CHOICES OFFERED, CHOICES CHOSEN

IN PASIFIKA EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

A Christchurch Experience

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A thesis

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by

Pauline Mary Elizabeth Luafutu-Simpson

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of Luafutu Ioane (1924-1976) - my father, my hero…

'Ou te fia Falealili fua'

You a simple man,
Just another hardworking Sam
Pacing well worn factory floors
The proud I am

Changing spools of wool
Spinning round and round,
Weaving mats
Never to lay on humble floor…

Yet there within
Hidden treasure lay
Wisdom of the ancient sage
Of histories old, kinships told
Rich in metaphor –
Alive in allegorical state

Visual pictures
Embraced within
Lyrical eloquent flow
Through potent vocal speak
In this sun kissed 'Falealilian' meet

Walking with dignity
Spite 'coconut' 'fresh' 'fob' take
You walked with pride
Foreign environs could
Neither repress nor mistake

Pay you no mind to what others thought
Limited to vistas chosen or sought
No identity clash, crisis or shame
This man here
He owns his name

You a simple man
Another hardworking Sam
A family's great hope…
A sudden shattered plan

Cry again the fathers dream
Cry again the proud I am

…I remember well your wisdom, your strength, your love, and miss you still Dad.
'ua liaina le fa'amoemoe fa'apei o se la la'au '

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

"Ia ifo le fuinui i le lapapa"

(May the cluster of nuts bow to the midrib of the coconut leaf.)
As to each coconut leaf, a cluster of young nuts belongs, so then does each individual belong to their family.

This project has been long in the making. From the usual two year period it has been extended and suspended time and time again as I prioritised other things in my life. Firstly the opportunity to work full-time on a project establishing a new Pacific service for teenage parents in Christchurch was too important an opportunity to pass up. The next time was when I decided to pack up, taking the youngest members of my family for a year to Samoa to accompany my ailing mother who wanted to spend some extended time with her family while she was able to. The following year was then taken up with having to pay the 'piper' for the worthwhile but costly experience. At the end of the day the priorities are always family and when the call comes you answer. I am no extraordinary woman; many have been there before me. Juggling family responsibilities, work commitments and academic endeavours is never an easy journey. Therefore I am indebted to many without whose support, encouragement and inspiration this thesis would still just be an idea.

Firstly all honour and glory to my creator God from whom all blessings flow.

For my mother's (Lupepe Tuatagaloa Luafutu), unfailing faith in God and all things Samoan that has made her a woman of strength and courage providing a source of nourishment, inspiration, unconditional love and endless frustration that I remain humbly indebted to and thankful for. I come from a long line of orators and chiefs on both sides of my family trees, which may account for my 'long-windedness'. Nevertheless I am grateful to have been blessed with a large extended family that I have greatly benefited from. It is their stories, their experiences, knowledge, and inspiration that I have begged, borrowed and gleaned from. Grandfathers, grandmothers, aunties, uncles, especially my sisters and brothers, nieces, nephews, cousins, in-laws, out-laws, ex-laws, too many to name but none the less vital. I continue to count it all joy – inclusive of the struggle and the pain, of being born into such a truly divergent, talented and colourful family.

For my friends (you know who you are), old, steadfast and true, that have shared with me so much, along life's journey and will continue to stand the test of time. To newly acquired friends, in the crossing of paths in academic spaces, and in the collaborative work on behalf of our Pasifika community, thank-you for the debates, the lattes and the much needed comradeship in often cold and monocultural environs.

To my Samoan post-grad mates that in the beginning shared many 'all nighters,' laughter, frustrations, kitchen raids, and early morning breakfasts at Denny's I have missed you all, especially as you have all graduated ahead of me, malo lava le fa'amalosi.

To my newest friends that I've had the unexpected fortune of soliciting while sojourning in Samoa for a year, I also owe a debt for more ways than one - for embracing me and mine (virtual strangers) into your fold without a moment's hesitation. It is in your unexpected friendships that the embodiment of fa'aaloalo ma le alofa moni was demonstrated to me and unwittingly helped me 'get over' myself somewhat!

Fa'afetai, fa'afetai, fa'afetai tele lava.

PREFACE

"Who gave us permission to perform the act of writing? Why does writing seem so unnatural for me…The voice recurs in me: "who am I a poor Chicanita from the sticks to think I could write?' How dared I even consider becoming a writer as I stooped over the tomato fields bending under the hot sun…? How hard it is for us to think we can choose to become writers, much less feel and believe that we can""

<div align="right">Gloria Anzuldua, 1981 (cited in Clarke 1998:20).</div>

Impostor syndrome! I would moan constantly to my friends and other post-graduate students. Some would laugh with me, and silently relate. Others would sigh with frustration, irritated at a woman who 'appeared' confident, passionate and self-opinionated at the best of times but at the worst of times depressingly self-deprecating. Other friends, unaware of the term, would ask "What do you mean you suffer from impostor syndrome?" "Oh you know I have this recurring nightmare that someday someone will finally realize that I'm here under some sorry delusion that I can actually do this academic stuff." We would all fall about laughing at me, but really I wasn't joking.

I am fortunate that most people did not take me seriously, and brushing aside my self-doubt, I would again take up the challenge and continue, endeavouring to 'get over myself' as best as I could. The need to keep self-doubt at bay is far too important to ignore for as Clarke (1998: vi) so succinctly notes: "…any tendency to crippling self-effacement is seen as a 'luxury' that we simply cannot afford." As a Samoa woman born in an adopted land, standing your ground is all the more tenuous if you waver just a little.

This research project not only examines and explores issues pertinent to our Pasifika communities living in Aotearoa/New Zealand, but it is also my desire and intention that more of our stories, our perspectives are given voice and made visible. Why? Because it is only through the uncovering of our stories, our positions, our struggles, our celebrations, our own particular ways of 'knowing' that we can begin to challenge for, contest and validate our own 'spaces'. Moreover it is vital that we continue to 'contest' and occupy these 'spaces' ensuring a safe passage for our future generations who will continue to emerge from the shadows, resplendent in multicoloured array, armed with confidence, secure in their identity, imbued with the possibilities, rich in healthy self-esteem and unencumbered from fictitious illnesses of the imagination commonly referred to as impostor syndrome!

<div align="center">

'O le laau e toto nei e manuia ai tupulaga taeao!'

The tree planted today will be of service to tomorrow's youth.

</div>

TERMINOLOGY

Pasifika people have been labeled various terms within literature such as Pacific Islanders, Polynesians, Pacific Islands people, Pacific Nations, Pacific people, Pacificans, Pasefika, and Pasifika people. For the purposes of this thesis the term Pasifika people has been adopted. Pasifika people is a generic term rather than a definitive term and incorporates people whose ethnicity includes New Zealand-born Samoans, New Zealand-born Pasifika people, Samoa, Tonga, Niue, Cook Islands, Tokelau, Fiji, Tuvalu, Kiribati, Vanuatu, Hawaii and American Samoa.

ACRONYMS

ECE	Early Childhood Education
PECCs	Pasifika Education and Care Centers
ECED	Early Childhood Education Development
MOE	Ministry of Education
MPIA	Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs
MSD	Ministry of Social Development
NZ-Born	New Zealand-born
SAASIA	Samoa Aoga Amata Societe i Aotearoa
CPERG	Christchurch Pasifika Education Reference Group

GLOSSARY

Fa'aSamoa   *In the manner of Samoans; according to Samoan customs and traditions; the Samoan way or culture*

Aiga   *family*

Fa'aaloalo   *to show respect and deference*

Usita'i   *Obedience*

Fetufa'i   *Sharing*

Tamaiti   *children*

Palagi   *european/western*

Fia- palagi   *want to be a palagi*

Fia- mauli   *want to be a Maori*

Malae   *village green*

Fa'alavelave   *family obligation regarding an important occasion*

Vaipuna i tala   *a fresh water spring found in Malaemalu*

Poutasi   *a village in Samoa*

Malaemalu   *a village in Samoa*

Palusami   *coconut milk baked in taro leaves*

teu le va   *Samoan concept referring to looking after the spaces between relationships*

Choices Offered, Choices Chosen

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THE UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY

ABSTRACT

Current government policy aims to redress the persistent under-participation of Pasifika children in early childhood education by improving the standard and availability of services delivered through Pasifika early childhood initiatives. This research explores the rationale that underpinned the choices of sixteen New Zealand-born Samoan parents in Christchurch by using the qualitative method of in-depth interviews, structured around a questionnaire. Three primary themes emerged from the primary data: Pasifika early childcare provisions; identity issues; and the effect of generational changes in parenting styles. As first and second generation New Zealand-born Samoans, participants' preference *vis-à-vis* the types of early childhood initiatives they accessed, reflected trans-generation differences between the original migrants and their offspring. Moreover, some participants and many of their children are of multi-ethnic heritage, exemplifying the changing face of Pasifika people in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Participants were divided into three groups. Findings indicate that Group A parents, who had the highest levels of social, cultural and economic capital, made informed decisions to access Pasifika Education and Childcare Centres in order to ensure their children were acculturated in Samoan language and culture. While there were multiple reasons why Group B parents withdrew their children from Pasifika services they were generally ambivalent about the effectiveness of Pasifika provisions in meeting the needs of their children. Group C parents did not access Pasifika preschool education; barriers to participation included their personal perceptions of alienation from the traditional Samoan community. Findings suggest that government policy formulation processes exclude the voices of stakeholders who demographers predict will comprise an increasingly large percentage of the population of Aotearoa/New Zealand. Pasifika parity in accessing early childhood education is contingent upon service provision that is conducive to meeting the needs of all Pasifika parents, including those who are marginalized by mainstream society and Pasifika communities.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Addressing the under-participation of Pasifika children in Early Childhood Education (ECE) is now considered a priority by the state. Current social policy aimed at improving Pasifika participation rates is directed towards increasing the number, and improving the services delivered by Pasifika early childhood initiatives, such as 'Pasifika language nests' and Pasifika Early Childcare Centres (PECCs). In view of the persistent under-participation, this research explores the rationale that underpinned the choices made by a group of Pasifika parents in Christchurch with respect to accessing PECCs. As first (1st) and second (2nd) generation New Zealand born (NZ-born) Samoans, the participants exemplify the effects of trans-generation changes in attitudes and values between themselves and their migrant parents. Furthermore, some participants, and many of their children, are of multi-ethnic heritage, which reflects the changing face of Pasifika people in Aotearoa/New Zealand. An analysis of their responses provides insights into whether or not the recent and current policies that target Pasifika parents in fact address the needs of parents of multi-ethnic heritage and different socio-economic backgrounds and education attainment levels.

1.1 RATIONALE FOR THIS RESEARCH

This research is based on the premise that if participation in ECE improves life-chances, and yet Pasifika participation rates continue to lag behind those of other children, then an analysis of the rationale that underpins Pasifika parents' choices with respect to engagement is required. Identifying the factors that influence parental choice is fundamental to better understanding what factors determine choice and how these factors should be incorporated into social policy formation. This thesis speaks to Pasikale's (1996:17-18) statement that:

> …information is required that offers insights into why, despite a decade of interventions, Pacific Island learners in New Zealand still achieve poor academic results, still have lower levels of skills and still lower employment participation results.

By exploring factors that underpin the rationale that influences parental choice, insights will be gained into 'why' and more importantly, 'what' needs to be done and 'how' under-participation rates can best be addressed. Accordingly, this research project seeks to illuminate more clearly the factors that could contribute to improving participation rates in PECCs or 'Pasifika language nests' and/or identify other services that Pasifika parents consider are more relevant to meeting their needs.

1.2   OBJECTIVES OF THIS RESEARCH

The primary objective of this research is to examine access/participation patterns of NZ-born Samoan parents at PECCs in Christchurch and identify the different perspectives and experiences that underpin parental choice as a means of uncovering factors that contribute to the continuing low participation rate of Pasifika children in ECE. Accordingly, the questions that are central to this research are:

1. What is the rationale behind the choices that NZ-born Samoans make with respect to accessing ECE for their children?

2. What are the key factors identified by NZ-born Samoan parents that encourage participation in PECCs and what are the perceived barriers to participation?

3. What other early childhood services do Samoan parents access in preference to PECCs or 'Pasifika language nests'?

This research addresses the four fundamental sites identified by Pasikale (1996: 18) first, the academic context which requires a contribution to the body of knowledge relating to Pasifika people in Aotearoa/New Zealand; second, the community context which demands collaboration and consultation with, and the participation of, Pasifika people in research; third, the public context, which is underpinned by the hope that policy and social change will be informed by insights gained through research; and finally, the personal context which involves the role of the 'self' in the study.

1.3   SOCIAL POLICY

A number of government policies designed to address the continued low achievement rate of Pasifika students in education such as MOE Promoting ECE Participation Project

(PPP) implemented in May 2001 was directed at increasing participation rates of Pasifika children in Early Childhood. Other initiatives such as ECE Participation also target Pasifika in the setting aside of a separate Pacific pool of discretionary funds to be used to assist Pacific community ECE services such as the building of new PECCs and improving existing PECC facilities. These initiatives are considered to contribute to improving the overall social and economic status of Pasifika people. The government's policy that directly targets Pasifika under-participation in ECE has resulted in increased institutional resources and support of Pasifika early childhood initiatives. This has helped to relieve the economic pressures that have detracted from quality service provision.

Originally announced in 2001, these policy objectives were reinforced in 2005 at the annual general meeting of *Sosaiete Aoga Amata Samoa i Aotearoa* (Society for Samoan Preschools in Aotearoa) in Christchurch by M.P. Taito Philip Field. Field informed the audience that the government remains focused on ensuring all children succeed within the state education system. The government's policy response to the under-participation of Pasifika children is to invest greater resources into upgrading existing, and building more PECCs, as well as increasing the number of qualified early childhood Pasifika teachers and further improving the quality of teaching programmes. However, current government policy is considered problematic for the same reasons identified by Reid (2006) which, while related to Maori educational underachievement, are nonetheless relevant to Pasifika peoples. These issues are first, the effect of ethnic statistics that contrasts Pasifika difference from the Palagi norm; second, the failure to acknowledge the multiple and complex issues that affect educational achievement; and third, lack of recognition of the increasingly heterogeneous composition of Pasifika communities.

1.3.1 Simplistic solutions for complex problems

The second crucial aspect that the policies mentioned above fail to acknowledge, relates to the complex and multifaceted nature of factors that contribute to the entrenched Pasifika educational underachievement. This includes ethnic disparities in social, cultural and financial capital (Bourdieu, 1977) and the increasingly unequal educational opportunities for Pasifika peoples (Lauder and Hughes, 1999).

Many policy makers and educators now consider that ECE is the fundamental long-term intervention strategy that will improve the educational achievement levels of all sectors

of the Pasifika community. However, simply focusing on increasing access to and improving early childhood services for Pasifika peoples, while necessary and laudable, will not be sufficient to improve achievement levels of all Pasifika people. Policies need to incorporate multifaceted strategies in order to address the continuing challenges faced by Pasifika peoples.

1.3.2   A homogeneous Pasifika community?

Third, this policy is based on an assumption that the Pasifika population is homogenous. This 'one size fits all' policy implies that most, if not all, Pasifika children attend PECC, or need to attend these centres, thereby implying that engagement in PECC is the panacea for improving educational outcomes for all Pasifika students. However, as Carpenter et al (2001:203), note:

> Any intervention, including educational initiatives and changes, must take into account pivotal issues of power and empowerment. Will changes result in an extension of life chances and life choices for Pacific nations peoples, or will their diverse ethnic identities simply remain a 'colourful' addition to the national identity? Alternatively, will Pacific peoples be fully participating at all levels of a diverse society, which values social justice and ethnic differences?

This study emphasizes that 'diverse ethnic identities' are not restricted to the different ethnic groups derived from the various 'Pasifika nations' but incorporates intra-group diversification of identities within these groups. Marginalization theorists, Hall et al (1994:26-27), identify two aspects of ethnic differentiation that are relevant to this thesis. The first relates to the stigmatization of identities by the dominant majority's ascription of negative values to different cultural identities and the second relates to the intra-group diversifications of identities within marginalized populations. (See Chapter Two).

1.4   LOCATING PASIFIKA ISSUES IN A CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK

> The growth of the Pacific population has been one of the defining features of New Zealand society in recent decades… Since the large scale migrations of the 1960's and 1970's, they have become a well established and integral part of New Zealand's social landscape, a vibrant and dynamic community experiencing considerable progress and change…(Statistics New Zealand, 2004: 1).

There have been numerous reports and books heralding the impact of Pasifika peoples populations in Aotearoa/New Zealand, touting and celebrating the vibrant, colourful blend of diversity. In 2006, as Pasifika people we can be proud of our success in the Arts. Our sporting prowess is legendary from Bryan Williams to Tana Umaga. Pasifika people are also represented in the corridors of power and there are increasing numbers of high achievers in business and in academic circles. However, despite an increasingly higher and more positive profile and the emergence of a small middle-class, Pasifika people still feature prominently in all negative social indices despite the government policies and interventions that have been implemented over the years. This project, in the process of examining diversity, seeks to further illuminate the issues that underpin the incongruence between the increasingly positive profile of some aspects of Pasifika society and people with the negativity associated with the general Pasifika population.

Contemporary research highlights the differences between Samoan-born and raised migrants and their offspring, the 1st generation of NZ-born Samoans. Researchers such as Jemima Tiatia (1998), Melanie Anae (1995,1997) and Anne-Marie Tupuola (1993a,b) have emphasized these differences and in so doing, have contributed much to discussions around trans-generational change. This thesis intends to take this debate to another level, by focusing on subsequent generations and the growing phenomena of multi-ethnic (mixed blend of multi-ethnic cultures) families.

1.5   AUDIENCES

This research has a practical application in that it fulfills the need for further research that relates to identifying and analyzing factors which contribute to the entrenched under-participation of Pasifika children accessing ECE, the importance of which is now recognized by the state. However, the primary audience this thesis intends to address is the Pasifika community, particularly the Samoan community, consistent with my philosophy of engaging in research that empowers our people. Furthermore, this thesis supplements a small but growing corpus of research that has emerged from within the Pasifika population, through Pasifika academics.

1.6   THE IMPACT OF THE DEMOGRAPHIC REALITY

The recent government emphasis on improving Pasifika participation in ECE is underpinned by the growing recognition of the socio-political and economic ramifications that the continued Pasifika underachievement will have for the nation. As noted by Reid (2006:5) "countries with educated populations will be the most productive and competitive in the international market place, and that global and technological change increasingly demands tertiary qualifications as prerequisites for participation in the knowledge economy." In order for Aotearoa/New Zealand to maintain "first world" living standards the current deficit of Pasifika human capital must be redressed, particularly as the nation will "experience greater future demographic turbulence than most other Western democratic nations" (Reid, 2006:5). Reid (2006:6) cites Pool's (2003:34) statement that "unemployed youth constitute a politically volatile group" therefore political stability will require that the current ethnic disparities in employment and educational opportunities are redressed.

The Pasifika people in Aotearoa/New Zealand are a rapidly increasing population which, according to Statistics New Zealand is, projected to reach a total of 414,000 in 2021. This represents an increase of 152,000 or 58 percent over the estimated resident population of Pasifika ethnicity of 262,000 at 30 June 2001. The Pasifika population includes people who identify with a Pasifika ethnicity, as well as those who identify with other ethnicities such as Maori. The annual growth rate of the Pasifika population is projected to slow from 2.7 percent in 2002 to 2.2 percent in 2021. However, the Pasifika population will still grow at a faster rate than the total New Zealand population. Consequently, the Pasifika share of the total population is projected to rise from 7 percent in 2001 to 9 percent in 2021 (Statistics New Zealand website, (n.d) retrieved 10/07/06). At the present time, 1 in 10 children are Pasifika and by 2051 this number is predicted to rise to 1 in 5.

People of Samoan identity comprise half the total of the Pasifika population. According to Statistics New Zealand (ibid), NZ-born Samoans accounted for 58 percent of the Samoan population in Aotearoa/New Zealand in 2001. In 2001, 39 percent of Samoans were under the age of 15 compared with 23 percent in the general population. Between 1996 and 2001, the NZ-born Samoan population increased more, and had a much younger age structure, than that of the overseas-born population. In 2001, 60 percent of

the NZ-born Samoan population were under the age of 15 years compared to only 11 percent of the overseas-born Samoan population (ibid).

Today's Pasifika people are heterogeneous, youthful, primarily urbanised and mostly NZ-born. These demographics have significant implications for the nation and will require that the state urgently focus attention on the causes that underpin the entrenched underachievement of Pasifika peoples in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs 1999: 10-12). The percentage of Pasifika children in the general youth population is rising. According to the government statistician, Brian Pink, (Statistics NZ website (n.d) retrieved 15/07/2006), the number of Pasifika children aged is projected to rise steadily during the 20-year projection period, increasing by 36,000 to 136,000 in 2021. Pasifika children will comprise approximately 17 percent of all children in Aotearoa/New Zealand in 2021, compared with 11 percent in 2001. This increase reflects the higher birth rate of the Pasifika population. However, Pink cautions that these projections are subject to uncertainty and should be used as an indication, rather than exact forecasts, of future changes in Pasifika population size and structure. They are based on the concept of self-identification of ethnicity and therefore exclude those people who have Pasifika ancestry but do not identify with the Pasifika ethnicity. These demographics highlight the importance of seriously addressing education issues for NZ-born Pasifika people, and more specifically New Zealand Samoans in this case, as they make up a significant proportion of future Pasifika communities.

At July 2003, 6.57 percent of children enrolled in ECE identified as Pasifika. In Christchurch there are currently 535 Pasifika children enrolled in PECCs; however, greater numbers of Pasifika children are accessing other types of early childhood centers that are available locally (see Table 1, Chapter 3). This begs the question as to why more Pasifika children are enrolled in mainstream centres despite the increase in the number of PECCs and the considerable increase of resources available to Pasifika communities for early childhood development. This issue is explored in greater depth in Chapter Three.

1.6.1   Compiling Ethnic Statistics

According to Ministry of Education (MOE) statistics, (MOE website (n.d), retrieved 12/06/2006), current Pasifika participation rates are 84.7% compared with Maori at

89.3%, 94.1% for Asian and 97.6% for European. However this ethnic data is not collected at an appropriate level of specificity. Furthermore, in statistical analyses such as these, the explanatory power of ethnicity is restricted to describing Pasifika difference from the mainstream norm, a methodology that encourages a deficit analysis as it fails to examine institutional structures or acknowledge the impact of institutional racism (Reid, Robson & Jones, 2000:45 cited in Reid, 2006). From this deficit perspective, the cause of ethnic disparities in primarily blamed on 'endogenous' factors, deficit aspects of Pasifika people's genes, behaviour, socio-economic circumstances and engagement with the system (Reid et al, cited in Reid, 2006). The outcome of this deficit-based approach is that the impact of 'exogenous' factors which stem from state policies and practices remain blameless and as a result state inventions and initiatives address superficial issues rather than underlying causes of Pasifika under-participation in ECE.

It is also important to examine the effect of the current methodology used by government ministries to compile statistical data on ethnicity. The MOE, for instance, assigns students of mixed or multiple ethnicities a **single** ethnic category in accordance with an ethnic ranking hierarchy. Harkess, Murray, Parkin and Dalgety (2005:21) in their report, identify the ranking hierarchy as follows: NZ Maori; Tokelau; Fijian; Niuean; Tongan; Cook-Islands Maori; Samoan; Other Pacific Islands; South-East Asian; Indian; Chinese; Other Asian; Other; Other European; NZ European/Pakeha.

While this methodology increases the numbers of 'Maori' and thus gives weight to Maori issues, it prevents an accurate tally of the numbers of students who are of mixed ethnicities and also fails to acknowledge their ethnic preference. As the category of 'Maori' is assigned the first priority, all children of mixed Pasifika and Maori heritage are recorded as Maori. For instance, although Tana Umaga is of Samoan decent, as his wife is Maori, their children are categorised as 'Maori' in the MOE database. As Harkess, et al (2005:21) note "…a small group of candidates who identify with Pasifika are excluded from Pasifika analysis." Another example is provided by several participants of dual Fijian-Samoan descent in this study, who despite strongly identifying with their Samoan ethnicity, are coded as Fijian. Accordingly, the size of the Pasifika population in Christchurch could be increased significantly if Samoan identity was given a higher priority in the ethnicity ranking hierarchy. It is also likely that there would be a significant increase in the size of the Samoan population if the government's coding

system reflected the preferred ethnic status of individuals of dual or multiple ethnic heritages rather than an ethnic identity that was officially designated.

This official methodology approach fails not only to acknowledge the reality of increasing numbers of people of dual and multiple ethnicities, but also allows the state to disregard the needs of this growing faction of the population, making it difficult for stakeholders to promote strategies that address the needs of a faction of the population that is not officially recognised. As a result, the impact of intermarriage between different ethnicities, such as Maori/Samoan; Samoan/Pakeha, has received little attention by the state. Keddell (2005:1) reinforces this point in her study of people of mixed Samoan and Pakeha ancestry. She emphasises the need to acknowledge the "lack of homogeneity in either group and the ways in which both Samoan and Pakeha cultures have been constructed over time and have had some degree of reciprocal influence in Aotearoa/New Zealand."

1.6.2   Collapsing Pasifika people into a single entity

Also of concern is the way consecutive governments have, in the past, collapsed all Pasifika people into one category in the interests of administrative convenience. This approach means that the state disregards not only differences in the languages, cultures and colonial histories of Pasifika nations but also the distinctly different political and economic relationships that the state has established with individual Pasifika nations. With respect to education, Carpenter et al (2001:200) maintain that it is important that teachers engaging with Pasifika students recognize that these cultural distinctions are crucial. However, if identifying cultural difference is considered a crucial element of teacher engagement with Pasifika students; it is of even greater importance that students themselves are made aware of the fundamental difference between the different Pasifika peoples and nations. Moreover, it is imperative that these differences are identified and recognized amongst the Pasifika communities, particularly by Pasifika leaders, when advocating for services to meet the needs of Pasifika people in their communities.

