Model of Pāsifika Student Engagement

The 'Feeding the Roots' Model illustrates a systemic approach to supporting and facilitating the engagement of Pāsifika students. Engagement is enabled when the 'roots' of the Pāsifika culture (below the solid black line) are 'fed', nurtured, acknowledged, celebrated and incorporated as critical contributors to engagement within each of the three ecological layers.

As illustrated in Figure 16, strong 'roots' (cultural factors below the solid black line) are critical to a strong, sustainable ecological system (represented by the tree) to enable student engagement. 'Feeding the roots' implies that critical cultural components should be incorporated in each of the layers in which students, teachers and parents participate, to enrich and strengthen the entire ecological system (represented by the tree). The cyclic action between the different layers, suggests a strong roots system culturally enriches each of the ecological layers within the wider system, which then feeds back to the 'root' system. Higher levels of student engagement were evident in the findings where these cultural components were incorporated across all three layers.

The 'Feeding the Roots Model' is a valuable tool to understanding the multidimensional, multi-layered nature of engagement and the reciprocal impact that occurs across the various ecological layers. For example, factors at the core of the Pāsifika culture; collectivism (representing the group rather than individuals), community (working together) and reciprocity (representing collaborating and sharing), are present in all three ecological layers. Their presence in each of the ecological layers means their influence on engagement factors such as personal perceptions, teaching and learning practices, and school-parent partnerships eliminate bias, misperceptions, and misunderstandings about Pāsifika, and also support education systems to accommodate Pāsifika ethnic diversity.

In the first layer, Pāsifika students and their larger family including parents form part of a collective in which they share beliefs and values. It is within this collective that successes are celebrated based on the belief that each individual represents the wider group (family). Community and reciprocity at this level also represents the families and how they communicate, contribute and share experiences within a framework of trust and respect.

At the second level, the three concepts (community, collectivism and reciprocity) require that the school model a sense of community. Within this model of a community, reciprocity flows between all members. Parents and students as integral partners are seen as culturally located within the community and an essential part of the school. It is at this level that their culture, values, and belief systems help shape the educational communities within which they operate. Reciprocal relationships of mutual trust and respect are created within the collective. Incorporating the diverse values of the Pāsifika peoples into teaching and learning practices enables student voice in the classroom and results in culturally appropriate and culturally responsive learning communities, which promote equitable opportunities for all students to access higher quality learning opportunities.

In the third layer, the communities of trust and respect create pathways for engagement at two levels. Firstly between the school and external agencies such as the Ministry of Education. Secondly, if the school is responsive to the communities of trust and respect parents have created at home, home-school partnerships are easier to establish. Within these partnerships, parents, based on their right to contribute to their children's schooling, contribute at much deeper levels, for example in this study, through setting collaborative academic goals with teachers and their children.

In summary, the factors of collectivism, community, and reciprocity that originate in the first layer represent the core (roots) of Pāsifika cultural values. The findings of this study illustrate that cyclic processes (between cultural factors that are represented at the 'roots' level and factors within the next two layers) create higher levels of engagement for the school, teachers, parents, and students.

The cyclic processes between the 'roots' and factors within the different ecological layers in the 'Feeding the Roots' Model, could be generalised to be applied to other cultural groups. 'Feeding the Roots' is thus a model that has the potential to be generalised across different ethnicities to understand factors which surround the concept of engagement of the diverse students within New Zealand schools. It therefore also has the potential to assist teachers in accommodating

Pāsifika and other students of ethnic diversity in their classrooms. However, in the context of this study, the 'Feeding the Roots' Model focus is on Pāsifika engagement and the implications at the levels of personal and classroom, parent and school and the wider community level.

❖ **Implications on personal and classroom levels**

The findings of this study illustrated that the teachers were at different places on a continuum of cultural awareness. The continuum of cultural knowledge illustrated two different approaches to teaching and learning practices, which held implications for student engagement at personal and classroom levels.

Teachers, who integrated their cultural knowledge into multidimensional practices, focused on creating caring, cohesive, culturally appropriate and culturally responsive learning communities in which critical cultural components (e.g., values such as trust, respect, community, reciprocity) were acknowledged. In culturally appropriate and culturally responsive learning communities, students have a 'voice' and became co-constructors of their learning experiences. Clearly illustrated in this study was the way in which Pāsifika engagement was mostly affected by reciprocity, an element critical to working together, sharing and building respectful relationships of mutual trust. The incorporation of collectivism, reciprocity, and community (see p. 5) by teachers in their teaching and learning practices provided more opportunities for co-constructed learning. The teachers' knowledge and understanding of critical cultural components established relationships of mutual trust and respect, which also provided equitable access to high-quality teaching and learning opportunities and increased student engagement. The elements encapsulated within the Feeding the Roots model were clearly evident. Within these learning communities, positive student-teacher and student-student relationships were evident, within a framework of high teacher expectations.

Shown clearly were the ways teachers had high expectations of their teaching practices and student outcomes. Porter-Samuels, (2013) explains that this is one aspect which often causes a loss of engagement when teachers lower their expectations. In this study, a cycle of preparedness was noted; teachers were well prepared for their lessons and students arrived equipped with necessary gear, resources, and stationery. In addition, when these culturally appropriate and culturally responsive components were incorporated, some factors, which might appear important, such as the ethnicity of teachers, student numbers per classroom and physical size of the classroom, had a lesser effect on engagement than the construction of respectful relationships of mutual trust founded in high expectations. These learning

communities were therefore characterised by minimal tensions and higher levels of student engagement based on strong evidence of student 'voice' and co-constructed learning experiences. This implies, in the light of views identified in the current study, that higher levels of student engagement were achieved by applying multi-dimensional teaching practices, which encompass knowledge and understanding of critical cultural components at the individual classroom level.

On the other end of the continuum, evident in the findings was the ripple effect of tensions that were created by the teachers' lack of understanding of the value of establishing culturally appropriate and culturally responsive learning communities. Firstly, missed opportunities to learn about the Pāsifika culture resulted in biased perceptions about the students and their parents, which created tensions that affected relationships of mutual trust and reciprocity. This in turn resulted in teaching practices that were associated with uni-dimensional thinking, which include minimal acknowledgement of critical cultural components based on the belief that issues related to poor engagement could be attributed to factors within individuals or ethnic groups. These views created tensions across all three ecological layers and contributed to lower levels of emotional and behavioural student engagement.

An implication of the 'Feeding the Roots Model' therefore suggests culturally informed teachers adjusted systems within their classrooms to enhance Pāsifika student engagement, rather than focusing on factors within individual students and their families for poor engagement. Applying their cultural knowledge and understanding in systemic changes in classroom management and teaching practices is a good example of multi-dimensional thinking. Knowledge and understanding of cultural engagement factors can help enhance current academic achievement levels, as it will reduce biased perceptions and stereotyping that historically created misunderstandings and misconceptions about Pāsifika students as a minority group in mainstream schools.

❖ **Implications for school and parents**

In the current study, it was clear that a lot more can be achieved if the role of parents is valued and parents are acknowledged as key contributors to their children's schooling. Findings demonstrated that the traditional way shaped by the interaction patterns established with the dominant cultural group and used to communicate with Pāsifika parents affected the parent-teacher, parent-school partnerships. It lacked the all-important principles of reciprocity, community, and consultation and did not prioritise establishing trusting relationships. As a

result, parents were kept on the periphery of their children's schooling, hence limiting their roles and contributions. For example, parents perceived their role (based on the expectations set in school newsletters and notices) as providing resources, stationery and attending school events and meetings as required. These perceptions were barriers to parents having a valid 'voice' and created tensions and missed opportunities in which teachers lost opportunities to gain knowledge about the Pāsifika culture.

Clearly illustrated in the 'Feeding the Roots' Model is the place of cultural knowledge and understanding as invaluable tools for teachers, particularly related to the engagement of Pāsifika students in learning. This is because it affects relationships of mutual trust and reciprocity, cultural cornerstones, which the students and parents relate to for academic and social integration. The 'voice' of parents can be a valuable contributor and reliable source to creating knowledge and understanding of the Pāsifika culture, and it can enhance understanding of the value of incorporating critical cultural components across school systems. In such systems, parents will be moved from their current peripheral position to the core of contributing to their children's schooling. Involving parents more will have a subsequent positive effect on student engagement in classrooms.

It is important for schools to model a sense of community (working together) and reciprocity (sharing and collaborating) that parents and students can relate to as cornerstones of the Pāsifika culture. A sense of community will help establish relationships of mutual trust and respect, and encourage parents and students to engage at the various levels of the communities in which they operate. These collaborative processes can help move parents from their current peripheral position to that of contributors, and collaborators, as they will have a better understanding of their role in their children's schooling.

The 'Feeding the Roots' Model therefore suggest that an approach that acknowledges a sense of community the students and parents could relate to, would over time, result in relationships of mutual trust and respect. Trust and respectful relationships encourage co-constructed information sharing and for parents, create opportunities to contribute at a much deeper level of their children's schooling. In these relational layers, clarification of roles and contributions will have some implications for the school and wider systems in which Pāsifika peoples operate.

❖ **Implications for the wider community**

The intent to be inclusive, culturally appropriate, and establishing partnerships with Pāsifika parents at school and national levels (as suggested by national policy and curriculum guidelines) is not enough. Although both the school and Pāsifika parents want students to achieve, this study identified barriers that affected this; however, these barriers can be overcome if schools, which act as the connection point between their school communities, parents and Ministry of Education, focus on establishing reciprocal, trusting relationships at all three layers (school level, home communities, and the Ministry of Education). Being the connection point implies that the school should not only prioritise reciprocal partnerships between teachers, students, and parents, but also understand its responsibility to establish reciprocal, trusting relationships with the Ministry of Education and other community agencies that focus on Pāsifika related issues.

Understanding the significance of prioritising mutual trust and respect in these relationships could present a shift in how the school engages with these agencies within the wider ecological system in which Pāsifika operate. Firstly, this shift could have an effect on the implementation of the Pāsifika Education Plan in schools. Secondly, it could highlight similarities between the barriers the school's communication with parents created, and those the PEP planners are trying to establish with the school as both are creating barriers to partnerships, reciprocity and effective engagement. Thirdly, it could highlight potential mismatches in expectations. Findings showed that the school expected PEP trainers to provide more directives while the trainers were of the opinion schools should be able to implement the presented guidelines based on the information they have provided. To overcome these barriers, it is suggested that rather than providing the PEP guidelines to schools via email and mail, establishing reciprocal relationships of trust should take priority. Overcoming these barriers (of mismatches relating to intent, communication and expectations) will therefore have implications for schools and the Ministry of Education. For the Ministry of Education, reciprocal communities of trust will be encouraged if trainers of the Pāsifika Education Plan (PEP) work alongside school staff to incorporate culturally appropriate guidelines to support delivery of the National Standards. Implementing the guidelines of the PEP alongside the National Standards will result in parents not only having a 'voice' but also a better understanding of their role; for example, when setting collaborative academic goals with teachers and their children, serving on the Board of Trustees and helping to organise and plan school events. Consequently, knowledge and understanding of their role can encourage parents to contribute at a much deeper level than the current provision of

resources and attending events and meetings on invitation. Changing their role from attendees to contributors and co-constructors will help reinforce the principles of community and reciprocity.

The above shifts in thinking also apply to teachers and students. Thinking differently about Pāsifika student engagement embraces the potential to change historical views (related to 'risk factors,' 'barriers,' 'deficit thinking' and 'stereotyping') and to work towards models of collectivism, community, and reciprocity. These factors are at the core of the Pāsifika culture and critical to effective student engagement.

Although numerous studies highlight engagement as multidimensional and multi-layered, researchers have also realised it has the potential to help create a better understanding of students' experiences in schools (e.g., Finn, & Voelkl, 1993; Fredricks et al., 2004; Matheson, 2006). This study, through creating a better understanding of the ecological effect of critical cultural components on Pāsifika student engagement, contributes to current understandings of engagement, and fills a critical gap in the literature as identified by Chu et al. (2013). As discussed in Chapter One, Chu and colleagues claim that there continue to be gaps in research studies targeting Pāsifika students' engagement in learning, particularly at intermediate school level.

7.3 Recommendations for future research studies

It is important to note that many initiatives have attempted to address the cultural diversity, and academic achievement levels of Pāsifika students in New Zealand schools. Despite these initiatives, there appear to be ongoing issues with successful implementation and opportunity to encourage education providers, at all levels, to establish learning communities that provide greater equity and quality learning opportunities for Pāsifika students. As Education Minister Parata (2015) stated, "Our education system is among the best in the world, but there is still much to do to meet the needs of Pāsifika children" (p. 4).

While the current study has provided new knowledge of behavioural and emotional Pāsifika student engagement, findings have also provided evidence to argue the need for more knowledge in areas specific to curriculum implementation and involving the wider (parent and Pāsifika external agencies) community. This implies curriculum implementation based on a model that follows a more integrated, collaborative approach, in which the role of parents is shifted from its current peripheral position to that of partnerships in which cultural knowledge is

co-constructed, shared and implemented to enhance the engagement in learning of their children. On this premise, a way forward and an example of future research includes:

- Mixed quantitative, qualitative research into factors facilitating the successful implementation of the Pāsifika Education Plan in schools
- Mixed qualitative, quantitative research into the collaborative partnership between teachers, students and Pāsifika parents in setting academic goals according to the National Standard guidelines

Chapter Seven concludes this study. The implications and possibilities arising from these key messages are discussed as a basis for shifting our thinking regarding Pāsifika students' engagement in learning. It, therefore, presents the contributions of this study and considers how to move forward by designing actions to minimise risk and harm that can prevent Pāsifika students from early disengagement from education. While the “Feeding the Roots Model for Pāsifika Student Engagement” generated from the outcomes of this study, supports more effective engagement outcomes for Pāsifika, this study was not without limitations as can be seen from the discussion in section 7.4.

7.4 Limitations

Despite creating a wider understanding of Pāsifika engagement factors, and extending the concept socially and culturally into the broader communities in which the Pāsifika students operate, this study was not without some limitations.

Firstly, this study was carried out using a small sample size at one school and therefore not generalisable to all Pāsifika students across all intermediate schools in New Zealand. However, through the case study approach, the small sample size allowed for an in-depth analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data that was generated within this context and for the themes to emerge from this group. The case study approach supported a process of mixed qualitative and quantitative data gathering, which enabled an in-depth understanding of the engagement factors, and a process of triangulation of the data, which created greater validity and reliability (Yin, 2009, 2014).

