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**TRANSNATIONAL TONGANS:
THE PROFILE AND RE-INTEGRATION
OF
RETURNING MIGRANTS**

by

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ABSTRACT

This study contributes to the ‘unwritten chapter’ in migration studies, namely transnational return migration, with specific reference to Tongan migrants who have voluntarily returned to live in Tonga. Return migration of transnational Tongans is not ‘permanent’ as their mobility pre and post-return is characterised by circulation or repeated return rather than staying at ‘home’.

In examining the circulation of transnational Tongans, two new forms of return migration are identified -- ‘return for career advancement’ and ‘ancestral return’. These additions to a new typology of return migration represent better the contemporary mobility system of transnational Tongans and suggest a means for addressing ‘brain drain’ through strengthening the ‘Tongan-ness’ of the diaspora while simultaneously stimulating economic development in the Kingdom. Despite these positive dimensions of return, re-integration is a ‘bumpy’ process, and there needs to be a holistic migration strategy if greater numbers in the Tongan diaspora are to return and make their potential contribution to sustainable development in the Island Kingdom.

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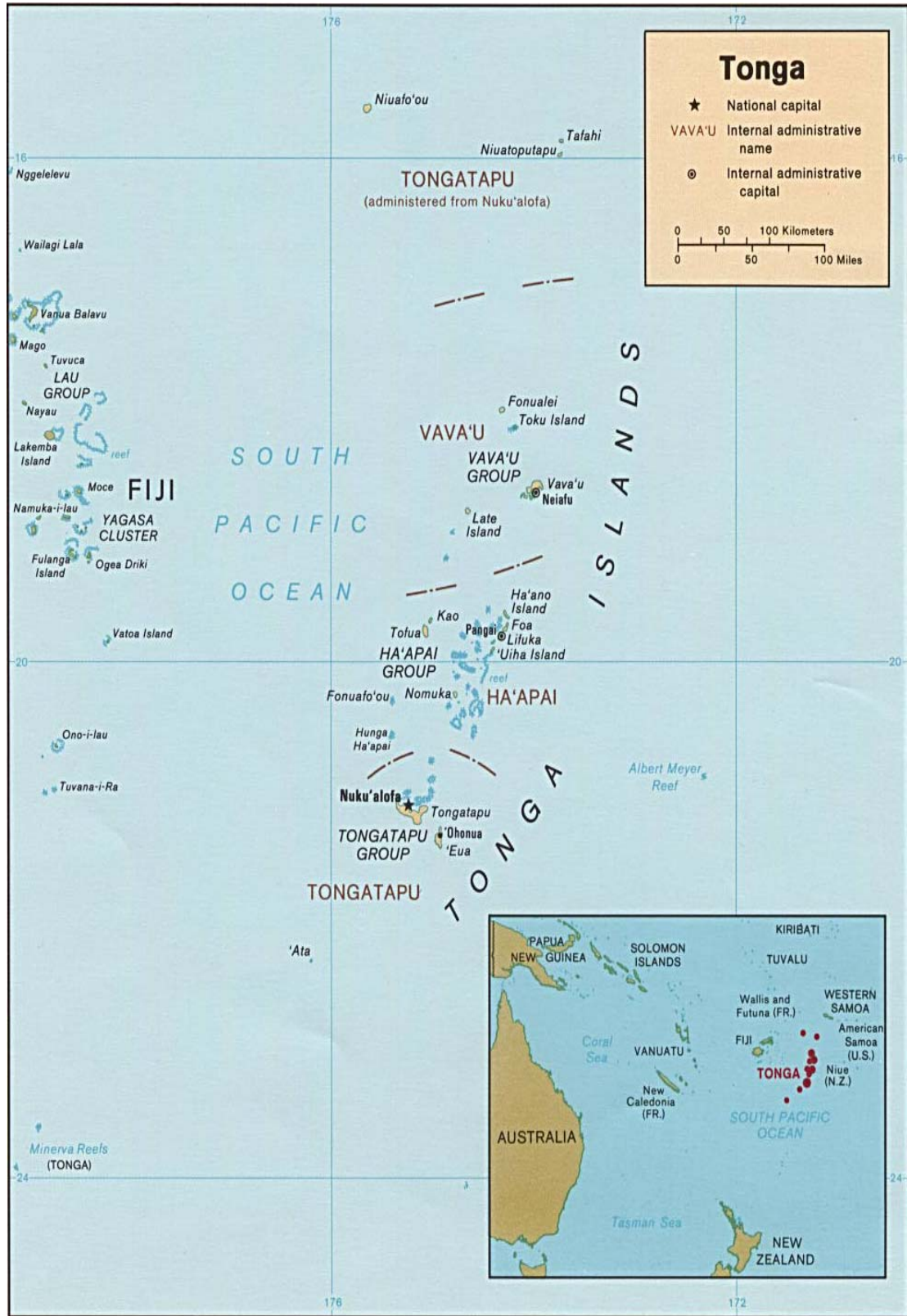
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Figure 1: Map of Tonga



Base 800199 (A05044) 1-89

Source: Government of Tonga (2006 vi).

CHAPTER ONE

TRANSNATIONAL RETURN MIGRATION: THE UNWRITTEN CHAPTER

There is relatively little that we know about some aspects of return migration. The situation is well summed up by King (2000 7) when he observed that “return migration is the great unwritten chapter in the history of migration”. Arowolo (2000 73), in a similar account, expressed the view that “return migration has been poorly researched for too long” worldwide. In an era of intense globalisation coupled with increasingly complex migratory movements of people everywhere, the concept of return migration has become even more ambiguous. The ongoing shortage of knowledge in this area has encouraged this interrogation of transnational return migration as a contribution to ‘the great unwritten chapter in the history of migration’.

This thesis investigates transnational Tongans who have intentionally returned to live in Tonga. Specifically, the scope of this study is limited to the voluntary return migrants, excluding deportees and other forms of involuntary or forced return, as well as occasional and seasonal return migration. Repeated circular migration prior to the actual decision to return to live in Tonga, and the cumulative development of a sense of Tonga as ‘home’ in terms of economic and social security, are key aspects of transnational return and re-integration.

‘Permanent’ return is arguably an unrealistic description of transnational Tongans’ contemporary migration back to Tonga. Instead, return is likely to be encapsulated within a concept of ‘circular migration’ with visits overseas remaining an important part of the returnees’ life courses.

Since Marcus (1974) wrote his classic paper on the dispersion of Tongan family members and transnational migration almost three decades ago, the diasporic Tongan

community has been increasingly recognised as being of considerable importance. One reason for this is that the number of Tongans living overseas has increased to balance those residing in the islands (Bedford, 1992; Lee, 2004a; Macpherson, 2004; 1997). In addition to this demographic significance, there have been tremendous contributions to Tonga's economy and society through remittances (Brown, 1995; Brown and Connell, 1993; Connell and Brown, 2005; Faeamani, 1995; Fuka, 1984; James, 1991; Small, 1997; Vete, 1995). The sustainability of remittance flows and their uses for consumption and investment, as well as the concept of 'brain drain', are critical elements of migration debates, not only in Tonga and other parts of the Pacific, but also worldwide.

In an effort to acknowledge the growing importance of the Tongan diasporic communities for Tonga's social and economic future, the Tonga Government endorsed the amendment of the country's Nationality Act to allow dual citizenship in June 2006 (Matangi Tonga, 2006). However, the real challenge is to investigate who have returned to live in Tonga, why and how the Tonga's diasporic communities in New Zealand, Australia and the United States engage in national efforts to improve and sustain social, economic, cultural and political development in Tonga. This challenge is at the heart of this thesis and anchors a contribution to the 'unwritten chapter' of the migration process.

An Ignored Dimension of Migration

The contributions made by, and impacts of, Tonga's transnational returnees to economic and social development have not been addressed comprehensively in the country's migration literature. In fact, there is no specific appreciation or acknowledgement of transnational returnees by politicians, the 'law makers', or in the process of government policy formulation. Factors that exacerbate the situation include: 1) the existing arrival and departure card system does not capture the social and economic characteristics of transnational returnees; 2) the intention of emigrants to return to Tonga is eventually disguised in the statistics of net migration losses of Tongans; 3) the publication of data on migration into and out of Tonga is sporadic. Similar situations can be found in other Pacific island countries.

The lack of official attention accorded to transnational return migration means that an important dimension of immigration to Tonga is overlooked. However, given Tonga's weak domestic economy, it is essential that every source of capital and opportunities must be explored as options for furthering development. It is for this reason that there is a need to consider more how to incorporate Tongans living overseas in the formulation of national development plans and policies. A study of transnational returnees is useful in this regard and this is the first study that specifically focuses on the voluntary return of transnational Tongan migrants.

The majority of Tongan emigrants are mainly concentrated in three Pacific rim countries known as 'traditional lands of immigration, namely New Zealand, Australia and the United States of America (USA). Most of the transnational return migrants are from these traditional immigration countries. More important questions than their specific sources, however, relate to who is involved in the process of transnational return; what their demographic and socio-economic characteristics are; why they have returned; and how they reintegrate into the society of their 'homeland'?

Aims

This thesis has two aims: firstly, to establish the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of transnational Tongan return migrants; and secondly, to provide some insights into their re-integration into Tongan society, including their impacts on local development.

Research Questions

In order to accomplish these aims, three key research questions are addressed:

1. What are the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the transnational returnees?
2. Why do transnational migrants return and what are their future travel plans?

3. How do returnees re-integrate into the Tongan society, including contribution to social and economic development of Tonga?

The findings from the research will contribute to addressing some of the ‘unanswered questions’ in the contemporary international migration literature in the Pacific.

Thesis Structure

The substantive findings of this research are presented in nine chapters. Chapter One has outlined the rationale for and aims of the thesis. Chapter Two begins by outlining some background information on the geographic and socio-economic characteristics of Tonga sourced from a brief review of relevant government reports and publications. This chapter provides the socio-economic context for an examination of transnational return migration in Tonga.

In Chapter Three relevant migration literatures are reviewed to develop a conceptual framework of the research. The scope of the research and subsequent analysis are based on this framework.

The research strategies and methods are discussed in Chapter Four. The strengths and weaknesses of the approach adopted to identify the participants, methods of data collection and analysis are examined and discussed in detail.

Chapter Five contains a descriptive analysis of the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of Tongan transnational returnees. This analysis uses data collected in a survey of returnees including variables such as gender, country of birth, age, marital status, year of return, educational qualifications, occupational status, and number of years away from Tonga. Discussion of return in the context of ‘brain drain’ versus ‘brain gain’ in relation to the profile of returnees is also contained in this chapter.

In Chapter Six, reasons for return to live in Tonga are discussed. The social, economic, political and cultural dimensions of these reasons are examined, drawing on specific case studies of migrants who have returned.

Chapter Seven focuses on the re-integration process and some of the development impacts of returnees in the wider context of the Government's priority for sustainable development. Chapter Eight addresses future travel plans of returnees in the wider context of circular migration. A variant of circular migration, termed '*field tripping*' is introduced; it refers to the repeated premeditated movements of transnational Tongans in a 'field of action' that includes Tonga and overseas places where they have rights to residence.

The conclusions are summarised in Chapter Nine. Returning to the research questions, there is a brief review of findings and some reflections on further avenues for research on transnational return migration.

CHAPTER TWO

BACKGROUND SETTING: TONGA AND ITS NEIGHBOURS

This chapter sets the Tongan scene for an analysis of transnational return migration. It does this in two contexts: Tonga's contemporary, social and economic situation, and the characteristics of Tongan international migration. In this way the chapter provides an essential backdrop against which the analysis of transnational return at a time of increasing political instability can be positioned.

Geographical Characteristics

Tonga is comprised of 172 scattered islands, of which some are coral and some are volcanic in origin. Out of the 172 islands, only 36 are inhabited (Government of Tonga, 1999). These islands are scattered over a sea area of 700,000 km², lying southeast of Fiji, south of Samoa and north of New Zealand, stretching between 15 and 23 degrees latitude south and 173 and 177 longitude west. The total land area is 699 km² (Crocombe, 2001 705) (Figure 1). Tonga's geographical location in relation to the Pacific rim countries of New Zealand, Australia and the USA has relevance for the movement of Tongans to these countries of immigration.

Tongatapu, where the capital Nuku'alofa is located, is the hub of most government and non-government organisation's services and infrastructure. Population distribution, as shown in the preliminary results of the 2006 Census, reveals that almost three-quarters (70.5%) of the total enumerated population of 101,134 reside in Tongatapu, about 15 percent in Vava'u, Ha'apai (7.5%), 'Eua (5.1%) and the two remotest islands, Niua (1.6%) (Statistics Department, 2006). In terms of population increase, Tongatapu has consistently experienced positive growth over the past three intercensus periods, 1976/86, 1986/96 and 1996/2006 unlike the other islands. This indicates that 'rural to

urban' migration remains important in Tonga because of the infrastructural and services disparities.

The Economy

Tonga's economy is small by world standards however it is characteristically similar to some neighbouring South Pacific countries. Tonga had an estimated per capita income of about US\$1,780 in 2003-04. Disposable income per head in 2003-04 was about US\$2,308. The average annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth for 2004-05 was about three percent (2.5%) ('Utoikamanu, 2006 14). These figures are challenged by the recent political events such as the civil servants 60, 70 and 80 percent pay rise in 2005 and the destruction of the capital Nuku'alofa in the November 2006 riots which prompted a greater possibility for economic downturn.

Agriculture, forestry and fisheries are primary sources of revenue for the Government, which account for about 25 percent of GDP (Ministry of Finance, 2006 28). In this respect, the Government of Tonga (2006 64) have identified agriculture, fisheries and tourism as key sectors for achieving two of the goals of the current Eight Strategic Development Plan (SDP8) – goal three: “promote sustained private sector-led growth of a globally competitive economy”; and goal four: “ensure equitable distribution of the benefits of growth”. Despite these, it has been noted in recent years that Tonga's leading export earnings, namely squash and long-line tuna fishing have shown poor performances (Ministry of Finance, 2006; Tonga-now, 2006b).

Nevertheless, there is hope for Tonga. Milne (1990) observed in his study of the tourism impact in Tonga that tourism has become more a central sector to the economic development of Tonga. This was recently reinforced in the Central Planning Department's (2006 1) policy briefing paper called 'Tourism: sector of hope' where it stated that “of all the sectors, it is Tonga's tourism sector that has the greatest potential to develop and bring broad benefits to the Tongan people”.

This is reflected in the national accounts as commerce, hotels and restaurants are the second largest sector of the economy constituting about 17 percent of GDP (Ministry of Finance, 2006 28). Supporting this claim is the rapid increase of total visitor arrivals by air, cruise ship and yachting from 37,769 in 2000 to 55,831 in 2004 (Harrison, 2004; Ministry of Tourism, 2002). Yet immense efforts are required from all stakeholders across the board to facilitate a culturally appropriate sustainable development strategy for the tourism sector.

Despite the slight improvement in the growth of the economy in 2004/05 ('Utoikamanu, 2006), Tonga's ability to sustain economic growth is constrained by its relatively small endowment of land and natural resources, vulnerability to natural disasters, substantial dependence on imports, relative isolation from major markets, and the high cost of public administration and infrastructure, transportation and communication, not to mention the recent political upheaval. A great challenge lies ahead for Tongans seeking to rebuild their city and society.

Living Standard

In 1999, Tonga was ranked second to Niue in the Pacific on the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Human Development Index (UNDP, 1999). By comparison, six years later, Tonga was ranked 54th worldwide ahead of Samoa and Fiji, and all other Pacific island nations. Tonga's high ranking is due to the high adult literacy rate (99%), a high enrolment rate in primary and secondary school (83.3%), high life expectancy (72 years) and relatively high GDP (UNDP, 2005 220).

Most Tongans' living standards are comfortable by developing country standards. The recent Asian Development Bank (ADB) poverty study indicates that the concept of "hardship" has tended to be the consensus term to describe Tonga's living standards instead of "poverty" in common with other Pacific nations (Abbott and Pollard, 2004; ADB, 2004). Two national poverty lines were calculated to measure the incidence of

relative poverty -- Food Poverty Line¹ and Basic Needs Poverty Line² (Abbott and Pollard, 2004). About seven percent of households were estimated to live below the Food Poverty Line. In Tonga as a whole, about 23 percent of households were below the Basic Needs Poverty Line of T\$28.20 per person per week (ADB, 2004 1). A common coping strategy is to augment household incomes by remittances via the extended transnational family network, thus ensuring that basic needs are met for most of the population.

The Human Poverty Index³ shows that Tonga was the only Pacific Island country that ranked in the High Human Development category. In contrast, Samoa and Fiji were ranked in the Medium Human Development category (UNDP, 2005 227).

The ongoing challenge is related to how hardship will be alleviated. One strategy that has never been explicitly affirmed in any of the previous Government development plans is related to engaging with Tonga's diaspora. As the ADB (2006 261) Outlook report suggested, "policies should aim to build workforce skills and contribute to successful emigration, while maintaining links between the overseas workers and their families in Tonga, if standards of living are to be maintained". This thesis explores one aspect of these linkages by focusing on return migration in the context of ongoing transnational ties and mobility.

Political Unrest – the new Tongan society

The political unrest that took place on November 16th 2006, or as the media termed it, 'Black Thursday', marks the beginning of a 'new chapter' in Tonga's history. It is anticipated that Tonga will slowly move from a dominating traditional monarchical

¹ represents the proportion of the population who have insufficient income necessary to meet their minimum dietary intakes

² is defined as the income necessary to meet the minimum dietary requirements and non-food expenditure (goods and services) for a basic standard of living according to the norms of the society

³ which measures deprivations in longevity (a long and healthy life), knowledge (measured by adult literacy rate) and standard of living (measured by the unweighted average of percentage of the population without access to water and percentage of children under weight for age)

structure towards a more modernised and liberal political structure. This was foreshadowed in His Majesty's closing speech of the 2006 Parliamentary session, "[t]oday, the constitution is owned by all the people, and Tongan culture, Tongan traditions, Tongan strength, Tongan singing, Tongan voices, Tongan prayer and Tongan dignity must find new expression and new strength" (His Majesty King Siaosi Tupou V, 2006).

Amongst other new expressions and strengths, Seta Tanaki has presented on Planet Tonga's website key issues challenging the traditions and cultural foundations of 'old Tonga' with reference to leadership roles, gerontocratic versus meritocratic status, and migration challenges when she commented:

Our Leaders need to communicate better than this. Really listen to each other and the people more now than they have been...It's a different Tonga now. It's not the Tonga we're used to anymore. People have been overseas and have lived in different communities where they've been heard to by their Leaders...Try to see things from a different point of view for a change. That's why you're Leaders...This is the exact same culture we used to run our families back then...Our fathers or elders will say jump and we say how high. This is not the case anymore. It's a different century now where we need to check out what our children want to say...they might have something better than what we have. That's why some of our children are taken from our families overseas...we seem to think that they're wrong most of the time...I would love to see the changes...(Tanaki, 2006).

There are immediate challenges ahead for the new Tongan society which need to be addressed holistically. Changes to the political structure are inevitable; government has to reprioritise development agendas and spending; the sense of security and sense of 'home' for all Tongans in Tonga and abroad must be restored; the education system has to be reconsidered to ensure its relevance and coherence; and most importantly the recovery of the sense of togetherness, a sense of security and a willingness to work collaboratively with all stakeholders (government, non-government organisations and community), to rebuild a better and new Tonga. As rightly summed up by the Tonga government website, (Tonga-now, 2006a),

The Government is facing its toughest challenge ever to ensure Tongan citizens have adequate health care, education, public services as well as providing proper security to maintain law and order. Compounding these setbacks is the real costs of damaged CBD which is equivalent to about 50% of Tonga's GDP. As a nation, coping with aftermath of 16/11 will be a test of what makes you a Tongan. Ahead of us are tough times and difficult circumstances, do we cower and hide hoping our troubles will disappear? Or do we stand together and work for the betterment of our nation, the legacy left to us by our ancestors whom we will hand over to the next generation. We will emerge a stronger people to rebuild a stronger economy.

The devastation caused by the events of 16/11 had negative implications for the whole nation. Numerically, 153 businesses were affected, 697 people lost their jobs not to mention the implications for their immediate families and dependent relatives. Overall, the estimate of total damages is about TOP\$123.5 million (Senituli, 2006), and a preliminary estimate of the financial resources needed for the reconstruction is at least \$200 million (His Majesty King Siaosi Tupou V, 2006).

There is no quick and easy solution to the political upheaval. Rebuilding the 'New Tongan Society' will require a collaborative effort at the national and international levels involving locals and Tonga's diaspora. The involvement of the Tongan diaspora is a crucial aspect of the rebuilding of Tongan society, but it will also bring with it new challenges that Tonga is not quite ready to encounter. As His Majesty King Siaosi Tupou V (2006) noted in his closing speech of the 2006 session of Parliament:

[Government]... will reach out to all Tongans in Tonga and overseas. As a people, we need now to re-gather our strength. We have to rebuild. We have to rebuild trust. We have to rebuild hope. We have to rebuild our sense of mutual responsibility to each other, so that never again will we see violence, arson, looting, death – and such shame...As we ready ourselves for these challenges, all our people must stand together.

In spite of this, the riots could just be the beginning of a series of future political disturbances as the 'mob mentality' has become trapped in the minds of some politicians and the public. A 'riot culture' may be seen within Tonga during the 21st century.

Although the political engagement of the diaspora in the homeland is not a new phenomenon according to Vertovec (2005), it is quite novel in the case of Tonga. For instance, the Tongan community in New Zealand, through the establishment of a

diaspora-based association in recent years, has begun to exert a political challenge to the Tongan government on some of the issues concerning those living offshore as well as at home. Such political tensions are only in their infancy but they can be expected to expand and eventually result in political transformation in the future.

Eventually, this is expected because of the growing importance of temporary migration. Migrants tend to pick up skills, knowledge and political motives while overseas. Hence, from a development perspective, ignoring transnational migrants in the information age of increasing globalisation processes is not a wise move.

International Migration

The last half of the 21st century was certainly the ‘age of migration’ in the Pacific, especially in Polynesia. Since the mid-1950s, migration has been and remains the greatest source of Tonga’s rapid socio-economic transformation. Over the past five decades, a conventional culture of migration has been established, conceptualized by Finau (1993) as a ‘migration syndrome’. However, from a human resource perspective, emigration is of considerable concern to planners and politicians in Tonga and other Pacific Islands like Niue (Bedford, 2007; McMurray and Muagututia, 2003). In a recent study of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in the Pacific region, conducted by the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat, and reported by the Tonga-now website, it is noted that “skills development has become a pressing priority in the Pacific...[because] emigration of skilled workers has also created shortages and gaps in the labour force of many Forum Island Countries” (Tonga-now, 2007c).

Tonga has limited resources to support industrial development, and this, coupled with quite high natural increase (only migration accounts for the low population growth) means that migration is commonly perceived to be the best route to an improved lifestyle. As de Bres (1974 9) pointed out over thirty years ago:

This is not to argue that emigration from Tonga to New Zealand should stop – on the contrary, a halt in this process now would make the situation in Tonga worse than it was before the present migration began. There is no looking back. An irreversible process has started, and the only thing that can be done is to guide this process in a direction which will provide a positive contribution to Tongan development.

There is no accurate count of the number of Tongans overseas. As early as 1969, de Bres (1974: 6) estimated the number of Tongans overseas to be around 1700. This number grew rapidly to reach around 6,900 in 1973 in countries like New Zealand, USA, Australia, Fiji, American Samoa, and other countries. Within four decades the initial estimate of 1700 had increased 60 times counting the Tongans born overseas. In the early 2000s there were over 102,000 Tongans overseas: 50,481 were recorded in New Zealand's 2006 Census (Statistics New Zealand, 2007: 5); the US Census 2000 recorded 36,840 (US Census Bureau, 2007: 9); and Australia's 2001 Census recorded 14,889 (see Lee, 2004a: 237). The number overseas is greater than the Island population of 101,134 recorded by the Tonga Statistics Department's 2006 Census (Statistics Department, 2006). It is important to note that the total number of Tongans overseas will be greater than the numbers enumerated in the different censuses if the problem of under-enumeration of Pacific peoples in censuses in Australia, New Zealand and the United States is taken into account.