1.6.3   Overlooking the minority factions

Although the incumbent Labour Government emphasizes the need to acknowledge, identify and implement interventions that are effective for the Pasifika population, this

thesis identifies a growing faction of the Pasifika community that is frequently overlooked. While members of this group identify as, or have been identified as Pasifika peoples, for statistical purposes, they have minimal contact with, experience of, or exposure to traditional Pasifika communities, such as ethnic specific Pasifika churches. This group encompasses the offspring of mixed ethnic unions including Samoan/Palagi, Samoan/Maori, Samoan/Tongan as well as 1st, 2nd or third (3rd) generation NZ-born or NZ-raised Pasifika people who, for a variety of reasons choose not to participate in their respective Pasifika communities, either because they feel no affiliation with their perceived Pasifika communities and/or they have found alternative support networks.

1.6.4   Researching minority factions and groups

When this study began in 2001 there was a paucity of research that acknowledged the changing face of Pasifika identity and the ramifications of such a phenomenon. However, recent research has begun to recognise changes in the cultural and ethnic mix of the population in Aotearoa/New Zealand and acknowledge the rise of dual and mixed ethnicities within the Pasifika population. In their report on policy implications for multi-ethnic communities, Boston, Callister and Wolf (2005:39), acknowledge the changing face of the ethnic mix within particular ethnic groupings:

> The *study* also examines how much more complex, and ultimately more diverse, measures of ethnicity could be used when exploring causes of, or at least associations with, disadvantage. The ethnicity study illustrates that the rise of a complex multi-ethnic New Zealand provides some challenges for the collectors of official statistics and the design of social policy, including policies aimed at helping overcome disadvantage…

The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs (MPIA) (2003:14) has also acknowledged the emergence of 2nd generation Pasifika peoples whose links to traditional cultures are not strong and has resulted in "a loss or weakening of Pacific identity, particularly for those of mixed marriages, who increasingly do not identify as Pacific." The MPIA report acknowledges the implications that this may have for the preservation of culture, language, Pasifika identity and Pasifika values. The emergence of new research by Pasifika and non-Pasifika academics which identifies specific issues that surround this changing face, adds weight to the voices that continue to reinforce the need for policy

analysts to closely examine and carefully consider the implications of state policies for future Pasifika generations.

Teenage Pasifika parents and solo parents are examples of under-researched factions of the Pasifika community. Issues pertaining to teenage and solo parents include stigmatization by not only mainstream society but also from the deeply religious Pasifika communities. Intra-group stigmatization can, as noted by Hall, Stevens, Meleis, Ibrahim (1994:27), exacerbate cultural identity problems. While these factions are generally included in Pasifika statistics, given the dearth of research about this growing sector of the Pasifika community, questions must be raised as to whether their unique needs are adequately addressed within the context of current service provision. Moreover, the effects of intra-group stigmatization must be acknowledged by Pasifika leaders and communities, so that the interventions and strategies they promote and support incorporate the needs of different factions of their specific communities, including those that differ by generation, gender, or age.

1.7   THE QUESTIONS RAISED

With the contemporary creation of an increasing number of multi-ethnic Pasifika identities and a future that promises even more, questions relating to the complexity of identities must be addressed. How should the needs of people of multi-ethnic identity be catered for? Will this generation of multi-ethnic individuals create a unique form of identity? If so, does the current ECE provision provide culturally appropriate services for these factions? Alternatively, will these individuals be assimilated into the dominant culture, alienated from their Pasifika communities, or will they begin to form their own sub-communities based on their mutual interests and find their own solutions to their cultural and identity needs? It is an analysis of this growing sector of the Pasifika community that requires attention in order to ensure more inclusive policies and programmes are formulated and implemented.

1.8   THESIS OUTLINE: MAPPING THE PROGRESSION OF CHAPTERS

The seven chapters that make up this thesis are structured in the following way. Chapter Two *Locating a Pasifika Context* reviews literature that relates to the three themes, identified earlier in this chapter: the development of Pasifika early-childhood education initiatives, identity issues and the impact of trans-generational parenting styles, which included a discussion on teenage parenting issues. Chapter Three provides an overview of Family Systems, Human Ecological and Marginalization theories, which collectively provide the theoretical framework within which the primary data gathered from participants is interpreted and analyzed. Chapter Four incorporates a discussion of the methodology, methods and epistemologies used in this thesis, together with the ethical considerations involved. In Chapter Five – *Participants Responses* - the responses of the sixteen participants are examined, interpreted and analyzed within the context of themes and theories referred to in Chapter Two and Three. The three themes that emerged during the process of conducting this research that warranted deeper analysis are specifically identified in sections throughout this thesis so that these subjects can be teased out more explicitly; they are: 1) Pasifika Early Childhood Education Development (ECED), which encompasses cultural and language development for Pasifika peoples, 2) cultural identity issues, and 3) the impact of traditional Samoan parenting styles on the parenting styles of subsequent generations of NZ-born Samoans. Chapter Six, entitled *Pasifika Frames: Pasifika Voices* – augments the literature reviewed but is placed in between the two chapters that examine and analyze participant's views, keeping it near to the voices of participants and highlighting individual journeys in keeping to the spirit of Pasifika story-telling. Pasifika epistemologies reinforce the battle for self-hood and multi-ethnic identity issues. These are expressed through poetry, personal experiences and stories, and provide another way in which the themes and findings of this study can be analyzed and examined. Chapter Seven – *Findings and Conclusion* – outlines the findings of this research, ending with a concluding discussion. The chapter that follows reviews literature, providing a more general Pasifika context to the thesis.

CHAPTER TWO

LOCATING A PASIFIKA CONTEXT

2.0   INTRODUCTION

The literature reviewed in this chapter is based upon both Pasifika and Western epistemologies vis-à-vis factors that are intrinsically linked to choices made by Pasifika parents with respect to engagement with ECE. This chapter looks at issues highlighted in literature regarding Pasifika people that are relevant to parental choices made for their child/children's education in ECE and choices offered in regard to services. Early childhood development for Pasifika over time will be examined, before two significant factors, namely identity work and parenting styles that influence choice are explored through the literature.

2.1   EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT FOR PASIFIKA

This section reviews the development of ECE for Pasifika people and the rationale that underpinned the genesis of 'Pacific language nests' and their evolution into PECCs in order to conform to state licensing criteria. By identifying the need for and the objectives of the original 'Pacific language nests', it is possible to identify if those needs and objectives have changed over time. As participation rates remain poor the effectiveness of current service provision is examined within the context of cultural development and language maintenance.

2.1.1   The Genesis of 'Pasifika Language Nests'

'Pasifika language nests' were inspired by the Kohanga Reo movement in the 1970s and the Maori struggle for language and cultural survival. This provided the impetus for Pasifika women's resolve that their children would not encounter the same problems. In recognition of the consequences for tangata whenua in the loss of language and culture, and thereby identity and self-esteem, Pacific Islands' women decided that action must be

taken to ensure the future educational success of their children (Mara, Foliaki and Coxen 1994: 205).

The genesis of 'Pacific language nests' was a social movement outside of mainstream institutions. In the absence of government assistance, early childhood groups were initially established in church halls and homes of members of Pasifika communities. In 1993 some 350-community initiatives were in operation nationwide (Carpenter, et al 2001: 201). The creation of 'Pacific Island language nests' was initially motivated by a determination to ensure the maintenance of the 'mother tongue', address issues of identity, raise the self-esteem of Pasifika children, and ensure cultural survival. These reasons underpinning the genesis for establishing 'Pasifika language nests' have a direct relation to the reasons in examining rationales behind NZ born Samoan parents' choices in their children's preschool education today.

2.1.2   Participation rates of Pasifika People in Early Childhood

In 2001, the MOE focused attention on the early childhood sector with the objective of establishing and maintaining the capacity to deliver quality services. Specific contracts were awarded to increase participation rates of Pasifika children in ECE in PECCs and mainstream centres. The government's overarching goal of increased participation was reinforced in *The Christchurch Programme of Action* together with the secondary aim of improving the quality of PECCs (MPIA, 2001: 3). *The Pasifika Plan* (MOE 2001a) echoed these objectives and aimed to increase the recruitment of qualified Pasifika teachers and increased levels of resources.

Notwithstanding the government's initiatives, the poor participation rate of Pasifika children in ECE remains a major government concern. The *Literature Review on Pacific Education Issues 2002* made reference to research conducted by Penny Jamieson in 1979, 1990) cited in Coxon, Anae, Mara, Wendt-Samu, & Finau (2002:16), identified Pasifika children as the group with the highest percentage of non-attendees at preschool. Furthermore, Newell's (1999:1) research found that the participation rates for Pasifika children over the period 1992-1996 failed to increase in comparison with all other ethnic groups, with the exception of Maori. The gap between participation rates for Pasifika and Palagi (European) was, according to Newell, far from closing and appeared to be

widening (Coxon et al.MOE: 2002:16). Newell identified that the locations with the highest participation rates were areas where Pasifika language groups operated. However, Newell also found that although the overall participation rates increased by 5% in the 1992-1996 period, there was a general decline in children accessing PECCs or Pasifika language nests but an increase in Pasifika children accessing other types of ECE. This phenomenon has continued. According to the MOE website ((n.d.) retrieved 12/06/2006), the 22.7% of Pasifika children enrolled in PECCs in 2001 dropped to 17.54% in 2004 and despite the increase in participation, the number of Pasifika children accessing ECE is still lower than all other ethnic groups in Aotearoa/New Zealand with 84% attending compared with 89% of Maori and 96% of Palagi children. In any case, those identified as Pasifika may be a conservative estimate as children of dual ethnicity could be included in Maori rather than Pasifika figures.

In spite of the poor rates of Pasifika engagement in ECE, the MOE 's Chief Executive Officer, Howard Fancy, identified the early childhood sector as one of the few areas where there has been some educational success for Pasifika peoples (Galumalemana Hunkin-Tuiletufuga cited in Macpherson et al, 2001:205). Fancy's claim is based on a 1999 MOE report in which Fancy claims "enrolments of Pacific children in early childhood services have risen at a faster rate than those of non-pacific children" (Macpherson et al, 2001:206). These conflicting reports illustrate some inconsistencies in the measuring of success in terms of Pasifika ECE and participation rates.

2.1.3 Participations rates of Pasifika in Christchurch in Early Childhood

In 1987 there were 18 'Pasifika language nests' throughout Aotearoa/New Zealand. By January 1990, this number had risen to 145 (Dalli, 1990: 66). In Christchurch there were three licensed 'Pasifika language nests' in 1998. According to MOE databases (contact via website) there are currently seven licensed PECCs and three unlicensed Pasifika playgroups in Christchurch alone. Current enrolment figures at both licensed and unlicensed centres in Christchurch total 553 (see Table 1). Although a greater number of Pasifika children are enrolled in mainstream rather than Pasifika ECE centres, it should be noted that some children may be attending two services and therefore could be counted twice.

Table One

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Pasifika enrolments at Pacific Early Childhood Centres & other ECE services - Christchurch City

As at 1 July

2005

Definition		No. of Services	Pasifika Enrolments
Licensed Services			
Free Kindergarten		39	165
Playcentre		7	
Education & Care Service	Other Service	79	146
	Pacific EC Service	7	153
	TOTAL	86	299
Homebased Network		3	
Sub-total		**135**	**482**
License-Exempt ECE Groups			
Playgroups		6	25
Pacific EC Groups		3	28
Playcentres		1	
Sub-total		**10**	**53**
TOTAL		**145**	**535**

Some values have been suppressed for Privacy Reasons

NB: Children can enroll at more than one service so double counting will occur.

Source: DATA MANAGEMENT UNIT, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

According to Statistics New Zealand (2001) the number of Pasifika children aged under 5 in Christchurch was 1,149 (see Table 2). In view of the rapid birth rate of Pasifika, it is assumed that the figure of 1,149 in 2001 will have increased by 2005. As previously noted, Table 1 indicates the total number of Pasifika children enrolled in any early childhood service as 538 as of July 2005. When this is compared with the number of children under 5 (identified by NZ statistics at 2001 and illustrated in Table 2), it appears that even with a conservative estimate, the number of Pasifika children **not** participating in ECE represents almost half of those accessing some form of service. This fact alone reinforces the urgent need for research to identity **who** these Pasifika children are and why are they **not** participating in early childhood education. An analysis of **what** factors underpin Pasifika parental preference with respect to the type of ECE they access and **why** others fail to access any service requires urgent research. Such research will identify the key issues, emerging new trends, revealing 'gaps' in previous research and 'gaps' in the provision of services to Pasifika peoples. While the constraints imposed by a master's thesis preclude a thorough investigation of this anomaly, it nevertheless is intended to contribute to this discussion.

Table 2: (Source: 2001 Census Pop and Dwelling, Statistics New Zealand (2001)

2001 Census of Population and Dwellings

Ethnic Group (Total Responses) by Age - Five Year Groups

for the Census Usually Resident Population Count of the Canterbury Region

Total Pacific Children	**1,149**
Samoan	738
Cook Island Maori nfd	201
Tongan	132
Niuean	60
Fijian (except Fiji Indian/Indo-Fijian)	42
Papuan/New Guinean/Irian Jayan	9
Rarotongan	21
Tokelauan	9

2.1.3   Institutional Practices

The development of the 'Pasifika language nests' and their journey through the education system in Aotearoa/New Zealand provides an example of the monoculture domination of state institutions. In order to qualify for MOE funding 'Pasifika language nests' needed to achieve certain standards. However, compliance with state licensing requirements, which included a complicated 'paper chase', funding applications and community fundraising to upgrade facilities, proved beyond the capacity of already stretched and often impoverished Pasifika communities. As a result many centres remain unlicensed. The 'Pasifika language nests' that successfully managed to navigate their way through the licensing process were left with little money to spend on resources for the children. This often resulted in sub-standard ECE that placed children attending these centres at a disadvantage in terms of their academic learning (Mara et al., 1994, Mara, 1998).

Another problematic issue for PECCs involved the training of Pasifika ECE teachers. The lack of qualified staff in PECCs precluded compliance with state licensing requirements. In response the MOE agreed to the proposal that a 2-year Pacific Island Early Childhood Diploma Course be taught at Colleges of Education throughout the country in order to fast track the qualification process (Burgess, 1990:1).

Too often new government interventions and initiatives represent responses to 'perceived' crises that are based on inadequate data, or programmes considered successful overseas or in other regions of the country are transplanted without consideration of regional specificity. Pasikale (1996:15) reinforces this point:

> In spite of this lack of data, policy makers claiming to incorporate the interests of Pasifika peoples continue to develop and implement mainstream policies. While acknowledging the good intentions of policy makers, development of policy with insufficient and/or inaccurate data has several consequences…The inability to measure the effectiveness of interventions, other than in qualitative terms, and the lack of adequate indicators to demonstrate the value for money, are but two consequences…. Experience shows that in this process, issues important to Pacific Island people are often lost or subsumed into mainstream issues and/or further marginalized.

2.1.4   Evaluating effectiveness

The quality of ECE is, according to the MOE's 2006 website, a "vital first step in achieving equality and reducing disparity in our society" (www.*minedu.govt.nz, retrieved 21/10/2006*). The growth of PECCs has compelled the government to fund the potential licensing and chartering of centers. As the government's focus remains the reduction of disparities between Pasifika and mainstream children, additional funding is available to support initiatives aimed at increasing the number of licensed Pasifika centers.

While Pasifika peoples' communities welcome this additional funding, the lack of research regarding the effectiveness of PECCs in different regions and the different needs created by changing contexts and environments, remain a concern. In their 2002 literature review for the MOE, Coxon, Anae, Mara, Wendt-Samu and Finau (2002: 42) emphasize these concerns and recommend that further research is needed to respond to some unanswered questions such as: "Why participation rates for Pasifika children in quality early childhood centers are not increasing significantly despite the extensive funding input?" Longitudinal studies are recommended in order to examine and explore how early childhood experiences in PECCs, 'Pasifika language nests' and other mainstream centers affect achievement outcomes for Pasifika children. These authors also recommend research that evaluates policy driven initiatives "designed to include, educate and empower parents." Coxon et al (2002:43) argue that although their findings have established a number of key issues that exist in the Pasifika early childhood sector:

> …the lack of breadth and depth of evidence in each of these areas must continue to be of concern. It may be timely to refrain from any further initiatives until a sector-wide stock-take is completed and all future programmes are required to include a research component.

This study, within the limitations of a Masters thesis, contributes to this discussion by exploring the rationale that underpin parental choice of NZ-born Samoans with respect to accessing ECE and in the process, examining the evolving multi-ethnic face of Pasifika communities in Christchurch.

In the next section I examine the issue of identity development. As this remains an important factor in establishing 'Pacific language nests' in the first instance, it is imperative to examine the way identity is constructed by NZ born Samoans within

Aotearoa New Zealand. This will assist in identifying common and diverse perspectives and to further explore any changes that have developed over time.

2.2   IDENTITY ISSUES

> Every age, every culture, every custom and tradition has its own strength, its beauties and ugliness; accepts certain sufferings as matters of course, puts up patiently with certain evils. Human life is reduced to real suffering…only when two ages, two cultures and religions overlap… Now there are times when a whole generation is caught in this way between two ages, two modes of life, with the consequence that it loses all power to understand itself (Herman Hesse, Steppenwolf cited in Cox 1999:125).

This section explores the sensitive and very subjective topic of identity. Cultural identity and/or the lack of it, has been recognized as a key factor in shaping how individuals feel about themselves and how they engage with or distance themselves from others, particularly within their own 'perceived' communities of similar ethnicities. Specifically in this case, cultural identity speaks to how New Zealand-born Samoans differ in how they see themselves in relation to members of the more traditional Samoan communities as well as the wider Pasifika communities. A parent's concept of identity influences choice with respect to accessing educational programmes that specifically target Pasifika people, such as PECCs.

Extensive intermarriage within the general population and trans-generational cultural change has contributed to the complexity of identity formation and in the case of children from multi-ethnic families, of their cultural identity.

2.2.1   Ethnic Identity

Aboud and Doyle (cited in Bernal and Knight 1993: 47) define ethnic identity as "a person's knowledge of belonging to an ethnic group and pride in that group" and refer to a perceived awareness and cognitive process that connects a person to others of similar ethnicity. These authors contend that ethnic identity has become increasingly important in all countries where ethnic groups co-exist. It is particularly significant for minority groups for several reasons This includes the concerns of many minorities at risk of becoming assimilated into a mainstream culture where their uniqueness would be lost in

the potential multi-cultural 'melting pot'. Moreover, Aboud and Doyle (cited in Bernal and Knight 1993:47) argue that the importance of a child's ethnic identity needs to be reflected and appreciated in the school environment in order for them to "attain equal opportunity through equal achievement." Gorinski and Fraser (2006:9) highlight this point in their report to the MOE when they warn of the continued underachievement of minority students unless the education system acknowledges the multi-ethnic composition of the student population:

> Families from a culture other than that from which the underpinning values and understandings of an education originate may be disadvantaged within the system. As Harker and McConnochie (1985) note, "Because the curriculum and teaching methods are not drawn from the 'general culture' but from the dominant culture, education cannot offer equality of access or opportunity… social and ethnic differences will mean that only those from the dominant culture will have the 'cultural capital' necessary to benefit from the system…**minority students, particularly those from low socioeconomic backgrounds, remain potentially disadvantaged**.

Bearing in mind Gorinski's and Fraser's report (2006), which identifies and acknowledges identity as a crucial determinant to educational success in Aotearoa/New Zealand, issues relating to Pasifika identity formation and young Pasifika peoples' perceptions of themselves are of critical importance. While the traditional Samoan migrant communities have generally held fast to the cultural practices, values and language that they were inculcated with from birth, first generation New Zealand-born Samoans have had to straddle the conflicting worldviews of their migrant parents and the dominant palagi (Western) culture.

The cultural divide between these two generations has resulted in differences and challenges that have been documented in current research (Anae, 1997; Tiatia 1998; Mamoe 1999; Huakau 2001 and Tupuola 1997). Cluny Macpherson (1991) presents some interesting models of ethnic identities in relation to how different Samoans view their individual ethnic identities. It is not surprising to find that there are a variety of ways in which Samoans view their beliefs and practices. As Macpherson contends, ethnic identities vary and change according to individual upbringings and the degree of exposure to cultural symbols, such as language and customs. Current research highlights the differences that exist amongst people of the same ethnic group and emphasises how

the collapsing of ethnic groups into one homogenous category can result in factions of a particular ethnic group being overlooked.

A strong identity contributes to factors that lead to competent, connected and well-adjusted young people. Conversely, a lack of identity can be an added 'risk factor'. Sound cultural capital includes the knowledge of our own cultural traditions, an understanding of the history and cultural traditions that shape us, and the ability to engage with contemporary cultural practices, along with respect for and acceptance of other cultural traditions. People need the skills and opportunities to express their cultural values and practices and to transmit these to future generations if they so choose. The following quote exemplifies the importance of the home environment in the formulation of a secure identity:

> Ethnic Identity is an important domain of the self-concept, as such, it is influenced in its formation by the normative socialisation processes that influence everyone…children of all cultures experience enculturation that is, they undergo the normative socialisation experiences of their culture. These enculturation experiences lead to the development of living skills, behavioural competencies, and values… (Bernal, Knight, Cota, Garza and Ocampo, 1993:106).

The identity formation process, while acknowledged as a greater preoccupation at the adolescent stage of development, begins to take shape in the home at an early age. Thus, looking at home environments and parenting styles that adults were raised in, further develops our understanding of the choices a subsequent generation of parents might make. This will be explored further in following sections.

2.2.2   Multiple Ethnicities

Subsequent second and third generation New Zealand-born Pasifika people, together with those of mixed ethnicities, constitute a growing sector of the Pasifika community (Boston, Callister and Wolf, 2005; Gorinski and Fraser, 2006). It is possible to collate the distinct ethnicities within Pasifika communities. According to Statistics NZ, the number of Pasifika people in Christchurch who identified as having one sole ethnicity is 4867, whereas 4999 identified as having two or more ethnicities. This indicates that over half the population identified as Pasifika people in Christchurch are of mixed ethnicities (Statistics NZ website: 3/7/2006). Some of the implications and views of multi-ethnic

Pasifika people are discussed further in chapter six. However more focused research is required to identify the full implications of this growing trend.

The MPIA report on Pacific Youth Strategic Directions, *Ala Fou – New Pathways* (MPIA, 2005:14) reports:

> The issues of Pacific self-identity and cultural preservation have emerged as key issues for Pacific people, particularly for Pacific youth. For some second-generation Pacific peoples, the bonds of Pacific culture are not as strong or dominant, and have resulted in a loss or weakening of Pacific identity, particularly for those of mixed marriages, who increasingly do not identify as Pacific. **This has implications in terms of cultural and language preservation, Pacific identity and traditional Pacific values** (emphasis added**).

The foregoing quotation alludes to a negative impact of multi-ethnic groups with respect to the preservation of culture and language. Colleen Ward (2005) in her study of identity and adaptation in dual heritage adolescents of Maori and Pakeha heritage argues that much of the research vis-à-vis ethnically and racially mixed children is posited within a deficit framework. Ward refers to researchers including Cottrell's study that identifies issues of psychological stress, trauma and conflicting parental values (Cottrell, 1995 cited in Ward, 2005:1-2). Williams et al (2002) contend, "Cultural identity formation contributes to anxiety in adolescents of mixed heritage" (ibid). Gumina (1995, ibid) argues that ethnic identity is weaker in offspring of mixed ethnicities in comparison to those of single ethnicity.

However, Ward (2006) challenges these deficit-based contentions, proposing that they represent negative stereotypical arguments, with covert and often overt racist overtures, aimed at mixed marriages and people of mixed heritage. This research concurs with Ward's argument that people of mixed heritage should be considered from a position of strength.

Notwithstanding the challenges that dual or multiple ethnicities present, in circumstances where other positive factors are present, for example, a good education, strong and stable family support, good peer support, a good environment and good role models, then any negative issues that may arise from a lack of identity or cultural displacement, are not insurmountable. Conversely, in the absence of contributing productive factors in a young

person's life, cultural displacement or lack of identity will impact significantly on their life-choices and may contribute to their vulnerability to 'risk' factors.

Emily Keddell (2005), in her Masters thesis, studied four participants of mixed/dual heritage - Samoan father and Palagi mother – and examined how they viewed themselves and constructed their identities. Three of the four participants in Keddell's study identified more strongly with their Samoan culture, despite experiences of racism and an awareness of society's sometimes, unconstructive attitudes towards Samoans. Keddell's findings attributed participants' identification with their Samoan culture to supportive Palagi mothers and positive Samoan cultural experiences in and outside the home. According to Keddell, acknowledging all sides of a child's heritage is recognised as having a positive value and "is important in helping a child attain a healthy regard for themselves and others".

2.3   DIFFERENCES IN PARENTING STYLES

This section explores how parenting styles and early childhood experiences contribute to how individuals view themselves, their capacity to engage effectively with other individuals and further, how this affects their collective identities as Samoans. An examination of traditional Samoan parenting styles provides insights into the socialisation practices that Samoan immigrant family brought with them to Aotearoa/New Zealand. With respect to specific child raising practices in Samoa, two factors are explored that have relevance to this study: the family unit, and disciplinary measures.

2.3.1   Childrearing practices in Samoa

The Family Unit: According to Siauane's (2006) study on *fa'aSamoa,* the word *'aiga'* refers to a household or family unit that recognises genealogical and kinship ties through marriage, land and title. An *aiga* generally consists of blood relatives and may include persons with no blood connections but who have either been adopted or married into the family and accepted as kin. In essence, an *aiga* consists of a group of people who acknowledge the authority of the chosen leader and holder of matai title. Meleisea and Schoeffel maintain:

> The pui'aiga or local kin group is the basic unit of Samoan social structure, comprising a group of people related by ties of blood or adoption who, along with their spouses, render service to and are represented by a matai who bears the name of a common ancestor (1998:160).