Secondly, all the interviews and surveys were conducted in English. Presenting these to the participants in English could have potentially compromised outcomes, especially from participants who used English as an additional language. Although most of the participants

appeared to be confident users of the English language, parent and student participants preferred small focus group interviews to individual interviews. The discrepancy between the triangulated survey and interview results indicate that the focus group interview could potentially have had limited responses. The researcher incorporated the support of a Pāsifika Reference Group throughout every process of this study. The cultural advice included the support with the designing of the data gathering tools, protocols, and processes for data gathering, assessment and analysis of outcomes. This support provided guidance towards creating non-threatening environments for participants and minimised bias. However, to further minimise bias, future research could translate the surveys and conduct the surveys in the participants' first language.

Thirdly, the timeframe between introducing the research topic to participants and starting to gather data was reasonably short, which did not leave sufficient time to build trusting relationships with all participants, especially the parents. Also, similar limitations to that affecting parents' involvement in their children's schooling (work and family commitments) also prevented parents from attending events where progress with this study was discussed. It is important to note that the outcomes of this study state teachers and schools should meet parents and students differently by prioritising relationships; so equally should researchers. It is therefore recommended that prioritising relationships should be a consideration for future research studies. Lastly, the negotiated whole class observations prevented tracking of individual students for determining the effect of engagement factors on their academic achievement levels.

Despite these limitations, the discussion in this chapter has created a wider understanding of engagement factors through the development of the '**Feeding the Roots' Model of Pāsifika Student Engagement**' which is an integration of Bronfenbrenner's ecological approach and the Tree of Opportunity. This model extends our understanding Pāsifika engagement socially and culturally into the broader communities in which the Pāsifika students operate. This ecological, multidimensional, multicultural understanding of engagement factors provides information that is useful for teachers who would like to broaden their knowledge base of Pāsifika student diversity. It also provides useful information for conclusive statements for future research studies and external education providers.

7.5 Conclusion

This chapter highlights the impact of the 'Feeding the Roots' Model of Pāsifika Student Engagement on a school system. The 'roots' are fed when critical cultural components are incorporated into the different ecological layers of a school community. Strong 'roots' are created when the different layers are enriched with cultural knowledge and understanding, and through creating a sense of community, reciprocity and collectivism the cycle feeds back and strengthens the 'roots'. Through this cyclic action, a system is created that is culturally appropriate, culturally responsive, and enhances Pāsifika engagement at all the different levels. Within this model, reciprocal relationships of mutual trust and respect, and critical cultural components are affecting personal perceptions, teaching and learning practices, and the wider community. The cyclic action in a system, through integrating cultural components and engagement factors across the different ecological layers, minimises tensions, misunderstandings and biased perceptions about Pāsifika; which is a prerequisite for higher levels of engagement. Some of the individual student comments on what they liked most about the school, relate well to the Roots Model, as they are representative of Pāsifika values such as respect, positive relationships, community, and trust, and included:

It is important to express yourself, Teachers who respect us like family,

Teachers who are kind,

Teachers who communicate well with us,

Teachers who are good role models and spend time with us,

I like to be pushed out of my comfort zone, and

I enjoy teachers who are interesting and good at their subject.

*Don't define me by looking at me.
I am more than the hand that is pushing a pencil across a blank page.
I am more than a face.
I am more than a body filling a chair.*

*I am shaped by...
Roots.
Background.
Culture.*

*Commit to getting to know me,
to understand the wealth of layers in which I operate.
Take time to discover who I can be within reciprocal relationships of trust
and respect,*

*Then...celebrate with me, as I steadily grow...
building on my roots, achieving, aiming higher,
to become the best that I can be...*

Alet van Vuuren (2016)

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APPENDICES

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**APPENDIX 1:
APPROVAL LETTER MUHEC**



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
ALBANY

10 August 2010

Alet Van Vuuren
c/- Dr J Annan
College of Education
Massey University
Albany

Dear Alet

HUMAN ETHICS APPROVAL APPLICATION – MUHECN 10/031
“Factors facilitating Pasifika students’ engagement in learning at Intermediate School level”

Thank you for your application. It has been fully considered, and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern.

Approval is for three years. If this project has not been completed within three years from the date of this letter, a reapproval must be requested.

If the nature, content, location, procedures or personnel of your approved application change, please advise the Secretary of the Committee.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R Bathurst'.

Dr Ralph Bathurst
Chair
Human Ethics Committee: Northern

cc: Dr J Annan & Dr M Mentis
College of Education

Te Kunenga
ki Pūrehuroa

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APPENDIX 2: BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND PRINCIPAL INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

INFORMATION SHEET

Talofa lava, Kia orana, Fakaalofa atu, Talofa ni, Ni sa bula, Mālō e lelei, Tēnā koe and warm Pāsifika greetings to you

My name is Alet van Vuuren. I work as a Registered Psychologist for the Ministry of Education, Special Education. In this role, I support children with learning and behaviour needs. This has highlighted a particular area of interest to me – what are the motivating factors that keep Pāsifika students participating in learning – specifically at Intermediate school level and in their first year at College?

I recently read a study by Robinson, Hohepa, & Lloyd (2009) which showed that 55% of Pāsifika students achieve NCEA level 2 and above qualifications compared to 70% for Pakeha and 84% for Asian students. These figures suggest a large number of Pāsifika students leave school with NCEA level 1 or lesser qualifications. To explore reasons why some Pāsifika students are doing exceptionally well at school and others achieving at a much lower level, I am conducting a research project at Pācific Intermediate School. This study will contribute towards the requirements for a Doctorate degree.

The purpose of this information sheet is to outline the study and to invite you to participate in the research study about:

“Factors facilitating Pāsifika students’ engagement in learning at Intermediate School level”

It will be carried out in three stages and involves following a cohort of Year 7 students through to Year 8. Data in each of these stages will be collected through:

- **Observations.** Observations will take about 20 minutes per session. Suitable dates and times for observations will be negotiated with the teachers and teacher aides. There will be no individual student observations, only whole class observations to determine classroom dynamics such as classroom layout, differentiated teaching, co-operative learning groups and additional support the school is providing, for example, teacher aide support and Rainbow Reading. I will endeavor to be as unobtrusive as possible when carrying out observations, and will clarify the objectives of the observations with teachers, teacher aides and students.
- **Interviews.** 2x interviews (one at the beginning and one towards the end each stage) Interviews will take approximately 30 minutes per adult and 15 minutes per student.

- **Questionnaires.** 2x online Questionnaires (one at the beginning and one towards the end of each stage). Questionnaires will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Hard copies are available to those who don't have internet access.
- **School data base,** for example, attendance records, ERO reports and school achievement records such as collated data for reading levels and competency in Mathematics to determine if there is a correlation between attendance, achievement, and learning experiences at school
- **The Ministry of Education's database** to determine the type of support the Ministry of Education, Special Education offers to Pāsifika students at Pācific Intermediate school.

Pāsifika students, their parents, caregivers, teachers and teacher aides will be invited to an information sharing session (at the school) where the research study will be explained. At this session, potential participants can ask questions and seek clarification and be invited to complete consent forms should they wish to participate in the study. This will take about 30 minutes.

The findings of the study will produce new knowledge about factors which create barriers or are enhancers to Pāsifika students' learning, and could therefore assist Intermediate schools to create positive learning environments for Pāsifika students. It will also help create a better understanding of the Pāsifika culture within in the school setting.

The name of your school will not be identified in the study, participants' contributions will be kept confidential and all participants will remain anonymous.

The data will be used in the writing of my Doctoral dissertation / thesis. I am intending to use this data later on in presentations at conferences, to write academic journal articles and in publications for teachers at Intermediate schools. It is important to note that Massey University requires for collected data to be stored securely for up to 5 years following completion of the project, and then destroyed.

Please note. You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question for example, during interviews or when completing questionnaires;
- withdraw any data you have provided to the study up to two weeks after I have completed the data gathering process;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give me permission;
- know that I will try to ensure confidentiality and anonymity in the research report of the findings;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings (upon request) when the doctoral study is completed

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application 10/031. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Ralph Bathurst, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, telephone 09 414 0800 x 9570, email humanethicsnorth@massey.ac.nz

Please don't hesitate to contact me or either of my supervisors should you have any further questions. Our contact details are listed below

Researcher

Alet van Vuuren
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Tel. 09 279 9867
Email: alet@xtra.co.nz

Supervisors

Dr Jean Annan and Dr Mandia Mentis
Massey University, School of Education
Tel. 09 414 0800
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Dr Mentis: m.mentis@massey.ac.nz

Fa'afetai, Meitaki Ma'ata, Fakaau lahi, Fakafetai lahi, Vinaka Vakalevu, Mālō 'aupito, Ngā mihi.

Alet



CONSENT FORM

Project Title

“Factors facilitating Pāsifika students’ engagement in learning at Intermediate School level”

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time. I therefore agree for the research study to be conducted at Pācific Intermediate School under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet. This will involve:

For STUDENTS to participate in:

- whole class observations
- online or hard copies of questionnaires
- interviews

For TEACHERS AND TEACHER AIDES to participate in:

- whole class Observations
- online or hard copies of questionnaires
- interviews

I agree to hard copies of the questionnaires) to be posted into a secure box in the Deputy Principal’s Office

I agree that the following information can be obtained from the school data base:

- ERO reports
- collated data on achievement levels in Reading, Writing and Mathematics
- collated data on student attendance

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Full Name (Printed): _____

Designation: _____

APPENDIX 3: PARENT INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

Talofa lava, Kia orana, Fakaalofa atu, Talofa ni, Ni sa bula, Mālō e lelei, Tēnā koe and warm Pāsifika greetings to you

My name is Alet van Vuuren. I work as a Registered Psychologist for the Ministry of Education, Special Education. In this role, I support students with learning and behaviour needs. This has highlighted a particular area of interest to me – what are motivating Pāsifika students to participate in learning – specifically at Intermediate school level and in their first year at College.

Do you know that studies conducted in New Zealand schools suggest a large number of Pāsifika students leave school with NCEA level 1 or lesser qualification? To explore reasons why some Pāsifika students are doing exceptionally well at school and others achieving at a much lower level, I am conducting a research project at Pācific Intermediate School. This study will contribute towards the requirements for a Doctorate degree

The purpose of this information sheet is to briefly explain the study and to invite you to participate. The school will soon send out some notices inviting you to an information sharing session (at the school) where the research study will be further explained. The topic of the research study is:

“Factors facilitating Pāsifika students’ engagement in learning at Intermediate School level”

It will be carried out in three stages during which I will be following a group of Year 7 students through to Year 8. What will happen in each of these stages?

PHASE ONE

Pāsifika students in Year 7, their parents/ caregivers, teachers and teacher aides will be the participants. To gather all the information I will need for the study:

- Participants will take part in two **Interviews** – one at the beginning and one towards the end of the first year of the study. The interviews will take about 15 minutes for students and 30 minutes for adults.
- Participants will complete in an online **Questionnaire**. These questionnaires can be accessed on home or school computers. Hard copies of the Questionnaire will also be available if you prefer this form.
- I am going to do whole class **observations** to find out more about the classroom dynamics for example, the layout of the classroom and the use of technology in the different curriculum areas (e.g., Mathematics, Reading, Writing, Social Studies, Specialisation and Home Room). As I am focusing on the whole group when doing observations, no names or any form of identification will be used. It will not disrupt the normal running of the classroom and will take about 20 minutes per observation.

- I will access the **school data base** for information related to attendance records, ERO reports and school achievement records such as collated data for reading levels and competency in Mathematics
- Information from the **Ministry of Education, Special Education's data base** will explain to me the kind of support the Ministry offers to Pāsifika students at Pācific Intermediate school.

PHASE TWO

During Phase 2 or the next year of the study, when students move to Year 8, I want to focus on only one factor, which help to keep the students motivated to learn at school. In this year I am following a similar approach as in Phase 1 as participants will once again be asked to participate in interviews and questionnaires. I will also be doing whole class observations and getting similar data from the school and Ministry of Education's data bases.

PHASE THREE

In Phase 3 I will be doing observations and interviews and participants will be completing Questionnaires as I want to follow up regarding those things that are keeping Pāsifika students motivated to learn, and to find out more about the students' and their parents' view of transitioning to College level.

The data will be used in the writing of my Doctoral dissertation / thesis. I am intending to use this data later on in presentations at conferences, to write academic journal articles and in publications for teachers at Intermediate schools. It is important to note that Massey University requires for collected data to be stored securely for up to 5 years following completion of the project, and then destroyed.

Remember the name of the school will not be used, participants will remain anonymous and all the information I have gathered will remain confidential.

The study will be valuable as it will help:

- to create new knowledge about those things which are either getting in the way of Pāsifika students' learning or advancing their learning,
- Intermediate schools to create positive learning environments for Pāsifika students
- to create a better understanding of Pāsifika students and their culture in Intermediate schools

What are your rights as a participant?

Please note. You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question for example, when completing the questionnaire or interview;

- withdraw any data you have provided to the study up to two weeks after I have completed the data gathering process
- ask any questions about the study at any time;
- provide information on the understanding that no names will be used and that there will be confidentiality in the research report of the findings;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings (upon request) when the doctoral study is concluded;

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application 10/031. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Ralph Bathurst, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, telephone 09 414 0800 x 9570, email humanethicsnorth@massey.ac.nz

Please don't hesitate to contact me or either of my supervisors should you have any further questions. Our contact details are listed below

Researcher

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P.O. Box 217 046
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Tel. 09 279 9867
Email: alet@xtra.co.nz

Supervisors

Dr Jean Annan and Dr Mandia Mentis
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Tel. 09 414 0800
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Dr Mentis: m.mentis@massey.ac.nz

Fa'afetai, Meitaki Ma'ata, Fakaau lahi, Fakafetai lahi, Vinaka Vakalevu, Mālō 'aupito



CONSENT FORM

Project Title

“Factors facilitating Pāsifika students’ engagement in learning at Intermediate School level”

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

I agree for my child (name of child): _____
Room Number: _____ to participate in the research study as explained in the Information Sheet. This will involve:

- participation in interviews
- whole class observations
- completing the online / hard copy questionnaire



I agree to participate in the research study as explained in the Information Sheet. This will involve:

- participation in the interviews
- completing the online / hard copy questionnaire



Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Full Name (Printed): _____

Parent/Caregiver: _____

APPENDIX 4:

NON-PARTICIPANT PARENT INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

INFORMATION SHEET

Talofa lava, Kia orana, Fakaalofa atu, Talofa ni, Ni sa bula, Mālō e lelei, Tēnā koe and warm Pāsifika greetings to you

1. Who am I and why have I chosen to do this research study?

My name is Alet van Vuuren. I work as a Registered Psychologist for the Ministry of Education, Special Education. In this role, I support children with learning and behaviour needs. This has highlighted a particular area of interest to me – what are the motivating factors, which keep Pāsifika students participating in learning – specifically at Intermediate school level and in their first year at College?

I recently read a study by Robinson, Hohepa, & Lloyd (2009) which showed that 55% of Pāsifika students achieve NCEA level 2 and above qualifications compared to 70% for Pakeha and 84% for Asian students. These figures suggest a large number of Pāsifika students leave school with NCEA level 1 or lesser qualifications. To explore reasons why some Pāsifika students are doing exceptionally well at school and others achieving at a much lower level, I am conducting a research project at Pācific Intermediate School. This study will also contribute towards the requirements for a Doctorate degree.