The occurrence of a “migration syndrome” in parts of Polynesia has attracted comment in a number of studies of Tongan international migration and its impacts (see 'Esau, 2003; Faeamani, 1995; Finau, 1993; James, 1991; McMurray and Muagututia, 2003). Some studies have examined the various aspects of migrant integration in their new ‘homes’ and the associated socio-economic and cultural changes that occur (see Ahlburg and Song, 2006; Ahlburg, 1997; Bedford, 2007; Funaki and Funaki, 2002; Lee, 2004a; Pau'u, 2002; Small, 1997). However, with the exception of Liava'a's (2000) air migration survey, there is little that we know about the socio-economic characteristics of those who depart from Tonga simply because of the absence of a departure card system in Tonga.

In the literature, there are four types of migration that describe overseas movements of Tongans. These are temporary labour migration, short-term migration for visiting

family and relatives, long-term migration for educational purpose and long-term migration for family reunification (see 'Esau, 2003; Bedford, 2007; de Bres, 1974; Cowling, 2002; Liava'a, 2000; Thaman, 1985; Tonga-now, 2007a). These are also found in other Polynesian countries (see Bedford, 1992).

The factors motivating migration by and large are socially and economically constructed and primarily centred around family related concerns. It is for this reason that Connell (2003) argued that the decision to move overseas is often shaped within a family context. Subsequently, 'Esau (2003) observed a shift of migration decision making from the traditional 'extended family to an 'individualistic' and 'nuclear family' emphasis. As identified by Cowling (2002 106) and many others like Faeamani (1995) and James (1991), the main reason was the desire to "help the family" to improve their standard of living and become upwardly mobile in terms of social status. Acknowledging this over thirty years ago, Marcus (1974) observed a growing dispersal of family networks abroad which retained complex webs of ties with the homeland. He later termed such networks 'transnational corporation of kin' (Marcus, 1981).

From an economic perspective, the driving force behind migration is the people's desire for goods and money to fulfil traditional and family obligations under different social and economic conditions. Sending remittances back to family in Tonga is the most tangible way migrants meet these traditional and family obligations. The impact of remittances on Tonga's development is enormous, both at the micro and macro level. The United Nations (2006 54) report on Migration and Development estimated remittances to have contributed about 31 percent of Tonga's 2005 GDP. This large contribution from remittances has offset Tonga's negative external accounts, which justifies Tonga's classification as a Migration, Remittances, Aid and Bureaucracy (MIRAB) economy because local developments are the result of exogenous forces through migration, remittances and aid (Bertram and Watters, 1985). James (1991) and Faeamani (1995), amongst others, have noted the tendency for villagers to withdraw from local production as a result of remittance flows.

Further, the dispersion of family network globally has opened up opportunities for trade overseas through the kinship network. A market has been enlarged and become more accessible via globalisation and the establishment of ‘roots’ in meta-societies (see Horan, 2002; James, 2002; Small, 1997).

The massive emigration of Tongans over the past four decades has brought a great deal of rapid development in Tonga but, equally importantly, also many development challenges, socially, economically, culturally and politically. Addressing these challenges is a key development issue for the Tongan Government especially if the focus is to engage diaspora in local nation-building. This requires a good understanding of patterns of migration of Tongans. Specific reference is made to the diaspora in New Zealand in the discussion which follows.

Arrivals and Departures – A New Zealand Case Study

The arrivals and departures of Tongans as recorded at the New Zealand border have intensified over the past 20 years. To illustrate this, Table 1 shows that there has been a five-fold growth in numbers of Tongans entering and leaving New Zealand between 1978 and 2006. This conforms to the massive growth in international population movements during the ‘age of migration’.

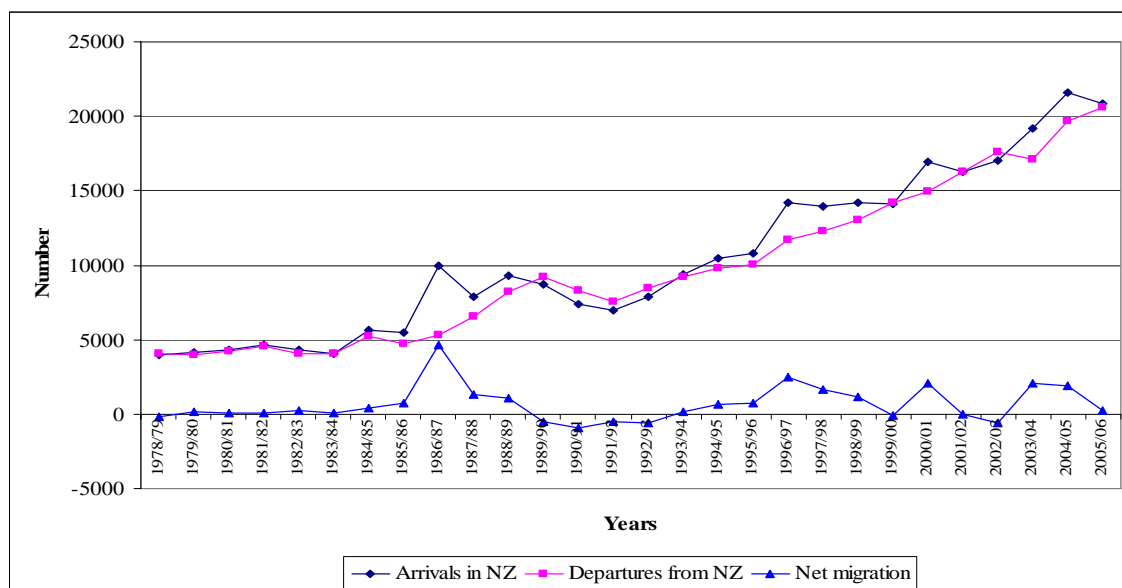
Table 1: Tongan citizen arrivals and departures to and from New Zealand, 1978/79 to 2005/06

Year ended 31st March	Arrivals	Departures
1979	3940	4092
1984	4091	4033
1989	9322	8215
1994	9369	9199
1999	14180	13057
2004	19224	17137
2006	20828	20629

Source: Migration Research Group (2006), modified

Prior to 1984/85 the numbers of arrivals and departures fluctuated around 4000 per annum. The volume of movement increased after the immigration policy changes in 1986, rising to over 9000 per annum by the late 1980s and over 10,000 per annum by the late 1990s. By 2006 arrivals and departures exceeded 20,000 per annum (Table 1 and Figure 2).

Figure 2: Arrivals and departures of Tongans, New Zealand, 1978/79-2005/06



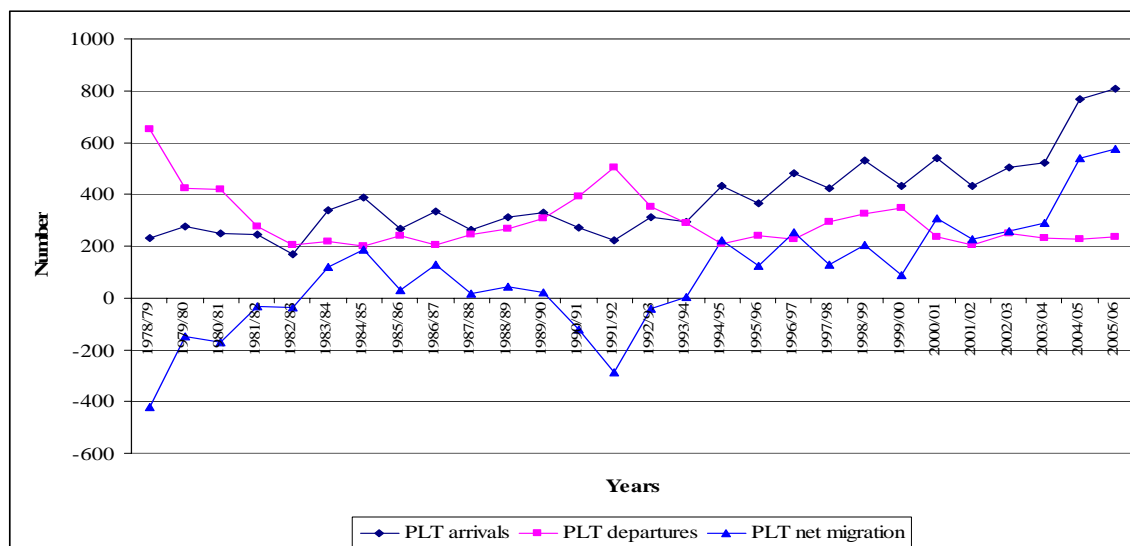
Source: Migration Research Group (2006), modified

Extensive out-migration from Tonga did not really begin until the 1960s. The initial wave of migration from Tonga was characteristically temporary, mainly for education and employment purposes (Bedford, 1992; Cowling, 2002; Lee, 2004b). However, many decided to settle permanently and long-term, and some were repatriated as overstayers in the early 1970s (de Bres, 1974).

Figure 3 shows the movements of Tongans categorised as permanent and long-term migrants in accordance with New Zealand's international migration classification system which comprises two major types of movements: arrivals and departures that are for under 12 months duration (short term migration), or moves for 12 months or more (permanent and long-term migration (PLT)). The number of PLT arrivals had tripled, increasing from 232 in 1979 to 810 in 2006. In the case of the PLT departures, the trend

has been fluctuations and generally in a downward direction (Figure 3 and Table 2). This suggests that New Zealand's permanent resident Tongans usually depart for short-term absences rather than for 12 months or more (Department of Labour, 2006b).

Figure 3: Tongans PLT arrivals and departures, New Zealand, 1978/79-2005/06



Source: Migration Research Group (2006), modified

The PLT net migration rate has fluctuated over the years but with net migration gains being most common. The only times the PLT net migration losses were negative were in the late 1970s to early 1980s and early 1990s. These net gains are linked mainly with family reunion/family sponsorship – they are not linked to New Zealand's skilled migration programme (Bedford, 2007). There was a Tongan work permit scheme in the 1970s and 1980s, but it was not used much as a route to work in New Zealand. The Pacific Access Category, introduced in 2002, has had an impact on permanent and long-term migration from Tonga since its inception.

Table 2: Tongans PLT arrivals and PLT departures, New Zealand, 1978/79 to 2005/06

Year ended 31st March	PLT Arrivals	PLT Departures
1979	232	652
1984	337	217
1989	312	268
1994	292	289
1999	530	324
2004	523	232
2006	810	235

Source: Migration Research Group (2006), modified

Transnational Tongans on the Move

To further demonstrate the mobility pattern of Tongans who have obtained permanent residence permits between 1998 and 2004, reference is made to the following tables, Table 3 and 4. Out of the 36,586 Pacific Islanders who were granted with permanent residence status during this period, Tonga had the third highest number who gained permanent residence comprising 21 percent of the total approved applications. Over the seven years, 7700 people migrated to New Zealand on a permanent and long-term basis. On average, about 1100 people obtained their permanent residence annually and have moved to New Zealand for residence, lower than the 1986-1996 intercensus average annual emigration rate of 1905 (Secretariat of the Pacific Community, 1999 20). Fiji had the highest share of new residents (43%) followed by Samoa (33%). When combined these three countries constitute 97 percent of all approved permanent residence permits for Pacific citizens. Other Pacific island nations share the remaining three percentages.

Table 3: Percentage distribution by nationality, 1998-2004

Nationality	Years							Total	% share of Total
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004		
Fiji	8.9	11.4	13.2	22.9	15.2	15.7	12.6	100 (15535)	42.5
Samoa	11.8	13.5	19.8	15.8	9.7	17.5	11.8	100 (12232)	33.4
Tonga	12.6	12.6	11.1	10.2	9.2	30.6	13.7	100 (7700)	21.0
Other	8.9	11.4	13.2	22.9	15.2	15.7	12.6	100 (1119)	3.1
Total	10.5	12.2	14.8	17.6	12.0	20.0	12.9	100 (36586)	100.0

Source: Department of Labour (2006a), modified

The possibility for a large scale of return migration to Tonga is limited. Just over 54 percent of the 7700 Tongan permanent resident holders, who arrived between 1998 and 2004, had departed from New Zealand on a short-term basis (less than 12 months) after taking up residence (Department of Labour, 2006b). Of those who moved, making up a total of 11386 spells of absence, just under four percent of the absences were for 12 months or more (Table 4) and Tonga is assumed to be one of the destination countries for these departing people. Comparatively, Samoa and American Samoa had higher percentages of absences for over 12 months.

Table 4: Lengths of spells of absence for migrants approved between 1998-2004 by nationality

Nationality			Number of days absent during each spell of absence (%)						Total
			1-30	31-60	61-180	181-365	366-730	731+	
Pacific	Island	Trust							
	Territory		0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1
	American Samoa		52.2	13.0	10.1	11.6	4.3	8.7	69
	Fiji		71.4	10.3	10.5	4.5	2.3	1.0	35336
	FSM		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	3
	Kiribati		68.5	9.9	6.3	8.1	0.9	6.3	111
	New Caledonia		39.4	30.3	24.2	6.1	0.0	0.0	33
	Nauru		47.2	19.1	25.8	6.7	0.0	1.1	89
	Pitcairn Islands		0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2
	Papua New Guinea		55.4	22.6	8.6	5.4	5.9	2.2	186
	French Polynesia		42.9	28.6	21.4	7.1	0.0	0.0	14
	Solomon Islands		69.8	12.5	7.8	6.3	2.1	1.6	192
	Tokelau		33.3	38.9	22.2	0.0	5.6	0.0	18
	Tonga		62.5	13.8	14.9	5.1	2.3	1.3	11386
	Tuvalu		41.1	13.9	31.6	8.2	2.5	2.5	158
	Vanuatu		60.9	9.4	9.4	9.4	6.3	4.7	64
	Samoa		53.8	11.3	13.0	8.4	7.0	6.5	12229
	Total		65.9	11.3	11.9	5.4	3.3	2.2	59891

Source: Department of Labour (2006a), modified

The modernisation of Tonga will continue to be further stimulated by the process of international migration. The scattered nature of islands, and their proneness to natural disaster, coupled with their weakening economic status and an unstable political future, means that international migration remains one of the primary sources of social and economic security for many Tongan families.

Tongan diasporic communities continue to multiply in numbers and so the possibility for a large number of long-term returnees to Tonga is high. A reverse migration process, bringing many Tongans “home”, can be viewed as an essential tool for the social and economic development of Tonga. However current numbers of returnees are small in New Zealand and a similar scale is assumed for other countries. The next chapter reviews the context of return migration.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter the relevant return migration literature is reviewed in order to establish the conceptual framework that is used to inform my research about return migration. The first section emphasises the complexity and varying debates surrounding the process of contemporary international migration. This is followed by a review of literature on return migration in general (section two) and more specifically in the Pacific (section three). Section four focuses on the literature about Tongan migration that has touched on the phenomenon of return migration. Drawing on these reviews, the final section articulates the conceptual framework for this study, building on Cerase's (1974) model of return migration of Italians who had settled in the United States of America.

The Complexity of International Migration

In its recent report on migration and development, the Secretary-General of the United Nations observed:

Migration is complex because it is a process, not a single event, and because it can be repeated several times over the lifetime of an individual...migration may vary in character according to the individuals who move and whether, or how, the State controls such movement (United Nations, 2006 23).

It is important to note at the outset of this review that international migration is a multifaceted global issue which affects every country in the world. As noted elsewhere, and cited in Ghosh's (2000b 4) introductory chapter to his edited book on 'Managing Migration: Time for a New International Regime?', "[i]nternational migration is essentially a multidimensional phenomenon [because] it defies a unisectoral approach". The magnitude of population movement on a global scale is increasing rapidly. The number of migrants who live in a country other than the one in which they were born has doubled since 1960 from 76 million to 191 million in 2005 (International Organisation

for Migration, 2005 379; United Nations, 2006 29). However, it should also be appreciated that 191 million migrants is a very small share of a global population of around 6 billion.

The occurrence of mass migration, including both regular and irregular movements, coupled with the growing complexity of migration systems in the ‘age of migration’ period led Lidgard (1992 12) to argue that “current immigration theories do little to explain the life spans of these movements or predict future migrations”. Others, such as Ghosh (2000c), have suggested that we need a new comprehensive, coherent, and internationally harmonized regime to manage international migration.

Temporary migration, within which much return migration is encapsulated, has always been part of regional migration systems (Kritz and Zlotnik, 1992). In recent decades, the increasing incidence of temporary circular migration has attracted more interest and, this in turn, has encouraged more research on return migration and its potential development impacts (Bedford, Lidgard and Ho, 2005; Bedford, Ho and Lidgard, 2002; International Organisation for Migration, 2005; Lidgard, 1992; Sanderson, 2006). On the other hand, forms of circular migration have been the subject of controversial debates in academic and policy literatures.

Critics argue that temporary labour migration schemes/programmes normally fail to meet their stated policy objectives (Ruhs, 2006). The experiences gained from two major temporary programmes, the *Bracero* programme in the United States (1942-1964) and the *Gastarbeiter* programme in Germany (1955-1973) have made many countries very cautious about institutionalised temporary migration programmes. Similarly, in the Pacific, a temporary Seasonal Employment Work Scheme discussed in the Pacific Forum meeting in 2005 has generated policy debate, especially around managing the risks of workers failing to return home at the end of their contracts.

For instance, the Australian Prime Minister, John Howard, is particularly opposed to these temporary work schemes. He is on record saying:

We have had some long-standing reservations. We apply an open non-discriminatory immigration policy and people from the Pacific Island area are coming in increasing numbers and we have always had a preference for permanent settlement or permanent migration... [t]here are some fundamental issues involved in seasonal workers and it's not something in the past that Australia has felt inclined to embrace and it's not something we change our policy on very readily...[e]ither you invite someone into your country to stay as a permanent resident or citizen or you don't (reported by Tait, 2005).

Notwithstanding such a critique and opposing views, others favour a more constructive approach such as launching innovative policy designs and programmes as well as strengthening institutions. In this context strategies suggested by Arowolo (2000), Olesen (2002) and Ruhs (2006), could assist Governments to avoid previous policy failures and to generate demonstrable benefits for migrants and their countries of origin. In line with these sorts of arguments, New Zealand's Prime Minister, Helen Clark, has stated that:

Seasonal work permits might be issued to relieve temporary shortages and ensure people return home... [w]e are short of workers. New Zealand does have the lowest unemployment in the Western world and we are particularly short of seasonal workers (reported by Tait, 2005).

Consequently, the Tongan Government Website (see Tonga-now, 2007a) reported that the Governments of Tonga and New Zealand have agreed to proceed with a seasonal employment work scheme, and subsequently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to this effect in April 2007. The fact that return is mandatory in this sort of regulated temporary migration means that such schemes fall outside the scope of this thesis where the focus is on voluntary return migration.

Interlinkages between the processes of international migration and globalisation have prompted attention to be focussed on the dynamism of migration in relation to the phenomenon of modernisation. The interlocking relationship of these processes produces complications in trying to understand migration in a comprehensive manner. This has led Papastergiadis (2000 92) to argue that "the phenomenon of migration is a dynamic feature of modernity, and [the fact] that it has both intensified in volume and diversified its directions, requires a new theoretical approach". In this thesis return migration is examined in the context of transnationalism.

Transnational Migration

According to Brettell (2003), the proliferation of interest in the concept of transnationalism in the migration literature since the late 1990s is due to its close association with globalization. The emergence of a transnational perspective has generated new debates that have changed the study of immigration. Earlier immigration studies tended to focus strongly on the processes of acculturation and adaptation of migrants in their new society while assuming that the ties with their home countries of origin were weakening (Itzigsohn, 2001). Owing to the intensification of global population movement, evidence suggests that transnational living and practices are made possible by global communication advances that give families in the host country an emotional 'sense of belonging' through the maintenance of strong social and cultural ties with family members at home (Falicov, 2005).

On the other hand, Schiller (1997) (cited in Brettell, 2003) has suggested that the concept of 'transmigration' is a way of rethinking the older migration categories of circulation, permanent and return migration. Schiller argued that "Transmigrants are people who claim and are claimed by two or more nation-states into which they are incorporated as social actors, one of which is widely acknowledged to be their state of origin" (Brettell, 2003 49). Debate of this kind has tended to blur the boundaries between different forms of mobility (migration, circulation, return) and this has distracted attention from specific studies of return migration per se. In this study, the meaning of transnational as defined by Vertovec (2005 3) to mean "belong[ing] to two or more societies at the same time" is used to establish both the profile and the return migration behaviour of transnational Tongans.

In recognition of the escalating complexity of migration and the associated challenges confronting many countries worldwide, an international dialogue on migration has intensified in recent years. The attention paid by the United Nations 61st General Assembly in September 2006, in its first ever High Level Dialogue on International

Migration and Development, has highlighted the need to revisit approaches to migration and development at large (United Nations, 2006).

In the midst of these mainstream migration debates a critical component of the migration process -- 'return migration' -- has been neglected too often for too long. The situation was well summed up by Ghosh (2000a 1) when he stated:

[Return migration is] one of the most neglected areas of migration research, it also has failed to receive adequate and systematic attention from policy-makers. Even when return has been a specific subject of public policy consideration, the tendency has generally been to look at the returnees on a non-differentiated or aggregate basis, without giving much attention to selectivity in terms of their personal characteristics, duration of stay in the receiving country, and the motivations underlying different types of return.

Return Migration Overview

Historical Background

Although an integral part of the migration process, return movement, including its social and economic implications has so far remained inadequately unravelled in the migration debate (Ghosh, 2000a 1).

King (2000 7) agreed with Ghosh when he stated that return migration remains the "great unwritten chapter" of migration studies. This is not surprising, perhaps, given that the first European conference on international return migration was only held in Rome just over two decades ago, in 1981 (Kubat, 1981).

Notwithstanding this recent interest, return has always been a component of international migration. Wyman (2005 16) cited some arresting return migration statistics when he noted that at least one-third of the 52 million Europeans who left Europe between 1824 and 1924 returned permanently to their homelands. In certain years the return rate was even greater than this as occurred in the USA in 1931 due to the economic recession: 89,000 left the USA compared with only 43,000 immigrants who arrived.

Return migration literature slowly started to take-off in the 1960s and has expanded significantly since the 1970s. For instance, out of the 2051 migration papers published between 1955 and 1962, only 10 were on return migration (Mangalam, 1968). Later in 1983, King and Strachan (1983) abstracted 300 studies of return of which 76 percent were published between 1972 and 1981. As with the case of the Pacific region, return literature is still in its puberty stage. Out of the 1940 New Zealand entries of books, journal articles and published conference papers, compiled by Trlin (2005) for the period 1995 to 2001, only 55 entries directly related to return migration. Despite the growing interest in the subject of return migration little is known about those who returned and the social, economic, political and cultural implications of return migration for both the sending and receiving countries.

Reasons for Ignoring Return Migration

The negligence of return migration in the literature is partly due to the fact that migration theories tend to conceptualise migration as a permanent movement for settlement at the destination country – not a process of circulation involving return. This is in line with Castles and Miller's (1998) observation that in the history of migration, immigration was associated with the notion of permanent settlement and migrants were potential settlers at the destination. Numerous studies reported an overwhelming trend of emigration/immigration throughout the world, and specifically from the less developed to the more developed countries. This has caused a greater focus worldwide on emigrants/immigrants and their eventual impacts on both the sending and receiving countries, rather than on return (see Bedford, *et al.*, 2002; Castles and Miller, 2003; Ghosh, 2000b; Hugo, 1999; King, 2000). Hence return migration studies were rare before 1960 (King, 2000).

Complicating the analysis of return migration is the fact that data on this process is not always captured in national censuses. Owing to the lack of reliable quantitative data Cassarino (2004) has noted that attention to the subject of return migration in studies drawing on census data has been minimal. Neither Statistics New Zealand nor the

Tonga Statistics Department has included specific questions in censuses for return migrants. It is largely for this reason that return migration information has tended to be submerged in the mainstream migration and socio-economic indicators at the national level.

In fact, the United Nations' (2006: 68) report on Migration and Development asserted that "global estimates of the extent of return migration do not exist", nor are there estimates of the people who engage in circular migration. In this respect, there are a number of issues to be researched in relation to return migration including: how many have returned?; who actually returned and for what reasons?; what was their residence status in the host country?; what has been the impact of their departure?; how long do they intend to stay in their home country for?; how long they have been away?; and how would they reintegrate back into the homeland's society?, amongst other issues.

Some studies in the Pacific have demonstrated the scale of return migration is small at the national level compared to the scale of emigration (Rallu, 1996). The reason for there being no substantial return is because of the major wage differentials between sending and destination countries as well as a host of social factors (Connell, 2006; Connell, 2003; Reagan and Olsen, 2000). Others have argued that the growing scale of family reunification in the destination countries causes less interest in return (Brown, 1998; Lee, 2004b). Thus, it is anticipated that small scale of returns results in minimal development impacts on the home country.