Within the *aiga,* family structure is hierarchical and factors such as age, gender, blood ties, spouses and generation determine roles, status, and rank. It is within the *aiga* that the communal ideals of, for example, sharing, obedience and service to elders are taught to the young. The sense of belonging and concept of service (familial obligations) are important psychological emotions that are inculcated through socialisation practices that bind an individual to one's *aiga* (Meleisea & Schoeffel, 1998; Siauane, 2006). It is these values and socialisation practices that the early migrants brought with them and replicated in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Discipline of Children in Samoa: According to Meleisea and Schoeffel (1998:164), disciplinary measures within the family unit in Samoa include 'shame' based methods such as the use of mockery, putdowns and admonishments; physical aggression is also an acceptable practice when other coercive elements are not effective:

> …undesired behaviour- particularly attention seeking behaviour and such traits as talkativeness, possessiveness, greed, and immodesty was laughed at and commented on by sayings like 'shame on you!' Children who did not respond to 'gentler' methods were smacked.

Furthermore, Meleisea and Schoeffel (1998:164) maintain that in traditional Samoan village settings children are afforded the lowest status in the *aiga.* While babies and toddlers are often indulged up to the age of 2 years or more, young children have a collective status and are assigned chores according to their size and capacity. These chores include collecting fallen leaves and rubbish, weeding, running errands for adults, babysitting siblings and other younger toddlers in their *aiga.* Children are taught to value service and view the chores that they perform as part of the service to the *aiga.* These authors (1998:164) contend that status demarcation has a significant influence on the relationship between children and parents:

> …children were taught to hold their parents in special affection and respect, but to treat them as persons of a distinct and higher status group. Thus relations between parents and children tended to be formal and reserved rather than demonstrative, individualistic and personal.

These observations of child rearing practices in a village setting in Samoa provide insights into the socialisation practices as well as the values and cultural protocols Samoan immigrants grew up with. As the established 'norms' these beliefs, values and attitudes represent approaches to parenting that Samoan migrants brought with them and passed on to their own children. However, the majority of migrant parents did not comprehend the effects of the different environment and conflicting culture of Aotearoa/New Zealand. This new environment impacted on how normal childrearing practises in Samoa were enacted, viewed, measured and received not only by their children but also by a vastly different society. Cultural conflicts were not just between Samoan and European ethnic groups, but also between subsequent generations of Samoans.

2.3.2   Teenage Parents

The issue of teenage parenting arises in this thesis due to most of the participants in Group B (2/3) and C (6/73) having had their children under the age of 25. It is important to note that current social service agencies that address the need for teenage parents support, classify teenage parents as being aged 14 years to 25 years. It is a factor that must have some bearing in examining differing parental attitudes and the choices parents make in regard to their children's educational options. It also highlights an increasing issue that is often not discussed within more traditional Pasifika communities. The teenage birth rate in Aotearoa/New Zealand is the third highest in the OECD (UNICEF 2001, cited in Collins, 2004: 1). According to Collins (2004) in 2003, 3,784 teenage pregnancies resulted in a live birth (ibid), and 3,846 in an induced abortion (Abortion Supervisory Committee 2004, cited in Collins 2004). Over the past twenty years, the pregnancy rate of 50 per 1,000 has remained about the same but the teenage abortion rate has nearly doubled, and the number of teenagers giving birth has declined (Boddington, Khawaja and Didham 2003). Quality of Life in New Zealand Report (2003: 84), commissioned by eight of the largest City councils in New Zealand, asserts that the rate of live births among females aged 13-17 years is "considerably higher for Maori and Pacific Islands females than any other groups". According to this report, in 2001, one quarter of all births to females aged 13 to 17, in the eight biggest cities in New Zealand were to Pacific Island females (23.7%). As teenage parenting is often associated with poor outcomes it has significant ramifications for Pasifika communities. Due to the

limitations of this thesis, a fuller analysis could not be justified but highlights another area for specific research.

2.3.3   Dual Development of Teenage Parents

In their study of parenting adolescents, Dixon & Baragawanath (1998) propose that 'dual development crisis' arises from dilemmas faced by adolescent teenagers in that the additional process of developing a parenting identity may further complicate the experiences of their own personal identity formation:

> While the processes of adolescence and of parenthood can be viewed as occurring along two separate continua, for the adolescent parent the two processes occur simultaneously or as parallel continua. This can result in conflict between the two needs of the developmental processes...for example, the adolescent's need for the opportunity to establish an identity may be in direct conflict with roles and responsibilities of parenthood.

Fergusson's and Woodward's (2000) Christchurch study of 520 young women, observed from birth to 21 years, found that women who became pregnant by age 18 had significantly lower rates of school achievement and post-secondary education than their peers who delayed pregnancy. Moreover Arai (2003) maintains that teenage childbearing is linked with an array of unproductive outcomes for both the young mother and their children. Generally, teenage mothers have lower levels of educational attainment than their older counterparts and are often premature school leavers. Teenage mothers, especially those in low socio-economic circumstances, are at a greater risk than their non-parenting peers of curtailed educational achievement outcomes. Arai emphasizes that teenage mothers with higher levels of depression exhibited less effective parenting behaviours, and that their children were more likely to display greater adjustment problems. Furthermore, in comparison to older mothers, studies found teenage mothers to be less sensitive, less responsive and more restrictive in their parenting. Teenage mothers also appear to display harsher childrearing practices and are more likely to display more physically controlling behaviour than older mothers (Arai, 2003). However it should be noted that while early childbearing is commonly associated with some negative outcomes among children of teenage parents, recent research indicates that the effects on children are not as damaging as previously thought (Levine et al. 2000, Strobino 1987; Zabin and Hayward 1993; Webster, Thompson, Mitchell et al 1994, cited in Arai 2003).

2.3.4   Ramifications of Adolescent Parenting.

The vulnerability of adolescent parenting to a range of possible social risk factors has been discussed in the previous section. Factors such as the impact of dual development processes, as highlighted by Dixon and Baragawanath, (1997: 292) demonstrate the uneasy and sudden transition adolescent parents are faced with. It is therefore not difficult to see how these factors individually and/or collectively compromise the ability of adolescent parents to make rational and informed decisions with respect to their children's future, particularly as their children's education may not be a top priority. This must have a significant influence in their ability to choose appropriate educational options for their children. According to Dixon and Baragawanath (1997:293):

> Parents' personal maturity and psychological well being have been found to be associated with the provision of sensitive and growth-promoting environments for the infant…the ability of an adolescent to provide such an environment must be questioned on account of the adolescent's age and the stresses that are often associated with adolescent pregnancy and parenting.

Furthermore from Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological perspective, parents provide the pathway through which cultural and environmental factors influence the development of their infants. Thus different parenting styles and the environment that parents may provide for their children would be varied and it would be safe to assume that the age of the parents would be a significant factor as explored in further chapters.

2.3.5   Current Research

Since 2003, when this research project began, there has been increasing interest and growing recognition by government ministries of the importance of effective parenting in arresting growing social issues. For example, there have been a number of government initiatives focused on improving parenting skills and strengthening family units. The MOE has a website dedicated to parenting issues, such as *Team Up Parenting* and a Parent Support initiative aimed at strengthening parenting skills through educational programmes and social support services which is centred in PECCs in low socio economic areas where families are most vulnerable. The Ministry of Justice has in 2006, launched programmes for parents going through the process of separation with the

objective of minimising the negative effects on the children involved. A huge proliferation of resource material has been produced in recent years by MSD and CYFs to promote effective parenting strategies to parents across the board. There has also been greater recognition of specific issues relating to teenage parenting and the implementation of support services to cater for the needs of increasing numbers of teenage parents. While the emphasis has focused on parents, there has also been recognition of the need to address environmental and the wider socio-economic issues, such as how poverty impacts on the ability of families to parent effectively. One example is the new Family Assistance package that provides families with children extra assistance.

Anne Smith (2006), in the Ministry of Development's Social Policy Journal, reviews a number of studies that examine the relationship between ethnicity, parenting-styles and disciplinary environment, and outcomes for children. Smith refers to several studies including Deater-Deckard and Dodge 1997; Horn et al 2004; Kelley and Tseng 1992 and Simons et al, 2000 which demonstrate that the effects of physical discipline vary across social and cultural contexts. Smith cites Deater-Deckard's and Dodge's findings that punishment has different meanings for different cultural groups, and that parent–child relationships are another important arbitrary feature. (Deater-Deckard and Dodge: 1997 cited in Smith 2006:6) assert that:

> …where physical punishment is a predominant and normative mode of discipline and where it is used in a controlled fashion in the context of a nurturing relationship, it is looked on as culturally acceptable, and a sign of good parenting, and that therefore the effects can be positive.

However, while Smith (ibid) observes that this suggestion of physical punishment having possible positive outcomes is reinforced in other studies, such as Horn, Joseph and Cheng (2004, cited in ibid), she notes that such findings are questionable as many more studies make the association between physical punishment and poor outcomes. Smith (ibid) also refers to a recent study by Landsford et al. (2005 cited in ibid) which tested the hypothesis of whether in cultures where physical punishment is normative the results were less negative than perceived in Western cultures. Landsford et al (cited in ibid) identified variations in countries' "normativeness" use of physical punishment and found that "normativeness" moderated the association between punishment and child

aggression and anxiety. For example, in cultural groups in Kenya, where physical punishment was more frequently used, adjustment problems were less severe. Conversely, in countries where physical punishment was less acceptable and used infrequently children who experienced physical punishment suffered more harmful effects. However, it is important to note that researchers agree that the 'moderating' effects of cultural norms are restricted to reasonable levels of physical punishment. Extremely harsh discipline, bordering on physical abuse, is ruinous for any child regardless of culture. Moreover, children who had experienced physical punishment, irrespective of whether it was regarded as normative or not, were more likely to be aggressive and anxious. Accordingly, Lansford et al argue that it is important **not** to take an extreme position on cultural relativism (Lansford et al. 2005 cited in Smith 2006:6).

This research has relevance to participants' experiences of strict upbringings that often involved physical punishment. In countries such as Samoa where physical punishment is a common parenting strategy used to deter undesired behaviour or attitudes in the young, moderate physical punishment is considered to be quite acceptable (Meleisea and Schoeffel, 1998). Furthermore, village life is a shared experience and as people live in open style *fale* (houses) very similar parenting practices are inculcated. Thus the normativeness of the parenting experience may assist the Samoan child's adjustment to these practices with minimal harmful results.

2.4   SUMMARY

The literature reviewed in this chapter is derived from both Pasifika and Western epistemologies that have relevance to the issues that affect choices made by Pasifika parents with respect to engagement with ECE. Firstly, the relevance of current services provided by Pasifika language nests and PECCs regarding language maintenance and educational standards were discussed. Secondly, the issue of identity, particularly the complexities of identity formation within the context of an increasingly multi-ethnic Pasifika population, was explored. Thirdly, factors relating to teenage parenting were also discussed in order to highlight specific issues pertaining to parenting differences within this growing section of the communities in contemporary society. Finally, the effects of trans-generational changes in parenting styles and their impact on the current parenting practices were examined. Chapter three will provide an overview of the theoretical framework used in this thesis.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMES

3.0   INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of theoretical approaches relevant to understanding the rationale that underpins Pasifika parental choice regarding engagement with ECE. Within the context of the increasingly multi-ethnic composition of Pasifika families, family theories are an appropriate analytical tool as they recognise the impact of social structures on multi-cultural families and the influence of past relationships and family histories on current family circumstances. While human behaviour is not determined by environmental factors, they nevertheless impose limitations and constraints, or alternatively provide possibilities and opportunities, for families. Human Ecology theories emphasise the significance of human environments by recognising more inclusive definitions of family structures and the impact of cultural differences on family interaction and human development. Importantly, these theories facilitate an analysis of individual and family issues within the context of wider societal structures.

3.1   A THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

According to Smith (1995:17) the word 'theory' is derived from the Greek word meaning to view or "to think about" and consists of "a set of interconnected ideas that frames the world in a certain way and guides the way in which people observe and explain phenomena." Carpenter, Dixon, Rata, and Rawlinson (2001) contend that theories provide the connection between philosophy and action by explaining the purpose that underpins the action. Thus, theories have the potential to explain the human condition and improve people's lives. Theories also reinforce the importance of exploring a broad range of theoretical approaches that incorporates new research, which challenges and extends our cognitive abilities. Moreover, Carpenter et al (2001:13) commend the disciplines of psychology, sociology, history and education for providing an array of complementary and competing theoretical tools that "provide lenses which we… can begin to understand ourselves… families and communities, and wider society."

3.2   OVERVIEW OF FAMILY THEORY

Family theories provide an approach that is conducive to an analysis of the social structures and factors that impact on multicultural families and how these factors affect the choices parents make regarding their children's education. According to Smith (1995:8) family theories facilitate ways of thinking about families by identifying what factors should be observed and how data should be interpreted. From this perspective, families are perceived as entities with the capacity and influence to ensure the good of both society as well as the unit itself, in terms of organic sustenance, economic maintenance, psychosocial and nurturance functions. However, as all individuals are dependent on shared natural resources, a balance must be maintained between cooperation and integration in the ecosystem with the individual's demands for independence and freedom. As an integral part of the total life system, families and their survival are interdependent with other forms of life and as cultures and environments are forever changing, families are continually engaged in the process of adaptation. Families are flexible units with the ability to respond, change, develop, act on and modify their environment as the need arises. Thus, family theories emphasize that both the physical and biological laws of nature together with human systems of regulation - such as social norms - guide the interactions between families and environments.

According to Smith (1995), family theories recognize that although environments do **not** determine human behaviour, they nevertheless impose limitations and constraints, as well as provide possibilities and opportunities for families. Decision making represents the central control process through which action is directed towards attaining individual and family goals. Family theories emphasize the interdependence of families and the systems in which they function; how families survive, maintain and sustain themselves is dependent on economic adequacy, justice, freedom and peace. The quality of the lives of family members is affected by health, education and learning, loving and nurturing relationships, productive work environments, experiences and symbolic systems that provide meaning and convey a sense of community (Bubolz & Sontag, M, 1993; Ingoldsby & Smith, 1995 and Berk, 2000). Importantly, as Smith notes, family theories obligate academics and practitioners to act in accordance with the values they espouse

and attend to the problems of groups and subcultures who lack power, self-determination, and access to resources. Thus family theories are compatible with my view that scholarship is of critical importance with respect to community development, particularly within Pasifika communities.

3.2.1   Family Systems Theory

Family Systems theory facilitates a way of understanding how current family circumstances have been influenced by past relationships or family histories (Smith, 1995). Family systems theory evolved in the post World War Two era from the work of individuals including Ackerman (1959), Jackson (1965), Minuchin (1974), and Bowen (1978). Linda Christian (2006:1) argues that although this theory is "typically used in family counseling and family therapy, much can be learned from examining it in the context of early childhood settings". One of the theory's fundamental concepts is that the family unit is comprised of 'interconnected members' who influence one another in predictable and repetitive ways. From our familial membership we learn the skills with which to function, interact and engage with others in larger and more formal settings such as schools and work environments. Furthermore, it is within our family experiences that we 'shape' our worldview and the expectations of how the larger world will engage with us (Christian, 2006; Van Velsor & Cox, 2000; Kern & Peluso, 1999 and Nieto, 2004).

As a unit, the family is comprised of interlocking relationships that have existed over many generations. Individual behaviour, Smith (1995:12) asserts, is more closely related to the functionality of the individual's original family than previously realised. According to Smith (1995:12) this theory differs from other approaches in that it focuses on the "communication processes used by family members to develop cohesion and resolve conflict." It examines the 'psychosocial processes' and describes the "interactional process among family members and the outcome of this communication, in any cultural setting" (Smith, 1995:13). This theory moves beyond cause-and-effect thinking and thereby facilitates a more comprehensive understanding of the multiplicity of factors that interact across time to produce problems or symptoms by recognising the interplay between biological, genetic, psychological, and sociological factors in determining individual behaviour. Moreover, it also highlights the ways in which human functioning

is similar to the functioning of all other forms of life; and, that certain principles governing behaviour are common to all life forms.

Family Systems theory considers that life is guided by emotional forces, which to varying degrees, are regulated by an individual's ability to think. Emotions include a variety of automatic responses, including those driven by instinct, genetics, biology, and hormones as well as automatic feeling or sensory responses. Individuals are able to modify their responses to the automatic emotional input by studying and understanding their own behavioural patterns and linking these patterns back to their multigenerational family (Smith, 1995). Thus, Family Systems theory provides a theoretical framework within which to examine the intergenerational issues that affect the Pasifika population, particularly changes in parenting styles and home environment of migrants and subsequent generations who were born and educated in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Intergenerational changes have impacted on parenting systems and decision-making processes that Pasifika parents make with respect to accessing ECE.

3.3   HUMAN ECOLOGY THEORY

Another branch of family theory is Human Ecology theory which focuses on the importance of human environments (Smith, 1995:14). This theoretical approach provides an appropriate framework for examining multicultural families for three reasons. Firstly, it accepts and is inclusive of various definitions of family structures; secondly, it acknowledges that cultural difference may influence family interactions and human development; and thirdly, it considers individual and family problems within the context of wider societal structures. Family issues relating to education, employment and/or housing are recognised as being affected by structural factors, such as discrimination and poverty and not simply attributed to "individual pathology or dysfunctional family communication" (Smith, 1995:14).

Importantly, Human Ecology theory challenges the deficit ideology that blames marginalized individuals and groups for the socio-economic disparities that distinguish them from the general population. While deficit theorizing is no longer overtly expressed, deficit thinking has nevertheless re-emerged in more powerful and insidious forms that

continue to exert a powerful influence on governments, their institutions and the general public (Reid, 2006:29). Accordingly, Smith (1995:14) extols the virtues of human ecology as it encourages scholars to study and assist marginalized groups who lack resources, social power and control of their lives:

> It emphasises "human betterment" in terms of economic adequacy, justice, freedom and peace…the needs of the "have nots" in the developing world must be addressed. Because of its commitment to action, the theory might be utilised as a framework for analyzing the interactions between human development and social conditions such as poverty at all ecosystem levels, including the individual, family, community and society. This could result in public policies, institutional programs, and community action plans to alleviate such problems (Bubolz & Sontag, 1993:426 cited in Smith, 1995:15).

Human Ecology theory is therefore conducive to examining the wider social issues and factors that influence decisions that parents of Samoan heritage make regarding the pre-school education of their children.

3.4 Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory recognises that multiple factors impact, influence, impinge and inspire the individual and reinforces the importance of considering all relevant factors when exploring the rationale that underpins individual choice. Bronfenbrenner's pioneering work combines aspects of sociology and developmental psychology and establishes a foundation for future approaches. By positioning child development within an ecological perspective, Bronfenbrenner's (1979) conceptual framework provides a practical starting point from which to explore the various factors that impinge upon and influence family interactions. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979: 22) the connection between individuals and their environments is "mutually shaping" and he perceives the individual's experience "as a set of nested structures, each inside the next, like a set of Russian dolls."

When viewing human development through the ecological system, one is compelled to look within, beyond, and "across" the interaction of systems that encompass the family, environment, workplace, and economy. From this perspective, the development of the child is understood as a gradual process which changes over time and although biology remains the principal player, interactions within the wider social context defines the

developmental results. For example, biological sensitivities, (such as the temperament a child is born with) as well as the social and environmental resources of the family combine to produce certain outcomes (Kreppner & Lerner, 1989). Thus, the logical extension of Bronfenbrenner's argument hinges on the ability of families to access and manage resources across these systems. Bronfenbrenner's conceptual framework comprises four interlocking systems that shape individual development:

1. *The micro-system* is where the family enters the framework by engaging with a child through interpersonal relationships. At this level a child experiences immediate interactions with other people. The home is the initial micro-system where interactions are limited to only one or two family members ("dyadic" or "triadic" interaction). As a child ages, the *micro-system* involves more relationships, for example, engagement with other adults and children when a child enters preschool. Exposure to increased numbers of interactions with others has the potential to enhance a child's development, provided that these relationships are both reciprocal and enduring.

2. At the level of *the meso-systems* the number of interrelationships increases in various settings including the home, day-care centres, and schools. The stronger and more diverse the connections between these settings, the more powerful an influence *meso-systems* exert on a child's development. The interrelationships between factors, such as the initiatives of the child and the parent's involvement in connecting the home and the school, are formative determinants in the quality of a child's *meso-system.*

3. *The exo-system* reflects the quality of interrelationships among settings that are influenced by forces external to the child's sphere of participation but which nevertheless have a direct bearing on parents and other adults who interact with a child. These may include parental workplaces, school boards, social service agencies, and planning commissions.

4. The level of *the macro-system'* is where the "blueprints" that interconnect the social forces and their interrelationships in shaping human development are located. These "blueprints" provide the ideologies and organizational patterns within which the *meso-* and *exo-systems* reflect the ecology of human development. *Macro-systems* are not static, but are changed by evolution and revolution. For example, economic recession, war, and

technological advances may produce changes that impact on people's perspectives (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1987; Kreppner and Lerner, 1989; Henderson, 1995 and Smith 1995).

3.4.1 CASE STUDY

The suitability of the Bronfenbrenner model to this research is exemplified by examining the experiences of a Samoan child who immigrated to Aotearoa/New Zealand with his parents in the 1960s. At the *macro* level, the underlying reason for the mass migration of Samoans in the 1950s and 1960s was the post World War Two economic boom and the emergence of a Fordist manufacturing industry. The need for cheap factory labour to service the manufacturing sector compelled the government to turn to their close neighbours in the Pacific and immigration laws were more relaxed to accommodate this need. However, the economic forces at the *macro* level which acted as 'pull factors' to entice Pasifika people to the 'land of milk and honey' resulted in huge changes in the *micro-systems* of the migrant Samoan child.

At the level of *meso-systems* his extensive network of relationships with extended family members in the communal setting of Samoa were reduced to relationships with members of his nuclear family. The nurturing of grandparents and other family carers had gone. He would now enter an education system at a time that coincided with the state's acknowledgement of a 'statistical blackout' (Hunn, 1961) in Maori educational achievement. His anticipated failure within the state school system was rationalized by cultural deficit theories. School was also an alien environment to his parents which served to exclude their involvement in his education. The state would attribute the lack of parental involvement to the low educational aspirations his parents held for him.

At the level of the *exo-system* his immigrant parents were required to now adapt to the changed nature of work, context and time. The relative simplicity of village life had been traded for a nine to five workday as his father toiled in a factory and had less time for the mother and child. His father's working class status would become entrenched and impact on his ability to provide for his family. This would impose restrictions on the family's life-circumstances and life-chances.

At the *macro*-level, the economic recession in the 1970s precipitated a sudden change in policy and in attitude towards Pasifika people. Once welcomed, Pasifika people now

found themselves surplus to labour requirements and scapegoats for the downturn in the nation's economy. This boy and his family would now be subjected to increased stigmatization.

The changing dynamics in the *micro*, *meso* and *exo* systems impacted on how this adolescent perceived himself, his relationship with his parents and his ability to make sense of his changing world. These changes affected the view of the world he had formulated through his earlier childhood experiences and negatively impacted on the identity formation process that all adolescents go through at this stage of their development. On the basis of his ethnicity, the "blue-prints" that interconnect the social forces and their interrelationships with human development, would preclude both he and his family from participating in his new society on an equivalent basis to mainstream members.

3.5   SUMMARY

This chapter has established a theoretical foundation for examining the rationale that underpins the choices Pasifika parents make with respect to engagement in ECE. Family systems and human ecology theories provide a framework within which to analyse factors that impact on the individual at the micro level of the nuclear family as well as within the context of wider societal structures. A hypothetical case study was then presented as an example of how Bronfenbrenner's ecology theory can be used to analyse Pasifika families and the individual child. Chapter Four describes the methodology, methods and ethical considerations of this research and outlines the profile of participants who generated primary data for this research. It will also explore the various issues that emerge from conducting research in Christchurch Pasifika communities.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGIES, METHODS, EPISTEMOLOGIES

4.0   INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the processes involved in this research: the methodology (the rationale behind the methods used), the method (the technique for gathering information), and epistemologies (the different theories of knowledge used to validate and strengthen an argument or 'position' and to analyse the information found) (Clarke, 1998). Finally, ethical considerations are discussed.

4.1   METHODOLOGY

The methodological approach used in this project, was of necessity, eclectic in order to address any underlying cultural issues that may have arisen due to the fact that I am an active member of the Christchurch Pasifika community. The two methodological considerations that needed to be addressed were, first, the political dimension of conducting Pasifika research and second, the need to conform to Western academic protocols and requirements.

I addressed the political dimension by adopting a Pasifika approach in that it was "by Pasifika, for Pasifika and among Pasifika peoples." Although this study was looking at Pasifika participation in general, the approach was specifically Samoan and focused on NZ-born Samoans as participants. Being of Samoan heritage, and born in New Zealand, I was able to draw on personal experience to engender trust and a sense of security for participants who did not necessitate an explanation of all the idiosyncrasies involved in coming from a Samoan context. One of the responsibilities as a Samoan researcher conducting research amongst Samoans in Christchurch was to ensure that participants felt continually safe, not only in an individual sense, but in a community sense as well. This meant that their anonymity was not compromised within or outside of the project. As the Christchurch Samoan community is relatively small, the need to be cautious in disclosing any information when in a community setting was paramount. Moreover, there was a

need to acknowledge the trust between the participants and the researcher: 'looking after the spaces between relationships' (*teu le va*) a highly valued Samoan concept in which the spaces between the relationships are heeded and respected. Within the interviews many participants volunteered personal stories about themselves as did I. This was an essential part of building authentic relationships where concepts such as fetufai (sharing) and fa'aaloalo (respect) occur. In an informal, qualitative setting, where professional discussions merge amidst familiar chatter, it is easy to include sensitive information, which if shared in the wrong context can compromise both the researcher and participant. Huakau (2001) explains further:

> Gossip is a huge part of our Pacific culture so therefore you need to insure confidentiality, because we don't have any (only in the way of family secrets) It is very important …because when you deal with Pacific people, you get to know the personal…To our people there is no division between the personal and the professional, they see it as a whole, in a holistic view. That is why in Pacific public meetings, you will hear a lot of personal stories about people. So unless you have gained academic skills it is very difficult for Pacific people to see the difference. Now I can see the difference, but I never used to …New Zealand people do not see oral tradition as valid. They need to recognise that there are other ways of learning, expressing, talking… (C:4 cited in Huakau: 2001: 77).