2. What is the purpose of this information sheet?

The purpose of this information sheet is to outline the study, explain how this will affect your child and invite you to consider consent for the observations component as explained below. The topic of the research study is:

“Factors facilitating Pāsifika students’ engagement in learning at Intermediate School level”

3. What is the research study about?

It will be carried out in three stages and involves following a cohort of Year 7 students through to Year 8.

Data in each of these stages will be collected through:

- **Observations.** Observations will take about 20 minutes per session. Suitable dates and times for observations will be negotiated with the teachers and teacher aides. There will be no individual student observations, only whole class observations to determine classroom dynamics such as classroom layout, differentiated teaching, co-operative learning groups and additional support the school is providing for example, teacher aide support and Rainbow Reading. I endeavour to be as unobtrusive as possible when carrying out observations, and will clarify the objectives of the observations with teachers,

teacher aides and students. Your child will therefore **not** be affected, directly involved or identified in any way

- **Interviews**
- **Questionnaires**
- **School data base**
- **The Ministry of Education's data base**

4. How will you know about our first meeting?

Pāsifika as well as non-Pāsifika students, their parents, caregivers, teachers and teacher aides will be invited to an information sharing session (at the school) where the research study will be explained. At this session, potential participants and you as non-Pāsifika parents can ask questions to clarify anything about the research. Afterwards potential participants will be invited to complete consent forms should they wish to participate in the study. I will also extend an invitation to you as non-Pāsifika parents to consent to the whole class observations. This will take about 30 minutes.

5. What are the contributions of the study?

The findings of the study will produce new knowledge about factors which create barriers or are enhancers to Pāsifika students' learning, and could therefore assist Intermediate schools to create positive learning environments for Pāsifika students. It will also help create a better understanding of the Pāsifika culture within in the school setting.

6. What are your rights as a non-participant?

Please note. You are under no obligation to consent to the whole class observations. Should you consent to it then you have the right to:

- ask any questions about the study at any time;
- know that no whole class observations will be conducted without consent
- know that I will try to ensure confidentiality and anonymity in the research report of the findings
- know that whole class observations will be conducted within a framework of ethical considerations to ensure the normal classroom routine and learning of the students are not disrupted
- know that the name of your school will not be identified in the study,
- know that your child will not be identified or named at any stage as the focus is on classroom dynamics NOT individual students
- know that your child will not be a participant in the study

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application 10/031. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Ralph Bathurst, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, telephone 09 414 0800 x 9570, email humanethicsnorth@massey.ac.nz

Please don't hesitate to contact me or either of my supervisors should you have any further questions. Our contact details are listed below

Researcher

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Supervisors

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Dr Mentis: m.mentis@massey.ac.nz

Fa'afetai, Meitaki Ma'ata, Fakaauae lahi, Fakafetai lahi, Vinaka Vakalevu, Mālō 'aupito, Ngā mihi.



CONSENT FORM

Research Project

“Factors facilitating Pāsifika students’ engagement in learning at Intermediate School level”

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the whole class observation component of the research study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that

- we may ask further questions at any time
- my child’s learning and normal school routine will not be affected by the whole class observations
- my child will not be identified or named at all
- my child will not be directly involved in the research study
- whole class observations will be conducted within an ethical framework to ensure the rights of the children in their learning environment are respected

I agree for my child (name of child)_____

Room number_____to be present in the classroom during whole class observation periods.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Full Name (Printed): _____

Parent/Caregiver: _____

APPENDIX 5: PARENT INFORMATION SHEET (SAMOAN TRANSLATION)

Talofa Lava, Malo e Lelei, Fakaalofa Lahi Atu, Ni Sa Bula, Taloha Ni!

O lo'u igoa o Alet van Vuuren. Oute galue ile Matagaluega o Aoga. O la'u matafaioi o le lagolagoina o alo ma fanau i a latou mana'oga fa'alea'oa'oga fa'apea amioga e a'afia ai le sologa lelei o a'oa'oga. O le tasi la itu taua e fia malamalaina – o nisi o mafua'aga po'o naunauta'iga e fa'amalosia ai le o i aoga o alo ma fanau Pāsifika – ae maise i latou ile tausaga 7 (Year 7) se'ia o'o atu i le tausaga 8 (Year 8).

I nisi o su'esu'ega (research) sa faia i aoga i Niusila, ua fa'alia ai le to'atele naua o alo ma fanau Pāsifika ua muta le a'oa'oga i aoga maualuga (NCEA level 1) po'o le le uma foi o aoga maualuga. O le ala lea o le a 'ou faia ai le su'esu'ega i le aoga i Pācific – se'i taga'i toto'a i nisi o mafua'aga ua ala ai ona maualuga le taumafai i a'oa'oga o nisi o alo ma fanau Pāsifika, 'ae fa'aletonu ma maualalo le to'atele fo'i o isi. O lenei fo'i su'esu'ega o le vaega o lo'u taumafai mo lo'u tikeri (degree) ole PhD.

O lea oute vala'au atu ai ma le agaga fa'aaloalo ia tatou auai fa'atasi i lenei taumafaiga taua. O lea feso'ota'i atu le aoga i Pācific i se taimi lata mai e ala i fa'amatalaga ma fanoga e talo atu ai lotou paia ma lotou mamalu ina ia tatou 'auai faatasi i le tatou fa'afaletui e faia ile aoga i Pācific. O le mata'upu taua e fia talanoaina i le tatou fa'afaletui e fa'apea:

“o itu e saga fa'amalosia ai le 'auai o alo ma fanau Pāsifika i a'oga tutotonu po'o Intermediate school”

E tolu (3) vaega o lenei su'esu'ega. O le a fa'apea ona 'ou su'esu'eina se vaega o tamaiti mai le vasega lona fitu (Year 7), ma mulimulita'i ai pea i le vasega lea se'ia o'o lava ina latou o'o ile vasega lona iva (Year 9). O vaega taitasi la nei:

Vaega 1

O i latou nei e 'auai ile fa'afaletui: o tamaiti aoga Pāsifika ile vasega o le tausaga fitu (Year 7); o latou matua; faiaoga ma faiaoga lagolago. O le fa'atinoga o le su'esu'ega e faapea:

- E lua (2) fa'afaletui e 'auai uma iai latou e pei ona ta'ua i luga – tasi e faia ile amataga, ma leisi e faia latalata ile faaiuga ole tausaga muamua ole su'esu'ega. O nei fa'afaletui e tusa ma le 15 minute le umi mo tamaiti a'oga, ae 30 minute mo tagata matutua.
- O lea fa'apea foi ona iai ma fesili ua saunia e fa'atumu e latou uma ua 'auai ile fa'afaletui. E mafai ona tali fesili nei i komupiuta (computers) ile aoga, po'o maota ma laoa pe a finagaloina. Olea fa'apena foi ona maua kopi tu'upepa o fesili nei pe afai ete mo'omia lea vaega.
- O le a 'ou mata'ituina (observe) le vasega atoa ma nisi o tulaga e pei o le fa'atulagana o mea i totonu ole potu aoga ole vasega; o le fa'aogaina o mea fa'atekonolosi (technology) i

mata'upu ole a'oga e pei ole numera, faitautusi, tusitusi, ma isi. Taluai ona ole a 'ou mata'ituina le vasega atoa, o lona uiga e le fa'aogaina ni igoa po'o nisi lava auala e a'afia ai lotou malu puipua. O le a fa'apea foi ona leai ni a'afiaga ile potu aoga. E 20 minute le umi o le taimi e mata'ituina (observe) ai le vasega i le taimi e tasi.

- Oute fa'aogaina tusitusiga ma fa'amaumauga a le aoga mo fa'amatalaga tau le tia'i aoga o tamaiti; o lipoti tau iloiloga o aoga fa'apea le solosolo lelei o tamaiti aoga i tulaga ole faitau tusi faapea le numera.
- O tusitusiga ma fa'amaumauga mai le Matagaluega o Aoga e fa'ailoa mai ia te a'u ituaiga o fesoasoani ua latou foa'i atu i alo ma fanau aoga Pāsifika i le aoga a Pācific Intermediate.

Vaega 2

Ole tausaga lona 2 lea o le su'esu'ega; ole taimi foi lea ua iai tamaiti ile vasega tausaga 8 (Year 8). Ole a mata'ituina se mea e tasi ua fa'atupu ai le naunautaiga o tamaiti e 'auai i a'oa'oga. E fa'apei ona iai i le vaega muamua, ole a fesiligia foi lo outou paia e 'auai i le tatou fa'afaletui fa'apea foi ma le taliga o fesili e pei ona iai. E fa'apena foi ma lo'u mata'ituina o le vasega atoa fa'atasi ai ma le fa'aogaina o fa'amaumauga ma tusitusiga mai le Matagaluega o Aoga.

Vaega 3

Ile vaega 3, ole a 'ou mata'ituina tamaiti ma faia fa'afaletui; 'ae tali fesili i latou ole a 'auai i lenei su'esu'ega ina ia iloa ai nisi o mea e tupu ai le naunauta'iga o tamaiti aoga Pāsifika e a'oa'oga. E fa'apena fo'i ona iloa ai ma nisi o va'aiga fa'amatua ma fanau i tulaga ole a'e atu o fanau i Kolisi ma aoga maualuluga.

O tusitusiga ma fa'amatalaga e maua mai i ia fa'afaletui olea fa'apea ona fa'aogaina e tusi ai la'u pepa (thesis). Ole a fa'apea foi ona ou fa'aogaina ia tusitusiga i fonotaga oute 'auai i taimi oi luma; ae maise le faaogaina e tusia ai se tusi mo faia'oga o aoga tutotonu po'o Intermediate Schools. Mo lou silfia, o tusitusiga ma fa'amaumauga e pei o lenei, olea teuina ma malu puipua mo sina taimi e o'o atu ile 5 tausaga talu mai le taimi na uma ai le su'esu'ega, e tusa ai ma aiaiga a le Univesete o Massey, ona fa'aleaogaina loa lea.

Ia manatua, e le fa'aogaina le igoa o le aoga lea o le a fai ai le su'esu'ega; o e 'auai i fa'afaletui ole a fa'apea ona le fa'alia o latou suafa; o fa'amatalaga, tusitusiga ma fa'amaumauga uma e maua mai olea fa'apea foi ona tumau i le malu puipua.

E taua lenei su'esu'ega ona o lenei:

- E iloa ai nisi o tulaga o lo'o poloka ma tuta'ia ai le alualu i luma o le a'oa'oga o alo ma fanau Pāsifika
- E fesoasoani i le fa'atupuina o si'osi'omaga e sologa lelei mo le a'oa'oina o alo ma fanau Pāsifika
- E fesoasoani ile fa'atupuina ole iloa moni o alo ma fanau Pāsifika i a'oa'oga, fa'apea a latou tu ma aga i aoga tutotonu po'o Intermediate schools.

O ou aia tatau

E ia te oe lava le faitalia pe e te 'auai mai i lenei fa'afaletui pe leai. Ae afai e te talia lenei vala'au ma e 'auai mai i lenei fa'afaletui, ia manatua lau aia tatau e faa'oga pe a e mana'o ai - e pei la o mea nei:

- E te le taliina se fesili mai le fa'afaletui pe afai e te le loto iai
- E toe soloia pe ave i tua au fa'amatalaga uma sa faia mo le su'esu'ega i se taimi e o'o atu ile 2 vaiaso talu ona uma le fa'amaopopoina o tala ma faamaumuga.
- E te fesiligia le su'esu'ega i so'o se taimi lava e te finagalo ai
- Ua e fa'asoaina au fa'amatalaga ma lou silafia e le fa'aogaina ni igoa; e fa'apena foi ona malu puipua le lipotia o i'uga ma iloa fou na maua mai le su'esu'ega poo le research.
- O le a tu'uina atu ia te oe le 'oto'otoga po'o le aotelega o i'uga poo mea fou na maua mai i lenei su'esu'ega, pe a uma (pe afai e te mana'o iai).

O lenei taumafaiga, ua uma ona iloiloina ma fa'amaonia e le Komiti e feagai ma tulaga ma aiaiga o le va lelei fa'aletagata, mai le Univesite a Massey (Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application 10/031). Afai e iai sou fa'apopolega i nisi o tulaga o lenei su'esu'ega, fa'amolemole fa'afeso'otai Dr Ralph Bathurst – o le ta'ita'ifono a le Komiti e pei ona taua i luga, telefoni 09 414 0800 x 9570, imeli: humanethicsnorth@massey.ac.nz
Afai e iai nisi fesili e te fia malamalama ai, fa'amolemole fa'afeso'ota'i mai a'u po'o seisi o la'ua o lo'o fesoasoani ia te a'u (Supervisors), o lo'o ta'ua i lalo:

O a'u (Researcher)

Alet van Vuuren
PO Box 217 046
Botany Junction, 2164
Tel: 09 279 9867
Email: alet@xtra.co.nz

Supervisors

Dr Jean Annan and Dr Mandia Mentis
Massey University, School of Education
Tel: 09 414 0800
Email: Dr Annan: J.Annan@massey.ac.nz
Dr Mentis: m.mentis@massey.ac.nz

Fa'afetai Lava, Meitaki Ma'ata, Fakaauae lahi, Fakafetai lahi, Vinaka Vakalevu, Malo aupito!

Alet



**APPENDIX 6:
NON-PARTICIPANT STUDENT INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM**

INFORMATION SHEET

Talofa lava, Kia orana, Fakaalofa atu, Talofa ni, Ni sa bula, Mālō e lelei, Tēnā koe and warm Pāsifika greetings to you

My name is Alet and I am going to do a research study at your school to look at things that are keeping Pāsifika students motivated to learn. You will see me at school over the next few years. The **Pāsifika** students in your class will be participating in interviews, surveys and observations.

This letter is to ask whether you object to me doing the whole class observations while you are in class.

Regarding the whole class observation, you have the right to:

- say no to me doing the classroom observations while you are in class
- ask any questions about the study at any time;
- know that your name will not be used;
- know that all the information from the whole class observations will remain confidential;

If you do NOT want to be in the whole class observations – please return the slip below

The school will soon send out some notices inviting you and your parents to an information sharing session (at the school) where everything will be further explained. At this session, you can ask questions if there is anything you don't understand.

Kind regards Alet

If you do NOT agree to whole class observations of a class where you are involved, please complete the form below and return to ...

Alet van Vuuren
P.O. Box 217 046
Botany Junction, 2164

I do NOT agree to the whole classroom observations of a class where I am involved.