The absence of a well coordinated official database to capture cross-border movements of people makes the subject of return migration even more unattractive than the study of immigration. This situation applies in Tonga and possibly other Pacific nations where it is impossible to establish from existing statistics a profile of return migrants, amongst other critical information. However, even in countries where proper arrival and departure card systems have been put in place, return migration is still a neglected subject of study (see Lidgard and Bedford, 1992). Even where an effective arrival and departure card system is in place, it is impossible to effectively identify return migrants.

Remittances and the Intention to Return

A key issue addressed in the research on emigration or immigration, whether temporary or permanent, is the effects of movement on the source and destination countries especially with regard to remittance flows. Much has been written on the nature of remittances and their subsequent uses in home countries worldwide (ADB, 2006; Bertram and Watters, 1985; Brown, 1998; Connell and Brown, 2005; Connell and Conway, 2000; Fuka, 1984; United Nations, 2006; World Bank, 2006). As the United Nations' (2006) Migration and Development report stated, "[r]emittances are the most immediate and tangible benefit of international migration". To illustrate the scale of remittances flow, for instance, the level of remittances worldwide has doubled within a decade, 1995-2005, increasing from \$102 billion to \$232 billion and about three-quarters (72%) of the all remittances end up in the developing countries (United Nations, 2006 54).

At the national level, there has been constant debate on the potential uses of remittances, both cash and in-kind, especially for investment or for consumption. Underpinning these debates in the Pacific Islands is the concept of MIRAB developed by Bertram and Watters (1985). Evidence from the Pacific suggests that remittances are invested in paying childrens' school fees, buying outboard motors, building houses, becoming involved in trading in the informal sector (see Brown, 1995; Brown and Connell, 1993; Chapman, 1991; Faeamani, 1995).

Other writers, such as Guarnizo (2003) and James (1991), have argued that remittances have reduced productivity in local economies, and thus produced a 'remittance dependency culture'. In her study of a fishing village in Vava'u, Tonga, James (1991 9) summed up the views of the village residents when she said that "previously our income has come from the sea" but "now they come from overseas". Further, she indicated that 90 percent of the households received remittances. At the national level, the statistics remain high. The 1999 Household and Expenditure Survey revealed that 75 percent of

households received remittances and these accounted for 20 percent of cash incomes (Government of Tonga, 2002).

In view of the crucial role that remittances play in the national development of receiving countries, researchers have been addressing the sustainability of remitting and the issue of 'remittance decay'. Gibson, McKenzie and Rohorua (2006) concluded that remittances are expected to further increase if remitting costs can be reduced. Brown (1998) suggested that as long as the demand for remittances and supply of remittances (income level and motivation to transfer) held up, there was no reason to believe remittance levels will fall. The debate about the sustainability of remittances remains contentious (see Bertram, 2006; Poirine, 1998).

Linked to the debate about remittances is the question about factors promoting return of migrants to their source countries. Many emigrants migrate in the hope that they will eventually return to their home country one day. Their remittance behaviour is often linked to this plan to return. Numerous studies have revealed that return is possible. For example, Ahlburg and Brown (1998) found that Tongans and Samoans in Australia, who indicated an intention to return, were much more likely to return than those who do not have such intention. Stoller and Longino (2001) have shown that return is more likely if strong ties have been maintained with the home country. Even among the 15.7 million immigrants admitted for permanent residence in the United States between 1908 and 1957, 30 percent returned to their countries of origin (Ghosh, 2000c 182).

Brown (1998) and Macpherson (1994) have argued that remittance behaviour is associated with intentions to return, however Ahlburg and Brown (1998 148) note in their conclusion that "once the migrant has returned there is a cost in the sense that the remittances and capital transfers that would otherwise be forthcoming will be reduced or stop altogether". Brown (1997) speculated that those who are intending to return remit significantly more than those who do not. Hence from a policy perspective, encouraging migrants to sustain their 'return intention' is one way of ensuring remittances remain high.

While return might always have been in the mind of a migrant from the beginning, the actual movement back home is often delayed indefinitely depending on a complex set of social, economic, cultural and political factors. Reagan and Olsen (2000), drawing on data from the National Longitudinal Survey of young immigrants to the United States, concluded that the longer migrants remain in the destination country the less likely they are to return. Similarly, Waldorf (1995) concluded in his study of return guest-workers from Germany between 1970 and 1989 that the probability of return intention is strongly affected by satisfaction and other time-dependent variables, including personal characteristics. Conversely in the Pacific region, political tension is a determining factor, not only behind decisions to migrate, but also decisions to return, particularly in the case of doctors and nurses in Fiji (Brown and Connell, 2004). This situation is summed up nicely by Kubat (1981: 4) when he observed that “[t]he fundamental wish is to return to the home country; however, the initial length of stay is nearly always extended for a longer period and this in turn reinforces the wish to stay”.

In the event where returnees have realised their intention to go home and find their expectations are not fulfilled, re-emigration is likely (see Connell, 1995; Connell, 2003; Ley and Kobayashi, 2005; Mangnall, 2004). This situation led Sanderson (2006: i) to conclude that “ongoing migration patterns are far more complex than traditional migration paradigms suggest, with repeat and return migration and ongoing mobility being an important part of actual migration experiences”.

Types of Return Migration

Depending on the process of integration into the new society at the destination, four types of return are possible according to Cerase (1974): return of failure, return of conservatism, return of innovation, and return of retirement.

Return of failure refers to return migrants who have failed to meet their migratory objectives at the destination because they have been unsuccessfully integrated into the new society due to emotional discontent, cultural shock and racism for instance. Return

migrants who adapted to the new society, and subsequently prolonged their stay to accomplish a set of goals, but were still strongly oriented to the home country and sent significant remittances home come into the category of *return of conservatism* when they eventually do return. Those that return with skills, capital, new knowledge and values and anticipate using these to fulfil their needs and aspirations in the home country are in the category *return of innovation*. *Return of retirement* is the category that applies to those whose return signifies the end of their active working life.

Cerase's model contrasts with the neoclassical economic framework of migration with its focus on wage differentials and expectations for higher earning in host countries, and the New Economy of Labour Migration framework which is focussed on remittance flows. Cerase's model challenged these frameworks for their lack of attention to the social, cultural and economic impacts of the uses of remittances by returnees in the sending countries (Cassarino, 2004).

Although Cerase's model characteristically unravels the description of returnees, concern remains around the question of how long returnees may settle in the home country. To assist with this, King (2000) suggested the following typology of return migration, which is based on the length of time spent by migrants in the home country: occasional, seasonal, temporary or permanent return. *Occasional return* was characterised as short-term or periodic movement and included those who return to visit relatives, take a holiday, and participate in business events or to take part in a family event. *Seasonal return* is primarily based on the nature of employment of the migrant or is dictated by climate or seasonal availability of certain types of work for instance. Those who return and remain in the sending country for a significant period but retain the intention to re-emigrate are categorised under the label of *temporary return*. Finally, *permanent returnees* are those who return and settle in the sending country and subsequently never move overseas to live for any lengthy period (King, 1986; 2000).

In addition to these categories, return takes place in varying circumstances. Return can either be voluntary (autonomous) or involuntary (forced return) (King, 2000). The

International Organisation for Migration (2005 459,461) defined voluntary return as “the assisted or independent return to the country of origin, transit or another third country based on the free will of the returnee” whereas forced return is the “compulsory return of an individual to the country of origin, transit or third country, on the basis of an administrative or judicial act”.

All these frameworks make useful contributions to our overall understanding of return migration. However, it will also be clear that they do much to reveal some significant ambiguities about the concept of return which is reflected in the wide range of labels and conceptual terms used to describe this process.

Ambiguity of Return Migration

There is no consistent label for return migration in the migration literature. This sort of movement has been referred to by Butcher (2004) as re-entry, counterstream migration (Stoller and Longino, 2001), trend reversal (Callea, 1986), back-migration or U-turn migration (King, 2000). One factor that stands out from these labels is the notion of ‘one-way’ return.

By definition, many of the previous return studies have consistently defined return migration in a way that return is perceived as what Callea (1986) terms the ‘concluding phase’ of the migration cycle. For example, Gmelch (1980 136) defined return migration as the “movement of emigrants back to their homelands to resettle”. A similar description is reflected in King (2000 8) where return migration is referred to “as the process whereby people return to their country or place of origin after a significant period in another country or region”. Ultimately, these are a reverse conceptualisation of the traditional migration paradigm of migration from the new destination country ‘B’ to the sending country ‘A’, with no subsequent movement overseas.

Contesting this notion of ‘one-way’ return is the fact that a substantial component of contemporary international migration is temporary, characterised by repeated or circular

movement. This conceptual complexity has led Ghosh (2000c 181-182) to argue that “emigration and return are not isolated acts or events; they must be seen as inter-locking parts of an open and wider on-going process of global mobility”. It is for this reason that return migration is best conceptualised as part of “circular migration”.

Circular migration, by definition, embraces repeated returns, but it does not occur, according to the United Nations (2006), when migrants return only for short visits while essentially remaining settled abroad. As a result of this conceptual complexity, Ley and Kobayashi (2005) suggest that the term return migration is replaced by ‘transnational sojourn’.

None of the literature reviewed so far has taken into account the return of those who were born overseas but claimed to be the ethnicity of the ‘mother country’ of their parents. For instance, the growing number of Pacific people born in New Zealand means that some of the second and third generations may return in search of their ancestral roots. The critical ambiguity here is whether these migrants would be classified as return migrants, migrants, transnational sojourn, visitors or what? In this research project overseas-born migrants, who were moving to their ancestral home with the intention of staying there, are considered to be return migrants.

Due to the ambiguity that surrounds the concept of return, and the fact that the traditional definition of return does not reflect adequately the complexity and intensifying circularity of contemporary international migration, King (2000) strongly recommends that studies of return migration are not focussed specifically on the decision or event, but rather are built around a more holistic and theoretically informed appreciation of the nature of migration and mobility in this globalised era. As Ley and Kobayashi (2005 111) emphasised, “in a transnational era, movement is better described as continuous rather than completed”. Hence transnationality replaces the fixedness of emigration and return.

Before developing a guiding conceptual framework of return migration for this study, it is necessary to review briefly the literature on Pacific return migration. This is the subject of the next section.

Return Migration: A Pacific Regional Perspective

Substantial reviews of Pacific international migration literature can be found elsewhere (see Bedford, 1992; 2000; 2004; 2007 and Connell, 2003). In this section the focus is on literature relating to return migration.

Essential to the understanding of the mobility of Pacific people is what Hau'ofa (1994) has termed a process of 'world enlargement'. The dispersion of Pacific people worldwide has been widely noted and discussed amongst social scientists, but the classic observation about contemporary Pacific migration remains in the following statement by Hau'ofa (1994 155-156):

Everywhere they go, to Australia, New Zealand, Hawai'i, mainland USA, Canada and even Europe, they strike roots in new resource areas, securing employment and overseas family property, expanding kinship networks through which they circulate themselves, their relatives, their material goods, and their stories all across their ocean...The resources of Samoans, Cook Islanders, Niueans, Tokelauans, Tuvaluans, Kiribatis, Fijians, Indo-Fijians and Tongans, are no longer confined to their national boundaries. They are located wherever these people are living permanently or otherwise...

Hau'ofa observed that while globalisation has contributed significantly to the diaspora of Pacific peoples, transnationalism has a long history in Oceania. The widespread dispersion of the Pacific 'international family network' Marcus (1981), which underpins the concept of the 'transnational corporation of kin' (Bertram and Watters, 1985), has led Hau'ofa (1994 156) to argue that "the world of Oceania is neither tiny nor deficient in resources". In this sense, many aspects of contemporary Pacific mobility are extensions of well entrenched, traditional mobility systems (Bedford, 2000), reflecting the fact that both traditional and contemporary migration of Pacific peoples extends beyond the geographical border of Oceania.

It has been suggested that there is considerable circulation of Pacific people between the Islands and the cities on the Pacific rim and elsewhere, and this can create an impression of 'temporary' migration rather than settlement at the destination (Bedford, Machperson and Spoonley, 2001). As Lidgard (1992) suggested, the term 'circular migration' tends to capture the essence of much of this movement better than emigration or return migration.

From a demographic perspective, the Tongan and Samoan diaspora are larger than the populations now living in Tonga (see Chapter Two). Bedford, (1992) and Hau'ofa (1977) observed that emigration has been acting as a useful 'safety valve' to control the population pressures on the home country's resources but it is not a sustainable strategy according to McMurray and Muagututia (2003) if it drains the latter of their productive labour forces and the potential for reproducing their populations.

The large numbers of Pacific people, particularly from Polynesia, living in the Pacific rim countries provide a substantial pool of potential return migrants. However, return is not yet a common process according to Mangnall (2004) because much of the contemporary movement of Pacific people between the sending countries and host countries involves the movement of tourists and short-term visitors (Bedford, 1992). In the case of Samoa and Tonga, according to Taufu (2003), emigration followed by visits rather than permanent return has been the common phenomenon over the last three decades. Connell (2003: 60) suggests that this is the general practise throughout Polynesia and where a 'culture of migration' is being established "emigration is normal and anticipated, and it is an important element that is factored into national social and economic systems".

The culture of migration is being further stimulated by information and communication technologies that are exposing more and more islanders to fashions and behaviours that are part of life in large cities (Bedford, *et al.*, 2001). Globalisation of sport, music and fashion is contributing to the pull of younger, more educated island residents to the cities on the rim. A critical dilemma for many countries in Polynesia is the increasing drain of

skilled personnel known as the ‘brain drain’ causing a shortage of skilled people in the service sectors, especially education and health (Brown and Connell, 2004). The challenge is how and whether developing countries like Tonga could reverse the process of ‘brain drain’ through return migration to produce a ‘brain gain’?

Return Migration: A Review of Tongan-based Literature

Hau’ofa presents an ideal explanation for what I perceive to be the contemporary migration pattern of Tongans in the 21st century. It gives a sense of repeated movement and exchange of knowledge, experience and goods and the desire and aspirations of Tongan people for migration just like any other country in the world.

The sea provided waterways that connected neighbouring islands into regional exchange groups that tended to merge into one another, allowing the diffusion of cultural traits through most of Oceania...[a] home-base to which we will always return for replenishment and to revise the purpose and the direction of our journeys. We shall visit our people who have gone to the land of diaspora, and tell them that we have built something, a new home for all of us. Taking a cue from the ocean’s ever-flowing and encircling nature, we will travel far and wide to connect with oceanic and maritime peoples elsewhere, and swap stories of voyages that we have taken and those yet to be embarked upon. We will show them what we have, and learn from them different kinds of music, dance, art, ceremonies, and other forms of cultural production (Hau’ofa, 2000 38, 42).

Again, this is a reconstruction of the ‘world enlargement’ process of Oceania via migration but more importantly, the enriching elements of ‘home-base’ and place where migrants will always return for replenishment, appraisal of options and opportunities, and for consideration of plans for future travel. The home-base is affirmed by Pau’u (2002 37) “there is no place like home” for reviving of culture and traditions as well as for assessing options for transnational ties and for enriching the culture of migration.

There is limited literature on return migration of Tongans. To date, there has not been a study to establish either a profile of Tongan transnational returnees or an assessment of their direct socio-economic and cultural impacts, both at the village and national levels. However, a handful of authors have attempted to contextualise return migration but in a fragmented and variable fashion (see Esau, 2005; Ahlburg and Brown, 1998; Brown,

1998; Brown and Connell, 2004, 2006; Connell, 2006; Lee, 2004b; Liava'a, 2000; Rallu, 1996; Small, 1997). I draw on their findings in developing a conceptual framework for this study.

One variant of return migration is when parents send their children to the homeland to greet and meet their relatives – a manifestation of what Funaki and Funaki (2002) and Small (1997) refer to as 'staying Tongan'. In a similar view, 'Esau (2005) and James (1991) suggest these arrangements as a way of keeping the transnational family intact. Sending children into the care of relatives in the home country can be a form of restorative justice or discipline but James (1991) argues that this can be placing children in a vulnerable position in the socialisation process.

Small (1997) provides an ethnographic illustration of an overseas-born child returning to the village setting to 'stay Tongan'. Lio (an overseas-born) is situated between 'two shores' hence a decision to stay in Tonga is remarkably tough, irrespective of his parent's view. Returning children may find that living conditions are unhygienic compared to the living standards that they were used to overseas. In Lio's case, the dichotomy of lifestyles between the sending and receiving countries is an influencing factor.

Lio is caught in between worlds...Are you Tongan or are you American? Lio responds loudly, I'm Tongan! So will you stay here or go back to America?...Lio says he wants to stay in Tonga...Another older boy chides, so you will stay in Tonga and you'll eat just taro? Is that OK? And you won't be able to eat candy anymore, OK? Vei adds, Yeah and you'll have to sweep the floor and the yard! And you won't be able to eat ice cream and all the things we buy for you now. Lio hold firms. He would stay in Tonga. Two days later...Lio changed his mind. He wants to go back to America (Small,1997 156).

There is plenty of evidence that returnees experienced 'cultural shock' upon return not so much based on living conditions, but mainly because of the response of and subsequent treatment by relatives and the community at large to a 'Tongan foreigner at home' (Lee, 2004b). Returning migrants tend to wear clothing that is in fashion in their overseas homes, and, in some cases, they do not speak the local language (Lee, 2003; Small, 1997). These traits can be viewed by locals as markers of their social status, and this often causes resentment.

For those who have never visited Tonga before, they may find that they are excluded and alienated from their communities because they do not have the local cultural skills and language for communication or rather they have an inauthentic Tongan identity. Additionally, important factors like knowledge of the home country, socialisation, cultural and religious participation are also critical features of one's attachment to the homeland. Emerging evidence shows that the second generation overseas-born could find these factors hinder their transnational ties, weaken kinship bonding and sustainability of remittances as well as a subsequent return home (Lee, 2004a).

In 2003, 'Esau (2005) studied 243 Tongan household heads that were born outside of New Zealand, but were residing in New Zealand at the time of her interviews. Over half (59%) of the respondents had visited Tonga since their migration to New Zealand, largely for family obligations such as family reunions, traditional rituals, Christmas holidays and orientation of their overseas-born children. In terms of future return, a large proportion of the household heads mentioned that they are "highly unlikely to return to Tonga" though they have a strong sense of emotional attachment to the homeland. Conversely, children in the households preferred to stay in New Zealand because of opportunities for better social and economic advancement. Obviously, a permanent return to the homeland is highly unlikely for these people. There is also speculation that in a situation where migrants are settled overseas with their children, return is subsequently uncertain (Lee, 2004b).

The new 'information age' has also brought with it a new dimension of the transnational ties. The access by Tongan diaspora to the Tongan newspapers (*eg. Taimi 'o Tonga, Kalonikali Tonga* and *Talaki* amongst others), Tongan magazines (*eg. Matangi Tonga*), radio and television programmes and interactive websites (*eg. Tonga Planet* and *Tonga-now*) has enabled a strong 'sense of connection' with the homeland. As Lee (2004a) suggests, growing access to internet and website connections has enabled 'emotional transnationalism' rather than actual transnational ties and a symbolic 'return home'. This could result either in a greater number of return trips or visits, or just be a mechanical

tool that ensures maintenance of emotional ties coupled with an indefinite intention to return.

Obtaining permanent residence or citizenship overseas are indications that Tongans living abroad are not planning to leave their new 'homes' on the Pacific rim permanently. Most Tongans prefer permanent residence over citizenship, according to 'Esau (2005), and this is because it allows them unrestricted access to their respective overseas homeland while enabling them to retain legal titles to land in Tonga.

In the overseas 'home', factors such as higher quality of life overall, better education and health standards, diverse employment opportunities, access to a diasporic community, and the availability of welfare security benefits, amongst others, makes the prospect of permanent return migration difficult to contemplate. The life choice between either returning to Tonga to work, establish a business, work in the plantation or remain unemployed, or returning overseas where opportunities for life advancement initiatives are plentiful, is a critical benchmark for many people when they make their movement decisions.

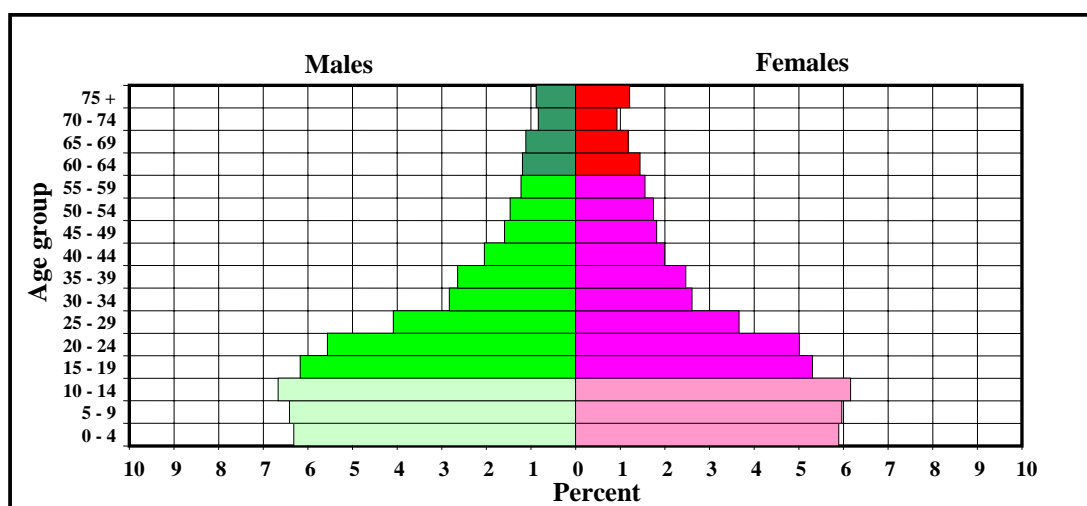
In recent years, numbers of Tongans who occasionally visit Tonga have been increasing. To highlight this, a study of people who left Tonga in 1999 revealed that a significant proportion (84%) of the Tongan-born departures stated that they intended to return (Liava'a, 2000). Between 1997 (23,773) and 2002 (37,160) there was a 56 percent increase in visitor arrivals in Tonga (Statistics Department, 2002; Statistics Department, 2005a). However, a large proportion of visitors, particularly from New Zealand, Australia and the United States, are overseas-based Tongans who come home mainly for holidays and to visit friends and relatives. Their visits normally coincide with national events such as Christmas and New Year celebrations, family reunion gatherings, church conferences and the Heilala festival (Statistics Department, 2005b). Although this type of occasional return is not the focus of this study, it indicates a pattern of connections which reinforces the need to reflect critically on the term return migration. In Tonga's case, return could arguably be viewed as 'home visits' rather than 'returns to stay'.

Scale of Return Migration to Tonga

The scale of return migration to Tonga is unknown although a few attempts have been made to disclose the uncertainty surrounding return. For instance, Connell (2003; 2006) cited Maron's (2001) thesis research on the existence of various types of return migration by age. Rallu (1996 35-37) estimated nine percent of the Tongan-born population in the Pacific rim countries to have returned in 1986. However, one out of two migrants who left New Zealand went to Australia or the USA, which makes the return figure even smaller and hard to accurately pinpoint. Rallu's estimation was based on census and immigration data and there can be a tendency for discrepancy in the estimation.

So, what is known is that the rate of return migration is small. The rapid growth of the Tongan population in the Pacific rim countries in the past three decades, while Tonga's resident population grew at a much slower rate, means there has been limited return migration. The structural effects of a high rate of emigration can be seen in Tonga's population pyramid (Figure 4) where the population is characteristically 'young' with around 50 percent aged under 20 years old. This has been accentuated by the substantial deficit in the working age population as a result of emigration, and this can be seen in the age-sex pyramid in the truncated bars for the population aged 25-54 years in 2006.