Furthermore, it is also relevant to conduct a specific focus around Samoans in Christchurch given that they make up the majority of Pasifika people living in Christchurch and on a national level (see Ch 1, pg 6). Notwithstanding NZ-born perspectives, being versed in Samoan protocols and values such as fa'aaloalo, (respect) tautua (service), and fetufai (sharing) allowed me to conduct the research in a culturally appropriate manner. I felt that this methodological approach avoided the ubiquitous focus of the government and its agencies on the poor educational and social outcomes of Pasifika peoples. Space was provided for explanations of the poor participation rates of Pasifika children in early education. The concept of 'working with' as opposed to the patronising norm of 'working for' has to begin by incorporating the voices of people that government interventions and services are directed towards. Accordingly, I believe that it is essential to listen to the 'people,' an approach that demands cultural communication and cooperation.

Emancipatory research was also considered appropriate as this challenges research that is designed and conducted by the dominant group. Emancipatory research advances

Pasifika peoples' desire for greater self determination and autonomy over their own affairs. By adopting an emancipatory approach, I was able to conform to Western academic standards, but at the same time conduct research with the objective of facilitating positive social change for vulnerable individuals and groups. By exploring the rationale that underpins Pasifika parental choice, an understanding of the barriers to participation can be gained.

Reid (2006:59) refers to Linda Smith's (2004:6) contention that research conducted within marginalized groups is considered to be "socially interested" or having "stand point" approaches that are identified as "critical research, social justice research and community action research." Researchers who belong to marginalized communities have a standpoint from which the research is developed, conducted, analysed and interpreted, and so may be considered 'insider researchers' (Smith, L. 2004 in Reid 2006:10). Accordingly, this project can also be described as 'insider research'. While 'outsider' or dominant group research remains dominant, insider research is being increasingly accepted as a valid approach, capable of adding new dimensions of knowledge to that which Westerners have recorded about Pasifika and other indigenous ethnicities worldwide. As Pasikale (cited in Mamoe 1999:21) notes, 'the 'insider' researcher's voice cannot be ignored because of misplaced beliefs of "objectivity" and "truths".'

From a personal perspective, my position as an 'insider' researcher has created both advantages and difficulties. The benefit of belonging to the Pasifika community means that as relationships have been formed over a life-time, trust is engendered without the need to overcome the scepticism that many Pasifika people feel towards Palagi research. However, my insider position in the Samoan community in Christchurch also creates problems with respect to neutrality. The small size of the local Samoan population, coupled with the fact that I have worked and actively participated amongst this group over my life-course, made it difficult for me to remain a neutral party or appear neutral to the participants. However, I was able to draw on my personal experience and knowledge in the field of research. As participants were aware of my long-term commitment to Pasifika early childhood education and the wider Pasifika community, it was understood that I was not just another researcher using Pasifika knowledge for personal gain and/or academic betterment and glory.

With respect to the issue of objectivity, while academics have long argued that objectivity is a prerequisite of research, the notion of objectivity is flawed. No idea is formed in a vacuum. Researchers come with individual experiences, perceptions and preconceived notions that influence and impact on the shape and content of subject matter being researched, despite the intention to be 'value' free.

As a New Zealand-born Samoan, I consider researching members of my own community to be a privilege and one which carries a considerable responsibility. I am also aware that in the final analysis, the body of knowledge that I have solicited from participants belongs to them.

4.1.1 Importance of a Local Context

The Pasifika community in Christchurch is of significance as a sample area because the regional specificities make it different from cities where the population size of Pasifika people is far greater. Most areas of Pasifika research have been conducted in areas where there are high numbers of Pasifika people. The *Ko e Ako a'e Kakai Pasifika* Report, MOE (1998:5) acknowledges that "Few initiatives involve Pacific Islands communities in areas where their numbers are low or where Pacific Islands peoples are isolated from each other." Mamoe (1999:4) argues the need for research in "less populated areas to check trends or to develop answers that may be applied to larger areas." As an active member of the Christchurch Pasifika community, I believe that when initiatives based on research for cities with large Pasifika populations are transplanted without consideration of regional specificities, they do not necessarily work successfully because of the different dynamics of diverse local Pasifika communities. Customarily, funding for specific interventions and initiatives that target Pasifika peoples are implemented in areas with large Pasifika populations. However, in predominantly monocultural areas such as Christchurch, the need and capacity to assert a minority cultural identity is made more difficult. Furthermore, as there are fewer resources available, the smaller enclaves of Pasifika populations in Aotearoa/New Zealand are in more vulnerable positions.

This highlights the importance of research done at a local level. Pasifika communities away from the bigger cities such as Auckland and Wellington where a bigger proportion of Pasifika people reside, contend with more barriers in asserting their identity. The

environment is more monocultural and their 'face' is less visible, leading to local authorities allocating fewer resources to what they consider less economically viable communities. A case in point would be the Christchurch City Council's threat to discontinue the local Pasifika festival, which has been held for the past four years at the Arts Center, on the grounds of economic viability. One of the concerns for local Pasifika communities would then be the contention that there were fewer opportunities for them to profile their uniqueness and 'Pasifika flavour'. It is useful to note that Pacific Underground, a local theatre and performing arts trust was instrumental in making Pasifika stories visible nationwide. The question has often been asked at how unusual this was, given that it came out of such a 'monocultural' city such as Christchurch. This highlights the fact that barriers can also act as a motivating factor. Because of the need to assert a Pasifika identity, often Pasifika people in isolated areas need to work that much harder at finding innovative ways to express and explore their identity as Pasifika people. Additionally, Pacific Underground gave opportunities for young Pasifika people such as playwright and comedian, Oscar Kightly and musician Scribe, to explore their talents in the arts.

Notwithstanding local barriers and a smaller population base, the Christchurch Pasifika communities are often able to work more effectively as a united front. The close work with local ministries such as MPIA and MOE is a testament to this collaborative approach. Progressive interventions such as more effective professional development in local PECCs are prime example.

4.2   METHOD

This research is a qualitative study, based on the responses generated by a sample of Pasifika parents in Christchurch. I considered that the qualitative approach was the most culturally appropriate way of gathering meaningful explanations of the rationale that underpinned parental choice as it accommodated the oral tradition of Pasifika peoples and it allowed me to 'uncover' the 'hidden voices' of factions within our Pasifika community who are usually overlooked. Moreover, this approach respects and reinforces our oral tradition where people's stories are regarded as essential forms of knowledge (Pasikale 1997; Mamoe 1999; Tiatia 1998; Huakau 2001). For these reasons, I believe that a qualitative approach should be incorporated in any research project involving our

Pasifika communities. It is not enough to make assumptions based on statistical data, for not only the quantitative approach often 'blankets' Pasifika people as one homogenous group, but it also disregards the validity of individual perspectives and experiences.

Primary data was collected from a population who identified as 'Pasifika' people. The Samoan population in Aotearoa/New Zealand is heterogeneous and participants in this study were NZ-born or NZ-raised parents of Samoan extraction who identified as Samoan, regardless of the percentage of Samoan blood they had. Thus, by utilizing the concept of 'ethnicity' rather than the pseudoscientific construction of 'race' I was able to include parents of mixed heritage that represent an increasing section of the Pasifika communities.

The sampling technique that I used to generate a group of participants is commonly called the 'snowball effect' (Tuckman, 1978 cited in Fonoti, 1998:18). The 'coconut wire' produced a group of twenty-eight possible participants, who were narrowed down to sixteen. This included eight in each sample group, a number I considered manageable in terms of the logistics involved in interviewing. However, during the process of interviews, I discovered three participants who had enrolled their child/children in a PECC but for various reasons decided to withdraw their child/children. As I considered that their experiences would provide unique insights into reasons parents terminated their child/children's participation in early education, a third group was created. Accordingly, for the purposes of this thesis, participants are categorized in groups in the following manner:

Group A: NZ-born Samoans whose child/children attended a PECC
Group B: NZ-born Samoans whose child/children attended a PECC but were withdrawn.
Group C: NZ-born Samoans who did not choose to enrol their child/children in a PECC.

While participants came from a variety of backgrounds, all met the criteria of having had children in the last decade. Fifteen out of sixteen were NZ-born Samoan and one who was born in Samoa but had migrated as a child of seven to NZ. Their characteristics are outlined in the profile below.

4.2.1   Profiles of Participants

Data reflects participants' characteristic as at the time of the first interview:

To protect the identity of participants, participants in Group A and B were given a Samoan number, tasi, lua, tolu etc. Group C were named after the first seven letters of the Samoan alphabet i.e.; as in the teaching of the English alphabet: A for apple, B for balloon etc is used, in the Samoan alphabet: A - Ato, E –Elephane, I –Ipu etc is utilized.

In Group A, six interviews were conducted with six NZ-born Samoans who had children who attended or were attending PECC. All six participants had their children over the age 25, four still have children attending a PECC and the two remaining parents had children in PECCs within a four year period at the time of interviews. All six had achieved a measure of success in the education system and at the time of interview were all employed in a professional capacity. Five participants were married women with one participant parenting alone. Three Group A participants were married to other NZ-born Samoans, two had Maori husbands and the father of the solo parent child was Samoan born:

Tasi - 43 years of age, her 2 children both attended a PECC within the last 5 years. Her husband is Maori. Tasi works as an educator. She completed high school and went onto tertiary education.

Lua - 38 years of age, her 2 children currently attend a PECC. Her husband is a NZ-born Samoan. Lua works as an educator. She completed high school and went onto tertiary education.

Tolu - 32 years of age, her child attends a PECC that is affiliated with her family's church. She is a solo parent, studying towards a postgraduate qualification.

Fa - 43 years of age, has 2 children, 1 attended a PECC the year before this interview. Her husband is Maori. Fa works as an educator at a tertiary institution.

Lima - 32 years of age has a child currently attending a PECC. Her husband is Samoan born but NZ-raised. Lima works as an administrator; she completed high school and went onto further education.

Ono - 34 years of age, has 2 young children, including a toddler who attends a PECC that is affiliated with the church community her family attends. Her husband is a NZ born-Samoan. Currently she is on maternity leave.

In Group B, of the three parents who had accessed a PECC for a short time, one participant assessed her engagement with the PECC in negative terms, particularly for her eldest son and youngest son. The other two participants were somewhat ambivalent about their experiences and the reasons they gave for withdrawing their children from PECCs related to issues of convenience. All three parents are in their forties and at the time of interviews two still had preschoolers. Two had their first child under the age of twenty, and the third over 25. Two are currently staying at home mothers while one works full time. All three participants in Group B are married to NZ-born Samoans:

Fitu - 43 years of age, had children that attended a PECC affiliated with her family's church. Her youngest child attended a PECC for a year before she chose to disengage due to issues that she perceived as not beneficial to either her or her son. Her husband is a NZ-born Samoan. She did not complete her high-school and is a home executive.

Valu - 40 years of age, enrolled her last child at a PECC for a short time before deciding her child was happier being at home with his father. Her husband is a NZ-born Samoan. Valu also did not complete her high-school education, however retrained as an adult student. Valu works as a senior administrator at a tertiary institution.

Iva - 35 years of age, had just given birth to her third child at the time of interview. Occasionally, her children attended a PECC when her sister-in-law took them but generally she was happy for them to stay with her. She had completed high school and a tertiary qualification. Iva works as an events manager and musician. She travels quite a bit and takes her children along as much as she is able, believing that their travels are also educational.

In Group C, seven interviews were conducted with NZ-born Samoan parents who chose **not** to access 'Pasifika language nests' or PECCs. Six of this group had their first child under the age of twenty and four were second generation NZ-born Samoans. Six of the seven had preschoolers at the time of the interviews, whereas one mother had already enrolled her youngest child in the local school by the time she was interviewed. Six of the seven participants were unmarried, and four had Maori partners. One of these participants is no longer together with their Maori partner, but shares custody. One participant had a Tongan/Samoan partner, one is separated from her Samoan born partner and now parenting alone with shared custody and the final participant, being the anomaly in this group, was married to a NZ-born Samoan:

A Ato - 26 years of age, has 2 children, with the oldest at school by a different and the other attending a mainstream preschool across the road from where she lives. Ato lives with her extended family and has a Maori partner who does not live with them. She was 18 when she had her first child to a different partner and did not complete high school. Her mother is Samoan born but NZ-raised, her father is Maori. She is a beneficiary.

E Elefane - 39 years of age, a 1st generation NZ-born Samoan, has 5 children, to three different partners. 2 of her children were, at the time of the interview, preschoolers. Her current partner is Maori. She has had a history of drug abuse and 3 of her children were often fostered out to family members. Her youngest two have not been in care but she acknowledges she continues to struggle as a parent due to her chaotic lifestyle. She left school in the fourth form and currently is on a benefit. She had her first child under the age of 20.

I Ipu - 26 years of age, has two children, the first one to a different partner. At the time of the interview her youngest was a preschooler. Ipu is a 2nd generation NZ born Samoan. Her partner is Maori. She did not complete high school and had her first child at the age of 16. She is currently receiving a benefit.

O Ofu - 27 years of age, is a 2nd generation Samoan male, who is separated from his Maori partner but shares the care of his five-year-old son. He did not complete high school and was unemployed at the time of the interview. They had their child under the age of 25.

U Uati - **36** years of age, a 1st generation NZ-born Samoan, now, a solo parent with four children and divorced from her Samoan born ex-husband. She left school in the fourth form to get a job. Currently she receives a benefit. Uati had her first child at the age of 24.

Fa Fagu - is a 2nd generation NZ-born Samoan. Her father was NZ-born Samoan and her mother came to NZ as a five year old. Fagu did not finish high school and is also a beneficiary. She has a NZ-born Tongan/Samoan partner. She had her first child at 20 years of age.

Ga Gata - is a 30+ NZ-born Samoan who had completed her high school and went onto a tertiary institution to further her education. She had her first child as a 30 + year old and is married to a NZ born Samoan.

The participant profiles illustrate the rise of multiple ethnicities with four participants married or living with Maori partners and another participant with a Tongan/Samoan partner. This has been highlighted in Chapter two: page 24, as a growing phenomenon. It

is also useful to note that in the course of the interview, most Group C participants disclosed tenuous relationships with their first relationships and this is further demonstrated in five out of the seven participants of this group, having separated from the first child's father. This contrasts starkly to the five out of the six Group A participants who were in more secure relationships at the time of conception and have remained in these stable relationships.

I personally contacted all sixteen participants by phone and asked if they would consider becoming involved in this research. All agreed. An Information Sheet (Appendix 1) outlining the project, together with a Consent Form (Appendix 2), was then mailed to them. I subsequently made follow-up phone calls to establish the participants' availability for interviews. I ensured that there was a sufficient time-lag between communications to allow participants to read the Information Sheet and perhaps reconsider their involvement in this research. However, all participants confirmed their willingness to take part, although some doubted that their contribution would be useful. Interview times and location were then negotiated.

4.2.2 Data Collection

The data collection technique I used combined the process of conducting semi-structured interviews with the aid of a questionnaire. The questionnaire (Appendix 3) was comprised of open/verbal and closed questions, list, category, and ranking. The questionnaire proved to be a useful tool that helped me identify trends and/or patterns that emerged during the interview process. While mailing the questionnaires to participants, and requesting that they fill them in themselves, would have been expedient and easier process of data gathering, from experience I know this method does not work well within Pasifika people communities. Furthermore, the process of having the participants fill out the questionnaire when face-to-face contact was made during the interview process allowed me to:

1.   Explain the rationale behind the research more fully.
2.   Enhance my relationship with participants and reinforce their sense of ownership of the project.

3.   Create a sense of trust and rapport, that would not have been engendered had the questionnaire been mailed.

4.   Ensure that all questionnaires were completed.

5.   Expand on questions such as how participants own parenting styles differed from those of their own parents.

The data identified characteristics that included: family backgrounds (particularly changes in their parenting styles in comparison to those of their own parents); educational attainment level; occupation; age at conception of first child; church affiliations; cultural access, exposure, experience; values and attitudes vis-à-vis ethnic identity; and educational goals, aspirations for their children. Additionally, their expectations of early childhood educational provisions for their children were ascertained and their ideas around further development of services to Pasifika parents were solicited.

Interviews were conducted in a variety of settings; some took place in participants' homes while others were conducted on neutral grounds. *Denny's Restaurant* was a popular choice, as the cubicles offered a measure of privacy and participants considered it a treat to be taken out for coffee. As a Samoan, providing hospitality is an essential element of establishing and maintaining relationships and it was therefore important that I, as the interviewer, reciprocate in some way for the time and knowledge that the participants' willingly shared with me. In cases where interviews were conducted at participants' homes I took food. If interviews took place in a coffee shop, it was understood that it would be my 'treat'. I felt this was a small price to pay for participants' time, expertise and goodwill. The interviews were conducted at the convenience of participants, often in the evening when there was time to relax after work and/or family responsibilities were taken care of.

In view of the intrusive nature of a tape recording apparatus and the discomfort of some participants with the idea of being taped, I decided to dispense with the process of recording the interviews. This decision required a lot of 'speedy writing' on my part and meant that the interviews took longer, on average lasting for two to three hours. I came to appreciate the advantages that a guided interview structure offered, as the process allowed me to capture the vitally important information, expand on the questions I felt needed further explanation, and limited the potential of participants to digress from the

topic at hand. The interviews were not stilted and the questionnaire did not appear to disrupt the flow of participants' stories. I felt that dispensing with the taping process did not mean I had missed out on gaining any valuable information even though the interview process proved a time-consuming part of the research.

The interviews were conducted in 2003 over a four month period. The first occurred on July 23, 2003 and the last November 11, 2003. Follow-up interviews were considered in light of the fact that this thesis was put on hold for three years then resumed in April 2006 and possible improvements in local PECC provisions may have altered personal perspectives of participants. Although formal interviews were not able to be completed due to time restraints, I was able to undertake more informal discussions with participants and showed a number of them where and how their personal contributions were written up in this study. My continued involvement via work commitments in the Pasifika community particularly in the ECE area, afforded me opportunities where I was able to make contact with participants and review progress in local PECCs. This 'follow-up' process was necessary to engender their feelings of ownership, to validate the importance of their contributions and to ensure that they understood the context in which their perspectives and experiences were used.

4.3   THE TIMEFRAME OF THE PROJECT

The duration of this project has been lengthy. Research began in 2001, was suspended in 2002, resumed in 2003 and then suspended again for the next two years as family priorities took precedence over educational pursuits. Coming from a large extended Samoan family and an equally large immediate family, the needs of the collective take precedence over personal pursuits. As a 1st generation NZ-born Samoan, I am familiar with the challenges that diametrically opposed cultural values and expectations present, as I live with this tenuous bipolar reality on a daily basis. I find the relationship of living as a Samoan with the cultural expectations and obligations this entails, in a Western environment with contrasting expectations, leaves one feeling schizophrenic at the best of times. However, I realize that I am not the first person to experience this sense of cultural incongruity and suspect will not be the last.

Due to the unanticipated length of time this study has taken to complete, changes in policies and progression has been duly noted. I have been fortunate in being able to monitor progress and government policies in regard to Pasifika ECED in several ways.

1) Being an active member of the Christchurch Pasifika Education Reference Group, I continue to take an active role in critiquing and monitoring MOE policy as part of a collective local Pasifika group.

2) As a part-time Pasifika Teacher Recruitment ECE Facilitator for Christchurch during the past 18 months, I maintained close associations with all the PECCs in Christchurch and visit them on a regular basis, renewing collegial goodwill with most supervisors that I trained with over ten years ago.

3) As a coordinator of a Pacific Young Parents' Support Service, which sits under the umbrella of a mainstream youth community organization, I have a working knowledge of the continuing issues that affect young parents, particularly Pasifika and Maori.

4) I have regular contact with Pasifika staff of the local MOE office which also keeps me informed of developments and initiatives aimed at Pasifika students.

These roles have presented me with opportunities to review and critique current developments. It has also meant that I have been invited to attend collaborative meetings with the local Pasifika communities, MOE staff and local PECC groups. This has kept me reasonably connected, albeit from a distance, and informed of progress or lack of progress as the case may be in regard to local PECC development.

 Chapter Seven indicates some of the progress made in PECC development through informed policies and through participant anecdotal observations. It will highlight resulting changes in some participant choices. It also emphasises the continuing need for interventions for some participants and others like them as some have observed little change over a three year period.

4.4   EPISTEMOLOGIES

The epistemologies used in this project, are wherever possible Pasifika, often specifically Samoan. In the past, research into Pasifika issues and people has been dominated by non-Pasifika researchers. However, as noted by Pasikale (1998), in recent years the number of

Pasifika researchers has increased and they continue to challenge Western epistemologies, raising questions about "what" and "whose" knowledge should be included, considered and/or rejected in the design, analysis and writing of research. Furthermore, as Mamoe (1999:21) notes "Pacific Island knowledge and ways of knowing have had little currency in mainstream society least of all in academic spheres" particularly as research has, until recently, remained the prerogative of dominant western thought. Accordingly, this research endeavours to validate Pasifika knowledge and our unique and significant 'ways of knowing.'

4.5   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Because of the involvement of human subjects in this research, ethnical considerations were a vitally important component of this project. The MOE's Pasifika Education Research Guidelines state:

> Researchers need to ensure that effects of research on Pacific peoples at all levels are taken account of and that research reflects a balance between positive and negative issues, and not a focus on the latter (Anae, Coxen, Mara, Samu, Finau, 2001: 2)

Reciprocal 'partnership-relationships' between researcher and researched must be established. Similarly the researchers must work on setting up rapport and trust with their Pacific communities, ensuring confidentiality when and as appropriate and ensuring safety for all research participants. Pacific values such as respect, service and reciprocity must be acknowledged and practised throughout the whole research process and beyond.

Pasikale (1996) reinforces this view, stating that the relationship between the researcher and those being researched should be negotiated to reflect the interests of both parties and the unequal power relations should be acknowledged where they exist. From a personal perspective I felt that it was essential that my work in the community remained separate from this project, and as a result the young mothers that I work with in my capacity as a social worker were excluded from this study. Moreover, I am aware of the dangers of making assumptions based on my experiential knowledge and the potential to predict outcomes based on personal experience. The knowledge and information that form the basis of this research project have been derived from the participant interviews,

secondary sources and as well as personal reflections that added to the narrative approach.

It was of course important to assure participants of their anonymity and given that I work in the Pasifika community, confidentiality remains a real issue within this small people group in Christchurch. In order to protect the identity of participants, those in Groups A and B were given a Samoan number and those in Group C were named after the first seven letters of the Samoan alphabet.

4.5   SUMMARY

This chapter has reviewed the methodology, method, epistemologies and ethical considerations involved in this research. Chapter Five will record the responses of the participants as the main part in the findings of this research project and an analysis of these responses will also be presented.

CHAPTER FIVE

PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES

5.0   INTRODUCTION

In this chapter primary data that explains the rationale behind the choices participants made with respect to accessing early childhood services is outlined. Excerpts from responses are discussed, interpreted and analysed in three sections that corresponds with the three primary themes that emerged organically during the interview processes. The first section explores PECCs and the importance parents attached to the language and cultural development of their children. The contrasting views and dissenting voices of other parents are also explored. The second and third sections examine participants' views on identity development and explore how their own early childhood experiences have affected their own parenting styles and helped influence, shape and inform their own identities.

Participants, who are identified by pseudonyms, are classified into three groups: Group A is comprised of six NZ-born Samoans who have or had children enrolled in a PECC; Group B consists of two NZ-born Samoans and one Samoan-born, NZ-raised parents who had children enrolled at a PECC and subsequently withdrew their children after a short time. Group C is comprised of three NZ–born, 1st generation Samoans and four 2nd generation NZ-born Samoans who chose not to access PECC services.

5.1   PASIFIKA EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRES

5.1.1   The Importance of 'the mother tongue'

All participants in Group A emphasized that the retention of the 'mother tongue' was the primary reason for enrolling their children in PECCs. This serves to reinforce the notion that the reasons underpinning Pasifika mothers' establishment of original 'Pacific language nests' remains valid today. Group A parents also wanted their children to develop a strong cultural awareness of who they were as Samoans and to be proud of it.

These parents clearly recognized the importance of children participating in Pasifika early childhood education.

i) Tasi (Group A), a first generation NZ-born Samoan with a Maori husband, came from an environment where Samoan culture was highly valued. However, as her parents were able to communicate with their children in English, English was the main language used in the home and speaking Samoan was reserved for conversations between Samoan speaking parents. Tasi now rues her own inability to speak Samoan and wanted to provide her own children with the opportunity that she never had:

> I feel quite strongly about the importance of language, ideally that's what I would have liked. That's my biggest regret in life that I'm not fluent in my language and so would dearly love my children to be fluent. The reality is that my children will be like me and when their grandma has gone my fear is that all language will be lost. (Int Tasi).

In response to the question of how important it was for her children to be culturally aware of their Samoan roots and whether one could be culturally secure without language skills Tasi stated:

> It's a holistic thing I think I mean it's all part of having that sense of belonging… I think you can develop culturally without the language, I think you can to a certain extent, be culturally aware and accepting, but with a good grasp of the language you can be living it. You'd have a deeper understanding and I think if I had the language and entrenched in it, I'd be able to offer, contribute more – that's my perspective. (Int Tasi).

Not being fluent in the Samoan language provided the impetus for Tasi to ensure that her children had access to an opportunity that was not available to her. This sentiment is echoed in Lua's testimony.

(ii) Lua, like Tasi rated her children's Samoan language development very highly because of her own inadequacies in this area. She explains:

> I think it has to do with myself, growing up, struggling with the language, I just wasn't confident. Which kind of impacted on my identity. I felt that in some circles there were negative judgments because of my lack in language skills [Samoan language] and I felt less respect. I don't want that for my girls and I don't want them to go through the same thing. I think that it's important that they can say I'm Samoan, I'm proud and I can speak the language and I know the culture. (Int Lua).