Student Name

Signature

Date

CONSENT FORM

Project Title:

“Factors facilitating Pāsifika students’ engagement in learning at Intermediate School level”



I have read the information sheet and know that: I can ask questions at any time,
I can say no to the whole class observations,
My real name and the name of the school will not be used,
All the information from the whole class observation will stay confidential.
I will not be directly involved in the research study.
I am not participating in the research.
The research is all about my Pasifika friends at school.

OBSERVATIONS

(Circle Yes or No)

I agree to whole class observations where different experiences for example the use of technology will be looked at

Yes / No

Student Name

Signature

Date




APPENDIX 7: PĀSIFIKA STUDENT INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

INFORMATION SHEET

Talofa lava, Kia orana, Fakaalofa atu, Talofa ni, Ni sa bula, Mālō e lelei, Tēnā koe and warm Pāsifika greetings to you all

Do you want to take part in a study at your school to help me find out what keeps you as Pāsifika students motivated to learn? Then....

Check this out! All it involves is...

1	2	3
1x 15 minute interview	1x computer survey	I am going to observe in the classrooms to learn more about the teaching and learning
		

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

- say no if you don't want to answer some of the questions;
- not answer any particular question when completing the questionnaire or interview
- withdraw any information you have provided to the study up to two weeks after I have stopped collecting the information
- ask any questions about the study at any time;
- know that your name will not be used unless you give me permission;
- everything you tell me will not be shared with anyone else;

The school will soon send out some notices inviting you and your parents to an information sharing session (at the school) where everything will be further explained. At this session, you can ask questions if there is anything you don't understand.

Fa'afetai, Meitaki Ma'ata, Fakaaue lahi, Fakafetai lahi, Vinaka Vakalevu, Mālō 'aupito, Ngā mihi.

Alet van Vuuren
Doctoral student
Massey University



CONSENT FORM

Project Title:
***“Factors facilitating Pāsifika students’ engagement
in learning at Intermediate School level”***



I have read the information sheet and know that:
I can ask questions at any time,
I can decide not to take part at any stage

INTERVIEW

Circle Yes / No

QUESTIONNAIRES

(Circle Yes or No)
I agree to answer the online
Questionnaire

OBSERVATIONS

I agree to whole class observations
Yes / No

Student Name

Signature

Date

APPENDIX 8: TEACHER INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

INFORMATION SHEET

Talofa lava, Kia orana, Fakaalofa atu, Talofa ni, Ni sa bula, Mālō e lelei, Tēnā koe and warm Pāsifika greetings to you

My name is Alet van Vuuren. I work as a Registered Psychologist for the Ministry of Education, Special Education. In this role, I support children with learning and behaviour needs. This has highlighted a particular area of interest to me – what are the motivating factors which keep Pāsifika students participating in learning – specifically at Intermediate school level and in their first year at College?

I recently read a study by Robinson, Hohepa, & Lloyd (2009) which showed that 55% of Pāsifika students achieve NCEA level 2 and above qualifications compared to 70% for Pakeha and 84% for Asian students. These figures suggest a large number of Pāsifika students leave school with NCEA level 1 or lesser qualifications. To explore reasons why some Pāsifika students are doing exceptionally well at school and others achieving at a much lower level, I am conducting a research project at Pācific Intermediate School. This study will contribute towards the requirements for a Doctorate degree.

The purpose of this information sheet is to outline the study and to invite you to participate in the research study about:

“Factors facilitating Pāsifika students’ engagement in learning at Intermediate School level”

It will be carried out in three stages and involves following a cohort of Year 7 students through to Year 8. Data in each of these stages will be collected through:

- **Observations.** Observations will take about 20 minutes per session. Suitable dates and times for observations will be negotiated with the teachers and teacher aides. There will be no individual student observations, only whole class observations to determine classroom dynamics such as classroom layout, differentiated teaching, co-operative learning groups and additional support the school is providing for example, teacher aide support and Rainbow Reading. I will endeavor to be as unobtrusive as possible when carrying out observations, and will clarify the objectives of the observations with teachers, teacher aides and students.
- **Interviews.** 2x interviews (one at the beginning and one towards the end each stage) Interviews will take approximately 30 minutes per adult and 15 minutes per student.
- **Questionnaires.** 2x online Questionnaires (one at the beginning and one towards the end of each stage). Questionnaires will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Hard copies are available to those who don't have internet access.

- **School data base**, for example, attendance records, ERO reports and school achievement records such as collated data for reading levels and competency in Mathematics to determine if there is a correlation between attendance, achievement, and learning experiences at school
- **The Ministry of Education's database** to determine the type of support the Ministry of Education, Special Education offers to Pāsifika students at Pācific Intermediate school.

Pāsifika students, their parents, caregivers, teachers and teacher aides will be invited to an information sharing session (at the school) where the research study will be explained. At this session, potential participants can ask questions and seek clarification and be invited to complete consent forms should they wish to participate in the study. This will take about 30 minutes.

The findings of the study will produce new knowledge about factors which create barriers or are enhancers to Pāsifika students' learning, and could therefore assist Intermediate schools to create positive learning environments for Pāsifika students. It will also help create a better understanding of the Pāsifika culture within in the school setting.

The name of your school will not be identified in the study, participants' contributions will be kept confidential and all participants will remain anonymous.

The data will be used in the writing of my Doctoral dissertation / thesis. I am intending to use this data later on in presentations at conferences, to write academic journal articles and in publications for teachers at Intermediate schools. It is important to note that Massey University requires for collected data to be stored securely for up to 5 years following completion of the project, and then destroyed.

Please note. You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question for example, during interviews or when completing questionnaires; withdraw any data you have provided to the study up to two weeks after I have completed the data gathering process
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give me permission;
- know that I will try to ensure confidentiality and anonymity in the research report of the findings
- be given access to a summary of the project findings (upon request) when the doctoral study is completed

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application 10/031. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this

research, please contact Dr Ralph Bathurst, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, telephone 09 414 0800 x 9570, email humanethicsnorth@massey.ac.nz

Please don't hesitate to contact me or either of my supervisors should you have any further questions. Our contact details are listed below

Researcher

Alet van Vuuren
P.O. Box 217 046
Botany Junction, 2164
Tel. 09 279 9867
Email: alet@xtra.co.nz

Supervisors

Dr Jean Annan and Dr Mandia Mentis
Massey University, School of Education
Tel. 09 414 0800
Email: Dr Annan: J.Annan@massey.ac.nz
Dr Mentis: m.mentis@massey.ac.nz

Fa'afetai, Meitaki Ma'ata, Fakaauae lahi, Fakafetai lahi, Vinaka Vakalevu, Mālō 'aupito, Ngā mihi.

Alet



CONSENT FORM

Project Title

“Factors facilitating Pāsifika students’ engagement in learning at Intermediate School level”

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

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet. This includes:

- whole classroom observations
- complete the online / hard copy
- questionnaires participate in the interviews

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Full Name (Printed): _____

Parent/Caregiver: _____

Room number: _____

APPENDIX 9: TEACHER AIDE INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

INFORMATION SHEET

Talofa lava, Kia orana, Fakaalofa atu, Talofa ni, Ni sa bula, Mālō e lelei, Tēnā koe and warm Pāsifika greetings to you

My name is Alet van Vuuren. I work as a Registered Psychologist for the Ministry of Education, Special Education. In this role, I support students with learning and behaviour needs. This has highlighted a particular area of interest to me – what are motivating Pāsifika students to participate in learning – specifically at Intermediate school level and in their first year at College.

Do you know that studies conducted in New Zealand schools suggest a large number of Pāsifika students leave school with NCEA level 1 or lesser qualification? To explore reasons why some Pāsifika students are doing exceptionally well at school and others achieving at a much lower level, I am conducting a research project at Pācific Intermediate School. This study will contribute towards the requirements for a Doctorate degree

The purpose of this information sheet is to briefly explain the study and to invite you to participate. The school will soon send out some notices inviting you to an information sharing session (at the school) where the research study will be further explained. The topic of the research study is:

“Factors facilitating Pāsifika students’ engagement in learning at Intermediate School level”

It will be carried out in three stages during which I will be following a group of Year 7 students through to Year 8. What will happen in each of these stages?

PHASE ONE

Pāsifika students in Year 7, their parents/ caregivers, teachers and teacher aides will be the participants. To gather all the information I will need for the study:

- Participants will take part in two **Interviews** – one at the beginning and one towards the end of the first year of the study. The interviews will take about 15 minutes for students and 30 minutes for adults
- Participants will complete in an online **Questionnaire**. These questionnaires can be accessed on home or school computers. Hard copies of the Questionnaire will also be available if you prefer this form. I am going to do whole class **observations** to find out more about the classroom dynamics for example the layout of the classroom and the use of technology in the different curriculum areas (e.g., Mathematics, Reading, Writing, Social Studies, Specialisation and Home Room). As I am focusing on the whole group when doing observations, no names or any form of identification will be used. It will not

disrupt the normal running of the classroom and will take about 20 minutes per observation.

- I will access the **school data base** for information related to attendance records, ERO reports and school achievement records such as collated data for reading levels and competency in Mathematics
- Information from the **Ministry of Education, Special Education's data base** will explain to me the kind of support the Ministry offers to Pāsifika students at Pācific Intermediate school

PHASE TWO

During Phase 2 or the next year of the study, when students move to Year 8, I want to focus on only one factor, which help to keep the students motivated to learn at school. In this year I am following a similar approach as in Phase 1 as participants will once again be asked to participate in interviews and questionnaires. I will also be doing whole class observations and getting similar data from the school and Ministry of Education's databases.

PHASE THREE

In Phase 3 I will be doing observations and interviews and participants will be completing Questionnaires as I want to follow up regarding those things that are keeping Pāsifika students motivated to learn, and to find out more about the students' and their parents' view of transitioning to College level.

The data will be used in the writing of my Doctoral dissertation / thesis. I am intending to use this data later on in presentations at conferences, to write academic journal articles and in publications for teachers at Intermediate schools. It is important to note that Massey University requires for collected data to be stored securely for up to 5 years following completion of the project, and then destroyed.

Remember the name of the school will not be used, participants will remain anonymous and all the information I have gathered will remain confidential.

The study will be valuable as it will help to create new knowledge about those things which are either getting in the way of Pāsifika students' learning or advancing their learning,

- Intermediate schools to create positive learning environments for Pāsifika students
- to create a better understanding of Pāsifika students and their culture in Intermediate schools

What are your rights as a participant?

Please note. You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question for example, when completing the questionnaire or interview;

- withdraw any data you have provided to the study up to two weeks after I have completed the data gathering process
- ask any questions about the study at any time;
- provide information on the understanding that no names will be used and that there will be confidentiality in the research report of the findings;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings (upon request) when the doctoral study is concluded;

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application 10/031. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Ralph Bathurst, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, telephone 09 414 0800 x 9570, email humanethicsnorth@massey.ac.nz

Please don't hesitate to contact me or either of my supervisors should you have any further questions. Our contact details are listed below

Researcher

Alet van Vuuren
P.O. Box 217 046
Botany Junction, 2164
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Supervisors

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Massey University, School of Education
Tel. 09 414 0800
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Dr Mentis: m.mentis@massey.ac.nz

Fa'afetai, Meitaki Ma'ata, Fakaauae lahi, Fakafetai lahi, Vinaka Vakalevu, Mälō 'aupito Alet



CONSENT FORM

Project Title

“Factors facilitating Pāsifika students’ engagement in learning at Intermediate School level”

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

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet. This includes:

- whole classroom observations
- complete the online / hard copy
- questionnaires participate in the interviews

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Full Name (Printed): _____

Parent/Caregiver: _____

Room number: _____

APPENDIX 10: RTLB INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

Talofa lava, Kia orana, Fakaalofa atu, Talofa ni, Ni sa bula, Mālō e lelei, Tēnā koe and warm Pāsifika greetings to you

My name is Alet van Vuuren. I work as a Registered Psychologist for the Ministry of Education, Special Education. In this role, I support children with learning and behaviour needs. This has highlighted a particular area of interest to me – what are the motivating factors which keep Pāsifika students participating in learning – specifically at Intermediate school level and in their first year at College?

I recently read a study by Robinson, Hohepa, & Lloyd (2009) which showed that 55% of Pāsifika students achieve NCEA level 2 and above qualifications compared to 70% for Pakeha and 84% for Asian students. These figures suggest a large number of Pāsifika students leave school with NCEA level 1 or lesser qualifications. To explore reasons why some Pāsifika students are doing exceptionally well at school and others achieving at a much lower level, I am conducting a research project at Pācific Intermediate School. This study will contribute towards the requirements for a Doctorate degree.

The purpose of this information sheet is to outline the study and to invite you to participate in the research study about:

“Factors facilitating Pāsifika students’ engagement in learning at Intermediate School level”

It will be carried out in three stages and involves following a cohort of Year 7 students through to Year 8. Data in each of these stages will be collected through:

- **Observations.** Observations will take about 20 minutes per session. Suitable dates and times for observations will be negotiated with the teachers and teacher aides. There will be no individual student observations, only whole class observations to determine classroom dynamics such as classroom layout, differentiated teaching, co-operative learning groups and additional support the school is providing, for example, teacher aide support and Rainbow Reading. I will endeavor to be as unobtrusive as possible when carrying out observations, and will clarify the objectives of the observations with teachers, teacher aides and students.
- **Interviews.** 2x interviews (one at the beginning and one towards the end each stage) Interviews will take approximately 30 minutes per adult and 15 minutes per student.
- **Questionnaires.** 2x online Questionnaires (one at the beginning and one towards the end of each stage). Questionnaires will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Hard copies are available to those who don't have internet access.
- **School data base,** for example, attendance records, ERO reports and school achievement records such as collated data for reading levels and competency in

Mathematics to determine if there is a correlation between attendance, achievement, and learning experiences at school

- **The Ministry of Education's database** to determine the type of support the Ministry of Education, Special Education offers to Pāsifika students at Pācific Intermediate school.

Pāsifika students, their parents, caregivers, teachers and teacher aides will be invited to an information sharing session (at the school) where the research study will be explained. At this session, potential participants can ask questions and seek clarification and be invited to complete consent forms should they wish to participate in the study. This will take about 30 minutes.

The findings of the study will produce new knowledge about factors which create barriers or are enhancers to Pāsifika students' learning, and could therefore assist Intermediate schools to create positive learning environments for Pāsifika students. It will also help create a better understanding of the Pāsifika culture within in the school setting.

The name of your school will not be identified in the study, participants' contributions will be kept confidential and all participants will remain anonymous.

The data will be used in the writing of my Doctoral dissertation / thesis. I am intending to use this data later on in presentations at conferences, to write academic journal articles and in publications for teachers at Intermediate schools. It is important to note that Massey University requires for collected data to be stored securely for up to 5 years following completion of the project, and then destroyed.