Figure 4: Tonga population pyramid, 2006



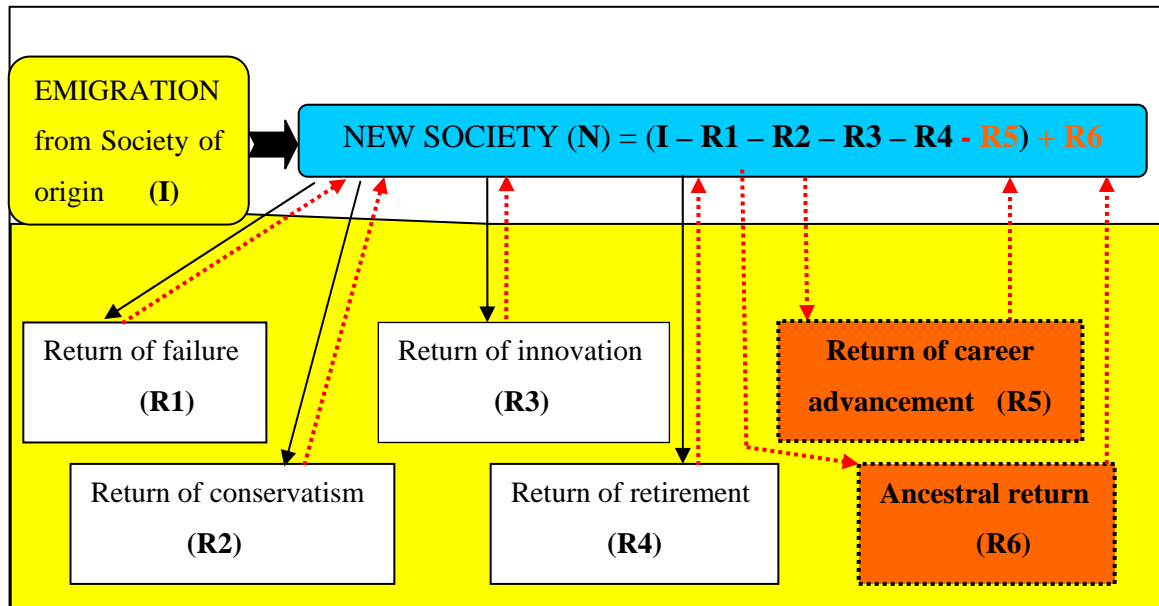
Source: Secretariat of the Pacific Community (2006)

Conceptual Framework: An Extension

It is evident from the literature reviewed that there is no comprehensive theory or framework that can be used to examine the contemporary return migration of Tongans. The most appropriate extant model is the one developed by Cerase (1974) over thirty years ago. This study builds on Cerase's findings to contribute to our understanding of the complexity of Tongan return migration.

Cerase's model represents the simplistic 'one-way' notion of return which is signified by emigrants moving from the originating society (I) to a new society (N) and return (represented by one-way return arrows). Therefore, a simple equation for the number of emigrants in the new society is the total immigrant population less the return migrants. Cerase's model is arguably no longer relevant to represent the contemporary forms of return migration. In this study, two new forms of return migration are added to Cerase's typology in order to indicate that return migration is not necessarily a final stage in the migration cycle, but possibly a repeated and on-going process embedded in the concept of circular migration (represented by cyclical arrows and plus signs).

Figure 5: Return migration of transnational Tongans: a remapping of Cerase's model



Source: Cerase (1974 252-253), modified

The discussion that follows in this thesis is focused on a transnational context where Tongans are able to return to live for various social and economic reasons. They are often motivated to return by factors such as 'career advancement' or seeking acculturation with the 'ancestral home' of the migrant parents. The new typologies closely coincide with, and portray a better representation of, the interlocking relationships between the processes of globalisation and migration. This framework informs the argument presented in the following chapters.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

This study has been designed to investigate the profile and underlying transnational return experiences of Tongan migrants who have been resident overseas. Two strategies have been adopted to collect relevant empirical data to address the research questions outlined in Chapter 1. These are a quantitative data collection strategy to obtain information on migrant profiles from a self-administered questionnaire, and a qualitative data collection strategy using in-depth interviews to gain a deeper understanding of the return experiences of migrants. This combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection strategies is supported by Arowolo (2000) and King (2000) in studies of return migration. Arowolo suggests that establishing the social, economic and demographic characteristics of returnees should be the initial approach to understanding the re-integration process. King (2000 40) argues that there need to be two steps to studying return migration: “firstly, attempts to formulate law-like statements *à la Ravenstein* on the basis of empirical and statistical evidence; and second, attempts to understand return migration within a more general epistemologies of studying migration and human behaviour”.

Tonga’s immigration database, like many others in the Pacific region, fails to provide information on numbers of migrants who have returned with the intention of staying on in Tonga. Therefore, it is impossible to draw a sampling frame for this study using official data. In a conversation with the Principal Immigration Officer on this issue, it became apparent that identifying and locating return migrants would virtually be impossible unless a snowball sampling process was used.

Migration data is regarded as being poor in Tonga. The sporadic production of migration reports as well as the lack of detailed analysis of migration movements in addition to the high rate of ‘not stated’ responses to most questions on the arrival card reported in the latest migration reports published by Statistics Department,

mean there is little data on migration generally and return migration in particular (see Statistics Department, 2005a; 2005b; 2005c). Tonga's arrival card, in common with such cards elsewhere, is designed to collect information on traveller's identification details, visa type, and a bio-security declaration – it does not contain any questions about the reasons for movement or the type of movement (see Appendix I).

Identification of Participants

Given that Tonga's immigration data base cannot provide a useful sampling frame for my research, the snowball sampling technique is the best alternative method to adopt. As Bryman (2004 102) has asserted, where “there is no accessible sampling frame for the population from which the sample is to be taken ... the difficulty of creating such a sampling frame means that ... [snowballing] is the only feasible [approach]”.

However there is a downside to the snowball method that I experienced during the course of my field research. Inevitably, it is a time consuming method to implement. In an island context like that in Tonga, snowballing is assumed to be an ‘easy-go’ exercise but revealingly it is not the case, unless the researcher has access to a wide network of friends locally and internationally. The method requires the researcher to identify possible candidates through referrals, check their eligibility for participation, convince them to participate if they are eligible, and urge them to respond in a timely fashion. As Lidgard (2001 12) has pointed out, identifying participants for a return migration study using the snowball method is a “costly and time consuming” process.

In the referral process in this study, informants often conveyed names but no contact details and often just a guess at their location in Tonga. In other words, they knew the names of some return migrants, but they did not have the information required to follow up with a personal contact. Given there is no proper postal structure in place in Tonga, considerable effort and time was needed to identify and locate possible participants particularly in the capital, Nuku'alofa, area. This would

be extremely difficult for a 'stranger' to the Nuku'alofa area. It involved a vigorous search for names and telephone numbers in the 2006 Directory Telephone Book, and if the name was registered in the directory then a series of telephone calls was made and eventually a time was scheduled for a visit. Some participants were easy to locate if their work place was known.

Given Tonga's socio-cultural context, and the fact that almost all the possible participants were strangers to me, 'face-to-face' contact was my preferred choice of meeting once the initial communication was established via telecommunication. The direct personal contact permits further clarification of the purpose of the research thus ensuring the eligibility of prospective participants, establishment of some connection and trust, and effective briefing of participants about the study (Information sheet - Appendix II). Simultaneously, this is an ideal opportunity for participants to ask questions about the research should they wish to clarify matters before accepting an invitation to become involved by signing the consent form (Appendix III). Face-to-face contact has the potential to increase the response rate; postal questionnaires are unlikely to have much appeal in Tonga.

With regard to the process of identifying participants, snowballing produces a non-random sample. In this study, I consulted some members of the Tongan Student's Association and two staff members at the University of Waikato, as well as family members in New Zealand and colleagues, family and friends in Tonga to obtain names of return migrants. This process inevitably produces bias in the selection of participants, and in the case of the return migrant's sample there was a tendency for exclusion of returnees from the Outer Islands for example. However as Kuluni (pers. comm., 2006) expressed to me, "the only way to know people who genuinely return is if they have come back and establish something to ensure their return status". Finding migrants that have done this, in a situation where there is no data on who has returned, requires a pragmatic approach, notwithstanding the inevitable bias in the sample that will come from the information provided by a selected group of initial contacts. This is an inescapable situation in this study of return migration as such a sensible approach was taken to link the quantitative and qualitative research strategies to ensure a reasonably robust set of data was generated.

The snowball sampling technique may not be the appropriate method for collecting reliable quantitative data given the ‘rule of thumb’ that the bigger the sample the more reliable and representative the results would be (Wild and Seber, 1999). Given that there is no information on the total return migrant population in Tonga, there is no way of assessing how representative the sample obtained by snowballing is of all return migrants. However, in this study, it was the only appropriate method that I could possibly adopt given the constraints that I have outlined above. Conversely, snowballing is more suitable for qualitative research and the identification of respondents for in-depth interview.

In order to gain a better understanding of the re-integration process and development implications of return migration, a subset of the respondents surveyed were interviewed in depth. The intention of the interview was to discover the underlying reasons for migrants’ return as well as how they reintegrated back into the Tongan society but from an insider’s perspective. In addition to this, other information that could not be easily obtained in the self-administered questionnaire was collected. For instance, in the in-depth interview, participants were asked to elaborate on the nature of their travel patterns whereas in the questionnaire they were only asked to list three countries they have been living in for more than 12 months (Refer to Questionnaire: Q.6 – Appendix 4). As such, the in-depth interview, as noted by Neuman (2003 76), allows the “researcher [to] share the feelings and interpretations of the people he or she studies and see things through their eyes”.

The Data

This study specifically covers transnational ‘voluntary return migrants’. ‘Forced return migrants, including deportees, repatriated children for informal adoption and other forms of involuntary return migration are not covered. A voluntary return migrant in the transnational context of this study is defined as someone who has permanent residence or citizenship in an overseas country or countries who has decided to return to live in Tonga after living overseas for a year or more. Returning to live in Tonga in this context does not necessary mean the ‘end’ to all

migratory movements. Rather it is a 'space' at a particular 'time' to recuperate cultural heritage, accumulate skills and work experience, invest skills and generate profits as well as for retirement.

Data collection in Tonga commenced in early November 2006 for six weeks. Within this time frame, both the self administered questionnaire and a series of in-depth interviews were implemented back-to-back. The months of November and December scheduled for field work were not a random choice. Rather they were determined by the schedule for completing a Masters thesis by July 2007. Unfortunately, during these two months, unexpected political unrest and looting of the capital Nuku'alofa ('Black Thursday') also occurred. These incidents caused a major disruption to my research, which consequently reduced my research timeframe from six and a half to five weeks only. A second period of field research was therefore necessary and in February and March of 2007, I returned to Tonga for three weeks to collect more of the quantitative information using the self-administered questionnaire.

In my first visit to the field, a list of 61 names of potentially eligible return migrants was obtained. Four of these people were found to be not eligible to participate in the study as their permanent residence status had either never been granted or had been revoked. In this sense they were not voluntary return migrants and they did not have the right to stay at their previous overseas place of residence. The total sample was therefore reduced to 57. Out of the 57 potential respondents, 26 returnees (46%) participated by filling-in the self-administered questionnaire, 21 (37%) were never approached due to the riots, six (10%) had departed again for overseas travel, and four (7%) never returned their questionnaires even though several attempts were made to collect them.

In my second visit, a further 21 names of potential return migrants were identified. Combining these new possible participants with the 21 possible participants that were not approached in the first visit because of the disruption caused by the riots, a total of 42 people were identified for approach in the second period of field work. At the end of my three weeks research, 26 questionnaires had been distributed, 22 completed questionnaires were collected, and four participants never returned their

questionnaires. Due to time limitations, no further in-depth interviews were scheduled -- all efforts were concentrated on conducting the self-administered questionnaire survey and building up the quantitative data base. A total of 78 possible returnees were identified during the two periods in the field. At the completion of my field research, 48 return migrants had completed the self administered questionnaire survey giving a response rate of 62 percent.

Nine of the first 26 respondents were randomly selected and interviewed. Each in-depth interview was tape-recorded. Eight of my interviewees were interviewed in English and one was in Tongan (Refer to Interview guidelines - Appendix V). The duration of each interview was between 45 and 80 minutes. Experiences in the field affirm that a well organised interview schedule does not always proceed as smoothly as planned. For instance, the initial intention was to conduct two interviews a day, morning and afternoon, at a time, place and day that was convenient to each interviewee. However, as it turned out, four of the nine interviewees had to postpone and reschedule their interview time and date due to work, family, and business commitments while the rest kept to the agreed time. The following table illustrates various characteristics of interviewees.

Table 5: Characteristics of interviewees

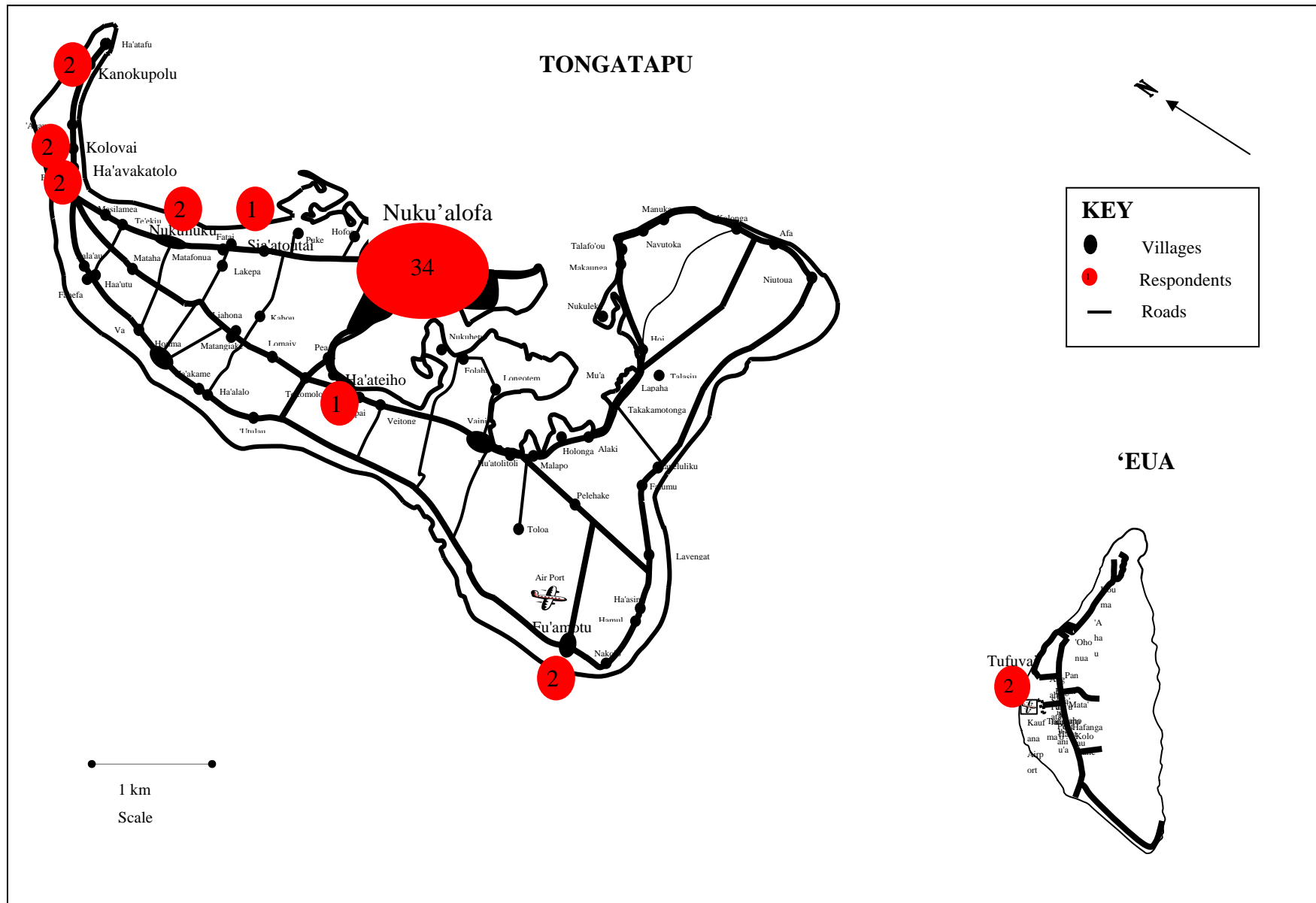
Interviewee -Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Place of birth	No. of years overseas	Year returned	Interview venue	Time
'Ana	39	Female	Overseas	22	1993	Work Place	12:30 – 1:15 PM
Seini	26	Female	Overseas	5	2005	Work Place	12:30 – 1:30 PM
Sione	39	Male	Tonga	14	1999	Home	8:00 – 9:15 AM
Semisi	52	Male	Tonga	36	2005	Café	10:00 – 11:00 AM
Kevini	60	Male	Tonga	36	1999	Home	6:00 – 7:00 PM
Tevita	35	Male	Tonga	27	2000	Work Place	11:00 – 12:00 AM
Pita	63	Male	Tonga	21	2002	Home	11:00 – 12:05 AM
Via	46	Female	Tonga	3	2006	Home	2:00 – 3:00 PM
Tomu	44	Male	Overseas	24	1993	Home	7:00 – 8:20 PM

At the end of the interview, each was given a choice as to whether he or she would like to read, comment and amend his/her 'word-for-word' transcript. Out of the nine interviewees only one requested to see her transcript. Where the interview was carried out in Tongan the transcript was translated into English ready for analysis.

Figure 6 shows the geographical distribution of the 48 return migrants who participated in the study. Almost three-quarters (71%) of the respondents lived in the Nuku'alofa area while the remaining 29 percent were distributed amongst some rural villages on Tongatapu and on 'Eua Island. The great majority of returnees residing in the Nuku'alofa area reflected the high concentration of the country's population in Nuku'alofa. Approximately 23 percent of Tonga's total population were enumerated in Nuku'alofa at the time of the census in 1996 (Government of Tonga, 1999). Owing to the high concentration of business activities and employment opportunities both in government and non-government organisations in Nuku'alofa, it was expected that returnees would be concentrated in town rather than the rural villages or the outer islands.

Two participants were identified on the Island of 'Eua. Two days were spent on travel to conduct the survey and interviews on 'Eua. No return migrants were identified through the snowballing technique on the other outer islands of Vava'u and Ha'apai. This does not mean that there are no return migrants in these areas - it is simply a function of the referral process that underpins the snowballing technique.

Figure 6: Distribution of participants



Impact of Political Unrest on Research

The ‘Black Thursday’ riots had a significant impact on my research. Inevitably, my sense of depression and disappointment at this tragic event affected my commitment to data collection and this impacted negatively on my research for at least a week and a half. I was totally confused and upset about the choice of violence as a ‘weapon’ for radical political change in Tonga. The destruction and scale of damage caused by the riots are very considerable on a local scale and this event became the centre stage of all media comment and the attention of the public at large, locally and internationally. Carrying on the survey was impossible because, firstly, I had lost my sense of commitment as I was very depressed by the whole event – indeed I nearly abandoned the project and returned to New Zealand. In the end, my sense of togetherness with my immediate family and relatives persuaded me to stay and carry on with the research.

Secondly, some possible participants may have been involved in the riots and/or looting and it was not appropriate for me to try and approach them immediately after the riots. As peace was restored and investigation into who was involved in the riot commenced, people were anxious and curious and at the same time felt very insecure. It was my own personal judgement that it was not appropriate for a stranger to approach potential respondents immediately after a major political upheaval and especially as this was the first time for such violence to happen in Tonga. Conversation would have been very difficult. One participant I did talk to chokingly said to me “why are you here? Are you doing some private investigation or something?” (Pita, pers. comm., 2006). Precautionary measures were a priority to ensure my safety.

Consequently, the unrest reduced my field research time period but subsequently caused a requirement for more time to complete the research and increased financial costs. Furthermore, 21 possible respondents were never approached during my first

period in the field. Some were subsequently captured by my survey during my second visit to the field in February/March.

Data Manipulation

The semi-structured questionnaire and interview guide were designed to capture essential information required to accomplish the objectives of this thesis. Data on gender, age, marital status, occupational status, education attainment were captured through closed questions asked as part of the quantitative component of the research (Example Q: 3, 4, 8-16 of Questionnaire – Appendix IV). Some open-ended questions were also asked in the self-administered questionnaire to capture the reasons why emigrants returned to Tonga and the challenges they have experienced in the re-integration process (Refer to Q: 17, 27 of the Questionnaire – Appendix IV). However, these aspects of the questions were also covered more comprehensively in the in-depth interviews.

Coding and Data Entry

Prior to the implementation of the survey, a Coding Manual was formulated to guide the coding process of the semi-structured questionnaire. Coding is a process whereby each question is assigned with a corresponding variable name of less than eight characters as well as assigning a non-overlapping code number to a response for data entry and analysis (SPSS NZ, 2003). A well structured coding manual is critical if data is to be analysed by a statistical package such as SPSS (Refer to Appendix VI).

A different form of coding was used for information collected in the in-depth interviews. I used a system of ‘colour coding’ to identify and group identical themes. For instance a red label was assigned for ‘re-integration’ related narratives, green for ‘return migration’ and blue for ‘reason given for return’. Eventually, the use of a simple colour coding system allows for grouping of responses to particular questions.

A similar approach was employed when regrouping the answers for open-ended questions after producing a frequency table by SPSS. For instance, Figure 7 demonstrates the use of colour coding in regrouping the diverse reasons given by the 48 respondents for return to Tonga to live (Refer to Q17(i) of the Questionnaire– Appendix 4).

Figure 7: Demonstration of ‘colour coding’

REASON 1:	
1 family reunification - Tonga was where my parents and siblings permanently resided	1: Family reunification (1, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 16, 21, 23, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 43, 45)
2 I migrated overseas to seek better opportunities and to educate my children, now I've retired so I return	2: Retiring (2)
3 work experience, initially to apply skills	3: Employment (3, 6, 32, 35, 36, 38, 42, 44)
4 a need to raise my young children in Tonga to accustom them to Tongan culture & traditions	4: Accustomed to Tongan culture (4, 17, 19, 20, 33, 34, 46)
5 stay with ailing mother	5: Business (10, 26)
6 church obligation	6: Home (14, 15, 18, 22, 24, 40)
7 family	7: Contribute to development (25, 37, 39, 41)
8 return to be with partner	
9 family	
10 help family business	
11 family reunification	
12 did not intentionally return to live in Tonga but began to adapt and build a new life here with my family when it was evident that I was not returning back	
13 to stay with my father	
14 home	
15 loan to build a house	
16 family	
17 enable children to learn Tongan and know Tongan culture	
18 I have my own house in Tonga	
19 familiarise with the Tongan culture	
20 cultural identity – to connect and discover more about my cultural background	
21 wife was deported from the US	
22 to invest and give something back to Tonga	
23 I have been away so long from the members of my family. I have to come back to see parents and grandparents	
24 Tonga will always be home – I never intended to look for a better life in NZ. We migrated to give more educational opportunities for our children	
25 to help people in hardship to go overseas to enable them to help their families	
26 returned to help in the family business and possibly establish my own	
27 employment: I've been obligated to return to work so as to assist my parent	
28 family obligations – taking care of my mum as she was sick	
29 to be with my family	
30 to stay with my mother and grandparents	
31 to be with my parents so that when they die I have been with staying with them	
32 availability of suitable employment	
33 essential part of my life experience because I was born in the States	
34 my husband's duty and obligation to his territory and people are here in Tonga	
35 my husband's obligation to Sia'atoutai Theological College	

36 church commitment
37 give back to the community after I finished my MA in NZ
38 employment and to help government's development effort
39 contribute to the future of the people of Tonga
40 a sense of Tonga as home
41 give something back to the country and local community. Obviously I'm not here for the great salary!
42 my husband has got to return to work for the church here in Tonga
43 to stay with my grandparents as they raised me as a child and were getting old
44 availability of suitable employment
45 to be with my father who returned to Tonga due to health reasons two years earlier
46 family title
47 Tonga as home, already have a house but not occupied since we left to NZ
48 Tonga is my home of which I always wanted to return to for retirement and for the rest of my life

As mentioned earlier, the statistical analysis package SPSS (version 11.5) was used for the manipulation of data captured from the survey. Using this package, various tables were generated for analysis in the following chapters.