(iii) Fa (Group A), reinforces Lua's rationale for enrolling her child in a PECC. She wanted her child to learn the Samoan language and be comfortable amongst other Samoans. Fa believed that being able to communicate in the environment of an extended family (*aiga potopoto*), gave children a sense of belonging and connectedness. With respect to the benefits of her child attending a Samoan ECE centre Fa commented:

> I found it was extremely beneficial in terms of the use of Samoan language and other cultural forms… was pleased with the child's progress in attaining the language and it meant that she could visit her grandparents and fitted in (Int Fa).

For Fa the benefits associated with her child's Samoan language development and acculturation far outweighed any reservations that she may have had regarding negative aspects associated with the PECC she engaged with. Fa explains:

> It's about being able to communicate in extended family homes- connectedness and belonging, you know, being able to navigate all the idiosyncrasies like family with lotu (prayer), how to walk in front of people and show respect…her father is Maori and so I do think I have a responsibility to ensure that my children know both their parents' cultures equally well and how to operate in either settings. (Int Fa).

The foregoing responses reinforce that language maintenance remains a fundamental reason for the continued existence of PECCs. As noted by Hunkin-Tuiletufuga, Pasifika languages continue to be the vital factor in ensuring the survival of Pasifika cultures, particularly in migrant enclaves such as Aotearoa/New Zealand (Macpherson, Spoonley, Anae, 2001:197-199).

However, as discussed in Chapter Three, the notion that language is essential to cultural development is being increasingly challenged by a younger generation of Pasifika parents who are not bilingual. Parental resistance to engagement with PECCs is discussed below.

5.1.2   Resistances

The following participants reflect the reality that many young Pasifika parents are negotiating dual, or in some cases multiple, cultures without the benefit of language fluency and have, in their view, survived quite well. The following excerpts from participants' responses who chose **not** to access PECCs illustrates that a growing sector of the Pasifika community have values that conflict with those of Group A parents.

i) Ato (Group C), 2nd generation NZ-born Samoan (with Maori heritage on her paternal side) is a young mother of two young children who did **not** consider that fluency in the Samoan language was of vital importance to her children. Despite the fact that Ato's Samoan grandmother acted as a surrogate parent (as both her own parents were unstable and not very responsible) and took her to Samoan church services and "after- functions" Ato explains that she never felt a part of the Pasifika community:

> Nana was influential always reliable as a backstop – very Samoan but I didn't buy into it. She would spoil me and she would take me to all her church functions but although I was always treated well, I always felt like I was an outsider and always felt that they talked about me being the daughter of the naughty daughter kind of thing. (Int Ato).

In response to the question of "how important Samoan language development was for her children, Ato commented:

> It's **not** important for me as I don't speak it but I try and teach them some words as much as I know myself but none of us speak it at home unless it's a secret that they don't want the kids to know what they're talking about .... So can be handy, ha ha. (Int-Ato)

ii) Ipu (Group C) is a 2nd generation, NZ-born Samoan young mother with two boys. Ipu's parents both came from *afakasi* (half-caste) Samoan families and while her father was born in Samoa, he had migrated to Aotearoa/New Zealand as a teenager. Her mother is a 1st generation NZ-born Samoan. Ipu did not consider that bilingualism was important:

> I don't speak Samoan and they are part Maori so I don't think it's necessary. I think it's important to know culture-wise you know it's in the blood and I come from a big family. I do want him to be proud of his roots but I think you can have knowledge of the culture without the language. (Int-Ipu).

iii) Ofu (Group C), a young father of a preschooler, is also a 2nd generation NZ-born Samoan. His father was born in Samoa but came to Aotearoa/New Zealand as a 6 year old. Ofu's mother is a 1st generation NZ-born Samoan *afakasi* (half-caste). Ofu had also lived in Samoa for two years as a teenager. Ofu also did not consider it important for his child to be bilingual:

> I think that there is **no** need for it being NZ born and with our family speaking English it's not so much a priority. If you're going to promote the language I reckon you got to embrace the whole fa'aSamoa and I'm **not** prepared to learn and live by it, myself. English is our first language – it's really up to him. If he wants to learn it at a later stage I'll support him. (Int Ofu).

iv) Valu (Group B) had five older children, none of whom attended PECCs. She enrolled her youngest child, a preschooler at the time of the interview, in a PECC at the beginning of the year but subsequently withdrew him because he preferred to stay at home with his father. Furthermore, Valu felt that the centre was making demands on her time that she could not manage because of her own work commitments. Married to a 1st generation Samoan, she had her first child when she was relatively young. Now at the age of forty, she was able to carefully reflect on her parenting experiences. Although she was bilingual and considered that it would be good for her child to be fluent in Samoan, she did **not** rate it as a high priority:

> The reality for me is that if he wants to learn later on that's fine but don't feel any pressure to teach him the language. (Int Valu).

When asked how important she felt it was for her child to be culturally aware of his Samoan roots, Iva was unsure whether this was really important anymore. She explains:

> I don't really know anymore because our culture is changing so much and our environment is so different … they need to learn more about their Pakeha environment because that's what they are living in. It's good to know where they come from but that's it… I don't think it's relevant to their everyday reality. (Int Iva).

Valu also explained that when she thought about her older children and their experiences, she believed strongly that they did **not** appear to miss out by not attending a PECC. Her eldest daughter identified strongly with her Samoan culture and was able to fit in well within Samoan contexts, electing to involve herself with the Samoan Association at University. Iva felt that even without much encouragement from her, her older children had been exposed to sufficient acculturation and socialization in Pasifika environments - at home and through relationships with their Grandma, cousins and friends - to sustain their Samoan identity and a healthy sense of belonging.

5.1.3   Conflicting Values

The following participants all rated the importance of language development highly, but found maintaining the language difficult. Moreover, the opportunity of enrolling their children in a PECC to address this issue was not an option that they chose for a variety of reasons explained forthwith.

i) Fagu (Group C), a 2nd generation NZ-born Samoan with a Tongan/Samoan partner, acknowledged having been very well brought up by her New Zealand-raised Samoan parents. Fagu considered it very important for her child to be fluent in the Samoan language even though she herself was not:

> Because I don't know my language I feel like we're losing our culture. But that's also through laziness. We're not doing anything to instill these things except maybe respect for elders. (Int Fagu).

Moreover, she also felt that it was very important for her child to be culturally aware of his Pasifika roots:

> Well just knowing where you came from is important. Like my oldest boys name comes from his father's father but we don't know him so I think that's sad. We have no contact with his Tongan side. Mind you it's not so important that we want to go to Samoan church or Pacific communities and involve myself in it. But I do want my kids to know what we know and be proud of themselves. (Int Fagu).

Notwithstanding, Fagu chose to enroll her son at the local kindergarten. When asked why she did **not** access a Samoan language nest, she replied that she had trained in a PECC for a short time when she had begun a teachers' training diploma in Pacific Early Childhood Education and witnessed how PECCs operated. Fagu felt 'ashamed' in an essentially full immersion environment because she could not speak Samoan:

> … I had a feeling like you don't really fit in. I kind of picked the easy way out and just laziness… easier to talk in English… pretty much waste of time cause we are pretty much outcasts in our Pacific communities. (Int Fagu).

ii) Elefane (Group C), a 38 year old mother of two preschoolers at the time of the interview, is a NZ-born 1st generation Samoan, with a Maori partner, who struggled with parenting because of her personal addiction problems. She considered that Samoan language development was very important for her children:

> It's important that they don't lose their culture. I see language important to culture and I don't want them to loose that side to them being Samoan I suppose. (Int Elefane).

However, Elefane admitted that she had done nothing to encourage her children in this regard:

> Well its kind of hard to just be a mother let alone try and… keep the language up I mean I can understand it and that but I'm not fluent and my partner doesn't speak it so… I want it to happen for them but it's not happening with me due to the chaos in my life. (Int Elefane).

When asked why she did **not** enroll her children in a language nest to foster bilingualism, she was most emphatic that this could never have been a choice for her:

> I couldn't go to the language nest, they all know Mum down there and they'll know who I am …oh no I couldn't handle seeing [teacher x] they'll know my business uh you know they'll be talking about me na na.. shame… I know too many Samoans that know me or my family so I would be too shamed out to take them to a language nest. They'd remember me a bad girl back then and yeah I wouldn't feel comfortable. I think they'd judge me and my girls. (Int Elefane).

Elefane alluded to a preconceived notion that traditional Samoan church communities, that many of the PECC centres are affiliated with, would be un-accepting of her and judgmental of her lifestyle.

iii) Ato (Group C) also referred to the perceived lack of acceptance by the traditional Samoan communities of people of multi-ethnic heritage, which in her view, caused the younger generation to distance themselves:

> …you know how they look down on you, and I was half-caste and Maori too and I feel that it seems half-caste Maoris are worse than being halfcaste Pakeha. Just going to Nana's church I felt different. You know stares of people, whispers, didn't feel good enough. I couldn't understand language although Nana's friends spoilt me, especially the men, but I thought the women judged me as Nan's naughty daughter's child… (Int Ato).

Despite these preconceived notions, Ato considered it very important that her children were culturally aware of their roots, particularly their Samoan roots:

> …I always say to my kids you are Samoan. I don't want people to look at my kids and think immediately, oh yes Maori, which is why I like them to go to Nana's place cause no-one lives in a house like Nana's with all the family pictures on the wall with the lei's and the pictures of Jesus you know… (Int Ato).

iv) Iva (Group B), a 1st generation NZ-born Samoan, married to another NZ-born Samoan, had three girls who had accessed PECCs with their aunty although Iva herself was just as happy having them at home or with her during their preschool years. Iva rated

the importance of language highly but did not feel that attending PECC would necessarily ensure that her children would become fluent in Samoan. She explains:

> Fluency would be my ultimate wish, but it's getting there. How would it affect us as a family? We have to ask ourselves the hard questions. How much are we willing to sacrifice? I guess an extreme strategy would be if we could migrate [Samoa] over there for a time. The concern would be for them being 2nd generation NZ born and how much more watered down the culture would be. The question would be, how can my children navigate their cultural identity issues better? I don't know, I mean they spend a lot of time with their grandparents and are around us and all the work we do in the Pacific Arts and Pacific music industry. (Int Iva).

Iva was aware and concerned of issues with respect to identity formation for her children. She understood what she would have to do in order to achieve her goal of ensuring that her children became bilingual, however was also very realistic about achieving this 'dream.' Iva hoped that despite the lack of language, her children were exposed to sufficient cultural input from within their *micro* environment to sustain a 'good enough' identity pathway.

v) Gata (Group C), a thirty year old professional, married to NZ-born Samoan considered the childcare of her first born child very carefully. She thought that it was very important for her child to become bilingual:

> Language is really important. I want him to know his roots and identity because although I understand [Samoan] and can read it I'm not as confident in holding a conversation and I would really like [child] to be confident in his language. Family is really important and cultural values are important to be passed on to him. I mean I want him to be a strong voice in his generation. It's been hard for my parents and it's hard for our generation, how much harder will it be for him in the future. (Int Gata).

Despite wanting her child to become bilingual Gata chose to enroll him at a Montessori centre after 'checking out' many of the PECCs. Gata found that the PECCs she visited were 'wanting' and failed to meet her expectations. This illustrates the need to examine issues relating to the quality and effectiveness of PECCs and their inability to meet the needs of all sections of the Pasifika community.

5.1.4   Participants' Perspectives on PECCs

Issues relating to the quality and effectiveness of services provided by PECCs were raised by several participants.

i) Gata (Group B), a NZ-born Samoan, whose parents were both Samoan raised, had a young infant at the time of the interview. Gata expressed strong views on the importance of language maintenance and cultural awareness for her child (similar to participants in the previous section) but felt disappointed that she did **not** find a PECC that fulfilled her expectations and needs as a working mother. She had visited a couple of PECCs that had places available but found the environments to be wanting. As a well educated professional woman, Gata was clear about what she wanted for her child. Although language and cultural development was important, she felt that it was equally important that her child was in an environment that made her feel confident that her child's physical, social, cultural and emotional, as well as educational needs, were being catered for:

> I questioned the quality of the language nest and when I got there only one person was supervising them. I questioned the safety aspect of the ratios. I didn't feel welcomed and they didn't offer to show me around…then I went to another one but it was just 'chokabloc' so many kids everywhere and I worried about their health and safety aspect… worried about where they slept… times weren't suitable for working mothers… I was really **gutted** that I had to make that decision not to send him to a language nest 'cause I really wanted him to go to one. (Int Gata).

ii) Fitu (Group B) also expressed concerns about the PECC her children attended. Fitu had specific issues with one particular teacher's unprofessional attitude and 'old school' habit of reprimanding children in unconstructive ways. This was exacerbated by the fact that this particular teacher was not only unqualified but also a relative and a member of the church and had worked as an untrained assistant at the preschool since it was established. Fitu also felt unsupported by the 'preschool' management and their refusal to effectively deal with her concerns. As a result she withdrew her child from the centre:

> I still have concerns with the quality or should I say lack of quality education for other children there… My older children attended for a little while as I used to work there as well but I resigned as a result of concerns with the physical discipline within the pre-school… I felt I got little support for my concerns and didn't want to create problems but couldn't stay given my convictions…I raised my concerns but felt they responded by trying to save face… it was hard cause the teacher I had issues with was also related... and related to a lot of the kids there. With my last child he only lasted a year because he hated it and was terrified of that teacher… (Int Valu).

In response to the question of "How beneficial did you find your child's attendance at the Pasifika centre?" Fitu stated:

> With one of my older children, I felt like he lost his confidence being scared of one of the teachers. You know how they are they treat you like a naughty kid always finding fault trying to control behaviour with harsh telling off…one of those typical judging aunties. All in all I felt like they didn't benefit at all. (Int Fitu).

In contrast, other participants found their children's attendance at PECCs very beneficial.

iii) Fa found her child's attendance at a PECC "extremely beneficial in terms of the use of the Samoan language and other cultural forms" but acknowledged that there were issues of concern:

> I would have to rate the different aspects differently like the facilities- poor, programmes and activities- adequate, routines- very good, curriculum- between poor and adequate, behaviour management strategies – poor to adequate, language and inclusion of other cultures – excellent. (Int Fa).

iv) Lua (Group A), also a 1st generation NZ-born Samoan was encouraged to take her children to her mother-in law's PECC which was affiliated with her mother-in-law's church:

> I have found it very beneficial and can see them flourishing. The girls are speaking Samoan well. It was really hard at first when I first came with the girls but I let my mother-in –law do most of the talking because I'm not confident in talking the language but now they accept me and I'm not so self conscious about it…It's great now cause they know their mother is there [Lua teaches there] and I can watch them from afar. The teachers are awesome; it's like a family thing… (Int-Lua).

However, although Lua is pleased with the experience and outcomes that her children and her family enjoy from participating in PECCs, she could empathize with other parents' reservations about PECCs being a viable pre-school option for their children:

> I have many friends that don't access language nests and centres and I had the same attitude before I became active in the preschool. A lot of my friends being professional are choosing to take their children to other Palagi centres as they have doubts to quality service and I can understand that because there are some centres that I might not send mine to as well. (Int Lua).

Lua's statement highlights the notion that PECCs provide a lower standard of childcare and preschool education than other early childhood centres. Lua agreed that had it not

been for the persistence and support of her mother-in-law, she might not have made the initial effort to enroll her children, emphasizing how the influence exerted by grandparents can be a factor in parental choice. Lua's comments also accentuate how preconceived notions about the poor quality of PECCs acts as barriers to participation. Another critical factor that affected access to PECCs was whether parents knew, trusted and had confidence in the teaching staff.

v) Ofu emphasized this point when he discussed why he did **not** consider a PECC as the first option for his son's education:

> I didn't trust the care giving, you know the discipline side. Bit worried that the 'Samoan' harshness would be too much for my son. I did consider it especially when my Aunty was there but I knew she was leaving so we ended up taking him to a Kohanga Reo. (Int Ofu).

vi) Tasi considered her children's experience at the PECC to be positive. In answer to the question of "how beneficial she found her children's attendance at PECCs", she responded:

> Really beneficial. It helped them settle more easily, routine was great and they enjoyed the benefits of a full programme. Socialization skills were developed further and because relationships were formed in Church, it helped with continuity, being able to build on those relationships. Really happy with the curriculum and they were totally immersed and happy to be learning in an environment conducive to learning. It was a real family approach you know somebody's nana was everybody's nana as far as the kids were concerned. I got so much out of it for my kids and so pleased we made that choice – no regrets. (Int Tasi).

Most Group A participants who had enrolled their children in PECCs reinforced Tasi's and Lua's sentiments that their choice proved to be a positive experience for their children. Lua also emphasized the significance of having affiliations and relationships with people and staff at these centres and highlighted the role of Samoan grandparents in encouraging their children to choose PECCs. However, it appears that a considerable effort was needed to overcome preconceived ideas about the 'quality' of service provision and overlook other limitations associated with PECCs. For Group A parents, language and cultural development was the elemental priority for accessing PECCs.

Other participants' concerns with respect to 'quality' issues reinforce the cumulative effects of the marginalization of Pasifika communities within Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Human Ecology theory underscores the importance of the type of environments people interact and engage in. In addition, the state policies and regulatory demands, made at *macro* and *exo* levels, collectively impact on the quality of services PECCs are able to provide. It must be remembered that Pasifika early educational initiatives evolved from Pasifika communities with little assistance from the government, that their very existence reflects the courage and commitment of Pasifika people, primarily women, who came from communities that were, and remain, some of the most impoverished in Aotearoa/New Zealand. As a result PECCs, while facilitating language and cultural development, have had limited resources available to improve facilities, curriculum and the quality of teachers; factors that have often compromised the quality of a holistic ECE for the Pasifika children. PECCs have improved over time, particularly as a result of the government's recent increased funding in ECE.

Notwithstanding improvements however, the issue of 'quality' remains an ongoing concern. The majority of PECCs can only charge nominal fees from members of their economically challenged communities in comparison to the 'market' fees charged by more affluent mainstream centres. As a result PECCs have minimal resources to subsidize ever increasing overhead costs including the payment of qualified staff. An evaluation of two Pasifika licensed exempt ECE playgroups underscore continuing government concerns about PECC's provisions:

> MOE regional staff spoke more specifically about local issues and relationships, and the need to allow for cultural values and needs. Many groups and centres were associated with churches, and the relationship between the licensee and the minister of the church can be very close. In some cases, the church minister him/herself has problems in implementing curriculum, and money can end up going to the church as a whole, rather than to the Pacific early childhood group. There is some tension about finding the balance in meeting both early childhood education needs and cultural values. One comment was that *some Pacific groups want the funds but they don't always want to comply* (Mitchell & Mara 2001: 41).

Although this report identifies valid concerns, it also reinforces the way in which the MOE posits ongoing problems with PECCs in a deficit framework, blaming the shortcomings of PECC's provision on Pasifika people. The report's recommendations to offer MOE research contracts to examine: a) the definition of 'quality' in license-exempt playgroups; and b) to evaluate and explore factors contributing to the achievement of

quality and sustainability for PECCs are long overdue and echo recommendations made in an MOE literature review in 2002. While it is commendable that MOE is finally taking these issues on board, the way in which the MOE appears to blame all the problems associated with PECCs on Pasifika people themselves, perpetuates the negative attitudes toward Pasifika people and their level of competence. It also highlights a lack of awareness of the continuing barriers that complex and ever changing MOE regulations, coupled with community poverty impose.

Family theory is useful in understanding how human systems of regulations affect the interaction between families and their environment. Family theory suggests that although environments do **not** determine human behaviour, they nevertheless impose limitations and constraints, as well as provide possibilities/opportunities for families. This has certainly been the case for PECCs and the families that they service.

For the majority of the participants in Group A (5 out of 6), the choice to participate in PECCs was facilitated by family associations with the churches that their respective PECC was affiliated with. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory provides a structural framework within which to understand how these associations affect parental choice. The influence of institutions, such as churches in the *exo-system,* impacts on the establishment of the PECCs in the *meso-system.* The persuasive power churches exert on their members, such as grandparents and parents, to engage with PECCs in turn impacts on the child's *micro-system.* Conversely, for participants in Group C, (5 out of 7) whose parents were not closely affiliated with any traditional churches, the option of engaging with a PECC was made much more difficult.

Although some of the participants (5 out of 16) did **not** consider that language maintenance was important for their children, all fully acknowledged the importance of their children knowing and being proud of their Samoan heritage. For example, although Fagu and Elefane acknowledged the importance of language development both cited the 'shame factor' as the underlying reason for their decisions **not** to enroll their children in a PECC. Ato, Ofu and Uati also reported that they did not engage because they lacked a 'sense of belonging' in these Pasifika environments.

Psychosocial stress theory provides an understanding of Elefane's 'addiction problems.' This theory posits that the underlying causes of such behaviour relates to "behavioural and endogenous biological responses to human interactions" and that chronic and acute social stresses induce disease as well as health-damaging behaviours (including psychoactive substance abuse) amongst marginalized peoples in response to hopelessly adverse circumstances, insurmountable tasks or the absence of social supports (Kreiger, 2001:696 cited in Reid 2006).

From the theoretical perspective of marginalization the 'shame' expressed by participants represents a negative manifestation of 'reflectiveness'. Hall et al (1994:30) define reflectiveness as "the fragmenting and conflicting psychic effect" that marginalized peoples undergo as a result of "discrimination, isolation and invisibility," and the psychological effort required to comprehend and compensate for these effects. As the subjective experiences of marginalized peoples differ from those of the dominant group, marginalized individuals must engage in "continual, purposeful, introspection" in order to understand the external contractions and pressures that surround them. For example, individuals, marginalized on the basis of their ethnicity may internalize, as part of their own identity, the negative stereotypical mainstream images associated with members of their group. The internalization of negative stereotypes results in the internal fragmentation of marginalized individual's identity, which Hall et al (1994:30) argues causes a "splitting of the self-image."

Also relevant is the concept of differentiation, which Hall et al (1994:27) relate to the "varying degrees and types of 'peripheralization' that occurs within ethnic groups". These authors (1994:27) identify two aspects of differentiation that have relevance to participants' experiences. The first relates to the mainstream differentiation of minority identities and second involves the potential for intra-group stigmatization. For some NZ-born Samoans, such as of those in Group C, differentiation represents a form of double jeopardy, as Pasifika they are not only stigmatized by the palagi majority, but also by members of their own ethnic group.

This gives rise to 'identity' issues, and explains the perceived lack of belonging experienced by several participants in 'traditional' contexts, which in turn underpinned their decision to discount PECC as a viable option for their children. Some participants

had conflicting values, acknowledging that although cultural development was important, language development was unnecessary. Their attitudes contrasted sharply with other participants' perceptions that language and cultural development were intrinsically linked. However, most participants agreed that a strong cultural base (knowledge of who you are as a Samoan) was a vital component of having a strong and confident identity.

These inconsistencies in participants' views and the diverse ways in which they constructed identity had a direct bearing on the choices they made with respect to the type of ECE their children engaged with. As a primary objective of PECCs remains Samoan language fluency, participants who do **not** consider language development as vitally important for their children, accessed other services. Participants such as Valu, Iva, (Group B) Ipu and Ato (Group C) commented that their children had the opportunity to develop a strong cultural identity within the context of extended family. Thus for participants who were not associated with, or lacked a sense of belonging to, the traditional, religious communities that PECCs are affiliated with, the option of accessing PECCs services becomes all the more extraneous; thereby reinforcing the relevance of ethnic identity to this study.

5.2   ETHNIC IDENTITY

The extensive intermarriage of Samoans with other ethnic groups is reflected in the contemporary multi-ethnic profile of Pasifika peoples in Aotearoa/New Zealand. According to Bernal, Knight, Cota, Garza and Ocampo (1993:106):

> Ethnic Identity is an important domain of the self-concept, as such, it is influenced in its formation by the normative socialisation processes that influence everyone…children of all cultures experience enculturation that is, they undergo the normative socialisation experiences of their culture. These enculturation experiences lead to the development of living skills, behavioural competencies, and values…

Thus the identity formation process of offspring of multi-ethnic families is multifaceted and affected by a multitude of complex factors including differences in the cultural norms and values of their respective ethnic groups. While an individual's identity formation is commonly associated with the adolescent stage of development, as noted by Bronfenbrenner (1979) this process, in fact, begins to take place in the home at an early

age. Accordingly, childhood experiences have a significant impact on the development of identity. This section explores how participants' early childhood experiences have contributed to their self-identity and impacted on their ability to engage effectively with other individuals and more specifically, the impact of these experiences on their identity as Samoans. The ethnic identity of parents has ramifications for the choices they make with respect to the type of service they access for their children's preschool education.

i) Ofu (Group C), a 2nd generation NZ-born Samoan, provides an understanding of how distinct ethnic identities emerge from within the same ethnic group. Ofu clearly did **not** see himself as part of the Pasifika or Samoan communities, happily choosing to place himself outside these parameters:

> I guess I see the Samoan community as the ones that go to church… and they stick to their own, you know - the different churches are like their own little village. I'm more of a New Zealander and consider them 'freshies.' I feel more on the outer and I prefer it like that. (Int Ofu).

ii) Ato echoes Ofu's sentiments, associating Pacific communities with "anything to do with traditional Pacific churches" and places herself and people like her on the outside of traditional parameters. She further explains:

> If you go along you go along as an outsider. You are still considered just that. No sense of belonging there. (Int Ato).

However, as the interview progressed Ato conceded that in her role as a mother she was in fact part of the Pacific community:

> Yes I do see myself as part of the Pacific community as a Mum when I think about it in terms of my kids I think, yes my kids are Pacific but I choose to take part when I want to. Like maybe attending festivals and that but I don't buy into the manipulation of cultural obligations. (Int Ato).

Ofu reflected on the personal experiences that cemented his self-identity:

> I identified with being a Maori and it wasn't until the school had a Pacific culture group that made me realise that there was a difference. I knew I was a Samoan but I wasn't around enough Samoan stuff to identify with so I guess as a kid the Maori culture was promoted a lot more than Samoan in those days. (Int Ofu).