Please note. You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question for example, during interviews or when completing questionnaires; withdraw any data you have provided to the study up to two weeks after I have completed the data gathering process
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give me permission;
- know that I will try to ensure confidentiality and anonymity in the research report of the findings
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This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application 10/031. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Ralph Bathurst, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, telephone 09 414 0800 x 9570, email humanethicsnorth@massey.ac.nz

Please don't hesitate to contact me or either of my supervisors should you have any further questions. Our contact details are listed below

Researcher

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Dr Jean Annan and Dr Mandia Mentis
Massey University, School of Education
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Fa'afetai, Meitaki Ma'ata, Fakaauae lahi, Fakafetai lahi, Vinaka Vakalevu, Mālō 'aupito, Ngā mihi.

Alet



CONSENT FORM

Project Title

“Factors facilitating Pāsifika students’ engagement in learning at Intermediate School level”

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

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet. This includes:

participate in the interviews

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Full Name (Printed): _____

Role/Designation: _____

APPENDIX 11: WHOLE CLASS OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Categories of off-task behaviour
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inappropriate in-seat behaviour (turn around, fidgety, leaning back in chair, rocking, playing with items, talking) 2. Out of seat behaviour (walking around classroom, leaving class, changing place, climbing on furniture) 3. Shouting out (non-task related: to attract attention of another student, shouting out answers without raising hand, making jokes) 4. Inappropriate talking (social conversations) 5. Disturbing other pupils (interfering with or damaging possessions/work/ person/property, making demeaning comments, singing or chanting, non-verbal noises e.g. whistle or humming) 6. Arguing with / challenging teacher (backchat, refusing to follow instructions, ignore teacher instruction, inappropriate comments about work) 7. Distracting teacher (engaging teacher inappropriately e.g. non-task related comments, making personal comments to teacher about dress/appearance) 8. Inattentive to task (Daydreaming, attending to other student's behaviour) <p>Jolly, & McNamara (1992)</p>

Categories of on-task behaviour
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participation in discussions 2. Looking attentively at / listening to the teacher 3. Remain seated and motivated to start set task 4. Completing set tasks 5. Following instructions 6. Ignoring negative behaviour of peers / external distractions 7. Not interrupting teacher inappropriately 8. Not disrupting peers 9. Student is giving the opportunity to respond academically, e.g actively engaged in lesson by reading aloud or by giving an answer or by contributing orally 10. Positive reaction to teacher and peers 11. Students are interested in topic 12. Students are enjoying the lesson 13. Clear understanding of the expectations and goals of lesson 14. Asking for assistance when required 15. Work is matched to ability levels of students 16. Work is matched to students' background and knowledge <p>Fredricks et al., (2004), Tyler, & Boelter (2008) in Gibbs and Poskitt (2010), Bishop, Berryman, Cavanagh, Teddy (2007), Libbey (2004), Martin, & Dowson (2009), Shernoff, & Schmidt (2008) in Gibbs and Poskitt (2010), Zepke, Leach, & Butler (2010)</p>

Topic: _____ Class size: _____ Timeframe: _____

Classroom Observation Checklist (1)

Behavioural engagement factors in class	Contribute to engagement in learning		Students' off-task behavior								Students' on task behaviour							Ontask behaviour represents a positive classroom environment Evidence
	Yes	No	In-seat	Out-seat	Shouting out	Talk	Disturb others	Arguing	Distract teacher	Inattentive	Concentration	Looking at teacher	Participation in oral discussions	Start set tasks	Complete set tasks	Good quality work	Persistence	
Presence																		
Pre-teaching to task																		
When task is set/ Task activity																		
*1 Teacher directed activities																		
*2 Student directed activities																		
Individual work																		
Group work																		
Combination of individual and group work																		

*1 Teacher-directed: Teacher directed instruction to the whole class *2 Student directed: Students engaged in set task activities

Class: _____ Class size: _____ Timeframe: _____

Classroom Observation Checklist (2)

Emotional engagement factors in class	Contribute to engagement in learning		Students' behaviour				Students' behaviour				On task behaviour represents a positive classroom environment Evidence	
	Yes	No	Positive reaction to teacher	Positive reaction to peers	Positive reaction to activity	Negative reaction to teacher	Negative reaction to peers	Negative reaction to activity				
Presence:												
Pre-teaching to task												
When task is set / Task activity												
*1 Teacher directed activities												
*2 Student directed activities												
Individual work												
Group work												
Combination of individual and group work												

Class: _____ Class size: _____ Timeframe: _____

Classroom Observation Checklist (3)

Ecological engagement factors in class	Contribute to engagement in learning		Socio-cultural context Specific examples	△ Ontask behaviour represents a positive classroom environment Evidence
	Yes	No		
Teacher awareness of cultural awareness of cultural context				
Contact with parents				
Students opinion				
Pāsifika Education Plan				
Pāsifika identity: learning goals, National Standards				
Pāsifika values				

Class: _____ Class size: _____ Timeframe: _____

Classroom Observation Checklist (4)

<i>Classroom management</i>	Contribute to engagement in learning		Reflective sheet / qualitative back-up for frequency data: behavioural / cognitive	On task behaviour represents a positive classroom environment Evidence
	Yes	No		
Students know what to do				
Students unable to do set task				
Consistent application of students management strategies				
Use of resources to support teaching, & learning				
Application of classroom rules				
External interruptions				
Exit from class				
Transitioning between activities				
Goals explained				
Expectations explained				
Teaching strategies				
Show interest in students				
Corresponds with parents				
Individualised programmes				

Class: _____ Class size: _____ Timeframe: _____

Classroom Observation Checklist (5)

Classroom management	Contribute to engagement in learning		Reflective sheet / qualitative back-up for frequency data: behavioural / cognitive	△ On task behaviour represents a positive classroom environment <small>Evidence</small>
	Yes	No		
Teacher aide support				
When help is required				
Seating arrangements				
Availability of equipment				
Students unoccupied				
Lesson interruptions				
Group work activities				
Size of classroom: Big / small				
Positive feedback				
Clear expectation when students finish work				
Routines				
Opportunities to collaborate, communicate				
* △ Differentiated teaching				
Positive classroom environment: an environment where students are engaged and motivated to learn – on task behaviour is mostly present				

APPENDIX 12: CATEGORIES OF ON-TASK AND OFF-TASK BEHAVIOUR

Categories of off-task behaviour
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inappropriate in-seat behaviour (turn around, fidgety, leaning back in chair, rocking, playing with items, talking) 2. Out of seat behaviour (walking around classroom, leaving class, changing place, climbing on furniture) 3. Shouting out (non-task related: to attract attention of another student, shouting out answers without raising hand, making jokes) 4. Inappropriate talking (social conversations) 5. Disturbing other pupils (interfering with or damaging possessions/work/ person/property, making demeaning comments, singing or chanting, non-verbal noises e.g. whistle or humming) 6. Arguing with / challenging teacher (backchat, refusing to follow instructions, ignore teacher instruction, inappropriate comments about work) 7. Distracting teacher (engaging teacher inappropriately e.g. non-task related comments, making personal comments to teacher about dress/appearance) 8. Inattentive to task (Daydreaming, attending to other student's behaviour) <p>Jolly, & McNamara (1992)</p>

Categories of on-task behaviour
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participation in discussions 2. Looking attentively at the teacher 3. Remain seated and motivated to start settask 4. Completing set tasks 5. Following instructions 6. Listening to teacher 7. Ignoring negative behaviour of peers / external distractions 8. Not interrupting teacher inappropriately 9. Not disrupting peers 10. Student is giving the opportunity to respond academically, e.g actively engaged in lesson by reading aloud or by giving an answer or by contributing orally 11. Positive reaction to teacher and peers 12. Students are Interested in topic 13. Students are enjoying the lesson 14. Clear understanding of the expectations and goals of lesson 15. Asking for assistance when required 16. Work is matched to ability levels of students 17. Work is matched to students' background and knowledge <p>Fredricks, Blumenfeld, Paris (2004), Tyler, & Boelter (2008) in Gibbs and Poskitt (2010), Bishop (2007), Libbey (2004), Martin, & Dowson (2008), Shemoff, & Schmidt (2008) in Gibbs and Pokitt (2010), van Acker (2002), Zepke, Leach, & Butler (2010)</p>

**APPENDIX 13:
STUDENT INTERVIEW SCHEDULES**

Date:	Time/Duration:
School:	Student code:

“Ice breaker”

Ask about age, family, school year, hobbies / interests, spare time activities, etc. in order to create a relaxed atmosphere before the actual interview begins.

1. How would you feel if any of the following about school disappears tomorrow?

• Reading	
• Maths	
• Writing	
• PE / Sport	
• Art	
• Drama / Music	
• Social Studies	
• Science	
• Computers	

2. Do you always understand what the Teachers want? (e.g., when they give instructions about starting and completing worksheets or other tasks).

3. What do you like most about school?

4. What do you like least about school?
5. What do you think about notices that are being sent home by the school?
6. Does your parent/s or caregiver/s read the notices being sent home by the school?
7. How involved are your parent/s or caregiver/s in the school? (Little, a lot, not at all, not sure). Do they come to parent interviews? Do they help at fundraising activities? Do they talk to your teacher about your learning?
8. What do you like about teachers? Why?
- 8.1. What do you dislike about teachers? Why?
9. What is your most favourite / least favourite subject? Why?
10. How do you feel about coming to school?



11. If you could change anything about the school, what would it be?
12. What happens to anyone who plays up / wouldn't listen? If this person had done something really serious what happens then?
13. If you had to explain to someone who doesn't know anything about your school what the school is all about, what would you say?

14. What do your friends think of going to school? Do you agree with them?

15. Do you think you learn things at school that will be useful for your future? If yes, name one or two.

16. How do you feel about moving on to Year 8? And to Year 9?

Observed behaviours (circle the most appropriate one)

1. co-operative
re-assurance



2. insecure



3. needed



4. uncooperative



5. withdrawn



6. refuse to participate



7. disruptive



8. friendly



9. left interview before finished



**APPENDIX 14:
CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT**



**Department of Learning and Teaching
Massey University College of Education
Albany Campus
Private Bag 102 904
North Shore MSC**

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

I _____ (Full Name – printed)

agree to keep confidential all information concerning the project

Project title

“Factors facilitating Pasifika students’ engagement in learning at Intermediate School level”

I will not retain or copy any information involving the project.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

**APPENDIX 15:
TEACHER INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

Date:	Time/Duration:
School:	Teacher code:

1. Do you feel well supported by the school system / management and what is in place for teachers?
2. What do you enjoy most about teaching?
3. What do you enjoy least about teaching?
4. Are you familiar with the Pāsifika culture?
5. Do you know how many of the students in you class belong to this culture/ethnic group?
6. Do you treat them differently from any other ethnic grouping in your class?
7. How do you feel about the support provided to introduce the National Standards and recently introduced curriculum for Intermediate schools?
8. Are you applying the principles of the Pāsifika Education Plan in your curriculum planning?
9. If you could change anything about the Pāsifika students, what would it be?
10. What is your opinion of differentiated teaching? Do you apply this in your teaching?
11. Are you familiar with the parents and home circumstances of the Pāsifika students in your class?
12. Do you liaise with the TA regarding goals, objectives (e.g., from IEP meetings) to accommodate the needs of individual students?
13. What do you think keep Pāsifika students motivated and engaged in learning?

**APPENDIX 16:
TEACHER AIDE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

Date:	Time/Duration:
School:	Teacher Aide code:

1. How many students are you supporting?
2. Do you liaise with the Teachers regarding accommodating the individual needs of students you are supporting?
3. Do you feel well supported by the school e.g. professional development and training?
4. What do you think are keeping students motivated to come to school?
5. Do you know what is expected in every classroom?
6. Are you supported should there be an incident of negative behaviour?
7. Are you familiar with some of the new curriculum content and the Pāsifika Education Plan?
8. Do you know how many of the students you are supporting belongs to the Pāsifika culture?
9. Do you know the parents of the students you are supporting?
10. Is information shared about home circumstances or barriers to learning re the students you are supporting?
11. Do you contribute to IEP meetings?
12. Do you feel valued / does your opinion count?
13. What do you like most about the support you are providing to the students?
14. What do you like least about the support you are providing to the students?

**APPENDIX 17:
PARENT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

Date:	Time/Duration:
School:	Parent code:

1. Does your child enjoy coming to school? Why? Why not?
2. How important is it for your child to get a proper education? Why?
3. Would you feel comfortable to contact the school about concerns you might have about your child's education?
4. Do you participate in the school activities such as fundraisers and parent interviews?
5. Have you met your child's teacher?
6. Do you read the notices that are being sent home by the school? If no, Why not?
7. How do you help your child with his/her homework?
8. Would you like to see your child move on to Year 9? What are your future expectations for your child?
9. Do you agree with the school's management of behaviour incidents?
10. If you could change anything about the school what would it be?
11. What do you like most / least about the school?
12. What is keeping your child motivated to come to school?
13. Have you met the Principal of the school?
14. How do you think can you best contribute to your child's schooling?

**APPENDIX 18:
PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

Date:	Time/Duration:
School:	Code:

1. Do you feel well supported by the Senior Management Team and the BOT?
2. What do you enjoy most about your position as principal?
3. How many Pāsifika BOT members?
4. What do you enjoy least about your role?
5. Are you familiar with the Pāsifika culture and how do you accommodate this in staff training, professional development and curriculum planning?
6. Do you know how many of the students in your school belong to this culture/ethnic group?
7. Do you treat them differently from any other ethnic grouping in your school?
8. How do you feel about the support provided to introduce the National Standards and recently introduced curriculum for Intermediate schools?
9. What does the BOT and SR management do to accommodate school- parent partnership?
10. Are you aware of the principles of the Pāsifika Education Plan and are you willing to apply these in your curriculum planning?
11. If you could change anything about the students or your school, what would it be?
12. What is your opinion of differentiated teaching? Do you expect teachers to apply this in their teaching?
13. Are you familiar with the parents and home circumstances of the students in your school? How easy is it to engage Pāsifika parents in the schooling of the children?
14. Do you think there is evidence of a good parent-school partnership – particularly Pāsifika parents?
15. Is it an expectation for teachers to liaise with the TA regarding goals, objectives (e.g., from IEP meetings) so they can accommodate the needs of individual students?
16. What do you think keep students motivated and engaged in learning?

**APPENDIX 19:
RTL B INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

Date:	Time/Duration:
School:	Code:

1. Do you think the BOT supports the Senior Management Team and Principal well?
2. What do you perceive as the school’s biggest contributor to engaging students? Do you think differentiated teaching is applied in the teaching practices in the school?
3. What do you think can be improved on from an RTL B point of view?
4. Do you think the Pāsifika culture is accommodated in staff training, professional development and curriculum planning?
5. Do you think teachers have a good understanding of the Pāsifika culture? How can they accommodate their knowledge in their teaching practices?
6. Do you think staff knows how many of the students in the school belong to this culture/ethnic group?
7. Are you aware of the principles of the Pāsifika Education Plan and do you think they should be applied in future curriculum planning?
8. Do you think the staff is familiar with the parents and home circumstances of the students in your school? To your opinion, how easy is it to engage Pāsifika parents in the schooling of the children?
9. Is there evidence of a good parent-school partnership – particularly with Pāsifika parents? To your opinion, how easy is it to engage Pāsifika parents in the schooling of the children?
10. What do you think keep Pāsifika students motivated and engaged in learning?