CHAPTER FIVE

TRANSNATIONAL RETURN MIGRANTS: A SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

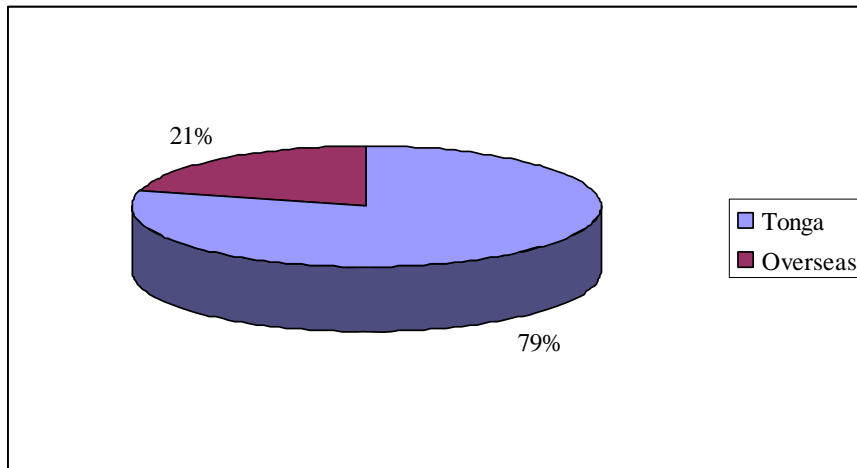
The aim of this chapter is to establish a social and economic profile of transnational return migrants. As I mentioned in Chapter Four, 48 respondents completed the semi-structure questionnaire. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section focuses on making sense of the descriptive statistics of the socio-economic variables generated from manipulation of the dataset. Key indicators such as place of birth, age, gender composition, occupation, level of education, marital status and duration of absence are interpreted in this section. In the second section there is a discussion of these socio-economic variables in the context of return migration.

Socio-economic Characteristics of Return Migrants

Place of Birth

Over three-quarters (79%) of those who completed the survey were born in Tonga (Figure 8). As expected, the proportion of Tongan-born migrants who were in the returnee sample is significantly higher than the proportion of overseas-born Tongans (21%). In one sense the latter could be considered to be “immigrants” rather than “return migrants” because they were born overseas. However, for the purposes of this study, overseas-born Tongans who came to live in Tonga are also part of the transnational return flow, largely because of the inherent social and cultural factors that link the two groups. In this way, I am acknowledging that overseas-born Tongans can return to their ‘ancestral home’ to live.

Figure 8: Country of birth



Tongans in the diaspora can still consider Tonga as their ‘home’ country irrespective of their birth place. Various reasons why respondents consider Tonga ‘home’ will be explored in Chapter Six but, interestingly, the question arises as to why overseas-born Tongans would consider Tonga as either their temporary or permanent ‘home’ given the social and economic privileges they have in their respective overseas home countries? A similar question can be asked of Tonga-born returnees who have permanent residence status overseas.

Age and Gender Composition

The respondents’ ages ranged between 25 and 63 years. The average age of the 48 return migrants is 41.25 years, which indicates that transnational returnees are, on average, coming home at the peak of their productive working age. The median age is 39 which means that 50 percent of the respondents are aged 39 years old and under (Table 6). The fact that transnational return migrants have obtained their permanent residence or citizenship of their respective overseas countries, and they can thus travel at anytime they want to without visa restrictions, may contribute to their return at a productive age. To this effect, they know they can go back to their overseas country at anytime they choose.

Table 6: Respondents age group distribution by gender

		Age Group								Total
		25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	
Gender	Male	0	8.3	25.0	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	16.7	100 (24)
	Female	33.3	16.7	20.8	8.3	12.5	4.2	0	4.2	100 (24)
	Total	16.7 (N=8)	12.5 (N=6)	22.9 (N=11)	10.4 (N=5)	12.5 (N=6)	8.3 (N=4)	8.3 (N=3)	10.4 (N=5)	100 (48)

There is a significant difference between male and female transnational returnees in terms of their age distribution. Females tend to return at a younger age than males, -- 71 percent of those who completed the survey were aged between 25 and 39 years compared with 33 percent of the males. Differences by gender in family obligations largely explain this. Traditionally, women have been obligated to look after their parents, and they often accompany parents 'home' (Tonga) or return to look after them in Tonga. This was reflected in the survey by a greater number of female respondents who indicated that the reason for their return was family reunification. However this does not necessary mean that men do not have family obligations, as can be seen in Table 7 which summarises some of the reason given for return by gender.

Table 7: Reasons for return by gender

Gender	Range of reasons given
Female	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Family reunification – Tonga is where my parents and siblings are permanently residing - Stay with ailing mother - To be with my family - My husband doesn't have permanent residence - Family reunion – most of my family migrated back here to Tonga due to employment
Male	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to stay with my mother and grandparents - to be with my parents so that when they will die I am staying with them

Table 6 also shows that in the sample surveyed for this research project, transnational return migration involved as many women as it did men. From a developmental perspective, this is arguably good for Tonga's future development should the government seek to attract members of the Tongan diaspora home. Further analysis of why women and men return to Tonga is carried out in Chapter Six.

Occupation

The International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) used by Tonga's Statistics Department indicates that just under 80 percent of the transnational returnees were in managerial and professional occupations (Table 8). This is a clear indication that transnational returnees are well educated, and tend to fit Cerase's (1974) category of the "return of innovation" – people capable of assisting Tonga's national building strategy. The remaining 20 percent accounts for returnees who engaged in 'other' occupational positions. Whether these return migrants will stay permanently in Tonga is another critical question which is explored further in Chapter Nine.

Table 8: Occupational status of respondents by gender

Occupation	Male	Female	Total
Legislators, administrators & managers	41.7	29.2	35.4 (17)
Professionals	33.3	54.2	43.8 (21)
Technicians & associate professionals	4.2	0.0	2.1 (1)
Clerks	0.0	8.3	4.2 (2)
Service & sales workers	12.5	0.0	6.3 (3)
Agriculture & fisheries workers	4.2	0.0	2.1 (1)
Elementary occupations	4.2	8.3	6.3 (3)
Total	100 (N=24)	100 (N=24)	100 (N=48)

The small numbers in the sample make it difficult to draw any general conclusions about the occupational distribution of respondents by gender. However, the results are consistent with the 1996 Census findings (Government of Tonga, 1999 xxxv). While there are higher shares of women (54%) with professional occupations than men (33%), the reverse is true when it comes to managerial-type positions. Around 42 percent of the male sample was occupying managerial positions compared with 29 percent of the females in the survey population.

In association with the occupation of returnees, there is the issue of employment status of respondents. Approximately 65 percent of the return migrants were engaged in full time salaried employment either in government or with non-government organisations, with a further 29 percent employed in their own private business (self-

employed). Combining these two employment categories covers about 94 percent of the sampled respondents (Table 9).

Table 9: Employment status

Employment	Percent	Cumulative %
Full time in a job	64.6	64.6
Self employed	29.2	93.8
Household duties with one or all of farming, fishing, handicraft	2.1	95.8
Retired	2.1	97.9
Other (eg. housewife only)	2.1	100.0
Total	100 (N=48)	

It is apparent from Tables 8 and 9 that transnational returnees have brought back skills, knowledge and experience that can be used in pursuing their career aspirations in Tonga. Respondents were asked whether their overseas experience had influenced their employment status on return. Approximately 83 percent indicated that their time abroad had enabled them to gain experience, skills and knowledge that directly contributed to their current employment status. Only 15 percent said their overseas experience had no impact on their current employment status, and one person was unsure.

Of the 83 percent that gained skills and knowledge from abroad, 97 percent stated that they were applying these in their current job. Some respondents pointed out that their attitude towards work and the “work culture” overseas had assisted them in their work. Respondents were asked a follow up open-ended question to justify why they thought their overseas experiences had influenced their present occupational status. The responses were thematically regrouped according to: (1) ‘application of overseas work culture and attitude to work’; (2) ‘application of skills and knowledge’; and (3) ‘others’. Any reasons that could not be classified under (1) and (2) were grouped into category (3). The responses are summarised in Table 10.

Table 10: How overseas experience influenced present occupational status

Reason (regrouped)	Range of answers given
Application of overseas work culture and attitude to work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working long hours and hard labour makes the present job easy - Coming to work on time, finishing my job on time and doing work with quality and precision - Gaining experience and more knowledge helped me establish my new business - Work place ethics, standard of work and value for money - Overseas experience has made me demanding and vocal in my current job, which is not the norm in Tongan work culture
Application of skills and knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Experience and skills acquired during my period of employment in NZ – I was able to apply it here in Tonga with regards to customer service - I was a chef and also had my own business in NZ. I contribute ideas in menu planning and running of the kitchen here in the hotel. I also do repair jobs whether its plumbing, painting and if I can do it I will fix it - I was working for various contractors in Australia from 1985 till 1993. Definitely my overseas experience has built me up to the post I am undertaking at the present time. The standard, quality and professionalism has been greatly influenced by my overseas experiences - I am vocal, frank and up front with my staff. Being honest and transparent are important traits to have as a manager - Return with higher qualification thereby get promoted to a higher level – extend knowledge and skills - My past work experience has better prepared me for work here in Tonga. I am more computer literate and understand office politics for example. This helps me to exhibit a degree of professionalism in my work habits
Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unemployed overseas - Work and studies overseas does not match my work in Tonga - Am not working here in Tonga, just a housewife - No intention of remaining in Tonga permanently

The application of overseas working culture and attitude such as working to time and placing a premium on quality of work to work in Tonga is appreciated and valued in the work force. However, without effective management these values can easily be submerged. There are tangible outcomes for application of skills and knowledge by returnees. The outcomes could be to enhance the reception of customers, contribute new ideas in menu planning in the hotel, and inject a degree of professionalism in the standard of work in the work place as well as promotion to a higher level in the work place. These aspects are expected to be highly valued by the Tongan Government as

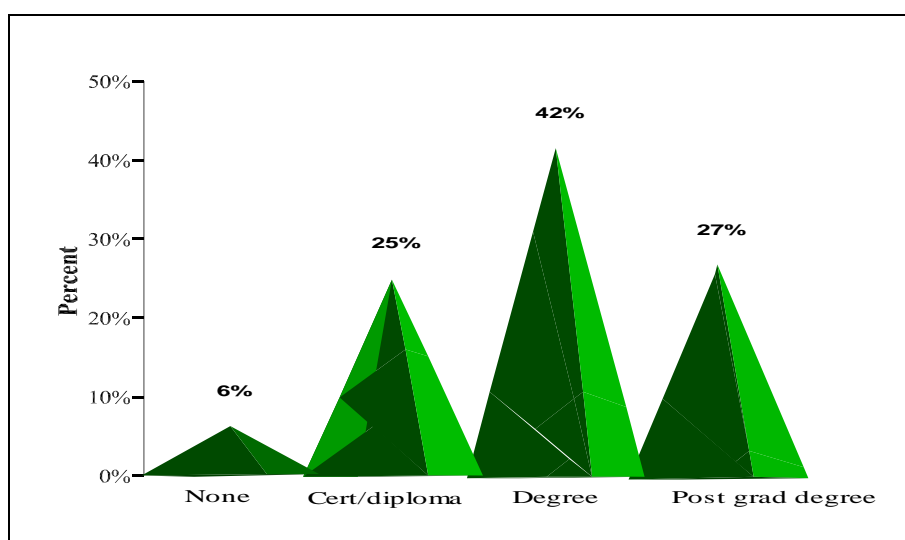
it progresses its current Economic and Public Sector Reform Programme. On the other hand, there is evidence of mismatches of qualifications and labour force demand as well as those who did not acquire new skills or resources abroad (i.e. unemployed) in the 'other' category.

Level of Education

Human capital is one of the most important resources for Tonga's socio-economic development. Transnational return migrants have a role to play in this regard in helping to ameliorate the effect of the exodus of Tongans for work overseas – the phenomenon of 'brain drain'. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they were educated overseas or not. The great majority of the respondents (88% - 42 respondents) did gain a qualification while overseas. Only 12 percent did not (6 respondents). This finding reinforces the common belief that educationally related reasons underlie the decisions for much Tongan overseas migration.

Figure 9 summarises the educational attainment of transnational return migrants. Just over two thirds of the returnees (69 percent) had attained a tertiary qualification while overseas -- 42 percent at the undergraduate degree level and 27 percent at the post-graduate degree level. A quarter of the respondents had obtained certificates or diplomas.

Figure 9: Highest qualification attained by returnees



There is a significant difference by gender in the level of educational qualification acquired. All of the female respondents acquired some sort of educational qualification, while amongst the males 13 percent did not obtain a qualification. Interestingly, approximately 42 percent of females have a masters degree or higher compared to about 13 percent of males (Table 11). This is in marked contrast to the 1996 Census results which showed that men dominate in terms of attainment of tertiary qualifications at all levels, from certificates to doctorates (Government of Tonga, 1999 xxvi).

Table 11: Educational qualification of respondents by gender

		Educational qualification				Total
		None	Cert/ diploma	Degree	Post graduate degree	
Gender	Male	12.5	25.0	50.0	12.5	100 (24)
	Female	0.0	25.0	33.3	41.7	100 (24)
	Total	6.3 (N=3)	25.0 (N=12)	41.7 (N=20)	27.1 (N=13)	100 (N=48)

Marital Status

Table 12 shows that just over half (56%) of the respondents were married, reflecting a higher propensity for married migrants to return than bachelors (44%). Three-

quarters (75%) of the male respondents were married compared to about 38 percent of women. This significant gender disparity reflects in part the very different age compositions of the two groups (see Table 6). It is also explained in part by the dominant roles of married men in Tongan rituals and legal entitlement to lands. On the other hand, single females have higher propensity to return than single males because of their subordinate position in their families until they get married, as well as their role as ‘care taker’ for parents, particularly at a younger age. For instance, one single female stated the reason for her return is to “stay with [her] ailing mother”. In my interview with an overseas-born single female returnee aged 26, named *Seini*, she pointed out how traditionally a single female would commonly be subject to the wishes and demands of her parents in a Tongan family unit. She said:

I used to be independent before for about five years. I used to be so independent fending for my own...totally in a different lifestyle in Christchurch compared to being here and being 25 [years old] but still under my parents and you still have to take what your parents had to say and all that...

Table 12: Marital status of returnees when return by gender

		Marital Status		Total
		Never Married	Married	
Gender	Male	25.0	75.0	100 (24)
	Female	62.5	37.5	100 (24)
	Total	43.8 (N=21)	56.3 (N=27)	100 (N=48)

When just the Tonga-born respondents are considered (Table 13), both the married females (56%) and males (73%) had higher proportions in the return flow than the never married cohort. This is not surprising because older Tongan-born migrants are more likely to return than younger ones for various social and economic factors. This reinforces 'Esau's (2005) finding that older migrants who have lived in New Zealand for 14 years or more tended to express a wish to return to Tonga upon retirement more frequently than the younger ones.

Table 13: Marital status of Tongan-born returnees by gender

		Marital Status		
		Never married	Married	Total
Gender	Male	27.3	72.7	100 (22)
	Female	43.8	56.3	100 (16)
	Total	34.2 (N=13)	65.8 (N=25)	100 (N=38)

The following statement by a widow and early retirement respondent aged 63, named *Sione* illustrates why senior migrants have a higher propensity for return.

For me personally, I grew up here in Tonga and generally the Tongan way of life (*mo'ui fakaTonga*) will never depart from me...The way I grew up here in Tonga, the freedom (*tau'ataina*) and comfortable atmosphere (*fiemalie*) I had then are unforgettable... I've been to the States and Australia and I can't get the relaxation atmosphere I want there. I sacrifice my life during the time I was working [in New Zealand] because for a time like this. Now I have retired, returned and I recuperate the freedom of life again back here in Tonga...

There has been a notable trend of family migration out of Tonga in recent years particularly to New Zealand. This is not limited to Tonga only but Samoa has experienced a similar situation. Provisions for family reunification under the New Zealand Immigration policy, for instance, have allowed for a lot of family cross-border movements to New Zealand on family related grounds (Bedford, 2007).

Table 14: The number of people accompanying respondents through marital status

		Number of people returned with		
		Return with NO one	Return with >= ONE person	Total
Marital status	Never married	95.2	4.8	100 (21)
	Married	25.9	74.1	100 (27)
	Total	56.3 (N=27)	43.8 (N=21)	100

Similarly, there is also an indication of family return movement back to Tonga in the responses obtained in my survey. Table 14 shows that approximately three-quarters (74%) of married return migrants were accompanied by one or more people back to Tonga. As expected, about 95 percent of single return migrants had no companion when they returned.

Reasons for family return movement were revealed in my interview with *Tomu*, who was born overseas and came to Tonga in 1993. He explained that one of his reasons for coming to Tonga with his family was related to income generation. He said:

[I]ronically, I was earning a reasonable salary back then in 1993, between NZ\$30-\$36,000 and we were spending every penny between our family, wife and two children, and rent, food and our bills and we couldn't save a penny. I was looking at how are we gonna get a deposit then I looked at Tonga. We [wife and two kids] heard of the farming opportunities here and we came to have a look and we never look back. Ironically, in economic terms this is better. There are better opportunities for [us] in Tonga than in New Zealand.

Duration of Absence

Respondents were asked to list every country they had lived in for 12 months or more and the number of years they spent in the respective countries. Three options were given and the total number of years spent by respondents living overseas ranged from two to 36 years. Of the 48 respondents, 20 indicated that they had spent more than 12 months in a second country other than that of their first destination and eight had moved on to live in a third country from their previous two destination countries. Although limited by the number of options given to the respondents, results from the survey show that some returnees can be considered to be 'transilient migrants'⁴, who have been progressively enlarging their 'world'. However, the rationale for their repeated movement was not captured in the survey – this is a potential area for further research.

On average, return migrants spent 15 years overseas before returning to live in Tonga. The median duration of residence overseas is 14 years. Fifteen years is quite a reasonable time abroad because Olesen (2002) speculates that between 10 and 15 years appears to bring maximum benefit to the sending country through remitting and returning with financial, human and social capital.

⁴ Migrants who transfer from one country to another (King, 1986 5)

Table 15: Duration of absence

		Duration of absence		
		Year <= 14	Year > 14	Total
Gender	Male	50.0	50.0	100 (24)
	Female	54.2	45.8	100 (24)
	Total	52.1 (N=25)	47.9 (N=23)	100 (N=48)

There is no significant difference in terms of the duration of absence by gender (Table 15).

Discussion

A Challenge for ‘Brain Gain’

Much has been said about ‘brain drain’ in the Pacific and its catastrophic impacts on the emigrant countries’ labour force particularly in the services sector (Brown and Connell, 2004; Reddy, Mohanty and Naidu, 2004). Conversely, little research has been done to investigate the reverse trend of ‘brain drain’ or ‘brain gain’ and its effects on the country of origin. The flow of educated and skilled migrants out of the Pacific countries to Australia and New Zealand has been accentuated to some degree by the selectivity of the skilled-based immigration policies of these destination countries (see, for example, Bedford, 2007).

On an international scale, many of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries have a substantial interest in facilitating the recruitment of migrants who have the potential to gain tertiary training and qualifications in local institutions (Sutter and Jandl, 2006). For instance, of the 1419 Tongan migrants who entered New Zealand under a student permit between 1997 and 2005, almost half (43%) had obtained a permanent residence by the end of June 2005 (Bedford, 2007 43). From a Tongan perspective, the transition rate from a student permit to permanent residence of Tongans is quite alarming given the hope that many of these people might return to Tonga with qualifications and experience gained

overseas. This is not unique for Tonga as tertiary studies have increasingly become the main successful agent for transforming and generating permanent residence status for many Pacific migrant people. The challenge, however, rests with Tonga, like any other sending country, to pull back its talented citizens and/or encourage the greater engagement of the diaspora with the social and economic development goals and aspirations of the home country.

‘Brain Gain’ at a Glance

Human resources are the most important asset for advancing Tonga’s social and economic development. A culture of migration overseas, similar to the New Zealander’s “overseas experience”, has been instilled in the blood of many Tongans, and this movement will not be stopped easily. The challenge is to encourage more of those who leave to return at some stage, and the evidence of human capital gain found in the returning of innovative skilled and educated transnational Tongans in this study offers some hope for those planning for Tonga’s sustainable development. Transnational migrants are characteristically highly educated and holding good jobs upon return whether in government or non-government organisations. This supports Ahlburg and Song’s (2006 119) affirmation that “human capital is the key for holding a good job”. Allowing for migration and training abroad is critical for occupational advancement of return migrants, particularly if they seek employment opportunities in the regional organisations or other countries in the region.

Tonga appears to have benefited from the return of transnational migrants. The development implications of this return will be discussed in detail in Chapter Seven but the fact that the majority are engaging in managerial and professional jobs signals that there has been some countering of the effect of ‘brain drain’. The return of highly educated transnational Tongans reinforces the findings of Ahlburg and Brown’s (1998) study of the return intentions of Samoan and Tongan migrants in Australia where they revealed that university qualified Tongans were more likely to return than those with lower levels of education attainment. Another study of Pacific

Island nurses and doctors from Fiji, Samoa and Tonga in Auckland and Sydney revealed that Tonga's skilled health professional are more likely to migrate overseas but also much more likely to return than the Fijians and Samoans (Brown and Connell, 2004). However, there is, arguably, an even higher tendency for university qualified transnational Tongans to be undecided about returning or re-emigration if they eventually returned. This is evident in the limited number of transnationals who have returned as discussed in Chapter Two and Three.

The return of transnational Tongans during their economically productive ages could be perceived as a potential way to further their employment career through extending their skills and experiences in Tonga's development context before re-migrating abroad to join the 'global labour force', should they wish. Specific reasons for why transnational migrants have returned are examined more closely in Chapter Six but, as already indicated, employment is a core element of the return of transnational Tongans.

There are two possible reasons why employment is critically important for transnational migrants. Firstly, given returnees are highly educated and have 'good jobs' they are perceived to '*return for career advancement*'. Secondly, they come home to earn income to assist them in dealing with the social, economic and cultural challenges they face as they go through the re-integration process. These reasons will be further discussed in later chapters but, with regard to the former, it seems that many transnational returnees, irrespective of their place of birth, perceive Tonga to be a place where they can broaden their knowledge and experience as well as building their capability and capacity, while at the same time making a contribution to the development of the country. Through this process they enhance their prospects for furthering their career in another country or in a regional multinational organisation such as the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), UNDP, Forum Secretariat and the University of the South Pacific (USP), to name a few.

Retaining a 'talented pool' of returning transnationals remains a great challenge for not only the Tongan Government but for other countries as well. In the case of New Zealand, for instance, some strategies for building a talented nation and retaining qualified tertiary citizens were put in place (see LEK Consulting Ltd, 2001) and amongst the recent strategies is the waiving of interest rates on student loans by the current Labour Government in the hope of encouraging more students to stay and work in New Zealand on completion of their studies (The Treasury, 2006).

In July 2006, the Government of Tonga endorsed the amendment of the Nationality Act to allow dual citizenship for Tongans born and living overseas but this is only a minor component of a strategy to better engage with the diaspora. There is neither specific policy nor programmes to retain transnational return migrants' in-country and this will remain a great challenge for Tonga in the foreseeable future due to the on-going vulnerability of the country's social, economic and political development. How the Government of Tonga intends to address 'brain drain' and sustain 'brain gain' remain questions to be answered.

Critical Roles of Socio-economic Variables in the Re-integration Process

The importance of a productive role in the economy of the home country as a strategy for assisting with the cultural challenges of re-integration has been stressed by several authors. 'Culture shock' is one of the most common challenges facing returning migrants (Connell, 1995; Gmelch, 1980; Macpherson, 1985; Rozario and Gow, 2003; Small, 1997). Tonga is no exception in this regard and, arguably, 'age' plays a crucial role in the process of re-integration to the home society. This is evident in the return of transnational Tongans at an age when they remain energetic and reasonably adventurous. This should increase one's tolerance for and patience with any challenges during the re-integration process such as the recent riots in Tonga.

This is evident in 'Ana's case, a single female when she returned in 1993 but now married, when she described her return situation as follows:

I [returned] back when I was 24 and I was probably at the peak of ones youth...you kind of just make things work and you are adventurous and you want to try out new challenges...probably if I had stayed long enough in Australia and got myself established and say migrate back [here] when I was thirty or so, I probably could not have the tolerance and patience to adjust or acculturate to the new system I return to.

She compared herself to her mother, who is now living in the United States. She explained:

...because my mother came back to Tonga when she was 47 she couldn't cope as she has been out of the country when she was 18, she can't cope. Even now my mum is 55. I've been asking her to come back like five years ago. She said she can't cope with the cultural pressure [and] the demands of the family. She is very Tongan inside but keeping away is her way of dealing or coping with the cultural and social pressures. Just removing yourself from that environment is perhaps better...So for her...in her mid-forties her tolerance level would be zero.

This is just one side of the story, though. Other migrants are more comfortable with the Tongan way of life when they return near or after retirement age. *Sione* explained his situation since returning in 2002:

You know, although I'm staying here by myself I will stay here [Tonga] till I die then my children can come and take my coffin back to New Zealand. Since I've returned, I helped the constructions of two houses for my brothers, helped them in the garden and do domestic duties...That retail shop is mine but I have given it away to my little brother and his family because I don't want to repeat my working life as in New Zealand. Even my obligations to the extended family, village and church I don't regret it. I have a vehicle and people have just come and ask if they can use the vehicle and I let them use it... These are cultural behaviours that have been instilled in me, the way we share things and being generous makes me happy...In this way I am respected by the people in my surrounding area because of my behaviour.