Ofu disclosed that his father was very strict and used physical discipline more often than he ever displayed affection. Ofu's experience of living in Samoa for two years away from

his parents did little to dispel his negative perceptions of Samoan culture as he also experienced physical abuse at the hands of his host family:

> When I think about it I reckon I do strongly identify with being a 'NZ born' Samoan but it was a seesaw journey. If the environment was more positive to begin with maybe I might have thought about it more positively rather than just a good hiding ha. (Int Ofu).

The perceptions of Ofu and Ato relate to an aspect of what Hall et al (1994:27) describe as intra-group diversifications of identities within marginalized populations and illustrates how the demarcation of identities increases in relation to the degree of oppression experienced. As noted by these authors (1994:27) marginalized individuals may become different and isolated from members of their own ethnic group, reinforcing how differentiation encompasses both the dominant group stigmatization of "outsiders" as well as inter-group distinctions within peripheral identities. In these instances, differentiation has contributed to fragmented identities. Moreover, Ofu's experiences, and others like him, can also be understood within the context of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) framework as the formative relationships with his father and host family in Samoa negatively impacted on the quality of his *'meso-system'*.

5.3   PARENTING STYLES

There is considerable contemporary research that stresses the impact of the home environment on child outcomes. While there are multiple causal factors that contribute to child outcomes, student achievement and the choices that people make in their adult life, this thesis imposes obvious limitations on the depth in which these factors are addressed. Accordingly, this section focuses on how different parenting styles and home environments have contributed to child outcomes and further how childhood and family experiences have in turn, contributed to the choices participants made with respect to the type of ECE services they access.

The trans-generational affect of cultural differences in parenting styles was a significant issue for many participants. As the offspring of Samoan migrants, participants were exposed to parenting practices that represented the cultural norm in the home islands but contrasted with the established norms in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The clash of Samoan and Western parenting practices are reflected in participants' responses. The three

primary issues participants raised related to 'strictness', physical punishment and the inconsistent parenting styles adopted by their mothers and fathers.

D. Terri Heath (in Ingoldsby and Smith, 1995) describes a typology of parenting styles 'energised' by Diane Baumrind's categorisation of childrearing practices into Authoritarian Authoritative, and Permissive parenting styles. The influences that these generalized parenting styles have on children, provides a useful tool for analysing how the parenting practices participants experienced in their childhood, subsequently influenced their own parenting styles and expectations for their children.

Diane Baumrind (1966) identifies three broad types of parenting styles:

1. *Authoritarian:* These parents are demanding and consider instant obedience as the most desirable child trait. They tend to be low in nurturance and high in parental control, and establish absolute standards of behaviour for their children that are not to be questioned or negotiated. Authoritarian parents favour forceful discipline and demand prompt obedience. Authoritarian parents also are less likely than others to use more gentle methods of persuasion, such as affection, praise and rewards, with their children. Consequently, authoritarian parents are prone to modelling the more aggressive styles of conflict resolution and display negligible affectionate and nurturing behaviours in their interactions with their children.

2. *Authoritative:* These parents are firm in establishing limits but warm and nurturing in their approach. They believe in parental control and attempt to explain the reasons for the control to their children. Authoritative parents, tend to be high in nurturance and moderate in parental control when it comes to dealing with child behaviour.

3. *Permissive:* Parents take a tolerant and accepting view of their children's behaviour and tend to be moderate-to-high in nurturance, but low in parental control. These parents place relatively few demands on their children and are likely to be inconsistent disciplinarians. They are accepting of a child's impulses, desires, and actions and are less likely than other parents to monitor their children's behaviour. Although their children tend to be friendly, sociable youngsters, compared with others their age, they lack knowledge of appropriate behaviours for ordinary social situations and take too little responsibility for their own misbehaviour.

Parents often use a mix of these parenting styles, depending on the situation of the interaction and that of the parent. These different parenting styles influence the characteristics and behaviours children display.

5.3.1   Strict Parents

Most participants reported having a 'strict' upbringing, however their perceptions of 'strictness' varied and their parents' practices indicate that a range of approaches were used, which in turn has influenced their own parenting styles. The following responses illustrate the impact of parenting styles on decisions to access PECCs:

i) Fitu (Group B):

> We were bought up very Palagi, Samoan was never spoken, couldn't stand Samoan food, but we were raised very strictly – not allowed out by ourselves, always chauffeured by my parents and really tight boundaries with us girls. Dad was overprotective and I found that hard and wanted to run away. I can appreciate it now but not then…I felt like we had to be pretty perfect. (Fitu).

However Fitu acknowledges that she has similar expectations and aspirations for her children except, as she states:

> … I guess I have extra support, I mean [I have]more knowledge in terms of child development like we weren't allowed to make a mess but with the support of others and books that I read I knew that it was part of a child's development- making a mess that's what kids do… I think they did the best they knew how and it was good that my parents gave me values that I also want to pass onto my children. (Fitu).

ii) Lua (Group A):

> Very strict with religion but more relaxed with the grandchildren. Values were really important with my parents. Mum was the homemaker and Dad the provider. Mum influenced me positively in that I want to encourage my children in the same way with the church community so they can have the same benefits that we did growing up in the church and develop long term friendships. (Lua).

iii) Lima (Group A):

> At the time I thought it was strict but listening to others, I guess it was pretty 'cruisey.' They were firm but not controlling… I think I parent the same way. I liked the way I was parented and knew I was loved. (Int Lima).

iv) Iva (Group B):

> …strict at first but as an older teenager they became quite permissive and let me do a lot of things. I was taught to be respectful to elders and that family and discipline was important. I don't have any regrets I'm more democratic but I believe how I was raised has been mainly positive. Our parents taught us that difference was special and nothing to be ashamed of… (Int Iva).

v) Tasi (Group) A:

> In terms of education and church they were very directive and little negotiation there but I had really positive childhood experiences and Mum and Dad were always there for me. They were pretty gentle... I guess I'm quite calm with my children I do more talking and understanding with my children due to being exposed to other alternatives through education and training. (Int Tasi).

5.3.2   Punitive Parenting Styles

Two participants who were subjected to more controlling parenting styles, harsh disciplinary measures and less open affection associated these negative experiences with fa'aSamoa.

vi) Tolu, (Group A), who had her child in her thirties voiced her deep resentments:

> I felt like I had to work quite hard for their love and we didn't get a lot of praise… I got a lot of discipline and made me really anti physical punishment and in some ways anti fa'aSamoa… I think it retarded our emotional development during our teenage years and kind of led to double lives (Int Tolu).

With respect to how her childhood had influenced her own parenting style, she stated:

> It made me want to learn about parenting and I am in my thirties and so have thought about parenting a lot more deliberately than say if I were younger…I don't know. I just know that I do a lot of reading rather than rely on my knowledge or even my sister's knowledge. I get the look from my family members that kind of say they think I'm a bit over the top and I want a more informed choice. It also has made me take ownership of being a Mum – I make the choices not my Mum or Dad yeah I'm really quite anti-tradition. (Int Tolu).

vii) Fa (Group A) described her parents as strict, culturally traditional and conservative and commented that when she was young, Samoan church circles provided her with a very positive and an important cultural grounding. However, when Fa reflected on her childhood she recognised that she led a 'double life':

There were seven of us and I was considered the bright one, always reading and very compliant and held up as the role model but really I was quite devious I lied, forged signatures and led a bit of a double life. On the surface I was very compliant and did what I was told but on the other side of the coin I only let my parents see what they wanted to see… (Int Fa).

viii) Gata (Group C):

Back then I thought it was too strict. Very gender biased. Like, my brothers seemed to have more freedom than me and made me feel resentful and unfairly treated. It was pretty authoritarian and I can't remember any display of open affection. I was really shy and not very social and that's probably because I wasn't allowed out so didn't associate with others much. Mind you I guess I had a pretty compliant personality, my brother was a lot more rebellious. (Int Gata).

When asked how she felt her upbringing impacted on her own parenting style, she responded:

Well I know how NZ works and I think it's easier for me. I would like to think that I would retain some of it. I mean I'd be strict on behaviour but [her child] would be given opportunity to explore, plus I would give him more encouragement in terms of affection and praise… (Int Gata).

5.3.3   Inconsistent Parenting Styles

Some participants discussed being exposed to inconsistencies in parenting styles; particularly situations where their fathers were very strict and controlling whereas their mothers were more lenient:

ix) Valu (Group B):

Mum was pretty nurturing and democratic but Dad was the major disciplinarian. Dad used fear to control us and he was to be obeyed at all cost. He was really traditional Samoan and hated staying with Mum's family as he saw them as too Palagi. Mum could be persuaded but Dad was too strong and Mum was very submissive to Dad. (Int Valu).

x) Ipu (Group C):

I was really rebellious I wasn't happy with the way Dad was, my brothers had more freedom but Dad was protective with me and I thought he was really unfair and very controlling even with Mum. She was soft but we had to get around Dad. (Int Ipu).

xi) Ofu (Group C):

Mum was more tolerant she smacked but never overdid it and always explained, but Dad caused damage. It was his verbal and emotional abuse that got to me the most so I disassociated with being

Samoan -as violence seemed to be the norm. It was accepted to get a hiding and to give one. At school I acted out that violence um if there was any disrespect towards me I'd react violently or verbally and wouldn't let anyone else put me down. …Now that I've grown up I've seen my Dad's way of raising me to be wrong. I guess I try to be there for [my son] and I'm more sensitive to him… I think I always had a sensitive side to me I want to be there for [my son]…and be able to support him in whatever he wants to do in life. (Int Ofu).

xii) Ato (Group C):

Well I was never allowed to do much, wasn't allowed to speak out of turn, taught to be respectful to your elders but Mum and Dad were very unstable not always there for me, but I never thought I had nobody cause I had my Nana, who spoiled me and then I lived with my Aunty and Uncle who were quite strict. But it was good because they gave me boundaries and a stability that was everything I needed for when I became an adult. (Int Ato).

These experiences reflected markedly different voices in the home and indicate inconsistencies in parenting. Moreover, the negative experiences provided the impetus for parents to adopt a more consciously positive nurturing approach in their own parenting styles. Ato (xii) wanted to ensure that she is always there for her children and give them the stability that she knows is important for children. Ipu (x) believed she is a lot more understanding of her children's needs and is more in tune to them. She is not averse to smacking her children when she feels that they warrant it but prefers to talk through issues. Ofu (xi) believes he takes on his mother's softer approach. Tolu (vi) has also sought alternative parenting strategies to those she experienced during her childhood.

Fa (vii) illustrates that, despite knowledge of other strategies, parenting practices experienced during childhood can often be hard to let go of especially when they are considered to be a cultural norm. Moreover, although many participants described their upbringing as strict, they also considered aspects of their parents' practices in a positive light, which corresponds with the characteristics of an *Authoritative* rather than *Authoritarian* parenting style. Children of *Authoritative* parents are characterised as usually self-reliant, self-controlled, cheerful, and cooperative with adults, achievement oriented and friendly with peers. It may therefore be more appropriate to view Samoan parenting styles as *Authoritarian* in principle but *Authoritative* in approach.

With respect to Diane Baumrind's parenting typology all participants described the *Authoritarian* parenting style as their parents attempted to shape and control their

children's behaviour and attitudes by establishing a standard of conduct, usually an absolute standard which was theologically motivated and formulated by a higher authority. These parents, as Baumrind (1966:890) suggests, considered obedience a virtue and favoured punitive, forceful measures to curb self-will in situations where a child's actions conflicted with what parents considered to be appropriate conduct. These parents believed in keeping the child in his/her place, restricting the child's autonomy and assigning household responsibilities in order to inculcate respect for work. These *Authoritarian* parents valued and encouraged order and tradition. Furthermore these parents did not encourage verbal 'give and take', believing that the child should accept their word as right. This parenting style concurs with Meleisea and Schoeffel (1998:164) findings that Samoan children are taught to respect their parents and treat them as people of a distinct and higher status. As a result these authors (ibid) contend relationships between parent and children are more formal with limited displays of affection. However, the limitations of Baumrind's model vis-à-vis Samoan culture is also apparent as participants did not conform to Baumrind's characterization of children of *Authoritarian* parents who were defined as usually fearful, moody, aimless, unhappy, easily annoyed and less able to cope effectively with stressful circumstances.

Participants who experienced classic *Authoritarian* parenting styles such as Tolu (vi), Fa (vii) and Gata (viii), where control and fear was used to solicit compliance, negative outcomes are evident. Tolu has negative attitudes towards *fa'aSamoa,* (Samoan way). Tolu also attributes the punitive disciplinary measures she experienced as the reason she led a 'double life.' Fa also makes references to being forced to lead a 'double life' managing to create a good impression while lying and deceiving her parents and doing as she wished behind their backs. For Gata, her parents' controlling and over-protective stance exacerbated her shyness and precluded the development of social skills as she was not allowed to attend social gatherings as a teenager.

Participants who reported inconsistencies in the parenting styles of their respective parents - a punitive, controlling and uninvolved father but a *permissive* but present mother (who often compensated for the father's harsh practices) - appeared more vulnerable to negative influences. At one level, this corresponds with aspects of Baumrind's characterisation of children of *Permissive* parents as usually aggressive, aimless, domineering, lacking in self-control and self-reliance, and noncompliant with

adults. However, Baumrind's model fails to capture the essence of a transposed communally-based, patriarchal culture that influenced participants' childhood.

Other research as outlined in Chapter Three may be more relevant. Research by Landsford et al (2005 cited in Smith 2006:6) suggested that in Kenya where physical punishment was more culturally accepted, adjustment problems were less severe. Thus, in countries where physical punishment was less acceptable and infrequently used, children who experienced physical punishment suffered more harmful effects than those who were not physically punished in those particular countries. However, it is important to note that different research in this area agrees that the 'moderating' effects of cultural norms only applies at reasonable levels of physical punishment. Extremely harsh discipline, bordering on physical abuse, is damaging for any child regardless of culture. Lansford et al (2005 cited in Smith 2006:6) found that children who had experienced physical punishment, irrespective of whether physical punishment was regarded as normative or not, were more likely to be aggressive and anxious. This is consistent with Ofu who expressed the view that the physical abuse he experienced at the hands of family members caused him to be aggressive at school.

However, as Meleisea and Schoeffel (1998:160) report, in Samoa where physical punishment is a common parenting strategy used to deter undesired behaviour or attitudes in the young, moderate physical punishment is quite acceptable. Furthermore, as village life is a shared experience with open style *fale* (houses), the standardization and commonality of parenting practices may assist children's adjustment to these practices with minimal harmful results.

This may account for the varied responses of participants to physical punishment by their Samoan parents. In Group A, five participants reported strict and traditional upbringing which included occasional smacks. Although they admit to not appreciating measures they considered confining and authoritarian as teenagers, now that they are parents themselves, can respect the intent that underpinned their parents' disciplinary practices. This is particularly applicable to the two participants who acknowledge that while their parents were strict they also demonstrated love and affection. For Ipu, Ofu and Valu at least, their less than positive experiences with their respective fathers may well have

influenced their perceptions about Samoan childrearing practices and affected their choices with respect to ECE of their own children.

Participants' varied responses to parenting practices they were exposed to as children highlight the diversity within the Samoan community. It further emphasises how environments and parenting styles experienced in childhood impacts on their adult perceptions of their ethnic community. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological System model is useful when examining this phenomenon. Seifert (1999) argues that cultural beliefs and values have a real potential to affect all Bronfenbrenner's systems. Furthermore, Seifert (1999) contends that because of the important role culture plays in identity formation, conflicting messages can lead to 'crises of identity in children.' Jemima Tiatia's (1998) study of the intra-generational clash of Pasifika cultures in the milieu of Aotearoa/New Zealand cites sources that support this view:

> …regardless of age, you are still considered a child, particularly by your own parents…Rather than be seen compromising with one's own children, some parents have opted to ignore this new individualism which cries out for recognition and for answers to simple and logical questions. Many of these young people have been labelled 'cheeky' and rebellious' because they appear to deprecate and deny their cultural heritage, putting themselves before their family (Taule'ale'ausumai, 1991:17 in Tiatia 1998: 82)

Moreover, responses correspond with Family Systems theory as their current family circumstances have been influenced by past relationships or family histories. Moreover, parenting styles reflect interlocking relationships that have existed over many generations. As previously stated Fitu (i), Gata (viii), Tolu (vi) Iva (iv) have modified their parenting styles to suit, by understanding how their own behavioural patterns are connected to the patterns of their multigenerational family.

According to Family Systems theories, as stated previously, whilst environments do not determine human behaviour, they impose limitations and constraints as well as provide possibilities and opportunities for families. Both Gata and Fitu accept that the constraints of traditional Samoan parenting styles kept them safe. Furthermore, while they considered their upbringing when they were teenagers as restrictive and controlling, they are now also were able to appreciate and understand the intent behind the restrictions their parents, particularly their fathers, imposed. This denotes aspects of an *authoritative*

parenting style. Both Tolu (i) and Fa (ii) reported leading a 'double life' where they 'managed' to give the impression of conforming to parental expectations but adopted devious strategies that enabled them to do what they knew their parents would not approve of. Although both participants participated in PECC, Tolu (i) equated her harsh upbringing to her Samoan culture, whereas Fa (ii) did not resent her parents' disciplinarian style and had incorporated what she perceived were the positive aspects into her own parenting style. While both participants' childhoods were affected by traditional Samoan parenting practices, the difference related to the quality of their home environment, which in Fa's case was a loving nurturing environment. Fa was very clear about what aspects of her own background she wanted to pass on to her children. She had very high aspirations for her children and emphasised the importance of education. Fa appreciated the value of being bilingual herself and had encouraged her children to learn Samoan and Maori as well as English. Fa's Samoan upbringing came to the fore where matters of discipline are concerned. Although well educated with respect to child development, Fa admitted to having what she described as a 'Samoan' temper and acknowledged the difficulties of abandoning parenting practices learnt in childhood.

5.4   INTERVENTIONS SUGGESTED BY PARTICIPANTS

Participants identified deficits in early childhood and parenting services for Pasifika parents. Issues raised included the lack of all-inclusive services and the dissemination of information regarding the availability of services to parents, particularly teenage parents.

Elefane (Group C) commented that she was unaware of any services when she was a young mother. Now at the age of 38, Elefane is still struggling with her preschoolers:

> For me and people my age there seems to be nothing and there wasn't anything for me back then. I think if there were services like yours* it might have helped me with my issues. (Int Elefane).
>
> *[*Elephane was referring to the Pacific Young Parents Service that she knew I was involved with.]*

Valu (Group B) had her first child at the age of 15. She also speaks of her lack of awareness in her early parenting years:

> I wasn't aware of needs in terms of parent education or education choices for my kids and so wasn't looking…didn't know that they might be missing out or anything, I guess I was still growing up myself…As an older parent now (43 years old) I've become more aware of services and possible benefits for my child so I felt I had some real choices. Like I said I decided to enroll (x) in a Samoan

preschool and I really liked it at first but then it became too demanding. At the same time (partner) was working night shift and so my boy liked staying home with his Dad. It kind of seemed more convenient for all of us. (Int Valu).

Fa (Group A) who has a lot of involvement with the Pasifika community believed that parenting services for Pasifika was an important issue. She had much to say in terms of possible ways to support Pasifika families:

> …majority of poor families don't have basic needs so parenting issues are not often a priority, they're too busy surviving- this needs to be acknowledged…we need to acknowledge the diversity of the types of Pacific families that exist and then have appropriate services that link that diversity. There's got to be a whole lot of different ones and maybe more of a match between early childhood education and teen parent education. I think new Samoan migrants should be offered orientation courses to NZ lifestyle and right from the ECE acknowledging different learning styles right through to secondary schools. It's important that we support our language nests but there is an assumption that the only way we can support is by attending, but it needs to be supported from teacher development right through. (Int Fa).

Participants indicated that greater options with respect to choices of services available to Pasifika parents would increase participation rates in ECE. They identified the need for 'middle of the road services' rather than just a choice between 'mainstream' and 'traditional' services.

Fagu (Group C) also believed that there needed to be a shift in attitudes and the value base at PECCs in order to accommodate future generations. She explains:

> We need to get rid of the judgmental-ness of our older Pacific generations and their non-acknowledgement of younger generation that may not be fluent in the language. You know - need to ditch the arrogance based on status I mean I need a ECE service that I can relate to, you know, that provides more of a balance. For us 2nd generation NZ born we have to get out of our comfort zones too and maybe learn more. (Int Fagu).

All participants, irrespective of whether they accessed a PECC, agreed that PECCs needed to be maintained. For example Ato (Group C), despite not accessing a PECC herself, suggested that PECCs were an important institution for language maintenance, but made the following suggestion:

> I know it's important because you've got to teach the younger ones the language otherwise it will fade away but it has to be presented in a way that we NZ born/half-castes can accept it…having

more younger NZ-born teachers that you can relate to would help us younger ones and you can say "well I didn't understand that part, can you go back." (Int Ato).

Ono (Group A) also suggested that having more NZ-born Samoan staff may encourage the participation of younger parents. She also suggested that increased resources and improvement in the 'quality' of provision would make PECCs more 'attractive.'

Ofu (Group C) suggested a way to better support Samoan parents and to increase participation was to offer them language classes:

> …joint learning classes where we can learn the language together with my son would be good. If I felt I could be comfortable in that place where my child can be there too and where I'd feel like I wouldn't be shunned for my lack of language I think that would be cool. (Int Ofu).

Ideas proposed by participants have many similar themes regardless of which group they were in. There was an acknowledgement of the need to continue to develop and maintain PECCs and furthermore to ensure quality. There was also an acknowledgement of the lack of appropriate services available to meet the increasingly diverse needs of Pasifika parents. The need for a shift in attitude on the part of traditional Pasifika communities so that younger generations were welcomed and accepted into the fold, was also suggested. The ideas and suggestions of participants reflect a natural connection with and a growing awareness of, the divergent needs that can be used as a basis to facilitate a pathway to bridge the gaps identified in the current service provision not only to Pasifika children but also to Pasifika parents.

5.5   SUMMARY

This chapter has explored the rationale that underpins participants' choices with respect to their engagement in ECE. The categorization of primary data into three sections – discussion and perspectives on the relevance and quality of service provision, identity issues and generational and cultural differences in parenting styles reflect the issues of primary concern to participants.

Chapter Six presents a Pasifika perspective on the relationship between social, economic, political and educational barriers that have precluded Pasifika people from achieving parity with the general population in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Pasifika voices are

incorporated to further reinforce the sense of cultural alienation experienced in mainstream society as well as the complexities of identity formation within an increasingly multi-ethnic Pasifika community.

CHAPTER SIX

PASIFIKA FRAMES - PASIFIKA VOICES

6.0   INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the voices of Pasifika people are expressed through poetry, personal stories and individual experiences. This also includes relevant experiences of the writer. This is presented to reinforce the importance of cultural identity and the relevance of identity journeys, both individually and collectively, to this research. Due to the paucity of Pasifika research on the issues of identity formation and multi-ethnic identities for second generation Pasifika in Christchurch, this chapter is intended to augment the literature reviewed by providing a Pasifika perspective. In several instances Western theorists are used to reinforce the connection between personal experience and academic thought.

6.1   THE BATTLE FOR 'SELF-HOOD'

This section aims to explore cultural identity journeys from the different perspectives of NZ- born/raised Samoans, the 'children of the migration' -those who migrated to Aotearoa/New Zealand as children through to those that are of the 1st generation NZ-born to the children of that first generation and of mixed ethnicities. We examine examples of 'Identity Journeys' in order to understand the complexities and idiosyncrasies diverse sections within Samoan communities engage in when navigating their own world view through contrasting and conflicting milieu.

6.1.1   Reflections of a Safe Passage

Ode to a Memory is written by Fa'amoana Ioane (1994:7), a Samoan who had migrated to Aotearoa/New Zealand as a seven year old child with his family almost thirty-two years ago. Ioane recollects his simple experiences of his childhood and reflects on a far different way of life that denotes a keen sense of belonging. It is poignant with a suggestion of longing for a time that can never be replicated in today's modern context.

Ode to a Memory - (Malaemalu by the Sea)

Evening meal is over

Now it's Bible study at the Pastors

Who hit the rock?

Who made the world?

Let's play screeching Bat

Come on let's catch the moon

On white sand we run to and fro

Hurricane lamps in the round houses

Begin to glow

Young ladies are at the spring

Vaipuna a Tala cool as ice water

As old as father time

Hair all washed and gleaming

Shampooed in Lemons and Lime

Combed thru in scented coconut oil

Under the moon to shine

In their lovers' eyes

One by one the lights disappear

Spirits of the old people

Dance in ghostly cheer

Framed by shadows of Breadfruit trees

The ancient helmsman smiles in his sleep

His head on a wooden pillow

Snuggled up to my Grandmother

I hear stories of days gone by

Round houses all around me

As waves on the Reef

Crash and Die

6.1.2 Confronting Confusing Contexts

In contrast, the next poem written by Fa'amoana's younger sister, Fuarosa Tamati, delineates the alienation of another Samoan who migrated as a child. Fuarosa Tamati draws on her personal identity journey to express the confusion that can often occur when familiar surroundings are suddenly traded for foreign environments. The confusion doesn't always stop in childhood but has the capacity to reverberate throughout all stages of development, constantly shaping and shifting a person's view of themselves and others, making the identity journey all the more hazardous.

<u>Ode to Mum and Dad</u>

My parents…
Eager to give their offspring
The best, Moved to another land
'Aiga' wooing them to
A paradise of money,

Better education and promises of opportunity, without
The drudgery of sitting by the kerosene stove
Doing the saka,
Life in New Zealand is
Easy, they say…
Everyone has a fridge …And a TV
Freedom from the countless *Fa'alavelave's*

Why does my stomach ache for Taro, Palusami
In a country where
You can have anything you want?
Why does my heart yearn?
For, a view of our malae
In Poutasi.

Why do I feel like I don't belong?

In a country that I grew up in?

Why do I want to escape all the time

There's nowhere to run away to,

I've been sentenced to one thing

And there's a yearning to be

Somewhere else.

Dissatisfied, everything is tainted

By the feeling…what is the feeling?