**APPENDIX 20:
PARENT SURVEY**

Parents' Survey

RESEARCH TOPIC: FACTORS FACILITATING PĀSIFIKA STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT IN LEARNING AT INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL LEVEL

Please follow the instructions below to complete the survey. Information obtained will remain confidential and will only be used for the purposes of the study project.

Date:

Indicate your level of Agreement / Disagreement with the following statements using the following rating scale: Click on "submit" when you are done with this page

5
Strongly agree
4
Slightly agree
3
Neither agree nor disagree
2
Slightly disagree
1
Strongly disagree

1. Statement

Statement	Scale				
	5	4	3	2	1
School / parent partnerships					
Example Parents and schools are important in a child's life	X				
1. Parents and the school should be partners, because it will make sure the children are learning and doing well at school					
2. I know all about the Pāsifika Education Plan and what the school expects of me in terms of my child's learning					
3. I know who the principal and members of the board of trustees are					
4. The teachers talk to parents about their children to help the children do better at school					
5. As a parent, I give the school feedback about the learning of my child/children					
6. My opinion counts when it comes to the learning outcomes of my child					
7. The school offers opportunities for parents to learn about learning so parents can help their children do better in their school work					
8. Parents can contact the school any time when they want to talk about their children's learning					

School / parent partnerships continue	5	4	3	2	1
9. Social and informal events for parents are being held at school					
10. I have met my child's / children's teacher / s					
11. I am happy with the support my child /children receives at school					
12. Teachers have high expectations for my child / children					
13. My child / children enjoys coming to school					
14. I want my child /children to do well at school					
15. The teachers are very supportive of my child / children					
16. The school has a good understanding of the Pāsifika culture in terms of my child /children's learning					
17. I know what type of support my child / children receives from the school, (e.g., Rainbow Reading, RTLB, Special Education)					
18. The notices from the school are easy to understand					
19. I am happy with how the school deals with behaviour issues					
20. I would like to be more involved in my child / children's schooling					

2. List a few good things about the school.

3. What would you like to see changed about the school?

4. How do you contribute to the school community?

Thank you for completing the survey. The time and effort you put into this is appreciated.

**APPENDIX 21:
STUDENT SURVEY**

Student Survey

RESEARCH TOPIC: FACTORS FACILITATING PĀSIFIKA STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT IN LEARNING AT INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL LEVEL

Please follow the instructions below to complete the survey. Information obtained will be regarded as confidential and will only be used for the purposes of the study project.

Date:

Are you a boy / girl (circle the right one)

Answer the following questions about your school. Click on "submit" when you are done with this page

5
Strongly agree
4
Slightly agree
3
Neither agree nor disagree
2
Slightly disagree
1
Strongly disagree

1. Statement

Statement	Scale				
	5	4	3	2	1
1. I enjoy reading					
2. Maths is my favourite subject					
3. I like writing					
4. My teachers understand me					
5. I understand the work presented by the teachers					
6. I ask if I don't understand instructions					
7. I appreciate a Teacher Aide helping me with the work					
8. I enjoy Art					
9. I enjoy Specialisation					
10. I have good friends at school					



Statement	Scale				
	5	4	3	2	1
School / parent partnerships					
11. My parent/caregiver read the notices that are being sent home					
12. My parent/caregiver talks to my teachers about my learning					
13. My parents want me to do well at school					
14. My parents feel proud of me when I do well at school and talk to me about it					
15. My parents help me with my homework					
16. My parents know they can contact the school any time if they want to talk about my learning					
17. There are special events at school where school staff, parents and their children can have fun together					
18. I am proud of being Pāsifika					
19. Everyone at school knows about my culture					
20. There are activities at school that are all about the Pāsifika culture					
21. We do group work in class					
22. We have buddy support in class					
23. We work on our own in class					
24. There are people at school I can trust					
25. I have someone at school I can talk to if I am upset					
26. There is some bullying happening in our school					
27. I am doing well with my schoolwork					
28. My teachers support me with my learning at school					
29. I want to do well at school					
30. We have lots of fun and good times at school					
31. I feel afraid to come to school					
32. I like Science					
33. I understand what will happen if I don't follow the school rules					
34. I am leaving school as soon as I am the right age					

2. What do you like most about school?

3. What do you like least about school?

4. What would you like to change about school?



Thank you for completing the survey

**APPENDIX 22:
TEACHER SURVEY**

Teachers' Survey

RESEARCH TOPIC: FACTORS FACILITATING PĀSIFIKA STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT IN LEARNING AT INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL LEVEL

Please follow the instructions below to complete the survey. Information obtained will remain confidential and will only be used for the purposes of the study project.

Date: _____

Relationship to students: Home room teacher
Full time teacher
Reliever

Subject/s taught: _____

Teacher's nationality: _____

Number of students in class: _____

Diagnostic information

Number of students in class with primary diagnosis as stated in school records:

ADD /ADHD: _____

Autism: _____

Asperger syndrome: _____

Other diagnoses (please specify and indicate number):

Number of students in class receiving support for

Specific learning difficulties: Reading _____ Mathematics _____ Spelling _____

Emotional / Behaviour difficulties: _____

Visual or hearing difficulties: _____

Number of students in class using a wheelchair as primary means of mobility _____

Most areas in school are wheelchair accessible? Yes _____

School has at least one wheelchair accessible bathroom? Yes _____ No _____

Outside areas are wheelchair accessible? Yes _____ No _____

Number of students in your class attending the breakfast club: _____

Number of students who don't bring morning tea or lunch to school: _____

Number of students who bring junk food and fizzy drinks to school: _____

How many Year 7 classes are there in the school? _____

Indicate your level of Agreement / Disagreement with the following statements using the following rating scale: Click on "submit" when you are done with this page

5
Strongly agree
4
Slightly agree
3
Neither agree nor disagree
2
Slightly disagree
1
Strongly disagree

1. Statement

Statement	Scale				
	5	4	3	2	1
Example Parents and schools are important in a child's life	X				
1. I am familiar with the principles of the newly introduced National Standards					
2. The National Standards are clear, concise and easy to understand and implement					
3. Everyone involved in curriculum planning at the school knows exactly what is expected					
4. I am confident about my classroom management and its outcomes contribution to student s' reading					
5. The National Standards will produce better reading outcomes for students at the school					
6. The Pāsifika Education Plan has been introduced at your school					
7. I am confident to deal with incidents of negative student behaviour					
8. The school has clear expectations regarding conflict resolution (for students) and uses this model effectively					
9. I am utilising adapted curriculum / differentiated teaching strategies to accommodate the diverse needs of students effectively					
10. The National Standards requires a big commitment (time and non-stop effort) and needs whole school support to function effectively					
11. Incidents of negative behaviour is managed effectively in the school					

Statement	Scale				
	Yes	No	Don't know	True for other Ethnic groups	True for Pāsifika
School / parent partnerships					
12. The engagement of parents contributes to a better partnership ethos, not only in the school but in the community as a whole					
13. Parents are aware of my expectation of their children's learning and reinforce these at home					
14. Students are respectful towards me					
15. I draw on the parents' knowledge of their children					
16. I receive positive feedback from parents about the learning culture of their children					
17. Home circumstances contribute to learning outcomes of students					
18. The school offers opportunities for parents to learn about learning so they can support their children to achieve					
19. I have an open door policy for parents to contact me about their children's learning					
20. Social and informal events for parents are being held at school					
21. The school offers opportunities for parents to learn about learning so they can support their children to achieve					
22. The school has an open door policy for parents to contact the school					
23. Parents support their children with their homework					
Statement	Scale				
	5	4	3	2	1
24. I am familiar with different policies pertaining to Education in New Zealand (e.g., SE 2000, Pāsifika Education Plan, National Standards)					
25. I am well supported in my the delivery of curriculum expectations					
26. I have high expectations for the students in the classes					
27. I liaise with teacher aides frequently regarding goals and objectives for lessons and their individual support to students					
28. Students at Intermediate level are difficult to engage in learning					
29. New teachers are well informed about the different cultures and ways of engaging these students in the curriculum appropriately					

2. List any POSITIVE ATTRIBUTES of the National Standards

3. List any factors that are to your opinion HAMPERING successful implementation of the curriculum at your school.

4. List anything that could contribute to improved learning outcomes for students

5. GENERAL COMMENTS about the management of incidents of negative behaviour

Thank you for completing the survey. The time and effort put into this is appreciated.

**APPENDIX 23:
TEACHER AIDE SURVEY**

Teacher Aides' Survey

RESEARCH TOPIC: FACTORS FACILITATING PĀSIFIKA STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT IN LEARNING AT INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL LEVEL

Please follow the instructions below to complete the survey. Information obtained will remain confidential and will only be used for the purposes of the study project.

Date:

Indicate your level of Agreement / Disagreement with the following statements using the following rating scale: (Click on "submit" when you are done with this page)

5
Strongly agree
4
Slightly agree
3
Neither agree nor disagree
2
Slightly disagree
1
Strongly disagree

1. Statement

Statement	Scale				
Example	5	4	3	2	1
Parents and schools are important in a child's life	X				
1. Teachers liaise with Teacher Aides frequently about support they can provide to individual goals objectives and students					
2. The newly introduced National Standards is clear, concise and easy to understand & implement					
3. Everyone involved in curriculum delivery at your school knows exactly what is expected of them					
4. As a Teacher Aide I feel confident about providing support to students					
5. The Pāsifika Education Plan has been introduced at your school					
6. Teacher Aide are well supported when there are incidents of negative student behaviour					
7. The school has clear expectations regarding conflict resolution (for students) and uses this model effectively					
8. Teachers are utilising adapted curriculum / differentiated teaching strategies to accommodate the diverse needs of students. Teacher Aides support with these					
9. The whole school focuses on better outcomes for students					
10. Incidents of negative behaviour is dealt with effectively in your school					

School / parent partnerships	Yes	No	Don't know	True for other Ethnic groups	True for Pāsifika
11. The engagement of parents contributes to a better partnership ethos, not only in the school but in the community as a whole					
12. Parents are aware of the expectations of the school of their children and reinforce these at home					
13. Students are respectful towards the teacher aides					
14. Teacher aides communicate with the parents and draw on their knowledge of their children.					
15. There is a lot of positive feedback from parents about the learning culture of their children					
16. Home circumstances contribute to learning outcomes of students.					
17. The school offers opportunities for parents to learn about learning so they can support their children to achieve					
18. The school has an open door policy for parents to contact the school					
19. Social and informal events for parents are being held at school.					
20 Teacher aides receive sufficient professional development to support students in a culturally appropriate way					
Statement	Scale				
	5	4	3	2	1
21. Teacher Aides are provided with professional development to better equip them for the work they are doing with students					
22. Teacher Aides feel well supported by the school staff					
23. Teacher Aides have high expectations for the students in the school					
24. Students sometimes refuse Teacher Aide support					
25. Students at Intermediate level are difficult to engage in learning					
26. New Teacher Aides are well informed about the different cultures and ways of helping these students to engage in learning					

2. List any POSITIVE attributes of the school regarding support to Teacher Aides

3. List any factors that are to your opinion HAMPERING successful implementation of the Curriculum at your school.

4. List anything that could contribute to improved learning outcomes for students

5. GENERAL COMMENTS about the management of incidents of negative behaviour

Thank you for completing the Questionnaire

APPENDIX 24:
 PERMISSION FROM DARTWOOD MUSEUM IN QUEENSLAND (IMAGES)



Hood Museum of Art **APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO PUBLISH**
 6034 Hood Dartmouth College Hanover, N.H. 03755-3591
 Tel: 603 646-2808 Fax: 603 646-1400

Date: August 12, 2010
Applicant: Alet Van vuuren
Address: 56 Skip Lane, Botany Downs, 2013
Telephone: 09 279 9867
E-mail: alet@xtra.co.nz

<u>Applies for Permission to reproduce:</u>	<u>Color</u>	<u>B&W</u>	<u>Inside</u>	<u>Cover</u>	<u>Other</u>
	X		X		X
Object No.: 2005.30.2					
Artist/Maker: Oceania Polynesia Tonga Tongatapu Island					
Title: Barkcloth Mat					
Object Date: mid-1980's					
Materials: Paper mulberry bark, natural pigments					
Dimensions: 90 1/2 x 91 in. (229.9 x 231.1 cm) (irr.)					

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

In the Following publication: PhD degree – part of border @ bottom of page (Information sheets to participants)

Author: Alet van Vuuren
Publisher and Address: Massey University, College of Education, Albany Campus
Expected date of Publication: 2015

Please circle all that apply:

<u>Commercial</u>	<u>Non-profit</u>	<u>Advertising</u>
<u>Periodical</u>	<u>Dissertation</u>	<u>Textbook</u>
<u>Book</u>	<u>Other</u> X	<u>Exhibition Catalogue</u>

Distribution rights desired (one time usage)

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By completing and signing this application for permission to publish, the applicant agrees that permission is subject to the Conditions noted on the accompanying sheet and further agrees to promptly pay all applicable fees.

Please complete, sign and return to the Hood Museum of Art, attention: Photo Services.
 A countersigned copy will be returned to you when permission is granted.