Cerase's model of return migration demonstrates that the *duration of absence* from the originating country is critically important in view of the development impacts that might be associated with return migration. The shorter the duration of absence (*i.e.* often associated with the *return of failures*) the less likely return migrants would bring with them capital, skills and experiences that could further their economic opportunities in Tonga. At the other extreme, those who are absent for a very long time (*i.e. return of retirement*) may come back with limited resources and energy to engage with local development issues, and may not necessarily stay, as in the case of Niueans (see Mangnall, 2004). In this respect, Olesen's (2002) suggestion of 10-15 years away could arguably be an optimum timeframe for *return of conservatism and*

innovation, a combination which could be very fruitful for Tonga. The influence of duration of absence on the re-integration of return migrants is discussed further in Chapter Seven.

Conclusion

Although the scale of transnational return migration in Tonga is minor in comparison with the rate of emigration, the return of ‘talented Tongans’ is occurring, irrespective of their place of birth. Characteristically, return migrants are highly educated and energetic and, more importantly, they are engaging in the labour force either through employment in the civil service or private sector or by establishing a private business. Critical to the development of Tonga is the requirement that, on average, transnational migrants return at a productive age and that their duration of absence has been long enough for them to gain the human capital required to advance their career and simultaneously contribute positively to development in Tonga.

The social and economic characteristics of transnational returning migrants imply that, eventually, return migration could be a contributing factor for ‘nation building’ in Tonga. However, achieving this rests with the ability of the Government of Tonga, by and large, to provide a conducive and coherent policy environment to further encourage ‘brain gain’ and simultaneously reduce ‘brain drain’. How to retain ‘brain gain’, however, is another tough and demanding task that continues to be an on-going challenge. As Levitt (2001 200) has stated, “transnational migration opens up opportunities for some and constitutes a deal with the devil for others”.

The social and economic profile of transnational returnees to Tonga has been established. In the next chapter I attempt to provide some deeper understanding of the reasons given by transnational migrants for their return.

CHAPTER SIX

RECONSTRUCTION OF TRANSNATIONAL RETURN MIGRATION

The aim of this chapter is to reconstruct the social meanings attached to return migration by Tongans who participated in the survey and in-depth interviews in November/December 2006 and February/March 2007. In the survey questionnaire, respondents were asked to rate factors that had influenced their decision to return, as well as to state three reasons for their return. The first section covers the explanations surrounding the mobility patterns of return migrants before they actually moved back to live in Tonga. The quantitative findings are presented in sections two and three. Section four draws the threads of the analysis together and assesses the findings of the nine in-depth interviews.

Mobility Pattern Prior to Return to Tonga

Before attempting to scrutinise the rationale for the return of transnational Tongans to live in Tonga it is important to have some insights into the mobility pattern of return migrants. The survey questionnaire did not capture the repetitive movements of respondents between Tonga and their respective countries of residence. Instead, the advantage of having the qualitative component is that it allows for this kind of information to be obtained with reference to the contexts within which the mobility occurred. The following extracts illustrate some dimensions of the mobility of transnational Tongans who have subsequently returned to live in Tonga.

Ana said:

[W]hen I was in Australia I never had an urge to come back to Tonga even during the holidays. When I was taken back in 1974 I never came back to Tonga until 1983 and I didn't bother to come back to Tonga, except just for visits, but never to settle permanently even when I came back in 1993 it was intentionally for only 12 months that was it then go back in 1994.

Tomu explained:

All my life I was raised in Tonga and New Zealand and travelled back and forward. In 1966 when I was four we came here and stayed till 1970s. I started primary school here. We went to New Zealand in the 70s. I finished primary school and started college came back in the 70s for a few years to do two years in the college in Tonga then back to New Zealand. In 1979 I finished college and then went to University and then all sort of years of working and then came back here in 1993. So all my life I've been going backwards and forwards between Tonga and New Zealand. I was here in the 60s, I was here in the 70s, I came around in the 80s and then in the 90s we came back.

Tevita explained to me that his family spent 25 years in Australia before his father decided to return to Tonga after divorcing his mother. *Tevita* said that “every three to five years in those 25 years we always came back but for holiday only”. Similarly, *Semisi* who spent 36 years overseas visited Tonga for “like 10 days for a holiday, probably every five years”. Likewise *Pita* said that his visits to Tonga depended on family occasions, but otherwise Christmas was the only time he came back to Tonga.

Kevini's case is slightly different but not unique. He said:

[W]hen I decided to come over, I came here and started looking around. The first time I came looking at what I was going to do. I found that what I have been doing in Australia for the last 30 odd years I don't want to do it here again in Tonga and I wanted to do something else. I started looking for something that nobody else has ever done or nobody has really tried to do seriously. It's not easy because when you've got family and talking about uprooting, a lot of material and moving from the area you have been living in for the last 30 odd years, it's a hard decision. But after considering a lot of things and after three or four trips backward and forward from Australia, I could see that I would like to spend the rest of my life here back in Tonga and I also had a look at what I could offer.

Via launched her application for New Zealand permanent residence in 2001 then migrated to New Zealand in 2003 with her family. *Via* said “when we were entitled to have our indefinite re-entry visa to New Zealand I started to move back and forth” between Tonga and New Zealand. But prior to her application for New Zealand permanent residence she spent several years overseas studying for her undergraduate and Master's degrees during the course of which repeated return trips to Tonga were the norm during study recesses.

Repeated return to Tonga has caused the strengthening of family network ties and attachment to Tonga as ‘home’ over the years to a point where migrants could make an informed decision to return with the intention to live in Tonga. Even if return does not eventuate this is the advantage of living in two ‘worlds’ or being transnational because one can evaluate how best he or she can maximise the social and economic opportunities in a given time and space. As Thaman (1985 115) stated:

New Zealand, the United States of America, and Fiji have all been new homes for me at different times and have all contributed in significant ways towards the evolution of a strong personal identity – one still, however, closely tied to the spirit of the land of my birth and the vast ocean that surrounds it. The experience of crossing both physical and cultural barriers – in fact, the experience of multiculturalism – is painful, but it is also humanising.

Factors Influencing Decisions of Transnational Migrants to Return

The choice between returning to Tonga to be with family, to work in the plantation or the office, to establish a business, or to remain outside the paid workforce, on the one hand, or staying overseas where opportunities for advancing one’s economic and social life are plentiful, on the other, is a critical one for many transnational Tongans. In this study, respondents were asked to rate the importance of the following factors in their decision to return to live in Tonga (Table 16).

Table 16: Factors that influenced the transnational migrants' decision to return

Factors	Rating (%)				Total
	Not applicable	Not important	Some importance	Very important	
Family reunification	4.2	4.2	22.9	68.8	100 (N=48)
Employment	8.3	20.8	16.7	54.2	100 (N=48)
Tonga as 'home'	6.3	16.7	29.2	47.9	100 (N=48)
Land	8.3	33.3	16.7	41.7	100 (N=48)
Business	27.1	29.2	22.9	20.8	100 (N=48)
Retirement	31.3	41.7	12.5	14.6	100 (N=48)
Inflation	12.5	62.5	16.7	8.3	100 (N=48)
Political reform	18.8	56.3	18.8	6.3	100 (N=48)
Church obligation	16.7	41.7	20.8	20.8	100 (N=48)

'Not applicable' stands for not playing any role in the decision to return while 'not important' means that it plays a role in the returnee's decision making but was not considered important.

If the factors that are considered to be 'very important' are ranked, it is clear that family reunification, availability of suitable employment, a sense of Tonga as home and availability of land are consecutively the four most important reasons for return. Conversely, business opportunities, retirement, church obligations and political reform factors in the homeland and inflationary factors in Tonga are the most frequently cited reasons in the 'not important' category. A slightly different order emerges if the percentages indicating the reason were of 'some importance' and 'very important' are combined. Availability of employment drops to third ranked position while church obligations move up to sixth position.

Apparently, social factors, rather than economic ones, clearly emerge as the predominant ones influencing a transnational migrant's decision to return. The influence of economic factors in Tonga such as employment, investment in a business initiative and inflation in Tonga were of secondary importance, with political reform in Tonga having a minor influence on the decisions of transnational return migrants.

Reasons for Return

Respondents were asked to state the three most important reasons for their return, in a ranked order. These were then grouped into broader categories (see Chapter Four or Appendix Six), and the results of this grouping are summarised in Table 17.

Table 17: Importance of factors cited as reasons for return to live in Tonga

		Percent		
		<i>Reason 1</i> (Most important)	<i>Reason 2</i> (Second most important)	<i>Reason 3</i> (Third most important)
Factors	Family reunification	37.5	25.5	11.6
	‘Home’	18.8	23.4	18.6
	Employment	16.7	19.1	20.9
	Culture & traditions	12.5	19.1	16.3
	Business	4.2	2.1	9.3
	Retirement	2.1	0.0	9.3
	Development contribution	6.3	0.0	2.3
	Church obligations	2.1	2.1	0.0
	Availability of land	0.0	2.1	2.3
	Education	0.0	2.1	0.0
	Not comfortable abroad	0.0	4.3	7.0
	Political reform	0.0	0.0	2.3
	Total	100 (N=48)	100 (N=47)	100 (N=43)

Note: One respondent did not give a second reason and five did not cite a third reason.

It is apparent from Table 17 that socio-cultural factors are the primary motives for return of transnational Tongans. Out of all the responses given for *Reason 1*, family reunification is the most important factor as stated by 38 percent of the respondents. This was followed, in order of frequency of citing, by: ‘a sense of Tonga as home’ (19%), ‘employment’ (17%) and ‘culture and traditions’ (13%). For *Reason 2*, the same order is maintained, family reunification (26%), ‘a sense of Tonga as home’ (23%) except ‘employment’ and ‘culture and traditions’ are equal at 19 percent. In the case of *Reason 3*, the pattern changes. Family reunification drops to 12 percent whereas ‘employment’ (22 percent) becomes a top reason followed by ‘a sense of Tonga as home’ (19 percent). Culture and tradition are still cited by 16 percent of respondents as their third reason.

Although the socio-cultural factors are the main motives for return of transnational Tongans, economic factors, particularly employment, become more consistently important as one moves from *Reason 1* to *Reason 3*. This is hardly surprising because if migrants hope to successfully re-integrate into Tongan society on return they must have employment or self-employment to generate revenue/income both to survive and to cope with the cultural and social pressures. Tonga's economy has become increasingly monetised and returning 'to work the land' for subsistence purposes is no longer a feasible strategy even if this remains ideal for some returnees.

A rather different set of pressures emerged in the factors identified as the second and third reasons for return relating to signs of discomfort with on-going residence in the host society overseas. Specific points that were made included: 'getting away from monotony and routine', 'get away from typical overseas life for a while', 'not feeling comfortable in New Zealand society', 'dissatisfaction with future prospects in New Zealand', 'getting away from the stress and advance lifestyle overseas'.

In Cerase's (1974) model, these reasons could be associated with the category of *return of failures*. However before coming to this conclusion it is important to investigate whether the socio-economic status of transnational return migrants in Tonga is really a reflection of 'failure' abroad or a 'way forward' in advancing their career and life opportunities.

To illustrate the diversity of reasons stated by respondents for their return, some of the specific statements made by respondents that have been grouped under the headings of the four most important factors are detailed in Table 18.

Examining the specific reasons stated by respondents that are broadly grouped under family reunification, return is primarily based on nuclear family related reasons to reunite with spouse or with parents, for instance, even, for instance, in a situation where a member of the family was 'forced' to return. Returning based on employment related factors is sought after by the Tonga Government in view of the

injection of skills and investment prospects to the labour force. Evidence also emerged for the return to build capacity through application of skills and to gain working experience as well as seeking possible career paths. Having land and a house, as well as a sense of contribution to the country of origin, are factors in the return of migrants. ‘Staying Tongan’ has been a major factor for many migrants (Small, 1997) and their children and it was also a factor underpinning the return of transnational migrants.

Table 18: Some examples of specific reasons for returning to live in Tonga

Factor	Example of reasons to return
Family reunification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - My husband didn’t have permanent residence - Family reunification - Tonga is where my parents and siblings permanently reside - Return to be with partner - Return to be with ailing mother - Wife was deported from the US - I have been away so long from the members of the family. I have to come back to see parent and grandparents - To reside with and assist my parents who live here in Tongatapu
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - My trip to Tonga is part of my capacity building training - Availability of suitable employment - I got a job before return to Tonga. I was happy about the job description and wages - To seek possible career opportunities, believe I would be exposed to more business opportunities in Tonga as opposed to NZ - Work experience, initially to apply skills - My husband has to return to work for the Church here in Tonga - A sense of obligation to serve in the Tongan government as an educated Tongan and to use skills gained to assist with development of the Kingdom for the benefit of the entire country

Table 18: Some examples of specific reasons for returning to live in Tonga (*Cont.*)

A sense of Tonga as 'home'	- I return to my ' <i>api</i> [home] because Tonga is more peaceful for the mind, soul and spirit.
	- The lifestyle of earning enough to live comfortably without the stress of being in the fast lane
	- A sense of Tonga as home – Tonga was instilled in me by my parents as home and was where I had spent all my holidays while away
	- I have my own house in Tonga
	- Tonga will always be home – I never intended to look for a better life in NZ. We migrated to give more educational opportunities to our children
	- To invest and put something back into Tonga
Custom and culture	- A need to raise my young children in Tonga to accustom them to Tongan culture and tradition
	- Familiarise with the Tongan culture
	- Cultural identity – to connect and discover more about my cultural background
	- Touch base with roots

When the factors underpinning reasons for return are examined separately for males and females, it can be seen that there are few significant differences on the basis of gender of respondent (Table 19).

Table 19: Most important factors underpinning the reasons stated for return by gender

		Gender		
		Male	Female	Total
Factors	Family reunification	37.5	37.5	37.5 (18)
	Retire	4.2	0.0	2.1 (1)
	Employment	16.7	16.7	16.7 (8)
	Culture & traditions	4.2	20.8	12.5 (6)
	Business	8.3	0.0	4.2 (2)
	Home	20.8	16.7	18.8 (9)
	Development contribution	4.2	8.3	6.3 (3)
	Church obligation	4.2	0.0	2.1 (1)
	Total	100 (N=24)	100 (N=24)	100 (N=48)

Earlier studies of intentional return migration in the Pacific (e.g. Brown and Connell, 2004; Macpherson, 1985) have found that return migrants are often interested in establishing a business when they get home. A similar situation is found in other

developing economies as jobs in the formal sector tend to be scarce (United Nations, 2006). This study reveals that the 29 percent of the self-employed respondents are investing in businesses such as cafés, guest houses, retail shops, computer and IT companies, transit lodges, consultancy companies, working in family businesses or are involved in an informal sector trading activity such as BBQ vending, fair trading or exporting crops overseas to sell through the Tongan community network. However, the relative importance of establishing a business on return is masked by the significance of social and cultural factors as the primary reasons for return of transnational Tongans. The significance of investing in a business becomes more obvious after return and, along with employment, is arguably one of the main determinants for successful re-integration. This matter is discussed further in Chapter Seven.

Return Narratives

The prospect of returning to Tonga from a place where there is a higher quality of life overall, better education and health standards, diverse employment opportunities, a well-established diasporic community, and the availability of welfare security benefits, amongst other things, is difficult to contemplate. To get a better and empathetic understanding of the reasons for return requires consideration of the narratives of the migrants. As King (2000 18) notes:

[R]eturn may have been an impulse not easily explained or rationalised, whilst for returns which took place several years earlier, the memory might have played tricks. The implication of many of these points is that a *qualitative* approach, which sacrifices statistical coverage from depth of analysis, may be more appropriate to uncover the complex and multi-layered nature of return migration processes and decisions.

Family formation and reunification are fundamental elements that not only influence the decision of transnational migrants to return but also persuade them to settle back long term in the home country. To give evidence, *Tevita*, who has been in Tonga for six years, elaborates on the reason for his return in the following statement:

I wasn't [thinking of returning]. I was pretty much settled in Australia. I had a full time job making regular money, you know, buying the material things the car, the big TV, the house, clothes and working seven days a week. I didn't realise [returning] until my father decided to come back to Tonga after divorce...to do a guest house. Of course we were very negative about it and we thought man he is crazy going back to Tonga. We got everything here! Why does he want to go back to Tonga?... Anyway he went ahead with it as we couldn't stop him because he wanted to do it. So when he showed us that he was not going to live in Australia my mum, even though they were divorced, actually told me to come and stay with him. I didn't really want to come because I didn't want to come back to Tonga but the only reason I came was because of him -- because he was here on his own...

Similarly, *Ana* admitted that the reason she settled in Tonga is "because [she] got married [in Tonga] and [her] husband didn't want to migrate to Australia". In *Seini's* case, she was born in New Zealand when her mother attended a family occasion but then they returned to Tonga. It is apparent that *Seini* has no choice but to return on the ground of family reunification. She (re)migrated to New Zealand for tertiary education then again returned to Tonga in 2005 to stay with her parents.

Culture and traditional values are vital for maintaining the 'Tongan-ness' of migrants and more so for the young generations (Lee, 2003; 2004a). Clear evidence of this became apparent in the interview with *Ana* and *Tomu*. *Ana* explained:

[The other reason why I return is] because I wasn't raised in Tonga I wanted to come back and pick up the language and learn the culture and I guess try to understand my heritage. For us the cross-cultural adjustment, the culture, the current prevailing culture in Australia and even the US, the ideals and the values of the multi-culture advocated within the mainstream culture doesn't appeal to me. [My husband] still believes in the traditional way of bringing up the family and children and he feels that if we were to migrate we lose that.

Similarly, *Tomu* said about the reason for his return:

There were multiple reasons... but the primary one was that I wanted my children to grow up in Tonga and to speak Tongan, write Tongan, know the family and be Tongan. If we didn't come back to Tonga then it wasn't going to happen in New Zealand.

Semisi returned to help run a family business. He was quite optimistic and said "[t]here are opportunities here. That is one of the reasons [why I return]. I thought if I can't get on well with my family business then I can just do my own business and I will do my own stuff."

Retirement is another reason why transnational Tongans return. A widow and early retirement interviewee named *Sione* said:

That's why I return because my hard working days are over so I still want to come back to Tonga to recuperate with the true Tongan way of life. To give evidence, when I retired, as the *palangi* says 'home sweet home', and I should have stayed overseas because all my children are there and life is 'easy' there but I decided to return...I went for a purpose, now I have achieved it [and] its time for me to return.

In *Pita's* case, strong attachment to Tonga was apparent from his explanation. He said:

I've never thought of living anywhere else but Tonga. I mean to be honest Tonga has always been 'home'. There hasn't been any second thought of anywhere else being 'home' for me and I don't know for some reason I just can't... even when I was working overseas it has always been in my mind that I've got to come back here. There is something in this place that draws me back here. That's why I'm back here.

Tomu mentioned two other reasons for his return that were not commonly mentioned by others:

[W]e've been brought up by our parents to use the education and work opportunities that we got in New Zealand to come back here [to Tonga] one day and do something to help our other cousins that didn't have those opportunities.

Finally, the third reason if you like, ironically, when I was earning a reasonable salary...of NZ\$30-36,000...in those days... and we were spending every penny...I was looking how are we going to get a deposit or for help and then I looked at Tonga. We heard of the farming opportunities here and we came to have a look and we never look back. Ironically in economic terms this is better. There are better opportunities for me in Tonga than in NZ.

The third reason why *Tomu* returned portrayed a sense of dissatisfaction with the destination country but expressed a greater ambition to invest skills and generate economic security and satisfaction in Tonga. In addition to this, respondents have stated reasons such as "trip to Tonga is part of my capacity building training" and "to seek possible career opportunities" (Table 18 – some examples of reasons) have reiterated the significance of the new type of return of transnational Tongans called *return for career advancement*.

It is clear from these statements by respondents that there are diverse reasons for returning to Tonga. Many of these reasons can be grouped, however, into broad categories that can be considered to be the factors underpinning return migration: family reunification, retirement, strong attachment to Tonga, culture and tradition as well as a greater opportunities for business investment. These findings are now placed in the wider context of the literature on migration of Pacific peoples.

Discussion

Repeated return to Tonga while based overseas is a common mobility pattern for transnational Tongans even if it remains essentially an invisible phenomenon because of the way migration statistics are collected (or not collected in the case of Tonga). The narratives above describing the repeated return of migrants before they eventually go back to live in Tonga reinforce speculations by Taufa (2003) and Bedford (1992) that return for visits is a significant component of the migration movements of Pacific people including Tongans. This is also obvious in the case of Niueans (see Mangnall, 2004). A substantive description of repeat return movement is also observed in Pau'u's (2002) personal account of '[her] life in four cultures' as well as Thaman's (1985) autobiography of her movements, even though these two have yet to return to stay in Tonga. In the case of the Tongans interviewed for this research project, there had been a decision to return to live in Tonga while still keeping open the option for periodic visits overseas if required in the future.

When the broad factors used in the questionnaire survey to categorise reasons for return are compared with the detailed responses obtained in the in-depth interviews, it is apparent there is little variation in the importance of reasons for return. It is also clear from other studies that social and cultural factors are the ones that respondents repeatedly cite as reasons for return—for example, by Niueans to Niue, by New Zealanders to New Zealand as well as by British migrants who had settled in Australia and Canada (see Glaser, 1977; Lidgard, 1992; Mangnall, 2004).

A critical question one has to ask is why social and cultural factors are the primary determinants of the decision to return to Tonga. In the history of Tonga, the pillars of Tongan society are embraced in people, land, tradition and culture, and it is for this reason that people's affection for the homeland is expected to largely revolve around the family network as well as searching for 'roots' and history. Subsistence affluence dominated Tonga's economy for centuries and this arguably explains why economic factors are secondary to socio-cultural ones because of a traditional norm of communal sharing and caring within which economic security is guaranteed.

The cultural significance of Tonga, as reflected in the narratives of *Ana* and *Tomu* above, raises a critical point for debate about whether Tonga will remain the focal point for sustaining the Tongan-ness of migrants and their children. Evidence for the ongoing cultural significance of Tonga for overseas-based families can be found in what James (1991) has termed the remitting of children for restorative purpose as well as for informal fostering in the village. Moana 'Ulu'ave's return, which resulted in her (re)discovering of her 'roots' and heritage, further highlights the fact that tradition and culture can not be fully captured anywhere but in Tonga. Moana said:

Returning to Tonga has been a wonderful opportunity for me. I was born and raised in the States because my grandparents migrated there for the sake of seeking a better future. Coming back has made me so proud to be Tongan. I've rediscovered my roots, my culture and the values my ancestors were brought up with. I'm a Tonga and I'm helping my country and it makes me feel humbled and very privileged that I'm here in Tonga, the place I keep telling myself I have to visit one day (Tonga-now, 2007b).

Likewise, *Tevita* explains why return is important to learn about traditions and culture:

You learn [the Tongan culture] overseas but it's very limited because you are living in a Western society. So I'm proud to be Tongan and I was very interested in learning about our culture and the history...[B]efore when I was overseas I just think I am Tongan but then I don't really know much about Tonga...when I came back I was really interested in the history, how we started, what happen through the years, the monarchy, the conquering of the specific islands, how our monarchy today is still intact even the medicine *fakaTonga* [traditional Tongan medicine], you learn the plants are for what, the food, its all new so its very interesting.

Return to Tonga for this cultural enrichment is clearly not seen to be essential by all Tongans in the diaspora, however, the organisation of various cultural festivals in New Zealand, Australia and the United States is designed to serve a purpose, amongst others, of sustaining Tongan-ness while overseas. This is an avenue for further research; it is not explored further in this study.

Investing in building a house in Tonga is also evidence that some eventual return is anticipated. A study of Tongans and Samoans in Australia, who stated that they intended to return, shows that migrants who expect to inherit money, a house, land or goods are more likely to return than those who do not expect to inherit (Ahlburg and Brown, 1998). This was also apparent in *Sione's* case when he explained that:

...there are people overseas who don't feel obligated to return because they haven't supplied resources to build a house here [in Tonga]. The means for building this house were all provided from overseas. I built this house in the 80s when I was first promoted to a foreman in the company I worked for in Auckland. At that time, I had already bought a house there [Auckland, New Zealand] and so I decided to build this house because of my intention to return. If I was not going to return this house was never going to be built...This was a target that I initially went overseas with and there wasn't at any given point in time erased from my mind. It's like I wished that return was just around the corner. Anyway if the objectives of why I migrated were never achieved I couldn't have returned. My objectives were to educate my children and to improve our standard of living. Everyone know our standard of living here so living overseas is much much better but the conditions I experience now are satisfactory and I am happy with them.