Not belonging, yet part of

Belonging but rejected

Some say I'm Fia-Palagi Some say I'm Fia-Mauli

I've been remade & all my parts don't slot together,

My parts slot in sometimes, and pop out at the slightest

Interference, it doesn't have to major!

A word, a nod, an attitude

I am shattered

It takes a long time to be me again

As normal as I can be,

…Under the circumstances

(Fuarosa Tamati cited in Ioane 1994:65-66).

6.1.3   Clashes in Relationships

The following poem from Samoan writer Ruperake Petaia although somewhat dated, still provides a valuable insight into how environments and relationships that Pasifika children engage within the *meso-system* (schools, universities) begin to impact on relationships in the *micro-system.*

Father and Son

He comes home now
His mind filled with

The wisdom of the papalagi
Your son has done well at school

And you are proud,
and showed him off to friends
for their congratulations
But
Suddenly he speaks
And you don't want to hear him
He dresses
And you don't want to see him

He tries to explain himself
But you say he's just
trying- to- be- smart- little- cheek
Who's had too much education

I wonder where in the darkness
You lost each other
Father and Son
(Ruperake Petaia 1980: 4)

The relative simplicity of village life in comparison to the complex environment that Samoan migrant children were thrust into, can lead to the unravelling of a positive cultural identity particularly if transitions are not managed effectively or even acknowledged. This in turn can lead to what Cohen and Taylor call a 'battleground'.

Sociologists, Cohen and Taylor (1997) in their study of prisoners in prison life, explore the battle for 'selfhood' in their analysis of people's attempts in making sense of their

everyday realities and their efforts to then escape in search for meaning, novelty, progress and a sense of their true identity. They draw on sociologist Erving Goffman's (1956) earlier exploration of individual identity, group dynamics, the impact of the environment, and the movement and interactive meaning of information to further illustrate the complexities of identity development:

> Without something to belong to, we have no stable self, and yet total commitment and attachment to any social unit implies a kind of selflessness. Our sense of being a person can come from being drawn into a wider social unit; our sense of selfhood can arise through the little ways we resist the pull. Our status is backed by the solid buildings of the world, while our sense of personal identity resides in the cracks (Goffman cited in Cohen and Taylor, 1998:44).

In their classic study, *The Social Construction of Reality*, Berger and Luckmann (1966:25) posit a pervasive "reality of everyday life" against and within which "other realities appear as finite provinces of meaning." These authors highlight the notion that there is nothing "natural" about man's social environment. There is only "human nature" in the sense of anthropological constants: "But the specific shape into which 'humanness' is moulded is determined by those socio-cultural formations and is relative to their numerous variations." Berger and Luckmann (1966:49) essentially argue that "man [sic] constructs his [sic] own nature, or more simply that man produces himself [sic]." Thus, human culture is a product of our own making. Moreover, if cultural experience is an abstract framework in which we construct our social reality, then modernisation is the accompanying process of cultural experience. The internalisation of these 'sub worlds' of meaning is gained through secondary socialisation. According to Berger and Luckmann (1966:152), "one may view the individual's everyday life in terms of the working away of a conversational apparatus that engagingly maintains, modifies and reconstructs his [sic] subjective reality."

These authors (1966:152) maintain that another defining factor of socially constructed reality is that it cannot be changed by the will of a single individual, but must instead evolve over time with the changing attitudes and environments of the community, thereby alluding to the ambiguity played out in everyday realities. Social ambiguity therefore highlights the tension between the 'me', in terms of the social role we play, and the 'I', that unique individual within which our innermost thoughts and perceptions of how we view ourselves.

As many NZ-born Samoans may attest to, experiencing two very different cultures and environments, becomes a battle of 'selfhood'. It is an intriguing concept and takes social ambiguity to an even deeper level. From a traditional Samoan stance there is no 'I' perspective only a 'we' and what this simply implies is that concepts or values, such as individuality, have no real meaning when related to Samoan values and beliefs. As suggested by Tamasese, Peteru, Waldegrave (1997:28): "…the Samoan person does not exist as an individual. There is myself and yourself… you cannot take a Samoan out of the collective context." This concept corresponds with Marx's theory of alienation which is critical of capitalist societies or class societies which alienate the individual and proposes that 'authenticity' or identity can only be achieved in relationship with other human beings. That is I am who I am in relationship to others.

6.1.4   The battle for 'self-hood' a personal perspective

There are ways in which NZ-born Samoans manage these conflicting parameters. As a Samoan born in Aotearoa/New Zealand, my own experiences reinforce my personal battle for 'self-hood'. One example of my consciously exerted personal choice is my refusal to take an active part in the ceremonial presentation of 'fine mats' when my mother is present as she has embarrassed me too many times by the stern way she directs and scolds me in front of other people. I understand, having lived in Samoa that this is part of her 'managing impressions' for those present and demonstrates her prowess in cultural knowledge and parental authority. However it is an approach that does not appeal to my more Western cultivated sensitivities. Thus, on one hand, I resist the pull of Western ideology by asserting my cultural values to rationalise this resistance, while at other times, use my Western thinking to resist conforming to traditional cultural expectations. I concede there are many times when resistance to Samoan familial obligations cannot be negotiated as simply as described in this example, occasions which add to the complex intricacies of identity work for NZ-born Samoans.

In more traditional societies like Samoa, identity work is connected to social order and the roles played by individuals. This has certainly been my personal experience. I had lived and attended high school in Samoa for four years as a teenager and when I returned with my mother and siblings some twenty years later with my father's body, familiarity

with Samoan culture made this a relatively easy and familiar journey for me. Within the parameters of my Samoan culture I clearly understood what role was required of me and found a sense of freedom and belonging in embracing that role.

I willingly gravitated towards the cook house and served my elders in complete submission. Cooking, cleaning, serving and running errands were not chores but the social norm, a perception that I am sure some of my more militant feminist university friends would not readily understand. However, as any Samoan will tell you, it is in the cookhouse that most adolescents begin their cultural apprenticeship, through the passing of gossip, observing and listening to the critical analysis of the days proceedings by aunties and uncles assigned to the cook house, and punctuated with raucous peals of laughter that make the learning all the more entertaining and interactive. It is also an acknowledgement and a demonstration of an awareness of cultural values such as fa'aaloalo (respect) tautua (service) and alofa (love). Thus I was more than happy, and not without a measure of pride, that I demonstrated my awareness of Samoan cultural protocol.

In contrast the experience for one of my older sisters, who was born in Samoa but migrated as a two year old with my parents in the late 1950s, was very different. She discovered on this, her first trip back to Samoa, an environment that seemed new, harsh and unfamiliar. The fact that the occasion was our father's reinternment, and therefore steeped in cultural and ceremonial protocol, exacerbated her culture shock.

The first visit for my second generation nieces also proved a challenging experience. The Samoan way of teaching by reprimand when protocols, behaviour or village dress codes were innocently contravened, made for some very confused teenagers, all of whom vowed they would never return to Samoa again. Two weeks is never long enough to understand all the idiosyncrasies that one needs to learn in order to come to terms with protocols of a 'perceived' patriarchal society, such as Samoa.

How very much more difficult it seemed for second generation New Zealand-born Samoans to make sense of themselves and their relationship to others against the cultural backdrop of Samoa, when adult parents as first generation or New Zealand-raised Samoans feel isolated and fragmented from lack of cultural practice and expertise in a

mono-cultural milieu of Christchurch. Socialisation is acquired through observation, practice, mistakes, and consequent reprimands. My four years in Samoa as a young adult and oldest girl in my pastor uncle's household had prepared me much more thoroughly for the *aiga* (extended family) and village expectations than other members of our visiting group who had not experienced the same opportunity.

Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Taisi Efi: (2003: 12) brings home conflicting inter and trans-generational dilemmas in the following poignant quote:

> How can you explain the importance of rituals to passing cultural knowledge, values, language, hopes and dreams from one generation to the next? How can you explain to future generations the meaningful role of the elderly in our society and that our culture is premised on gaining quality or meaningful time between the young and old… In finding balance and in sharing life and love we have to **breathe life** into our collective responsibilities (emphasis added).

6.2   TRAVERSING MULTIPLE IDENTITIES

> …so to all those people who still insist on forcing their stereotypes on us wake up and take a good look around! Over 60% of the Pacific population in Aotearoa are New Zealand born and many are of mixed ethnicity. This growing population may or may not have their language, they may or may not participate fully in Samoan, Tongan or Cook Island communities but it does not mean that they can not identify as being Samoan, Tongan or Cook Island. It also does not mean that we are some how disenfranchised either. (Catherine's story: Daughters of the Pacific Website 6/9/06).

Daughters of the Pacific began as a group of New Zealand-born Pacific woman who met at the MPIA Pacific Vision Conference in Auckland 1999 and realised that they all lived and worked in Christchurch and had similar issues with respect to their individual identity journeys. This was the start of a support group that led to the establishment of a website dedicated to exploring issues of identity and raising the awareness of the changing face of Pacific peoples in Aotearoa; giving voice to their perspectives in the Pacific and wider communities. Their aim is to support Pasifika women and their aspirations and to share and celebrate the diversity and the different cultural mix represented amongst them (*Daughters of the Pacific website,* 6/09/06).

Their personal journeys have been publicly aired on their website in their effort to foster a deeper understanding and tolerance for difference in and around the Pasifika communities they serve. All are well educated and high achievers in their respective fields; some hold significant positions as either public servants in government ministries or local agencies, others are successful artists. Their courageous and honest reflections discussed on this website illustrate some of the barriers presented in their search for identity. The personal stories of individuals with dual Samoan/Palagi heritage reveal that for some being 'bicultural' afforded them cultural capital to achieve in the Palagi system and the resources to assist in developing their Samoan identity when they were ready to explore this aspect for themselves.

6.2.1   Danielle's Story

…In all the papers I did, I always took opportunities to research stuff to do with culture and identity, especially anything about women, half caste, totolua, "border identities" and so on. I tried to get my head round the culture shock I had experienced as a 16 year old travelling with my Dad for the first time to meet my Samoan family in South Auckland. (Danielle's story: Daughters of the Pacific website).

6.2.2   Catherine's Story

…eventually I came to realise that we were part of two different worlds in which different things were expected of us, and these expectations were often conflicting! …A lot of the discrimination I have experienced has actually come from other Samoan people about me being an afakasi (half-caste). For example, being told that 'I am not Samoan because I don't know my language' or 'I'm not Samoan because I don't look Samoan' … the definition of what it is to be a Samoan or to be a Palagi can never ever be objectively pin pointed. These people who continue to degrade people of mixed ethnicity based on their own prepositions of what is to be an 'X', fail to understand and appreciate that our population in Aotearoa is changing. There are increasingly more people who identify as being more than just one culture… I personally identify as being both Palagi and Samoan and now I've found a middle ground so to speak.   (Catherine's story: Daughters of the Pacific website).

Despite these challenges and conflicting parameters, the determination and strength shown by these women who choose for themselves the spaces they wish to occupy, highlight what Keddell describes as "the power of people of dual heritage to challenge those who would try and constrain them to one" (Keddell, 2005:12). If Pasifika communities continue to ignore and/or reject these voices and fail to accommodate the diversity within their own members, they risk losing some potentially powerful

advocates. The gifts, talents and skills of bicultural members of the Pasifika communities add to the vibrancy of the Pasifika collective and despite assumption vis-à-vis the limited cultural knowledge or language skills these women possess, the Pasifika heart, passion and pride are nevertheless evident in their stories.

6.2.3   Lesa's Story

Lesa's story, (Pacific Daughters website: 2006), demonstrates that despite growing up in a mono-cultural palagi (european) environment with limited access to her Samoan roots and experiencing negative responses to her tentative attempts to get to know her Samoan side, she remains impassioned about helping Pasifika people:

> When I completed my law degree I wanted to be able to make the law more accessible for Pacific people. I'm lucky that I am able to do that…The statistics show that the face of NZ is changing. There will be more people like me in the future, more NZ-born and more from one-parent families. We are all looking for our place in the sun too. We are entitled to love and understanding. We have a right to our cultural heritage and likewise we have a responsibility to learn and nurture it. We can't do this if we're not acknowledged and encouraged on our journeys… I am a daughter of the Pacific, a daughter of Samoa, a daughter of Aotearoa. (Lesa's story: Daughters of the Pacific website).

These strong and impassioned voices of multi-ethnic identities only further prove the need to embrace the diversity within and rather than see the difference, celebrate the uniqueness, connect with the similarities and unite effectively for the future of our Pasifika people living in Aotearoa/New Zealand. This thesis argues that it is a diversity we ignore at our peril. It is also a responsibility of our younger generation to temper their views with understanding of where and what has gone on before and to acknowledge the shoulders of 'giants' that have paved the way, and on which we now stand.

As Mamoe (1999:99) asserts NZ-born Pasifika learners face identity dilemmas that are compounded by marginalisation in a Western society and again through inter-generational parameters within their own ethnic groups. Tiatia (1998: 1) reinforces this notion when she writes:

> On the one hand we are Pacific Islanders toiling in a predominately European society that does not seek to understand or fully acknowledge our cultural uniqueness. On the other hand, within our own societies, we are the silenced Western educated voice, ignored because we may be a threat to Pacific Island cultural traditions.

6.3   CLAIMING A PAN-PASIFIKA IDENTITY

There has been considerable debate amongst some Pasifika academics regarding pan-Pacific identity versus ethnic specific identity. Morton (2003:249) in her study of Tongans living abroad, explores the notion of 'Panethnicity' and critiques Melanie Anae's rejection of a pan-Pasifika identity. Anae (1997:136 cited in Morton 2003:249) contends that if young people develop a secure sense of their identities as NZ-born Samoans rather than as Pasifika peoples, they become 'healthier' members of their Samoan families, churches, communities and the wider society in Aotearoa/New Zealand. While Morton (2003: 249) concedes that Anae highlights some significant issues, she contends that Anae's argument suggests 'ethnospecific' and 'panethnic' are "mutually exclusive" whereas for many young people they are "simply facets of their multiple identities." Morton explains further:

> Anae also ignores the possibility that for some young "Islanders" living overseas, it may not be possible for them to establish secure identities within their specific "ethnic' groups, even as adults, if they lack the language and cultural competence that enables them to be acknowledged by others as authentic members of that group (Morton 2003:250).

As a NZ-born Samoan I relate to Anae's argument and identify myself as a Samoan rather than as a Pasifika Islander. However, I also agree with Morton as my children are of Tongan and Fijian as well as Samoan heritage, growing up in Aotearoa/New Zealand and will need to construct their own identities. For my children, and others like them, multi-ethnic identities are realities that cannot be easily ignored. They want to acknowledge all of their ancestry, honoring both parents. Why should they be expected to choose one over another?

6.4   SUMMARY

This chapter has presented the voices of an increasingly diverse NZ-born Samoan faction of the wider Samoan ethnic group within the even broader Pasifika community. It has highlighted the issues around the management of 'identity work' and although these journeys are navigated in a predominately Western environment, accommodation is also

required within individual's own ethnic specific groups. These 'identity journeys' have and will continue to have a direct impact on how the younger generation of Pasifika parents choose to manage their own identities and those of their children. PECCs provide one avenue in which language and cultural development for ethnic specific groups are managed. While it is argued that language and cultural development are fundamental components in the construction of secure senses of identity, the question remains whether or not PECCs realistically reflect the changing cultural characteristics of all NZ-born Samoans and also whether or not they should.

In Chapter Seven, the findings, a final discussion and conclusion of this research project are outlined.

CHAPTER SEVEN

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION: *'Gathering the Threads'*

7.0   INTRODUCTION

This chapter gathers the threads of this thesis, in a final discussion that seeks to respond to the research questions and objectives of this study:

1.   What is the rationale behind the choices that NZ-born Samoans make with respect to accessing Pasifika early childhood education for their children?

2.   What are the key factors identified by NZ-born Samoan parents that encourage participation in PECCs and what are the perceived barriers to participation?

3.   What other early childhood services do Samoan parents access in preference to PECCs or Pasifika language nests'?

Findings are presented with the understanding that because the method used in this study was a small non-random sample, it is not possible to generalize these findings to the general population. This chapter is structured as a comparative analysis of the three participant groups:

Group A (N 6):   NZ-born Samoans whose child/children attended a PECC.

Group B (N 3):   NZ-born Samoans whose child/children had attended a PECC but were withdrawn.

Group C (N 7) :   NZ-born Samoans who did not choose to enrol their child/children in a PECC.

As previously discussed, of the sixteen participants two women and one man were single parents. Five had Maori partners; seven had NZ born Samoan partners, and one a NZ born Samoan/Tongan partner. Of the three that were solo-parents at the time of interview, two had their children to Samoan born and raised partners and the third had a Maori partner that he was now separated from.

My analyses are organized around the themes of PECCs and participation choices, Identity Issues and Parenting Styles that emerged from primary data and have provided a structural framework for this thesis.

7.1   PASIFIKA EDUCATION AND CARE CENTRES

A comparative analysis of the characteristics of parents in Groups A and C identifies intra-group commonalities and inter-group differences that help explain the rationale that underpinned parental choice with respect to engagement in PECCs. In contrast the characteristics of parents in Group B represent an anomaly.

In **Group A** the intra-group similarities in characteristics are notable. All six participants achieved in the compulsory education system and subsequently engaged in tertiary study. They were all employed in professional positions; three were teachers in the ECE, primary and tertiary sectors, two were administrators and one was a freelance writer and postgraduate student. The majority conceived their first child at 25 years or more; five out of six were married. With the exception of one participant who grew up in Auckland, five had historical affiliations with the Pasifika centers that their children attended; four out of six enrolled their children in PECCs that were associated with the churches that either they or their parents attended.

Most considered that language acquisition and cultural acculturation were important elements in their children's development. Although Group A parents were aware of the limitations of PECCs provisions, the priority they attached to biculturalism and bilingualism out weighed these concerns. This also reflected their convictions that attributes developed in attending PECCs, would contribute to their children developing secure identities and a sense of affiliation with, and familiarity in, traditional Samoan contexts. Acculturation as referred to here is what can be described as the process by which people absorb the culture of a society from birth onwards, in this instance, Samoan culture.

Notwithstanding their decision to access PECCs, Group A parents, and particularly Fitu of Group B, identified the need to address 'quality' issues and shortcomings in certain areas of provision including the standard of facilities, the quality of staff and behaviour management techniques used in some PECCs, as described by Fitu (Group B) in the previous chapter. Moreover it is also clear that given their own success in negotiating the

'Western' education system they would be more able to assist their children when they graduated to the primary and compulsory sector of education institutions.

It would also appear that because of the human, social, cultural and financial capital Group A parents possessed, they were very conscious of the importance of their children developing secure identities and how this could be best achieved. Accordingly, their choices with respect to ECE were considered and well informed. Moreover, it is interesting to note that the rationale that underpinned the choices made by Group A parents corresponds with the rationale of the original pioneering group of Pasifika women who established the initial 'Pasifika language nests.'

The characteristics of Group A and Group C parents differed significantly. In comparison to Group A (who were predominately 1st generation NZ-born Samoans), four of seven Group C parents were 2nd generation NZ-born Samoans; six out of seven had not fared well in education institutions, failing to finishing high school or engage in tertiary education; six of the seven conceived their first child under the age of 25; and five out of seven did not identify with the traditional Pasifika churches.

Furthermore, in contrast to Group A, four of the seven participants in Group C did not rate proficiency in Samoan language highly, which suggests a fundamental reason why these parents chose not to enroll their children in PECCs. Notwithstanding their decisions however, all seven parents did recognize the importance of their children being proud of their cultural heritage. Most (four out of seven) believed that language was not a vital component of cultural development and implied that children who came from large Samoan families could develop a sense of cultural identity through familial associations. Additionally, four of the seven felt that as their children were also of Maori descent and were raised in English speaking families, Samoan language development was essentially a pointless exercise. This rationale contrasts with two of the six participants in Group A, who also had Maori partners but nevertheless considered that the development of a strong Samoan identity their children would gain by accessing a PECC was vital. This contrast reinforces the fact that if parents perceived that PECCs were primarily mechanisms for teaching their children Samoan language, which they themselves did not afford a high priority, then the option of accessing PECC provisions became irrelevant to meeting what these parents perceived were their children's needs.

Parents in Group C felt rejected by members of the traditional Samoan community. Several participants commented on the 'shame' they anticipated feeling, or had felt, in traditional Pasifika contexts, which suggests that they had been stigmatized by members of the more traditional Pasifika church communities who are closely affiliated with PECCs. Ato, Elefane and Uati mentioned 'not really fitting in' and feelings of 'shame' amongst other Samoans at these centres. Participants' perceptions that other Samoans involved with PECCs were judgmental of them, or their own parents, provided justification for not accessing Pasifika services.

The one exception in Group C is Gata whose profile closely corresponds with participants in Group A. Gata wanted her child to acquire Samoan language and culture and although she actively searched for an appropriate PECC, she was 'gutted' that she could not find a centre that met her needs as a working mother and also fulfilled her expectations in terms of the provision of a quality education as well as cultural and language development. Gata's experience emphasizes parent's needs for PECCS to be flexible and knowledgeable of the diverse expectations of Samoan parents. However, what is most significant is that Gata has, within the three years since my initial interview, enrolled her child in a PECC. I discovered this at a recent MOE meeting that I attended, where I was delighted to witness 'Gata' rise as the parent representative of a local PECC and praise the quality of work done by staff. With two children currently attending a PECC she has found a centre that meets with her expectations. Her decision is testimony to the recent improvements in PECCs that have been realized since the injection of state funding into the upgrading of facilities and other services.

Group B participants (who had initially engaged with PECCs but had subsequently withdrawn their children) are an anomaly. Whereas the contrast between the characteristics of participants in Group A and Group C are obvious and indicate inter-group differences, the characteristics of Group B participants did not match those of either Group A or C, but rather their profiles reflected an eclectic mixture. Fitu in particular, questioned the 'quality and effectiveness' of her child's lengthy engagement with a PECC and reported strongly on the negative impact that attendance had on her child, due to his fear of one of the teachers. Since the interview three years ago, Fitu has engaged once more in the PECC she had previously enrolled her children in. This time it

is as a trainee ECE teacher. It is also worthwhile to note that the teacher she referred to, is no longer employed there and this PECC is well on the way in supporting all their teachers to gain qualifications and thereby teacher registration. This indicates an improvement and growing awareness in the need for qualified teachers at local PECCs. While Valu and Iva had more ambivalent views, they nevertheless found some of the aspects of PECCs to be wanting. However, their decisions to disengage from their respective PECCs were primarily caused by their unwillingness to become too involved in these centres. For example, Iva's children only attended a PECC when her Samoan sister-in-law took them, as she was quite happy having her preschool children at home with her. Iva also considered herself to be fortunate as her children had Samoan grandparents who reinforced cultural values in her children. Group B participants highlight the diversity within NZ-born Samoans and illustrate how parental choice is often based on a perceived need or an informed need, which may be responded to in a variety of ways. For example Iva and Valu have not considered Early Childhood Education as vital to their child's development as others and policies might infer. They both are happy with their children spending as much time at home with (in Valu's case) Dad. Given the busy work schedule she holds, this is more convenient and a more suitable option for her family. For Iva as her work enables her to take her children with her, she prefers that option to placing them in childcare. Moreover Iva believes that as she and her husband live with her parents, she is not bereft of reliable and culturally appropriate child care assistance when warranted.

The inter-group differences in characteristics between Group A and Group C and the intra-group commonalities within these groups, provides a basis for analyzing factors that underpin parental choice. Characteristics such as educational attainment levels, age of conception, socio-economic status, together with experiences of, exposure to and engagement with, traditional Samoan communities and institutions impacted on parental choice. It is also apparent that 'generational status' was a significant factor. Group A parents, who were 1st generation NZ-born Samoans, had different attitudes towards, and levels of affiliation with, traditional Pasifika churches in comparison to Group C parents who were mostly 2nd generation NZ-born Samoan parents. There were also differences in the ways in which participants navigated their life journeys in relation to identity formation and the lenses through which they viewed themselves and others in Samoan communities. These differences manifested in either positive or ambivalent beliefs about

whether PECCs could meet their children's early childhood educational needs. These dissimilar attitudes can be explained by Bronfenbrenner's theory that differences in ecological systems affect the ways in which individual family members interact with one another. These familial relationships are formative in shaping how individuals engage or disengage with communities and institutions in the ensuing outer layers or as Bronfenbrenner describes as the *meso* and *exo* systems.

To explain this further, if one looks at relationships in the micro system, we find that parents of participants who have been consistent in their engagement/relationship with particular traditional churches in the meso/exo system, role modeling strong parental authoritative approaches, maintain significant influence over their relationships with their children within the micro system. Attending traditional church settings as young children, participants are therefore exposed to relationships and cultural practices along with other Pasifika families and their children. It appears that parents of these participants, are able to transmit their cultural values to their children more positively. Additionally, if participants have had a positive relationship within the education system (*meso* system), their ability to consciously consider educational and cultural development opportunities for their children is further enhanced.

This contrasts sharply with the majority of Group C participants whose parents, (the majority of them being 1st generation NZ born or NZ raised), for a variety of reasons, might not have engaged effectively with these Pasifika traditional churches in the meso system. Therefore role modeling positive relationships with these institutions to their children may not have occurred, exacerbating a cultural divide between those institutions in the *meso* system and the child in the *micro* system. Further, Tui Atua highlights how some 'normative' parenting practices in contemporary society and found within the *micro* system (family settings), can contribute towards the breakdown of vital relationships within the family unit:

> if the young are morally and spiritually nurtured and sustained by video, television, radio and 'the flicks', rather than by their *matua* [elder] then the bonding which is an essential ingredient…in this context becomes *questionable*. (Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Taisi Efi, 2003:14)

The foregoing section has demonstrated how different experiences and environments affect parental choice. In the next two sections, the effects of cultural identity and early childhood parenting practices on parental choice serve to further reinforce the ways in which Bronfenbrenner's *micro-systems* are intrinsically linked to parental choice.