Signature of applicant: _____ Date 10/09/10
Please print name and title: Alet van Vuuren

Signed for the Museum:  _____ Date 9/15/10
Name and Title: Rebecca Fawcett, Registrarial Assistant

**APPENDIX 25:
ABSENCES**

St nr	Year 2011		Total	Year 2012		Total
	Number of days present	Total number of days per annum	Percentage	Number of days present	Total number of days per annum	Percentage
1.	194	194	100	147	149	98.65
2.	192	194	98.96	167	170	98.23
3.	177	194	91.23	165	170	97.05
4.	161	194	82.9	145	170	85.29
5.	187	194	96.39	167	170	98.23
6.	192	194	98.96	156	170	91.76
7.	194	194	100	168	170	98.8
8.	184	194	94.8	166	170	97.6
9.	185	194	95.3	170	170	100
10.	159	190	81.9	40	46	86.9
11.	177	194	91.23	165	170	97.05
12.	186	194	95.8	116	170	68.23
13.	161	194	82.9	143	170	84.11
14.	167	194	86.08	44	64	68.75
15.	192	194	98.96	162	170	95.2
16.	186	194	95.8	153	170	90.0
17.	192	194	98.96	159	170	93.5
18.	182	194	93.8	159	170	93.5
19.	183	194	94.3	163	170	95.8
20.	173	194	89.1	113	170	66.47
21.	129	136	94.8	166	170	97.6
22.	185	194	95.3	163	170	95.8
23.	190	194	97.9	164	170	96.4
24.	193	194	99.4	158	170	92.9
25.	191	194	98.4	170	170	100

	Year 2011		Total	Year 2012		Total
	Number of days present	Total number of days per annum	Percentage	Number of days present	Total number of days per annum	Percentage
26.	184	194	94.8	148	170	87.0
27.	184	194	94.8	157	171	91.8
28.	183	194	94.3	170	171	99.4
29.	146	194	75.25	148	170	87.0
30.	188	194	92.7	168	171	98.2
31.	182	190	93.8	170	170	100
32.	170	194	87.6	139	171	81.2
33.	190	194	97.9	169	171	98.8
34.	184	194	94.8	168	171	98.2
35.	182	194	93.8	165	171	96.49
36.	153	194	78.8	131	171	76.6
37.	190	194	97.9	171	171	100
38.	187	194	96.3	162	170	94.7

**APPENDIX 26:
FOOD AT SCHOOL SPSS RESULTS: FOOD AT SCHOOL**

Breakfast Club

Only a small number (n=3) of students made use of this service because students were too proud to accept help (Teacher interview results)

Breakfast Club

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	0	5	41.7	62.5	62.5
	1	1	8.3	12.5	75.0
Valid					
	2	2	16.7	25.0	100.0
	Total	8	66.7	100.0	
Missing	System	4	33.3		
Total		12	100.0		

Morning Tea

Between four and twenty students per class brought no morning tea or lunch to school (Teacher interview results)

Morning Tea and Lunch

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	0	3	25.0	27.3	27.3
	4	1	8.3	9.1	36.4
	6	2	16.7	18.2	54.5
	8	1	8.3	9.1	63.6
Valid					
	15	2	16.7	18.2	81.8
	16	1	8.3	9.1	90.9
	20	1	8.3	9.1	100.0
	Total	11	91.7	100.0	
Missing	System	1	8.3		
Total		12	100.0		

Junkfood

Between 3 and 32 students per class bring junk food to school on a daily basis

Junk Food

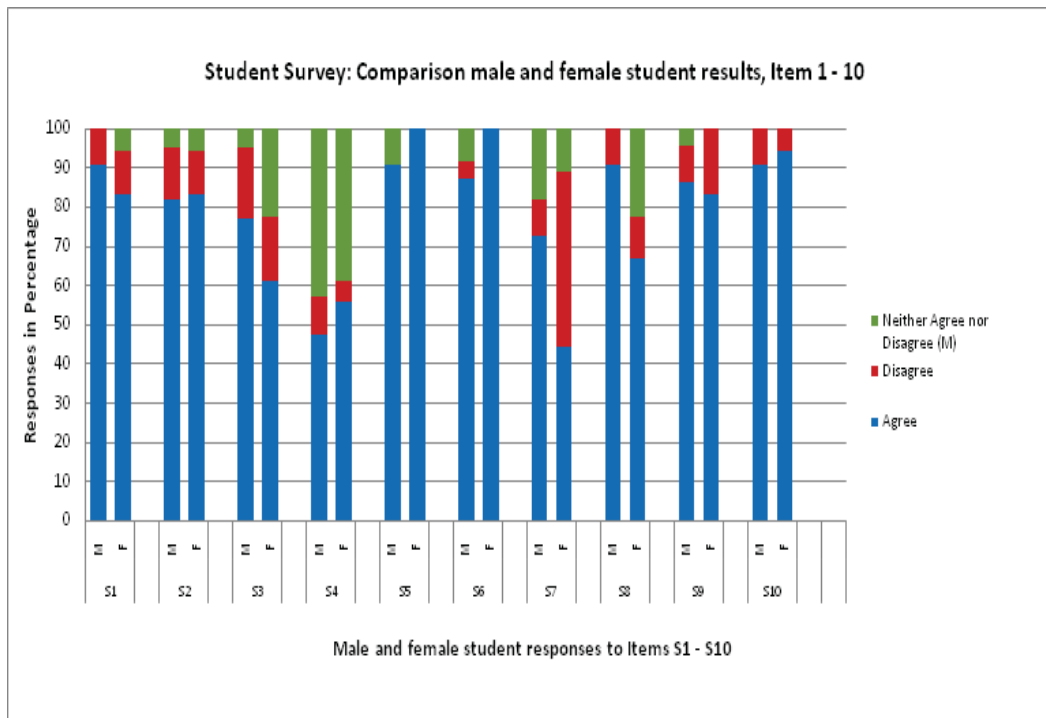
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	3	1	8.3	9.1	9.1
	7	1	8.3	9.1	18.2
	10	2	16.7	18.2	36.4
	12	1	8.3	9.1	45.5
	15	1	8.3	9.1	54.5
Valid	16	1	8.3	9.1	63.6
	18	1	8.3	9.1	72.7
	20	1	8.3	9.1	81.8
	22	1	8.3	9.1	90.9
	32	1	8.3	9.1	100.0
	Total	11	91.7	100.0	
Missing	System	1	8.3		
Total		12	100.0		

**APPENDIX 27:
SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS**

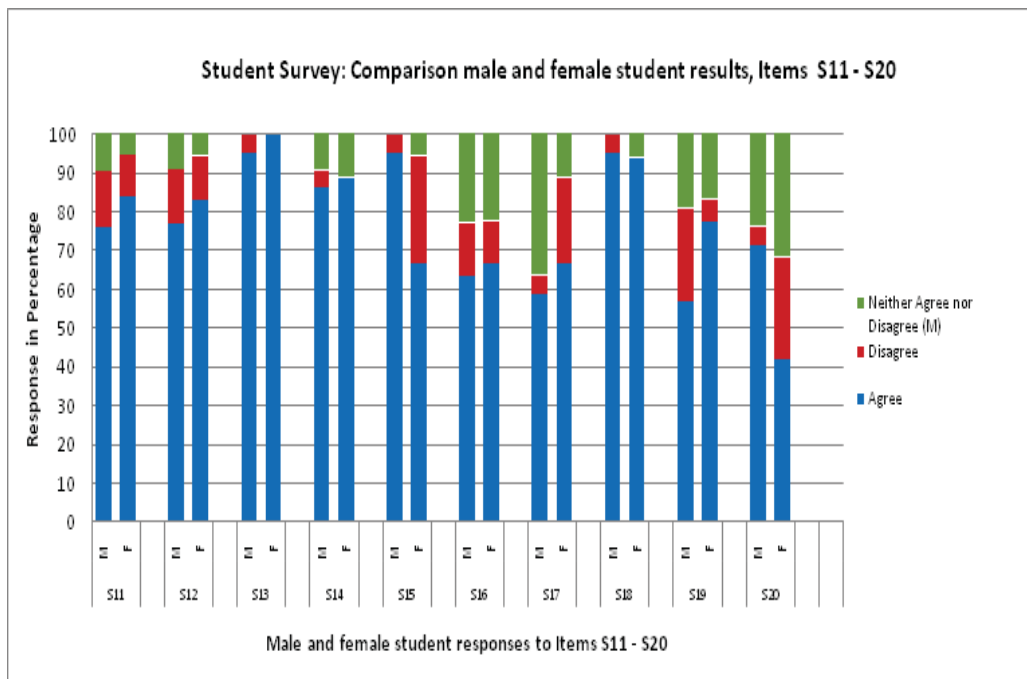
Table 6.d: Respondents Approached Survey (RA:S), Response Rate Survey (RR:S)

Respondent group	Respondents Approached (RA:S)			Response Rate (RR:S)		
	(N: RA)	% (P)	mean (PA)	(N)	% (R)	(RR)
Pāsifika Students	40	38.46	10.0	40/40	100.00	1.0
Teachers	16	15.39	4.0	12/16	75.00	0.75
Teacher Aides	9	8.65	2.25	6/9	66.67	0.67
Parents of Pāsifika Students	39	37.50	9.75	6/39	15.38	0.15
<i>Total</i>	104	100	26.0	64 /104	61.54	2.57
<i>Average mean RA:S</i>			6.5			
<i>Average mean RR:S</i>						0.64
<i>SD</i>	3.96			0.36		
<p><i>N:RA = total number of respondents approached N:RR: total number of responses (surveys returned)</i> <i>% (PA) = Percentage participants approached</i> <i>% (R) = Percentage of responses (surveys returned)</i> <i>RA:S= Respondents Approached Survey</i> <i>RR:S = Response Rate Survey</i> <i>SD = standard deviation</i> <i>Highest RR:S= 1.0 (100%- Students) and lowest RR :S = 0.15 (15.3% - Parents)</i></p>						

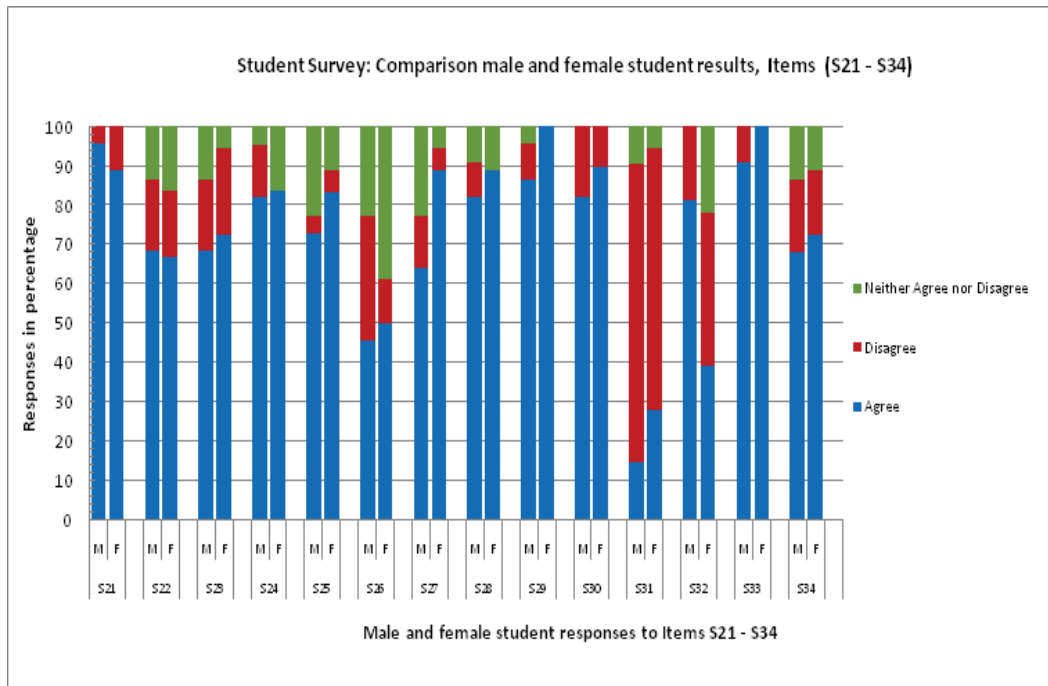
Student survey results



Item related to Chapter Five	Student agreed response in percentage
S2: Subject E is my favourite subject"	82% male and 83% female
S3: "I like Subject A2"	72% male and 61% female
S5: "I understand the work presented by teachers"	90% male and all females
S6: "I ask if I don't understand instructions"	87% male and all females
S7: "I appreciate a TA helping me with the work"	72% male and 44% females
S9: "I enjoy Subject B"	86% male and 83% female

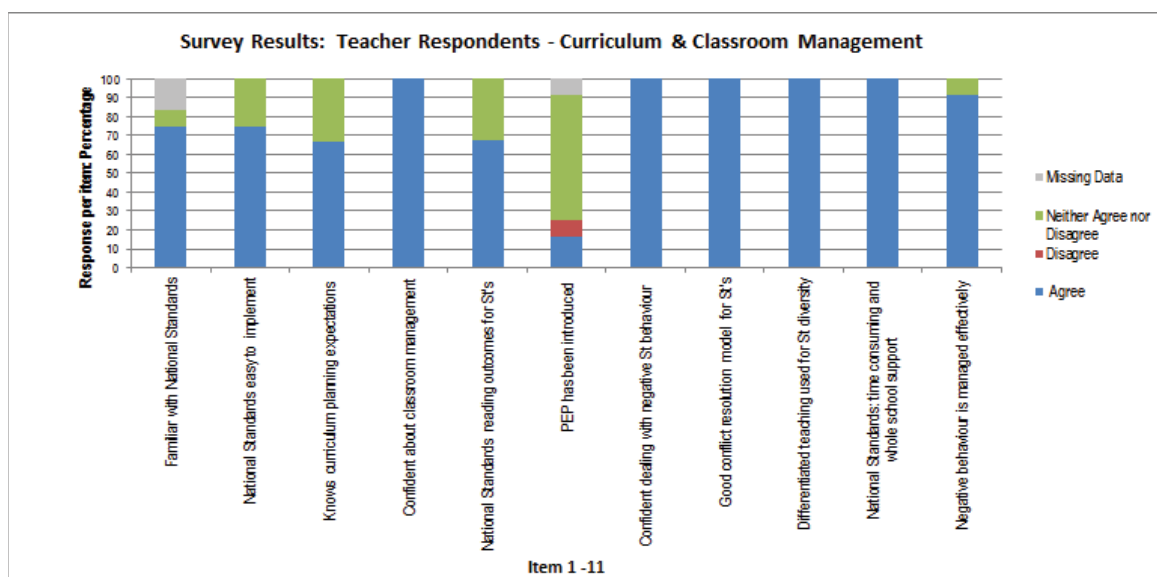


Item related to Chapter Five	Student agreed response in percentage
S11: "I have good friends at school"	91% male and 94% female
S14: "My parents feel proud of me when I do well at school and talk to me about it"	86% male and 89% female
S19: "Everyone at school understands my culture"	57% male and 78% female
S20: "There are activities at school that are all about the Pāsifika culture"	71% male and 42% female