Inevitably, there are two main determinants of transnational return for Tongan migrants. Firstly, transnational migrants had to have strong socio-cultural ties to family and homeland and secondly, they needed economic security to enable them to deal with a range of socio-economic challenges while in Tonga. When these two determinants are brought together it can be argued that return migration can be a powerful mode for development or what Marcus (1993) called the 'internationalisation' of Tonga, a process that is also evident in the transnational behaviour of Chinese people in Canada (see Ley and Kobayashi, 2005) and within China (see Zhao, 2002).

Conclusion

Return migration to Tonga means reviving social and cultural ties with family and homeland while at the same time ensuring that there are resources to sustain the challenges of re-integration back into Tongan society. Return also necessitates compromises, both on the socio-cultural and the economic fronts – living at home is not the same as living overseas. Essential to the national building strategies of the Government of Tonga, is the opportunity that Tongan-born and ancestral return migrants provide for investment of skills and resources for the benefit of Tonga more generally as well as seeking individual gains through return for capacity building and career advancement in Tonga. These factors must be considered should the Government persist with a policy of greater engagement with the Tongan diaspora.

The underlying reasons for return of transnational Tongans have been established in this Chapter. But return migration must have some productive outcomes for both the individuals concerned as well as the wider society if it is to be considered to be ‘successful’ and of relevance for the future development of Tonga. It is to the re-integration dimension of return that the discussion now turns.

CHAPTER SEVEN

RE-INTEGRATION PROCESS

In any given place and time, the ultimate goal of a re-integration process for migrants is to fully restore streams of returnees into the society so that 'homecoming' is considered by all to be successful. It is the intention of this chapter to study how transnational return migrants re-integrate into Tongan society, a society that has been vital in the formative socialisation of the majority of the participants in this study, and a society that acts as 'ancestral home' for overseas-born returnees.

The discussion is presented in five sections. The first briefly establishes a benchmark for the debate on the duality of re-integration -- success versus failure. The challenges confronting the return of transnational Tongans are presented in section two. Section three discloses the coping strategies taken by return migrants to encounter the re-integration challenges. The development impacts induced by return migrants as they settle in Tonga are reviewed in section four. Re-integration of returnees is the focus of general discussion in the last section.

Benchmarking Re-integration Success or Failure

Ahlburg and Brown (1998 125) have suggested that there is little evidence of significant human capital (education, experience and skills) embodied amongst those who intend to return. However, one has to bear in mind the contextual difference between this study and Ahlburg and Brown's study. This study primarily focuses on migrants who have voluntarily returned with the intention to live in Tonga. Out of the 48 respondents, 25 respondents (52%) have lived in Tonga for more than six years. The remaining 23 (48%) returned after 2000. Thus, it can be argued that 25 respondents at least have successfully reintegrated back into Tongan society by staying, and that Tonga is becoming their 'home'. In contrast to Ahlburg and

Brown's (1998) findings, it is suggested that these Tongan transnational returnees have brought back with them skills and experience that will be of value in their home.

According to *Tevita* and some of the other returnees that were interviewed, it takes time for returnees to determine whether Tonga is 'home' or not because of the need for them to understand and experience the hardship of life in Tonga "which is the normal system". *Tevita* said:

You know I've been overseas twice since I came to Tonga six years ago. During this time I went back to Australia twice for holiday *pe* [only]. I'm actually based here in Tonga... I think for people that come back to Tonga if they want to stay in Tonga it takes three or four years to confirm whether they would like it here or not...you need that three or four years to make a decision whether you wanna stay here or not because you need to experience difficulties in Tonga which is the normal system...You can't come 12 months and say ohh I wanna live in Tonga...They have to come for like three, four years for them to be fully understand and comfortable with the '*mo'ui fakaTonga*' (Tongan way of living).

Tevita's point about the 'time' taken for perhaps a successful re-integration to happen in Tonga is an important one for this discussion. *Tevita* suggested three or four years, *Seini* suggested one year (see re-integration challenges section) and Olesen (2002) suggested not less than two years to determine whether and to what extent re-integration is successful. The 'time' requirement for successful re-integration to happen is not extensively investigated here, but I will demonstrate later that successful re-integration is possible despite some obstacles to this process.

Re-integration Challenges

Challenges to re-integration, according to Arowolo (2000), come in various forms including social, economic, political and cultural, and are inevitable in any return migration situation. In countries like Tonga that have neither an explicit immigration policy nor national recognition of return migration, re-integration processes are completely obscured. It is simply assumed that re-integration is "normal" for return migrants; after all they are "coming home". This is primarily because of the norm of repeated movements of Tongans in and out of the country. Notwithstanding this

norm, the challenges of re-integration must be explicitly dealt with should there be any intention to foster local engagement with the diaspora.

In the questionnaire, respondents were asked to state three challenges confronting their return. These challenges were thematically grouped in broad factors for analysis and for cross-referencing with the information obtained in the interviews. Table 20 illustrates the challenges confronting re-integration of transnational Tongan returnees according to their responses in the questionnaire.

Table 20: Challenging factors confronting return migrants' return

Factor	Challenge 1	Percent Challenge 2	Challenge 3
Culture	37.5	23.9	26.8
Working environment	25.0	43.5	19.5
Socio-economic	18.8	13.0	34.1
Missing overseas places	8.3	6.5	7.3
Human resource	6.3	2.2	0.0
Environment	2.1	2.2	2.4
Politics	0.0	6.5	7.3
No challenge	2.1	2.2	2.4
Total	100 (N=48)	100 (N=46)	100 (N=41)

Note: Two respondents did not give answers to Challenge 2 and seven for Challenge 3

Challenge 1 is treated here as the most important factor hindering the re-integration of returnees because I presume this is the first and foremost factor that initially comes to respondents' minds. However factors under Challenges 2 and 3 are also important.

Clearly, from Table 20, culture related factors were the most common hindrances in the re-integration process of the returnees: 38 percent of respondents mentioned this as their first challenge. Work-related issues were the second most commonly cited hindering factor (25%), followed by socio-economic related factors (19%). When assessing all factors, the three mentioned were cited by over three-quarters of respondents. Much smaller percentages mentioned factors such as human resources, missing people and places abroad, environmental conditions and political issues. Work related issues were the most common factors cited as the second challenge, while socio-economic related issues dominated as the third challenge. Only one

return migrant did not encounter any problems in his re-integration, and thus did not specify any challenges.

More specific cultural factors hindering re-integration are given in Table 21.

Table 21: Examples of cultural challenges

Range of statements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cultural shocks – peer groups and social systems were different - Encountering the great differences in society and culture - Restrictive practices such as what can say or do at home and at the work place - Trying to adapt to the Tongan way of living in such a close-knit society - Pressure of family restrictions/obligations on myself as an individual - Adjusting to family obligations and the Tongan system of living - Having adjusted to family/extended kinship-oriented obligations playing the role model of a Tongan - Too much (kavenga) obligations here in Tonga such as funerals, weddings, and the church - High expectations of me to contribute a lot to community development activities - Gossip – living in the US, people are more honest and upfront. I’m still not used to the back stabbing in Tonga - Slow pace of work and life in Tonga

It is apparent from Table 21 that returnees would definitely require some readjustment to the normative system of living practised in Tonga. It is for this reason that some return migrants were confronted with ‘cultural shock’ because “peer groups and social systems were different”. Further, the process of re-integration is even more intense, if not harder, for return migrants like *Mele* who stated that “cultural and social integration is difficult due to language barriers”. Language is conceived to be where culture and tradition are embodied, and without proper speaking or understanding of the language the challenges, when transferring from a mainstream culture to another, are going to be enormous and eventually a cause of frustration for many return migrants.

Seini, a single New Zealand-born female interviewee, outlined her cultural re-integration nightmare in the following words:

[I'm] 25 but still under my parents and I still have to take what my parents had to say and all that and yeah suffering the cultural shock. The differences are I don't have my friends anymore so I have changed myself to have new friends and readapt. When I first came I hated everyone and I just hated them. I hated the environment because it was dusty. In New Zealand, it's very clean you know, the air is clean and everything and I don't have to wash my hair all the time and all that sort of little things that add up. I was a very very unhappy person for about a year. It has taken me a year to readapt. It's hard but a challenge.

The daunting pressure of re-adaptation to a close-knit family structure and finding new friends in addition to poor environmental conditions have been significant factors for *Seini* and some returnees.

High expectations from family members and the community at large on returnees to cover for their unmet cultural obligations, for instance, are commonly part of the 'cultural shock' phenomenon. (see Table 21). *Kevini* said that cultural shock is:

[T]he hardest thing especially when you were away for so long. You always have to weigh the pros and cons of what the type of lifestyle you always used to have and the costs or the ramifications if you don't mix with these people... How much are you going to lose if you don't get on with these people and that is hard because there are certain ways in the culture here that makes these people look at you as if you are a some sort of a divine person coming into their midst with a lot of money and you are not expected to say no to the family especially when you come and set up a business.

In some situations, returnees face resentment and a sense of rejection if they do not fully understand and participate in cultural and traditional practices in the home community. The full account of this is clearly illustrated in *Kevini's* explanation of his re-integration ordeal. *Kevini* said:

I think people were curious about me when I first came here and I think it's only natural for them to be like that. Although my father is from *Motu-one* [a pseudonym for an Island], he himself never spent much time here as we used to come back here only on occasions like school holidays. We spent much of our childhood in Tongatapu [the main Island] and *Motu-two* [a pseudonym for another Island], [because] my mum is from *Motu-two*. So when the people of *Motu-one* saw me coming back here there were lots of suspicions and wondering what the hell is this guy up to? He has never been with us. So at the initial stage there was always an element of resentment for me. The feeling that I had at the time was that I had to prove to them that I'm here to stay, I'm good enough to stay, I'm here to abide with what *Motu-one* wants, not what I want to do in *Motu-one*, what they want me to be.

It nearly eight years now since I've been here and it's still hard, I feel, for these people to accept me because I haven't come to their terms. For example, the religious belief here is very very strong. You have to be seen, it is not whether you are a genuine Christian or not, you have to be seen as you are and you have to do this and you have to be at church at five o'clock in the morning, you've got to get involved in the church activities and all those kind to activities in order to be accepted.

I'm having difficulties. First of all, I don't have the time to go to church early in the morning. The thing that I wanna do here does not work with all these needs, so it's gonna be a long journey. There are lots of people who haven't accepted me for who I am at the same time I haven't accepted them. It works both ways...They have to give in and I had to give so that we can meet in mutual ground...[B]ecause [the lifestyle here] is so different from what we were used to [abroad]...there is no way, no way at all that I'll completely give away what I used to live with to be a Tongan the way the [people] here expect me to be. Now its just too much, too much to ask and it too much for me to ask them to come my way... over this period of time there are lots of people here who have come slowly but surely my way.

Based on *Kevini's* narrative, it can be hypothesised that the longer the 'duration of absence' and disconnection with the home community the harder the experience of re-integration. Kevini was abroad for 36 years and has been living in Tonga for eight years now but he is still finding it difficult to cope with public expectations. However, this does not necessarily deny the possibility for a successful re-integration; people are coming slowly but surely to accept *Kevini's* way.

On the other hand, the relaxation of culture is a profound atmosphere for some migrants, as in *Sione's* case (see Chapter Six for the reasons for *Sione's* return), but when it comes to running a business, according to *Pita*, "it's a huge challenge".

Knowing that the majority of respondents are working full time or self employed (see Chapter Five), local experiences of return migrants at their work places suggests there is a great deal of psychological anxiety particularly when benchmarking against his/her overseas experiences. When the broad factor of working environment is unpacked, problems mentioned by respondents included poor customer service, wage issues, management issues, lack of accountability, uncompetitive-ness of work and lack of resources in the work place (Table 22). The culture in working places in Tonga differs from that in countries like New Zealand and Australia, and it has become a great re-integration challenge for a number of the returnees.

Table 22: Examples of challenges related to working issues

Range of statements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Receiving poor customer service both in public and private sector companies - Salary level was too low to allow me to establish myself outside family. This has forced me to consider options such as marriage - Difficult to manage attitude of workers - Employment salary in NZ is very high. Yearly packages and bonus offered depending on performance appraisal - Skills level of employment are really poor due to lack of competition/exposure both technical and managerial skills are very poor - Working with students who copy overseas problems and can't really deal with them - Lack of accountability. Few Tongans at work or church ultimately believe they are not accountable for their actions. This leads to a number of behavioural traits - Profound lack of resources. We just don't have the resources to get things done efficiently - Working environment is so relaxed – difficult for career building and development as work environment is not very competitive

Reference to the low level of services in the work place is not surprising and this is one of the objectives of the current Economic and Public Sector Reform Programme that the Tonga Government has introduced to improve the efficiency of performance of civil servants (Government of Tonga, 2006).

There were other challenges referred to in the interviews. There was concern about the trustworthiness of non-immediate family members to manage and operate businesses owned by return migrants. For instance, *Kevini* and a few others deliberated on the problem of finding a reliable person in Tonga to manage their businesses while they were absent overseas. In such situations, relying on immediate family members would usually be the solution. This is evident in the accounts of the following participants, as well as the reason for the return of *Semisi* (see Chapter Six). *Kevini* explained:

My initial intention was to build a business and go back to Australia and let someone run it here. That was a big mistake. At the start building was OK. I never saw it until the end of establishing the business...when I started to run the place I started to look for people to run it for me while I went back to Australia. That's when I found out that I wouldn't be able to leave Tonga. I have to stay here. There is no way that I will find anyone reliable to run this place so I could leave Tonga for a long period of time and come back. If it wasn't for my son who came back here and liked the place more than I did I would have sold the place and gone back to Australia.

Another respondent and her husband shared a similar view when asked how far they would be able to manage and operate their business. The husband said:

Both of us are getting old and all of our children are overseas. We would like to find someone to come and run the place but it is hard to get someone that we can trust...We would like one of our children to come and run it but none of them want to return.

Even securing a job in the formal employment sector can cause apprehension amongst younger return graduates in the workplace, particularly a tension around the meritocracy versus gerontocracy statuses. This was apparent in *Pita's* case when he was working for *Matangi* [pseudonym] hotel. He explained:

When I came back to Tonga for the first time after graduation from the University, I came and worked in the *Matangi* Hotel. I was only 21 then and I was put in a position of Food and Beverage Manager and I felt very inadequate when I was working there because there were people who have been working in the hotel for 20 years and I was now their manager...for anyone who has been overseas and comes back...you do sort of feel like a bit of an outsider for a while until you settle in.

Some of the specific social and economic challenges stated by respondents are presented in Table 23. Challenges like inflation of goods in Tonga, lack of formal employment opportunities, demanding family and household lifestyles, and establishing new friendships are amongst the socio-economic problems specified by respondents.

Table 23: Examples of socio-economic challenges

Range of statements
- Inflation of goods - NZ goods and products are very cheap for daily living
- Establishing friends/family contact
- High cost of food stuff and utilities (i.e.) petrol, electricity, water and gas
- Keep up with business missions
- Obligations to extended family
- Extended family crowded in one house
- Lack of employment opportunities that suit qualifications
- Help family to work hard, live in a rightful lifestyle and in peace

The challenge of finding a job is increasingly apparent. The high unemployment rate (13%) based on the 1996 Census (Government of Tonga, 1999) indicates that finding employment would be difficult for those who do not have appropriate educational

qualifications. This was experienced by a returnee who did not obtain a qualification while abroad. He stated “finding a job especially when not completing my tertiary education” is challenging. The cut backs in the number of civil servants and new positions by the Tongan Government, the largest employer in Tonga, through the implementation of voluntary retirement scheme in 2006 has had a great deal of impact on both the qualified and unqualified returnees who are specifically targeting a job in Government agencies.

Some specific challenging factors were also mentioned, such as the recent political riots and looting on ‘Black Thursday’. This event has been extremely disruptive and destructive for a lot of businesses and it has certainly caught the attention of some returnees. According to *Pita*:

...the big challenge at the moment is knowing where Tonga is heading and what’s gonna happen and whether it [riots] will happen again. I think that is one of the biggest challenges now but it has popped in my mind whether... I got the option and I think a lot of people who own businesses in Tonga have the same option. I mean we can just hop in the plane tomorrow and go but I think I wanna see this through...[but] it really depends how things unfold in the next couple of years...

To a considerable extent, the political dimension of development is going to, and will, determine the socio-economic development of the country, for decades. Hence, immense effort is needed from parties in all spheres of society, local and international, to come to a mutual understanding. This is vital when one considers the potential socio-economic contributions of returnees to the country.

Notwithstanding all these challenges Tonga is still an attractive place to live for some return migrants. Making Tonga ‘home’ requires great determination and sacrifices, even to the extent of compromising social and economic status, as well as a high level of tolerance and perseverance in order to overcome the ‘ideology of return’.

Strategies for Successful Re-integration

Despite these challenges, there are signs of successful re-integration of returnees in Tonga. Repeated returns of migrants, prior to the actual decision to come 'home' to stay, consolidates the 'sense of Tongan-ness'. The comforts of having acquired an educational qualification while overseas, and then a job either in the civil service or in self-employment, are collective factors contributing to returnees' successful re-integration. As Cassarino (2004 262) pointed out "return migration is part and parcel of a circular system of social and economic relationships and exchanges facilitating the re-integration of migrants".

The following quotations provide some insights into how Tongan transnational returnees have, arguably, successfully re-integrated and become long-term residents in Tonga.

Tomu said:

First of all we have to be cross-culturally prepared to face all sorts of challenges. When you come back from overseas to Tonga you should have all sorts of skills for the career that could become...It takes time for you to modify your attitude about the way things are done in Tonga as opposed to ways of things are done in Australia or New Zealand or the USA...On the business side, you talk to people and you expect them to turn up at eight to do things and they don't because of all sorts of good reasons like '*putu*' [funeral] or something like that...So in that cross-cultural side we need to learn how to handle that and get around it and get a back-up to get your work done...The cross-cultural thing definitely something that we have to take, and a lot of people get frustrated and they give up. You just have to be enthusiastic and work out ways to handle it because if you can't you are failing living in Tonga.

It is apparent in *Tomu's* narrative that understanding of the cross-cultural changes and being compassionate about what you do, as well as making alternative plans or arrangements and acquiring of multiple skills, are the basis of his successful re-integration.

Asking *Kevini* what he did in order to get the trust of the people for him as a returnee, he explained that part of his strategy has been “always [to] give generously to any worthwhile activities such as school and medical needs”. He explained further that:

If there is a fundraising for one of the churches or something like that, we always give to schools prize givings and I think people are starting to see that we are not here just to look at ourselves. There are lot of things that I’ve already helped the Island with.

Similarly, acting in the ‘Tongan way of life’ of *‘fe’ofa’aki and fetokoni’aki* (be kind to one another and giving generously) is the prevailing strategy for *Sione’s* successful re-integration into his family and society spheres. Generous giving and caring could be seen to be a cost of re-integration. However, there is satisfaction and some sort of social status gained as a result of giving. Whether returnees could act as ‘agents of social change’ in this kind of situation needs further analysis. Explanation of *‘fe’ofa’aki and fetokoni’aki* is provided in *Sione’s* description below.

I have two little brothers who are staying here, one next door on that side and one on the other side. When I returned I urged them to rebuild their respective houses, helped them in all sorts of work including work in the plantation, domestic duties and I even set up my own retail shop. I started the operation of the shop but after a while I thought I am a New Zealand retiree and one of the reasons I returned was to retire. Now I am not retiring but extending my working life as I used to in New Zealand. So I generously gave the shop for my little brother and his family... I am one of the respected men in this area because of my *‘ulungaanga’* (behaviour/attitude). [For example] I have two vehicles. One guy came this morning and asked if he can borrow one vehicle so that he can pick his uncle up from the airport then I gave him the key. The other vehicle, the three tonne truck, is very important for heavy duties and anyone can come and ask to borrow it...There was an 88th birthday anniversary took place at the house across the road yesterday and I enveloped \$60 and presented it to him as my gift...I acquire happiness through doing these kind of things. This is what we called in Tonga *‘fe’ofa’aki* and *‘fetokoni’aki*.

Quite interestingly for *Ana*, she treats her re-integration constraints as challenges, viewing surpassing them as milestones marking her perseverance to establish her personal identity. She explained that:

Living here amongst the family network with poor living conditions, certain values, expectation about carrying out certain responsibilities and duties...I found them quite burdensome, I didn’t like it...and then I moved out of home. Well I guess the challenges for me...I wasn’t going to be pressured to leave Tonga. For me I saw it as a challenge and I was gonna remain here. I saw it for me as a pride for my personal identity so I just wanted to keep at it and...I mean now after probably 10 years some of the family members have finally realized that I can’t be pushed around.

For *Seini*, being subordinate to parents, and having commitments to maintain the social status of her close- family, as well as readapting and making new friends, are keys for her long-term living in Tonga. She said:

[Over] time, I readapt once I learnt to accept the current situation and where I was and I have to understand and define for myself is it really worth staying or swimming to New Zealand or die trying...I have learnt to like it here so far. I mean I have this job and I met new friends and I've established myself both socially, economically and you know my parents always kind of complain that we always send you guys off then you fly away and come back and never help us or whatever. So I thought fair enough you helped me when I was young and put me through school...yep it's my turn to help you out.

Pita just simply 'walk the talk' as well as ensuring a conducive working environment for his employees. Good planning practices are his coping strategies for ensuring the progression of his business and maintaining the status of his living in Tonga. *Pita* pointed out:

My work here has never been to have acceptance but I always believe in doing something. If you do it then you do it to the best that you can do. If anything I guess hopefully your work just speaks for itself. I've never sort of done my work in order to have some sort of acceptance but it's more of what I can do for the community that I live in.

Part of our mission here as a company is to have a positive contribution to the community which involves our staff...The working environment...it's not necessary money going into their pocket but just the environment that they are working in that is a lot easier for them to do their job...[I] encourage [workers] to participate in courses and like the cultural things as well just being aware that there are things other than work that are important to them [but] I don't mind as long as they can tell me ahead of time so that we can organise and attend to it. It just a matter of working around it and planning it you know.

Despite these wide ranging of coping strategies that suggest pathways for successful re-integration and long-term living in Tonga, some returnees fail to reintegrate. In such circumstances, leaving Tonga is perhaps the better option. For instance, one respondent stated in her questionnaire that her return to Australia was imminent because of the political unrest on the Black Thursday.

Development Impacts

The impacts of return migration on development are likely to vary according to the potential of return migrants to be an innovative force. While the number of voluntary return migrants who intend to live in Tonga is small, it is anticipated that their investment initiatives could yield some development outcomes.

The development contributions of migrants to formal sector employment have been discussed in Chapter Five. Their movement overseas resulted in several of them receiving better education and training than they would have got if they had stayed in Tonga. There is evidence that return migrants brought back with them skills of value in formal sector employment, and they have been able to stimulate some local social and economic change. The snowball effects of the engagement of returnees in the local labour market and the community are not examined extensively here; they are a subject more detailed study elsewhere.

Some of the investment outcomes of returnees can be demonstrated by case studies.

Tomu, who is a farmer and exporter, explained that:

When I say farmer, we grow taro, kumara, vanilla, coffee, some *hiapo* [paper mulberry], *lou'akau* [pandanus leaves] and export mainly coconuts to New Zealand and Australia. We make *lolo Tonga* [Tongan coconut lotion] and moisturiser out of coconut oil to sell locally and export...I employ 18 staff and I buy coconuts throughout Tonga every week. [Staff] are collecting coconuts from 50-60 families in Tongatapu, Ha'afeva, Pangai, Lifuka, Foa and Ha'ano and we are also buying in Vava'u. We just started buying from the Niua Islands last week [December 2006]...So the benefits of my business are wider than just the immediate employees.