7.2   IDENTITY ISSUES

Research indicates that positive engagement with cultural practices and respect for cultural diversity are important aspects of a healthy society. Charles Waldegrave (1993:8), a social researcher with The Family Centre in Wellington states:

> We were taught that belonging and identity are the essence of health and human potential. It has been convenient for us to deny this, but the results have been tragic."

Six of the seven Group C parents 'perceived' that authentic cultural practices involved violent discipline, non-accepting and judgemental attitudes and overtly religious demands. As these associations served to exacerbate the already fragmented psyches (Hall et al, 1994) of culturally displaced 'at risk' individuals, they had potentially negative implications for the health of society. For some participants in Group C their negative associations with traditional Samoan culture, combined with risk factors relating to their life-circumstances (such as low income levels, poor educational achievement outcomes) contributed to the poor choices that a parent, such as Ofu, might make during his life-course. This contrasts sharply with the experiences of multi-ethnic women (refer *Daughters of the Pacific* Chapter 6) who in spite of having limited access to cultural knowledge, language and traditions, had sufficient cultural capital to facilitate the positive progression of their life-courses.

As noted by Aboud and Doyle (1993: 47), a strong cultural identity is connected with factors that lead to competent, connected and well-adjusted young people whereas a lack of identity can be an added 'risk factor.' Participants in this study from all groups, suggest that culture and identity are intrinsically linked. Cultural capital is derived from knowledge of our cultural traditions, an understanding of the history and cultural practices that shape us, the ability to engage with contemporary cultural practices as well as a respect for and acceptance of other cultural traditions. It is necessary that individuals

have the skills and opportunities to express their cultural values and practices and to pass these on to future generations.

Religious beliefs and associations had a significant impact on parental choice. As previously discussed, traditional Samoan churches play a significant role in the maintenance and visibility of 'authentic' Samoan identities. In Christchurch, five out of the six registered and licensed PECCs are affiliated with one of these traditional churches. Group A participants did not consider that this institutional relationship was a barrier, on the contrary five out of six parents have close familial associations with these churches which they and/or their parents attend. Furthermore, they perceived this association as a vehicle for solidifying their children's identity as Samoans. Conversely, other participants (particularly in Group C) perceived that these churches were the 'Samoan community' and their lack of affiliation with these institutions reinforced their sense of cultural alienation. Regardless of whether these parents perceived their exclusion was voluntary or the result of rejection, the fact that they did not have positive relationships with traditional churches impacted on their choices with respect to accessing PECCs.

This section has indicated that identity issues and religious affiliations are factors that influence the choices that NZ-born Samoan parents make in regard to the ECE of their children. This analysis stresses the need for the state and community leaders to recognise the complex issues raised by teenage parenting, lack of affiliation or exposure to traditional Pasifika communities, generational differences, managing multi-ethnic identities, marginalisation by both the general society and the ethnic groups that they are members of, and socio-economic factors that exacerbate issues further. This study shows that these complex issues contribute to a growing number of NZ-born Samoans who do not access PECCs and in some cases ECE services altogether. Moreover, the changing demographic profile in Aotearoa/New Zealand suggests that it is becoming increasingly urgent that the needs of this sector of the Samoan community are accommodated.

7.3   PARENTING ISSUES

This section highlights the impact that childhood parenting and home environments have on an individual's identity formation process. Participants' responses emphasize how the

traditional parenting styles and socialization practices of the islands that their migrant parents transported to Aotearoa/New Zealand resulted in a generational 'culture clash.' The new environment became a 'battlefield' marked by incongruent Samoan and Western parenting styles and practices through which the 1st generation NZ-born Samoans had to navigate. In addition this section discusses issues relating to adolescent parents in order to consider what factors are responsible for the non-participation of this group in ECE.

All participants in Group A testified to being parented in strict and traditionally conservative ways with an emphasis on religious conformity which accords with what Diane Baumrind describes as an *Authoritarian* parenting style (see chapter five). However, as has been reported in Chapter Four, the characteristics Baumrind ascribes to children who experience this parenting style do not fit with the profiles of Group A participants. This suggests an inappropriate match if this Western typology were simply applied to a different cultural group. Moreover, Group A participants who experienced parenting approaches that varied from warm, loving and nurturing to physically harsh, disciplinarian with limited affection, demonstrated high expectations to achieve and conform.

Thus for some, although their descriptions of the parenting styles they experienced were consistent in principle with Baumrind's typology of *Authoritarian* parenting style, the approach was more *Authoritative*. This serves as an example of where western theory/approaches do not necessarily fit with cultural differences in regard to parenting practices and highlights the need for interventions suggested for Pasifika to account for these subtle differences. Other characteristics common to Group A participants included having two married parents who were born and raised in Samoa, who were regular church attendees. This is also the case with Group B participants.

Some participants in both Groups A and B discussed the challenges they had in accepting and understanding the rationale behind their parents' *authoritarian* style of parenting, particularly when they were teenagers. However, now that they are adults and parents themselves, are able upon reflection to view their experiences from a different perspective and are more able to appreciate some of the positive aspects of the way they were parented. Accordingly, they now appreciate and understand where their parents

were coming from and that their intentions had been well intended. This indicates the positive adjustment these participants had managed in their development.

This contrasts with participants in Group C, the majority of whom (five out of 7) reported 'inconsistent' parenting styles; two had particularly controlling fathers and 'soft' or permissive mothers, one had an indulgent grandmother, strict aunt and uncle and permissive parents who were frequently absent, and the final two had firm fathers but inconsistent mothers who could be manipulated at different times. Another factor pertinent to parenting styles is the country of birth of their parents. In Group C, two of the seven participants' parents were Samoan-born, three had parents that were Samoan-born but NZ-raised and another had a NZ-born mother and a Maori father.

Another factor that distinguishes Group A participants from Group C is the age and the context of the birth of their first children. In Group A five out of six had their first child over the age of 25 and one at age 23; five out of six were in stable relationships when their children were conceived and had remained within those relationships. The profile of participants in Group C differs significantly. With the exception of Gata, who as previously mentioned is an anomaly, the remaining six had their children under age 25 and all were either are unmarried, recently separated or in tenuous relationships. With respect to Group B, two of the three had their children under the age of 25, and all were married and had been in stable relationships for periods that spanned 10 – 20 years. The differences in inter-group profiles reflect the vulnerability of Group C participants and highlight the realities lived by a more impoverished and culturally deprived sector of our Pasifika community.

These findings reinforce the need for all stakeholders in Pasifika ECE, particularly the traditional Pasifika community and Pasifika leaders, to embrace the subsequent generations of 2nd generation, often multi-ethnic NZ-born Samoans, who are infused with different experiences, skills and knowledge but lack the Pasifika cultural experience or expertise other members of the Pasifika communities are privileged to hold. More importantly, an awareness and understanding of this younger generation of Pasifika parents may assist all stakeholders to identify what new provisions are necessary and how current services could be made more accessible and user-friendly to this growing sector of the Pasifika community.

Most participants acknowledge the importance of PECCs but contended that other interventions were also needed and that 'more talking around the issues' was definitely necessary. The strategies recommended by participants in this study included early interventions in the schools. For many of the participants there was an acknowledgement of the lack of discussion around sexuality and appropriate sex education for Pasifika teenagers and therefore many advocated more effective and culturally appropriate interventions in the schools to arrest the 'perceived' growing teenage pregnancy rate amongst Pasifika young people.

It was suggested that the creation of opportunities to engage with other traditionally raised Pasifika parents would contribute much to the breakdown of perceived differences and judgmental attitudes on both sides. Many advocated for more support services for teenage parents given that they only knew of the Pacific Young Parents Service that this researcher has been involved with over the last 5 years. Furthermore, they believed that teenage parents were at greater risk of being marginalized. This corresponds with the findings of this study.

A greater range of ECE provision for Pasifika that encompassed full immersion language nests to bicultural, and 'middle of the road' services was also suggested. Several participants mentioned the need for 'middle of the road' services, by which they seemed to mean a Pasifika service that was not necessarily 'full immersion' in a Pasifika language but still promoted a Pasifika 'experience'. This corresponds with Silipa's (1999) research with Pasifika parents in Christchurch where he found that some NZ-born Pasifika people while not expecting their children to be fluent in a Pasifika language wanted to ensure that they still had a sense of pride and understanding of their cultural roots (Silipa, 1999).
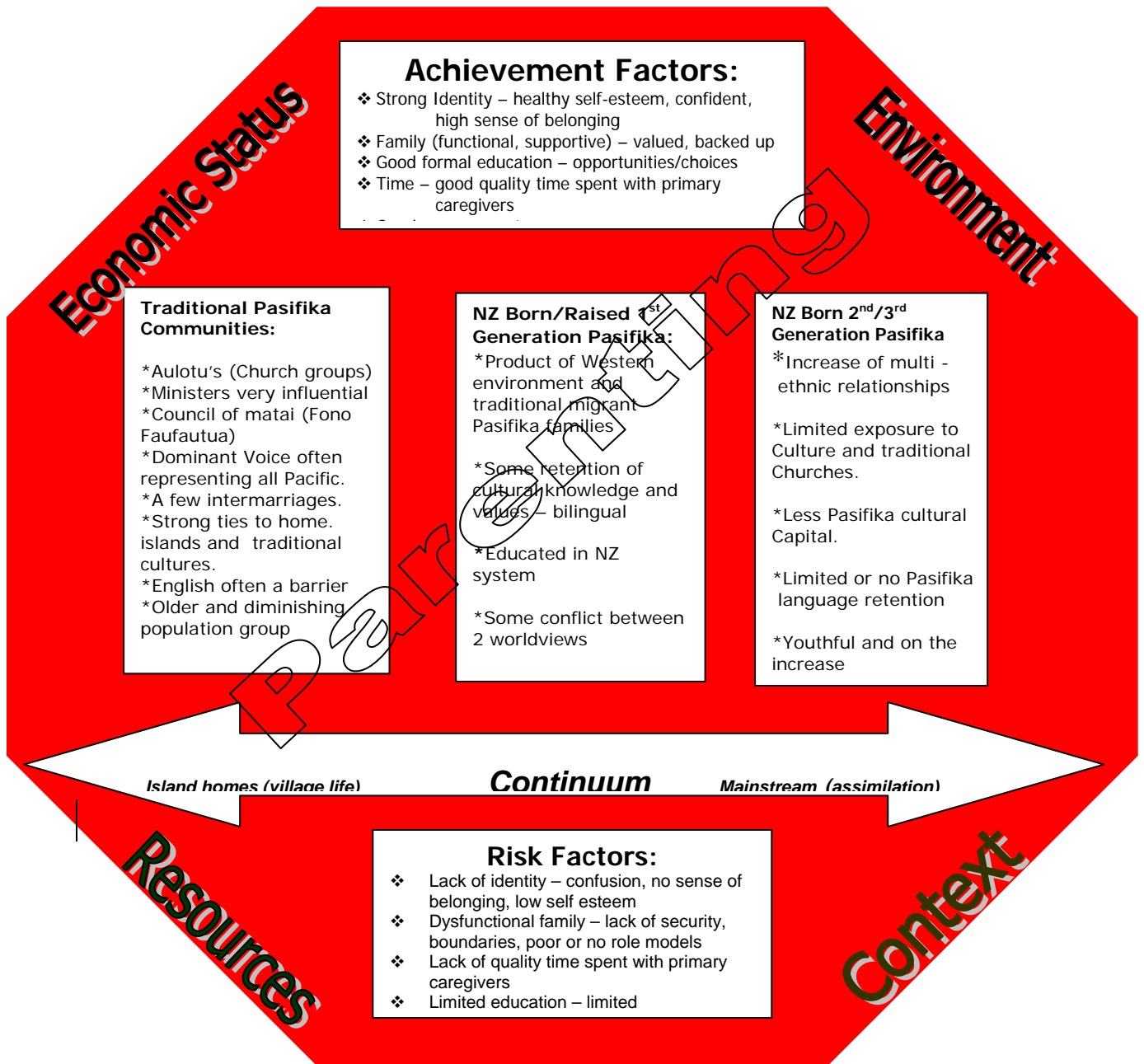
As a strategy put forward by participants to attract more NZ-born Samoans in participating in PECCs there should be a concerted effort to increase recruitment of more NZ-born Samoan teachers who are bi-lingual and could relate to contemporary issues that NZ-born Samoans contend with inside and outside their Pasifika communities.

The following figure illustrates a final overview of what this researcher considers the evolving face of the Pasifika community, in the form of a symbolic stop sign indicating the need for all stakeholders to **stop** and consider the evolving Pasifika face and the 'us' within. In viewing this model the sectors are clearly distinguished from each other. This model illustrates the significant distance between the first section (traditionally focused Pasifika sector and migrants of the '50s, '60s and '70s) and the third section on the far right of the continuum (2nd and 3rd generation NZ-born Pasifika, multi-ethnic, Westernized). It illustrates the difficult divide for those on the far right, to connect with the section on the far left and vice versa. Therefore given that PECCs are usually associated and established by the traditional churches that are located in the first section, it should not be surprising if parents in the third section might not choose or view a PECC as relevant to their life style. It is also important to note that the section in the middle, consisting of first generation New Zealand-born Pasifika often act as bridges between the two sections and furthermore often straddle the divide on either side. This appears logical given that they are not as removed from the more traditional yet relate to the section on their right due to also being a 'product' of the same environment that they have been raised in. The factors such as: environment, context, resources, economic status impact on our Pasifika people.

The achievement box and its contents mirror the 'risk factors' box and represent how people from each section, given the combination mix of those stated factors are able to either progress satisfactorily through present systems, or are the more vulnerable due to having too many of the risk factors as stated. Across all is an emphasis on parenting as it is usually the one factor common to all and one that is deemed a powerful influence in children's development.

This study has shown that parents from Group C, which had more 'risk factors' present in their lives, had the most need for support and prove to be the more vulnerable sector of our Pasifika communities. The parents in Group A had more 'Achievement factors' present in their lives and took advantage of the specific services for Pasifika offered.

Figure 1 : **'us' framework –** Examining our evolving Pasifika communities

Economic Status

Environment

Parenting

Achievement Factors:
- ❖ Strong Identity – healthy self-esteem, confident, high sense of belonging
- ❖ Family (functional, supportive) – valued, backed up
- ❖ Good formal education – opportunities/choices
- ❖ Time – good quality time spent with primary caregivers

Traditional Pasifika Communities:

*Aulotu's (Church groups)
*Ministers very influential
*Council of matai (Fono Faufautua)
*Dominant Voice often representing all Pacific.
*A few intermarriages.
*Strong ties to home. islands and traditional cultures.
*English often a barrier
*Older and diminishing population group

NZ Born/Raised 1st Generation Pasifika:
*Product of Western environment and traditional migrant Pasifika families

*Some retention of cultural knowledge and values – bilingual

*Educated in NZ system

*Some conflict between 2 worldviews

NZ Born 2nd/3rd Generation Pasifika
*Increase of multi - ethnic relationships

*Limited exposure to Culture and traditional Churches.

*Less Pasifika cultural Capital.

*Limited or no Pasifika language retention

*Youthful and on the increase

Island homes (village life)   ***Continuum***   *Mainstream (assimilation)*

Resources

Context

Risk Factors:
- ❖ Lack of identity – confusion, no sense of belonging, low self esteem
- ❖ Dysfunctional family – lack of security, boundaries, poor or no role models
- ❖ Lack of quality time spent with primary caregivers
- ❖ Limited education – limited

7.4 A JOURNEY'S END

This chapter has melded the findings and theory in order to conclusively respond to the questions that form the basis of this research. The findings show that the rationale that underpins parental choice to participate in PECCs remains consistent with the rationale for establishing the initial 'Pasifika language nests' in the 1970s. Language and cultural development (specifically Samoan in this case) remain vital components in the development of a secure and confident Samoan identity. This remains an impassioned commitment for the NZ-born Samoan parents who choose to participate in PECC's.

Factors that accommodated participation in PECCs included secure cultural, social, human and financial capital (Bourdieu: 1977). Parents' cultural capital was based on their close associations with traditional churches, and having strong and secure relationships with their own Samoan parents, which reinforced a sense of cultural belonging and identity. Parents with secure levels of human, financial and social capital, demonstrated by post-compulsory education; middle-class income levels; maturity at the time of conception; and stable marital relationships, were conscious of the importance of ECE and had the ability to make informed choices.

Conversely, deficit levels of social, economic and cultural capital presented barriers to participation in PECCs. Parents who lacked affiliations with traditional churches and Pasifika communities and were immature at the age of conception, (particularly teenage parents who were premature school leavers with low income levels), were less able to consciously prioritize the needs of their children. These parents' childhood environments commonly lacked stability and/or good role models in parenting practices, which served to normalize familial dysfunction and precluded healthy identity formation processes.

Bronfenbrenner's ecological model, together with other theories provided a conceptual framework to analyse how parenting styles and ethnic identity working in partnership, influence and shape children's world view, impacting in the child's *micro-system* influencing how relationships are then formed and viewed in the outer systems. Furthermore, we see through this model how factors in the *macro* and *exo system* then encroach upon the child's development through the different levels in the system. Structural barriers in the form of institutions, and policies and regulations cannot be

underestimated in the way they affect people at all levels and make contestation for valid 'spaces' to develop positively, all the more hazardous.

This study clearly shows that the need to maintain and strengthen local Christchurch PECCs remains vital in strengthening language acquisition and cultural values. Moreover, this study has highlighted that PECCs remain essential in developing a strong and secure identity for Pasifika children. For the more monocultural environments such as Christchurch, opportunities for parents to enrich their children in positive cultural experiences are all the more crucial. Accordingly it cannot be emphasized strongly enough that other innovative strategies are required to include/ embrace the more isolated and marginalized families on the peripheries to access services that are relevant and effective in facilitating opportunities for growth.

Additionally, this thesis highlights the diversity that exists within the NZ-born Samoan sector of our Pasifika communities and accentuates the need for multi-faceted interventions to address the multi-faceted and changing needs of parents within these communities. It is important to acknowledge the power that parents exert in facilitating positive change and progress for themselves and their children when appropriate opportunities and resources are available, and information is disseminated to ensure that parents are given opportunities to make more informed choices. Notwithstanding economic factors and policy directives, Pasifika communities themselves need to embrace the expanding diversity that challenges our ability to unite and form a more collective and strengthened voice to advocate for effective services and interventions not only for today but for the future of our grandchildren.

Finally, this study argues that if policies and strategies aimed at furthering and supporting progress for Pasifika, such as improving services in Early Childhood, do not acknowledge, consult, advocate and include the more marginalized and vulnerable sector of our communities, the incongruent milieu of a few visible and successful Pasifika celebrities together with an increasingly 'browner' middle class, will continue to **mask** the realities of the most vulnerable in our Pasifika communities. This cannot be left unheeded as the consequences not only affect individual families and our Pasifika communities, but society as a whole.

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APPENDIX 1 – INFORMATION SHEET

Participants Information and Consent Form

Talofa lava, my name is Pauline Luafutu-Simpson. I am inviting you to participate in a research project that I am conducting as part of my requirements for a Masters of Arts at the University of Canterbury in the Macmillan Brown Centre of Pacific Studies.

I am a New Zealand–born Samoan interested in the education of Pacific students particularly in Early Childhood. Research has continually highlighted the low participation rate of our Pacific children in early childhood centres despite the increase in the number of licensed Pacific language centres in Christchurch. This has raised questions in terms of why some parents choose to access our Pacific language nests while some choose not to. My intention is that this project will uncover some of the reasons for this and identify/clarify issues for our New Zealand-born Samoan parents. Apart from academic grading, being an active member of the Pacific community and parent of eight children, I have always been interested in looking at ways of improving and building on the education services available for our Pacific children now and in the future. Your experiences and perspectives will be valuable to ongoing research in this area.

With this in mind, I would be grateful for the opportunity to interview you. I would prefer to audiotape the interviews with your consent. Please be assured that all information will be strictly confidential and no one except me will have access to your personal information. Your name will not be used unless requested by you. Any early childhood centre or Pacific language nest will also not be identified. You may withdraw your participation, including withdrawal of any information provided at any time. If you feel you would like to participate please complete the attached consent form. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me at:

McMillan Brown Centre of Pacific Studies

Canterbury University

Ph 366-7001 ext 7978 Ph 386-2159ext 35 (work)

Cell 027-442-4481

Email pms33@student.canterbury.ac.nz or pohlen@paradise.net.nz or

Work email: pauline@waipunatrust.org.nz

My Supervisors are:

Dr Helen Clothier

Department of Education

University of Canterbury

Email: h.clothier@educ.canterbury.ac.nz

Dr Karen Nero

Director

Mcmillan Brown

Centre of Pacific Studies

Email: k.nero@canterbury.ac.nz

APPENDIX 2 – PARTICIPANTS' CONSENT FORM

I have read and understood the information sheet from Pauline Luafutu-Simpson describing

the research project. I have the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered.

On the basis of this information I agree to be interviewed by audiotape. I also consent to the

publication of the results of the project on the understanding that the anonymity will be preserved.

I understand that I may at any time withdraw from the project, including the withdrawal of any

information I have provided.

Signed_____Date_____

APPENDIX 3 - QUESTIONNAIRE

**Questionnaire Sheet for New Zealand-born Samoan Parents
Guide for interviews**

Please circle/tick the box most applicable

Background

Mother:

Samoan born and raised
1st generation NZ born Samoan
2nd generation NZ born Samoan
Palagi
Afakasi Chinese or European
Other (Please name)_____

Father:

Samoan born and raised
1st generation NZ born Samoan
2nd generation NZ born Samoan
Palagi
Afakasi Chinese or European
Other (Please name)_____

Partner:

Samoan born and raised
1st generation NZ born Samoan
2nd generation NZ born Samoan
Palagi
Afakasi Chinese or European
Other (Please name)_____

Current Age:

| 15- 20 | 20-25 | 26-30 | 30+ |

Age when first child was born:

| 15-20 | 20-25 | 26-30 | 30+ |

Marital Status:

Married   De-facto   Solo parent

Relationship with father of child:

Long-term/ stable   Recent/unsure   Distant/hostile   present/unstable

Family Background – Raised by:

Mum/ Dad   Solo-parent   Grandparents   others?

Parenting styles:

Strict   Permissive   Democratic   Bits of all

Impact?

_____
_____
_____
_____

What suburb do you live in?

Education

Years at high school? (Please circle)

1   2   3   4   5

Tertiary:

University
Polytechnic
Teachers College
Other Training Providers

Qualifications:

School Certificate
University Entrance
Bursary/Scholarship
Tertiary Qualification (name)_____

Are you employed?

Yes

No
Part-time
Beneficiary

Occupation?   _____

Is your partner employed?

Yes
No
Part-time
Beneficiary
N/A

Occupation?   _____

Estimate your household income

Under $20,000
20-25,000
25-30,000
30-35,000
35-40,000
40,000 +

Do you:

Rent
Own your own home
Board
Live with family

How many in the household?

_____

Do your parents attend a traditional Pacific Church?

Yes   No

Do you currently attend Church?

Yes   No

Is it a traditional Pacific Church?

Yes   No

Did you attend a traditional Church as a child?

Yes   No

Where you ever involved in a Pacific youth group/ Sunday school?

Yes   No

Has your child ever attended a Pacific language nest in the past 5 yrs?

Yes   No

If yes, for how long?_____

What made you choose this Pacific language nest? (Tick as many as appropriate)

I attend the church the Pacific language nest is affiliated with
My parent/parents attend the church and expect me to access it
My parent/s take my child there
I want to support our centres
Its cheap
I work
I want them to learn the language
I trust the staff
I like the centre
I know some of the staff
Someone recommended it
Its close to where I live
Other reasons_____

On a scale of 1-5 how important were these things in your choice of school?
(1=not important, 3=important, 5=very important)

Close distance	1	2	3	4	5
Tradition	1	2	3	4	5
Low Fees	1	2	3	4	5
Samoan language	1	2	3	4	5
Cultural aspect	1	2	3	4	5
Good facility	1	2	3	4	5
Good staff	1	2	3	4	5
Quality EC Education	1	2	3	4	5
Support Church community	1	2	3	4	5

Are you aware of other early childhood options?
Yes
No
Did your child attend any other early childhood centres?
Yes

No
Do you attend with your child?
Yes
No

On a scale of 1-5 how much contact did/do you have with the Pacific language nest?
(1=none, 3= some, 5=a lot)

1   2   3   4   5

Do you want to be more involved with the preschool?

Yes
No

Can you explain why?
_____
_____
_____
_____

Do you/ Did you have any problems with talking to the teachers or staff or management?

Yes
No

Can you explain further?
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

How beneficial did you find your child's attendance at the Pacific language nest?
_____
_____
_____
_____

On a scale of 1-5 how would you rate the quality of the Pacific EC centre?
1=poor,
2=adequate,
3=good,
4=very good,
5=excellent

On a scale from 1-5 indicate how important is it for your child to be fluent in the Samoan language? (1=not important, 2=important, 3=very important)
1   2   3   4   5

Can you explain further?

_____
_____
_____
_____

On a scale from 1-5 indicate how important is it for your child to be culturally aware of his Samoan roots? (1=not important, 2=important, 3very important)
1   2   3   4   5
Please explain further if you can

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

If you did not choose to access Pasifika language nests can you tell me why?
Didn't know of their existence
Didn't know where they were located
Didn't know anyone there
I chose another EC centre (name)_____
Didn't think my child needed it
Chose to take my child to a local centre
My child stayed home with me
My child stayed home with his grandparents
Any other reasons:

_____
_____

What support services do you know of out there in the community for Pacific parents?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Do you think there are enough?

Do you think it may be an issue for our Pacific communities?

How do you think we can support our Pacific parents better?

Do you think it important to support Pasifika language nests?

How can we do this best and encourage more participation? Do you have any opinions on this?

Appendix 4 – Human Ethics Approval Letter

9 June 2003

Pauline Luafutu- Simpson
Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies
UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY

Dear Pauline

The Human Ethics Committee advises that your research proposal **"Working Title: Investigating participation patterns of young New Zealand-born Samoan parents in selecting language nests. 'A Christchurch Experience'"** has been considered and approved.

Yours sincerely

Blossom Hart
Secretary