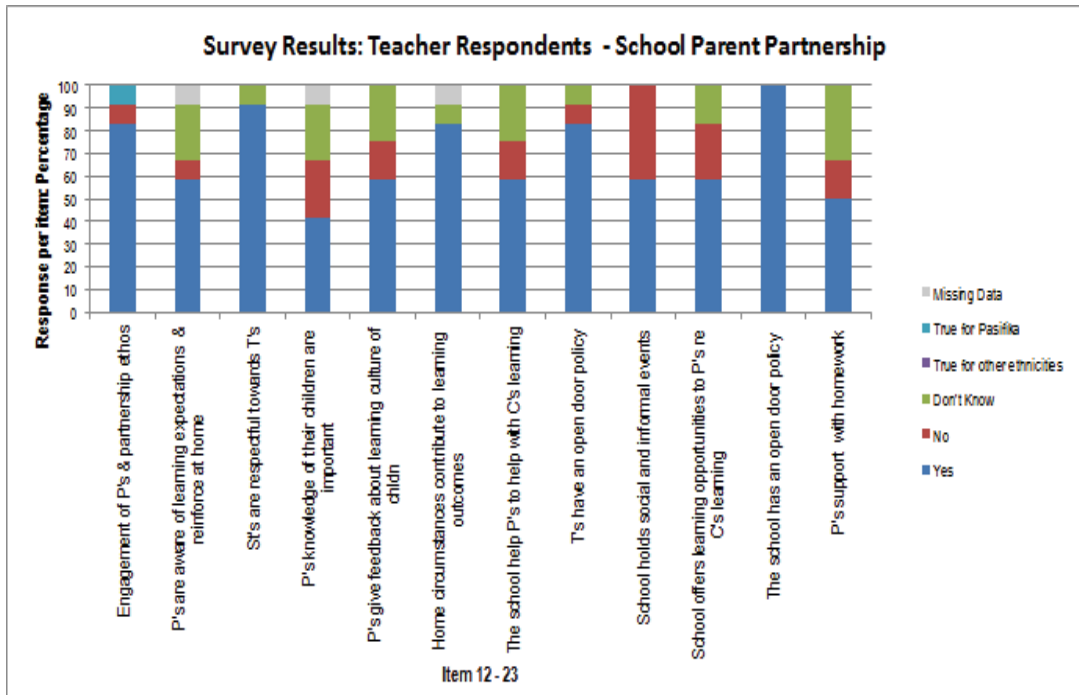


Item related to Chapter Five	Student agreed response in percentage
S21: "We do group work in class"	96% male and 89% female
S22: "Buddy / Peer support in class "	68% male and 67% female
S23: "We work mostly on our own in the classroom"	68% male and 72% female
S24: "There are people at school I can trust"	82% male and 83% female
S25: I have someone I can talk to when I am upset"	73% male and 83% female
S27: "There is some bullying happening in our school"	46% male and 50% female

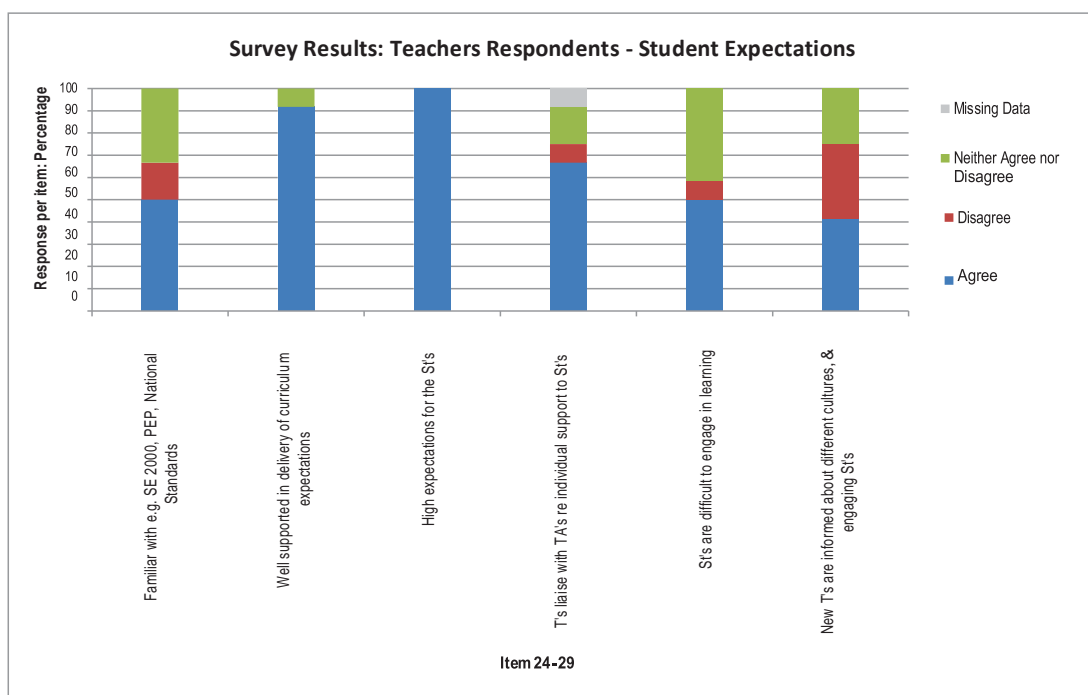
Survey Results: Teachers



Item related to Chapter Five	Student agreed response in percentage
Everyone in curriculum planning at school knows exactly what is expected	67%
The school has clear expectations regarding conflict resolution (for students) and uses this model effectively	100%
I am using adapted curriculum / differentiated teaching to accommodate diverse needs of students	100%

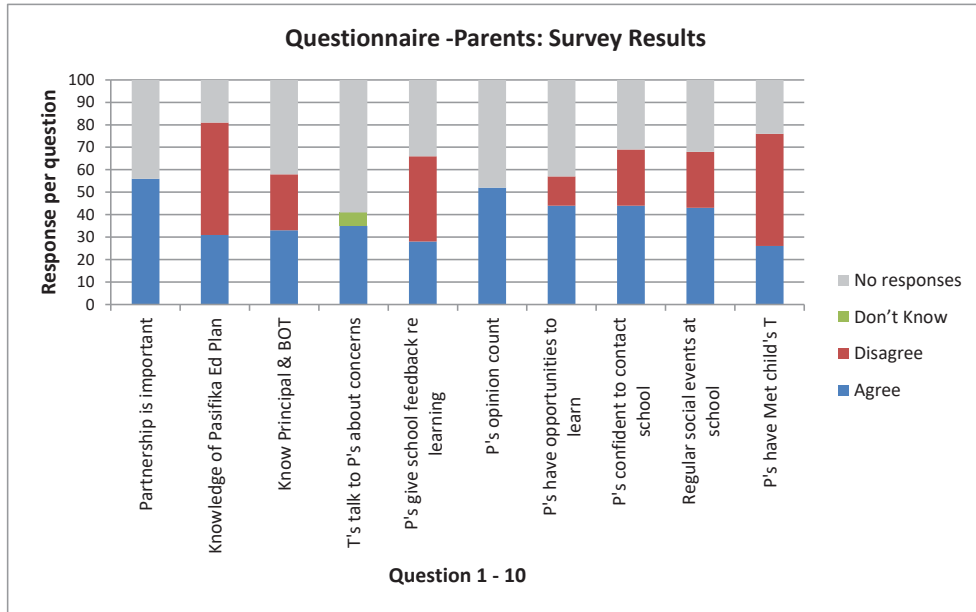


Item related to Chapter Five	Student agreed response in percentage
T14: The students are respectful towards me	92%
T15: I draw on parents' knowledge of their children	42%
T17: Home circumstances contribute to learning outcomes	83%

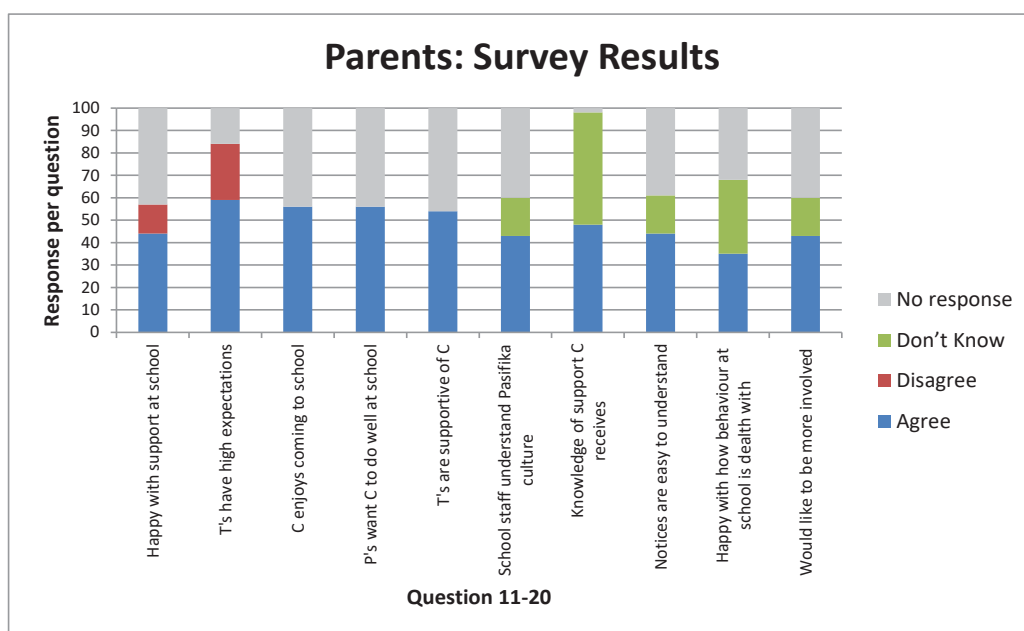


Item related to Chapter Five	Teacher response in percentage
T24: I am familiar with the different polices (SE2000, Pasifika Ed Plan and National Standards)	50%
T25: I am well supported in my delivery of the curriculum	92%
T28: St's are difficult to engage in learning	50%

Parent survey results



Item related to Chapter Five	Number of parent responses n=6)
P6: My opinion counts	51%



Item related to Chapter Five	Number of parent responses (n=6)
P12: Teachers have high expectations	59%
P16: The school has a good understanding of the Pāsifika culture in terms of my child /children's learning	42%

APPENDIX 28: OBSERVATION RESULTS: SUMMARY OF CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND TEACHING PRACTICES

Summary of observation results: classroom management and teaching strategies					
Subject area	Classroom management and teaching strategies observed: structure, routine, teacher expectations			Levels of on-task behaviour observed	
	Structure and routine	Culturally appropriate teaching strategies for Pasifika	Teacher expectations	High	Low
Subject A2	<p>Easy access to workbooks, stationery, portfolios – marked and set up</p> <p>Proactive – immediately supports students who becomes unsettled</p> <p>All students have books and stationery</p> <p>Consistent seating</p> <p>Classroom well organised – stations for all different categories</p>	<p>Well established – students familiar with sequence of routine and achieved smooth transitions between activities</p> <p>30 seconds counting down</p> <p>Put hand up for answering questions, clarification or teacher support</p> <p>Verbal reminders, humour, praise and re-direction</p> <p>Frequent communication with students, active listening</p> <p>Student monitors support peers</p> <p>Explain unfamiliar concepts using cultural contexts</p>	<p>Students put hands up when they are ready for next activity, marking each other's work</p> <p>Individual, peer support and group work</p> <p>Respect (communication and learning of others) and supporting each other</p> <p>Complete tasks within given time frames</p> <p>Students keep themselves busy with choice of activity while waiting for peers to complete tasks</p> <p>Noise levels appropriate to learning goals</p>	√	
Subject B	<p>Easy access to equipment</p> <p>Consistent seating</p> <p>Equipment not needed is organised, labelled and stored away</p> <p>Review previous goals</p> <p>10 minute count down before end of lesson</p>	<p>Students are familiar with sequence of routine</p> <p>Counting down strategy</p> <p>Students put hand up if they need support, answer questions or needed clarification</p> <p>Active listening</p> <p>Verbal reminders about timeframe for task completion, humour, praise and re-direction</p>	<p>Safety gear (shoes)</p> <p>Silence as task required high concentration and poses safety risks</p> <p>Individual work</p> <p>Students knew learning goals Respect (communication)</p> <p>Complete task within given timeframes</p>	√	
Subject D2	<p>Easy access to workbooks</p> <p>All students had stationery</p>	<p>Students put hand up if they need support, answer questions or needed clarification</p> <p>Verbal reminders to stay on task</p> <p>Explain unfamiliar concepts using cultural contexts</p> <p>Students talked about their different cultures</p>	<p>Students knew learning goals</p> <p>Complete task within given timeframe</p> <p>Noise levels appropriate to learning</p> <p>Respect (communication and each other's learning)</p> <p>- Peer support and individual work</p> <p>Students who finish early keep themselves busy – not interrupting learning of others</p>	√	

Summary of observation results: classroom management and teaching strategies				
Subject area	Classroom management and teaching strategies observed: structure, routine, teacher expectations		Levels of on-task behaviour observed	
	Structure and routine	Teacher expectations	High	Medium Low
Subject C	<p>Easy access to equipment Consistent seating</p> <p>Equipment well organised and supporting learning well</p>	<p>Students waited for teacher to present learning goals before accessing equipment</p> <p>Put hand up for support, answer question or clarification</p> <p>Used "maraca" to manage noise levels</p>	<p>Respect (communicating and each other's learning)</p> <p>Supporting each other Learn from each other</p> <p>Collaborative problem-solving</p>	<p>√</p>
Subject E	<p>Seating consistent – peer and individual support</p> <p>Easy access to equipment (books, group work activities, stationery)</p> <p>All students had stationery Differentiated teaching (groups)</p>	<p>Well-established structure and routine-students are familiar with it. Teacher monitor groups</p> <p>Students encouraged each other's learning - Put hand up – "show me you are ready" -also for attention, answer questions</p>	<p>Respect</p> <p>Complete tasks within given timeframes</p> <p>Group work...student-directed, collaborative</p> <p>Understood learning goals</p> <p>Noise levels appropriate to learning</p>	<p>√</p>
Subject D1	<p>Well prepared</p> <p>Familiar with content worksheets</p>	<p>Inquiry questioning to encourage student participation</p> <p>Confirmed students understood task</p> <p>Spoke respectfully</p> <p>Allowed student discussions about topic (observation results showed 5 students had conversations unrelated to topic)</p> <p>Roamed classroom</p> <p>Verbal reminders of class rules to manage noise levels</p>	<p>Student participation (one student shout out)</p> <p>Respect</p> <p>Student support to each other</p>	<p>√</p>
Subject A1	<p>TA support to one student</p>	<p>Students could discuss topic (talking about unrelated topics, shouting out – one student)</p> <p>Confirmed students understood expectations</p> <p>Provided personal support</p> <p>Roamed</p> <p>Showed examples of peers' work to clarify questions</p> <p>Spoke respectfully</p> <p>No praise</p>	<p>Peer support</p> <p>Collaboration</p>	<p>√</p>

Subject F	Sat at desk, marking books	Two instructions only: "open your books" and "Write a paragraph about yourself" Engage when students need clarification	To write about topic Complete work within given timeframe Neg reactions towards task: "Do we have to do it?" and "boring!" Neg reaction towards teacher" ignored	√	
Subject A3	Strong Maori context Wrote task on whiteboard, set 30 minute timeframe and withdrew	Spent limited time with students Marked work from previous lessons Verbal reminders to finish task x3 Verbal reminders re noise levels	Complete work in given timeframe "Be quiet" Neg reaction to task Other behaviours: Riding chairs Talking about unrelated topics Throwing paper Roam classroom x6 Throwing eraser x1 Giggling x3	√	