In addition to this, *Tomu* admitted that he has been working on a Japanese-funded taro project developing crops for export to Japan for six years. It is anticipated that once the arrangement with the Japanese export market is settled it will expand the economic benefits widely to the grass-roots community. In the community, *Tomu* said:

We have our little church here and [in our family] we have four generations in 'Apifo'ou [name of secondary school]. The 'api [town allotment] where the church is, my grandfather donated it for the church. The cemetery over there my grand father also arranged that little fa'itoka [cemetery]. We fundraised for 15 years to build that little church down the road. We just had our 'katoanga 'ofa' [church donation] two weeks ago. Our children go to 'Apifo'ou where they have all their kavenga [obligations] there. Our children went to the local primary school, the Government Primary School, all the kavenga there, fundraising, concert mo e ha fua [etc]. Hey part of coming back to Tonga like I said is to raise the children [and] this is what exactly I am talking about.

Ana, a former Level One civil servant, plays a principal role in coordinating community projects. She not only invested in building a house for her husband and children, employing people on an ad hoc basis and consistently employing a babysitter, but also generously gave gifts and donations to relatives and offered services to community activities. She summed up her contribution as follows.

I guess I've already reinvested in certain capital infrastructure like a house, I employ people, I contribute to community development, we've [Ana and her husband] assisted a number of individual families with educational needs and health needs sometimes. So I guess I see that as some form of investment in Tonga. If you actually say investment in some entrepreneurial activities...probably we would consider that later.

...some of the communities I've helped them get their road tarsealed, I contribute to fund raising for communities, not only the women's groups but also churches ...but I see community development more sustainable this way instead of just handing out cash and it benefits a lot more people. For Kolo [village pseudonym], I've coordinated fencing, cement tanks, road tar, I've done an environmental project for Kolo's youth but much of the youth stuff I just provide advisory services to them in putting their proposal together.

Pita described the progression of his café in the services sector. He said:

[The business] doesn't usually do sponsorship because we really don't have the money to do that but sometimes we give to hospital and schools that come and ask for donation. I think for me more it's contributing more to my staff that is more important. I mean, that's an indirect way of contributing to families and communities is through your staff.

Right now I have 20 staff including myself. When we first open the café we were only opened from the morning till like three o'clock and eventually the year before we started offering dinner so we offer breakfast, lunch and dinner. Once we open in the morning we just run through and then change shift in the afternoon. So we are able to hold that number of staff, we needed it there is no doubt about that.

Unlike the case of Tomu and Ana, Pita does not take the lead in any community activities unless, according to Pita, the need for him to be involved is absolute. Capacity building of staff is Pita's priority.

Via explained that upon her return with her husband in 2005, after two years in New Zealand fulfilling the visa requirements for her permanent residence, they established a consultancy company and a BBQ stall.

I run my own consultancy on Business Management and Human Resources. We do consultancy work for organizations like government and public enterprises but not so much with the private sector...So that's our main business. As a sideline, our BBQ stall by the road is amazing. I didn't realize that I could collect so much money from it.

...we employ five people in our BBQ stall. It's interesting I started with one [employee] in May of this year [2006] and then like over the past few months it went up to five. With our consultancy company it just me and my husband because for most of the training we go out to the workplaces and conduct the training there. We don't really need a secretary or someone to help because can do it ourselves.

Kevini is employing eight people full-time and another three staff are on part-time contracts.

Despite the small scale of return migrants' businesses, there are tangible economic outcomes that, no doubt, Tonga's Government and the public could identify as a contribution by return migrants to 'employment creation'. For instance, five of the informants who were interviewed employed 55 people between them, mostly permanent and some part-time. Apparently, the economic initiatives of returnees do contribute towards addressing Tonga's high unemployment rate.

In order to make Tonga 'home', gaining of economic security is an essential contributing factor to successful re-integration and long-term settlement in Tonga. Returnees expect Tonga to have a social and economic policy environment that fosters opportunities for successful re-integration of transnational returnees, both in the formal and informal employment sectors. Failing to provide opportunities to facilitate the re-integration of returnees would affirm Tonga's position as a 'transit station' for returnees rather than a stopping off point.

Discussion

Arowolo (2000 68-69) has suggested that:

For any programme of economic reintegration of returnees to be successful, it must be based on a careful analysis of their background characteristics: age, sex, education/skills acquired, reasons for leaving, host country or place of residence, type of work done while away, family characteristics, amount of money repatriated, access to property at home, etc. These determine the individual/personal needs for economic integration or reintegration...Even if a returning migrant effectively overcomes the problem of economic reintegration, the social dimension of the process is equally critical to full reintegration.

Part of Arowolo's set of socio-economic variables has been captured in this study, but no substantive information was collected on the host countries or the type of work return migrants did while away from Tonga. A comprehensive assessment of this aspect of successful re-integration is outside the scope of this study. Instead the focus is on how returnees have reintegrated into the Tongan society with some initial consideration of likely development impacts.

Return migrants cannot escape the fact that in the course of their re-integration they must make use of all their resources and assets as well as the skills accumulated abroad. This is the nexus of return and development as the International Organisation for Migration (2005) has reported. Return migration can be a significant force for modernisation at the local level. According to Ghosh (2000c 190) this is evident in countries like Mexico in Latin America, Bangladesh, India Pakistan, Sri Lanka in Asia and Turkey in Europe.

However, much of the modernisation arguably depends on two critical factors: (1) the ability and capability of return migrants to re-integrate; and (2) the social, economic, cultural and political conditions of the receiving countries to absorb the return flow of voluntary migrants. In the case of the first factor, it is evident that return migrants everywhere face many re-integration constraints (see Arowolo, 2000; Dumon, 1986; Gmelch, 1986; Macpherson, 1985; Mangnall, 2004; Reyneri and Mughini, 1981). Tonga is no exception but the 'love for country', coupled with socio-cultural factors

and an eagerness to ‘touch base with cultural roots’, enhances the ability of transnational returnees to push modernisation forward. This situation was well summed up by *Keveni* when he stated:

I think there still a lot more for me to build. Eight years of being here is a long time and I experience a lot and have a lot of mixed feelings. All in all, I would advise Tongans who are contemplating coming back to Tonga whether to set up a business or not is to do it slowly, not to come in and rush into it. I feel that I have a lot to offer. There are lots of people overseas who have got a lot more than I have but I was quite willing to come back and give it a go. It’s one of the biggest satisfactions of my life although there are challenges and obstacles to overcome but its worthwhile going through all that and to see what you could achieve.

With regard to the second factor, it is very difficult to transfer specialised skills gained by migrants while overseas to the workforce back home unless there is a reasonably similar sort of job market and enterprise structure. It is particularly difficult to do this in situations of stagnant or ‘backward’ socio-economic growth and the existence of a culture of political unrests, riots and looting. Political instability in Fiji associated with the coups in 1987, for instance, led Reddy, Mohanty and Naidu (2004 1457) to conclude that “the loss of skilled manpower from Fiji has had far-reaching social, cultural, economic and political implications, which underpin the very foundations for sustainable development of any country”. The same situation will evolve in Tonga should the recent political instability persist for long. The events on the ‘Black Thursday’ have made some returnees ambivalent about staying in Tonga or re-migrating; others echo *Pita’s* sentiment -- “I would like to think I’m fairly committed [to staying in Tonga]”.

Economic Re-integration

Collectively, the high rate of labour force participation of returnees in formal and self-employment (see Chapter Five), the role of employment factors in assisting to explain reasons for return (see Chapter Six) and the creation of employment by the economic activities of return migrants, as illustrated in this chapter, suggests that the returnees are making a tangible contribution to the socio-economic development of the country.

The ability of returnees to create employment fosters modernisation and assists with the alleviation of poverty/hardship at the household level. At the macro level, however, there was minimal evidence of a major contribution to economic development being made by return migrants, except in the case of *Tomu's* efforts to export the products of his business. King (1986) as well as Reyneri and Mughini (1981) also show in their studies of returning Italians to Southern Italy that return migration has minimal macro-economic impacts, even though it can make an important contribution at the micro-level to household incomes and wellbeing. There is a need for further and deeper investigation of the economic dimensions of re-integration.

Social Re-integration

Returnees are perceived to commence the process of re-integration during their periodic visits home before they return to live. These periodic visits allow for the maintenance and on-going strengthening of ties with families and community. This is reinforced by periodic sending of remittances back home (see Ahlburg and Brown, 1998; Brown, 1998). If Tongans do not repeatedly visit a specific place, and never remit one way or another to people in that place, but decide to return at some stage in the future, there is high possibility that they will face all sorts of social re-integration problems. This is evident in *Kevini's* narrative cited earlier. However, this does not necessarily mean that re-integration will be smooth for those who do repeatedly visit and remit to their family and village.

It is very difficult to determine when the process of re-integration finishes. This is especially difficult to define when there is on-going circular migration. Again, this is an issue that needs further research, but this study has demonstrated that circular mobility allows one to lay a good foundation for an eventual 'grand return' home and re-integration.

Tomu's conceptualisation of community socialisation and development helps to illustrate why returnees have been successful in their re-integration.

We don't live in a little Island. I mean my little '*api* [town allotment] here in *Palataisi village* [village pseudonym] is not an Island. It is part of this *kolo* (village) and this *kolo* has a church and we belong to that and whatever fundraising they may have...

Because of the communal notion of the Tongan way of living it is very difficult to determine a clear boundary between success and failure in the case of social re-integration.

There was evidence of return migrants who were '*popula ki he taufatunga motu'a*' [enslaved to culture and tradition] in this study. This reinforces previous migration literature that reported 'cultural shock' as a major stumbling block for returnees, not so much based on living conditions, but more because of the expectations of and subsequent treatment by relatives and community members of a 'Tongan foreigner at home' (see Small, 1997; Thaman, 1985). Similar circumstances can be found in Samoa (see Macpherson, 1985).

The above-mentioned aspects of re-integration reiterate Connell's (1995 274) speculations on the "ideology of return" in Albert Wendt's writing. Returnees may realise when they return that their expectations are not fulfilled and their social, cultural and economic status may alter and yet remain Samoan.

Conclusion

Re-integration is a 'bumpy' process socially, economically, culturally and politically. On the one hand, returnees demonstrate they can be successful in re-integration while on the other hand wish to see a faster economic transformation in Tonga. Evidence present in this study suggests return can be a 'way forward' to advancing career opportunities in Tonga rather than a reflection of failure overseas. However, only if

the scale of the return flows increases will the magnitude of investment increase thus stimulating development.

Transnational return can result in creating new jobs and opportunities for advancement of careers. In the context of nation-building, return migration can be seen to be contributing to achieving two of the national development goals in the Tonga Government current Eight Strategic Development Plan 2006/07-2008/09, namely 'promoting sustained private sector-led growth' and 'ensuring macroeconomic stability' (see Government of Tonga, 2006). However, this potential development contribution can only be realised if: (1) the level of socio-cultural tolerance and perseverance of return migrants to invest in Tonga is at the heart of their transnational lives and maintained throughout their re-integration process; and (2) Government assists with minimising the re-integration challenges and fostering effective diasporic engagement initiatives. As Iredale, Guo, Rozario and Gow (2003 187) concluded:

To participate in nation-building and economic transformation, skilled return migrants need employment that matches their aspirations to local economic and social priorities and sufficient economic and physical security to ensure that their commitment to their own country is not compromised in the face of the exigencies of everyday life...how this may be achieved in practice is a matter of the implementation of appropriate policies.

The final question to be addressed in this study is how sustainable is a nation-building strategy that incorporates the future migration intentions of transnational return migrants? This is the substantive issue addressed in the next Chapter.

CHAPTER EIGHT

REALITY OF TRANSNATIONAL RETURN MIGRATION

Much has been revealed in previous chapters about the socio-economic profile of return migrants, their reasons for return, and how they re-integrate into Tongan society. It is important to note early in this chapter, however, that 'return' does not necessarily constitute the end of the migration cycle. This chapter considers the issue of on-going international mobility, following return, in the light of Cerase's (1974) rather static and simplistic one-way definition of movement back "home". In the first section of the chapter, attention is focused on circular migration – a process that continues after return. In the second section the notion of 'home' in the context of return is the centre of discussion.

Circular Migration

As was shown in Chapter Six, frequent travel between places of residence overseas and Tonga is often a prerequisite for a decision to return to live in the island home. This circular system of movement has not only been practised by Tongans within the islands of the Kingdom but it has also served to enlarge the world of action for Pacific peoples beyond the borders of their island homes (Hau'ofa 1994). This is not unique to Tonga; Hugo (1999) has observed, for example, that internationally, population movement has become dominated by circular and temporary flows rather than permanent migration.

At the regional level, circular migration is a fundamental component of population movement in Oceania. Bedford (2004 223) notes that "circulation is, in turn, an integral component of an ongoing process of expanding the worlds of action and interaction among islanders...". Although return is not always guaranteed, mobility between the Islands and Pacific rim countries is commonly a circular process

(Bedford 2000). Pacific people are on the move to take advantage of the socio-economic opportunities in the Pacific rim countries but they do not necessarily intend to leave their island homes permanently (see Chapter Two).

As expected of transnational migrants in the context of this study, evidence from the quantitative data shows that over three-quarters (90%), of respondents have indicated their intention to travel within the next 12 months. Four respondents (8%) stated that they were unsure about travelling in the next 12 months, but only one had no intention of moving in that period (Table 24).

Table 24: Travel intention of returnees

Travel in the next 12 months	Respondent	Percent
Yes	43	89.6
No	1	2.1
Unsure	4	8.3
Total	48	100.0

The very high proportion intending to travel in the next 12 months reflects both the privilege as well as the opportunities afforded by being transnational. Having the right to residence overseas, either as a result of citizenship or through the provisions for permanent residence status, means that possibilities for future travel are effectively guaranteed for most transnational returnees. The notion that return is ‘permanent’ is arguably no longer relevant in Tonga in the light of this potential for on-going circularity in movement behaviour.

Findings from interviews for this study show that circular migration before (see Chapter Six) and after returning to live in Tonga were clearly evident. For instance, *Tomu* has subsequently made some trips after his intentional return in 1993. He said:

I’m tired of travelling. I was travelling out to Japan a lot of the time. In the last four years, I’ve been to Japan four times and other places, New Zealand, Australia and I just got tired of travelling...It’s cold and you’ve got to wear shoes and you know all sorts of reasons. I went to Wellington and I was cold down there. At the same time I was worried, I wanna see [my] farm... I don’t like to leave Tonga now.

Asking *Tomu* whether he is likely to travel within the next 12 months, his response was “well this Saturday - this Saturday we are off to New Zealand. [My wife’s] mum and dad are living in Wellington so we try to do an annual visit to her mum and dad”. In addition to *Tomu*’s observations, other interviewees have also expressed their intention to travel overseas either for a holiday, buying stock for their businesses or for visits.

The reality of transnational return is that Tonga is still considered ‘home’ for Tongan-born and ancestral return migrants. While at ‘home’, returnees and other residents in the islands do not completely abandon future overseas *field tripping* prospects. A common description emerges when asked about the significance of permanent residence or citizenship, especially when significant proportions of travellers do so for the convenience of *field tripping* travels. This was well summed up in *Pita*’s account when he said:

Getting my residency in New Zealand was more for convenience of travel more than anything else. It just makes life easier to travel [and the other benefit is] getting visas to other places as well is a lot easier.

Pita’s response is a reflection of Hau’ofa’s (1994) process of ‘world enlargement’. This involves a complex aligning of movement to the phenomenon of globalisation, which by and large contributes to the intensity of temporary movement contemporary migration systems in an on-going and non-ending process. Eventually, this is the shortfall in Cerase’s (1974) model. It fails to represent the complex set of field tripping like movements of contemporary Tongans and the global population at large. The return of transnational Tongans is not permanent but rather a process that allows for the recuperation of socio-economic and cultural aspects of Tongan lifestyle to necessitate further career and life advancements in any given place and time.

Home

Not surprisingly, the sense of Tonga as ‘home’ was a key social element for transnational migrants (see Chapter Six). Whether Tonga is the long term or perhaps the permanent place of residence; for how long; and how significant is the foreign country of residence for the transnational returnees are critical issues for consideration in a discussion of return ‘home’. This study does not cover the theoretical discussions surrounding the concept of ‘home’, but ‘home’ in this context literally means the country of residence of transnational migrants living either in Tonga or overseas. Where is ‘home’ in the world of enlargement of transnational returning migrants? Is Tonga ‘home’ or a ‘transit station’ for return migrants? These questions are important when considering future development policy implications for Tonga.

All interviewees (Tongan-born and overseas-born) had a common theme in their descriptions of Tonga – Tonga was ‘home’— a place where they settle on a long term basis facilitated by supportive social and economic foundations. Contributing factors to this were the existence of close-knit family in association with time-honoured cultural rituals and traditions, establishing economic security either through employment or by pursuing a business career, providing assistance and creating opportunities for current and future engagement with community members. To exemplify this, *Pita* explained he did not consider his country of permanent residency, New Zealand, to be home because of his strong attachment to Tonga. He said:

I was working in New Zealand for like five years before I came back here. It was a pretty good job and it paid pretty well but for some reason I just can’t get Tonga out of my system.

Similarly, asking *Tomu* whether he considered his birth place, New Zealand, as home and his reply was:

New Zealand is a place we visit now. [Tonga] is my home...do I want to leave Tonga [because of the Black Thursday riots]? No...I know it will take a lot of time to fix up the damage [and] a lot of hard work...This is my home and I'm not gonna let [someone] stop that and turn my life upside down. So I'm home and I'm staying home!

Although the general accounts of interviewees indicated a strong preference for Tonga as ‘home’, for transnational return migrants, the occurrence of an unhealthy political climate in particular may begin to shift this preference and consequently re-emigration of return migrants (see Chapter Seven).

The concept of home is considered to be of critical importance when acknowledging transnational practices and living of migrants. There was no direct evidence of transnational practices other than movement and re-integration processes captured in this study, although reference was made by an informant to a particular transnational enterprise. That is, the ‘Funaki enterprise branch’ at ‘home’ [Tonga], which is an extension of the Funaki Enterprise in South Auckland, New Zealand, and demonstrates the intimate connection between ‘home’ and overseas country of residence. The connection is facilitated by various practices including circulation of goods and equipment – the “mobile kitchens”, the mobile mortuary equipment as well as the movement of people, foods, clothing, remittances and other essential consumer items between Tonga and Auckland, Sydney and Los Angeles.

Conclusion

The return migration of transitional Tongans is not ‘permanent’ and is better conceptualised as part of a mobility system characterised by intensive temporary movement. Consolidating this paradigm shift, the pre and post-return mobility system of transnational return migrants, where the intention is to live in Tonga, is best encapsulated in the concept of circular migration. Tonga is primarily ‘home’ and a ‘place’ where Tongan-born and ‘ancestral return’ migrants live, spend time for recuperation of socio-cultural rituals and traditions, invest skill and capital in pursuing the advancement of their career opportunities, and having always the option

for future 'fielding tripping' guaranteed by the privileged position of being approved for residence in more than one country.

Given the ability of transnational return migrants to influence development at the micro and possibly the macro levels in Tonga, more attention should be given by Government to the sustainability of long term residence of return migrants in Tonga. The occurrence of transnational movements, practices and living necessitates the ongoing circular movement of transnational migrants between 'home' and their respective overseas residence country in the absence of any clear policy stance by the Government of Tonga to guarantee the citizenship (and land) rights of overseas-born Tongans back 'home', sustainability of the development impacts of return migration is not certain.

CHAPTER NINE

TRANSNATIONAL RETURN MIGRATION: TOWARDS THE “WRITTEN CHAPTER” FOR TONGA

Socio-economic instability generated by political turmoil and geo-economic vulnerability of Tonga has been and continues to be a major concern for the Government of Tonga. Evidence of a trend towards a ‘new Tongan society’ in these times of political and fiscal instability and uncertainty means that this research project focusing on the potential social and economic impacts of return migration is timely. The extensive debates, not only in Tonga but also worldwide, on the effects of ‘brain drain’ against ‘brain gain’ and remittances that underpin the theory of MIRAB economies, places this research at the heart of migration debates in the Pacific. More specifically, the study contributes to our understanding of return migration - King’s (1986) ‘unwritten chapter’ in the extensive literature on international migration everywhere. In this concluding chapter I review briefly the main findings of the study and suggest some policy implications of these findings. The final section contains some thoughts about avenues for further research on Tongan return migration.

Transnational Tongans: A Perspective from ‘Home’

It is important to keep in mind when assessing these findings, that they are based on information provided by 48 respondents (nine interviewed in depth) who completed a survey in Tonga late in 2006 and during February/March 2007. It is not possible to obtain a reliable sampling frame for a statistically significant survey of return migrants in Tonga thus the respondents in the survey were identified using the snowballing technique. While it is not possible to generalise to a larger population from this small group of returnees, the information obtained from them provides valuable insights into the mobility behaviour of a segment of Tonga’s population that

has not been studied comprehensively before. Information gained from the survey was extended through selected detailed interviews to provide a richer understanding of the return migration and re-integration processes.

This study argues that despite the predominant outflow of Tongans, or ‘brain drain’, to the ‘traditional immigration countries’ of New Zealand, Australia and the USA, a pool of ‘talented’ and voluntary transnational Tongan-born and *ancestral migrants* have returned to live in Tonga – ‘brain gain’. Characteristically, these transnational return migrants are highly educated, reasonably young (41 years old, on average), energetic and vibrant and, more importantly, they are more inclined to be active in the labour force either through employment in the civil service or private sector or establishing a business venture.

Fifteen years was the average duration of absence overseas, which implies that, in general, the time away has been long enough for migrants to gain human capital and resources required to advance their career opportunities (*return for career advancement*) and contribute positively to the development of Tonga. The socio-economic characteristics of voluntary transnational return migrants indicate that, eventually, return migration has the potential to contribute to ‘national building’ and socio-economic transformation in Tonga.

Achieving positive development outcomes from voluntary return of transnational Tongans rests primarily on the ability and capability of Tonga’s society and culture in particular to encourage migrants to return. This is important because, primarily, both the motivating factors and the rationales for the return of transnational Tongan-born as well as ancestral return migrants are found in the social characteristics of society and culture. Economic factors, while secondary, are significant and make important contributions to the re-integration of transnational returnees. Less important factors, such as political reform, retirement and discontent with life overseas were mentioned but seem less of a determinant factors neither motivating nor rationale for the return of transnational Tongans. Returning to live in Tonga implies first and foremost the

sustaining of social and cultural linkages with family, community and homeland, while at the same time ensuring that there are sufficient economic resources to overcome the “costs” of re-integration into Tongan society.

While the return of the Tongan-born and ancestral return migrants who were interviewed and participated in the survey, whether male or female, young or old, is generally considered to be successful, re-integration is a ‘bumpy’ process. Statistically, all but one of the 48 respondents referred to re-integration challenges related to culture, workplace and other socio-economic factors, as well as politics, environment and overseas-related factors. Therefore, living in Tonga is not the same as living abroad, and thus the need for readjustment to local conditions.

Return migration leading to permanent settlement back home is no longer the best representation of this movement, either for Tongans or for return migrants in other parts of the world. Circular or repeated movements prior to the actual decision to return to live in Tonga is a common practice and continues after return in spite of Tonga being labelled as ‘home’. Transnational return migration is encapsulated within the phenomenon of circular migration. Consequently, it results in the creation of new jobs and advancement of career opportunities, as well as stimulating the maintenance of Tonga’s distinctive society and culture. To be sustainable the conception of Tonga as ‘home’ has to be underpinned by a sense of economic security if voluntary return migrants are to stay home.

Primarily, Tonga is a ‘place’ in ‘time’ where diasporic Tongans can return for cultural recuperation, social exchange and advancement of career opportunities. In reality, return of transnational Tongans is not the final phase of their mobility histories – it is a stage in a system of mobility that allows Tongans to continue to enjoy a *field trip* like form of movement to and from overseas destinations after return. This mobility system is well summed up by the following remark by an overseas-born return migrant who said:

I travelled extensively before moving back to Tonga. Seeing developing countries made me come back to my homeland to help before going to any other country to work...

Finally, the essence of this thesis arguably demonstrates that return migration is not limited to Cerase's (1974) four typologies of return, which is rather static and simplistic concept, if not out of date, in nature. Developments in transportation and communication technologies permit a complex web of intensifying circular movements of transnational Tongans and the global population for career advancement as well as the return of overseas-born Tongans in search of their ancestral roots. Therefore to acknowledge the return of transnational Tongans, the Government of Tonga and related stakeholders need to consider the following policy implications.

Policy Implications

Migration has been and is a fundamental aspect of Tonga's modernisation, both at the macro and the micro levels. However, return migration has been largely ignored because of the poor recording of migration into and out of the country (see Chapters Two and Three). This problem was evident during the course of designing the sampling frame for this study. The secondary migration data, needed to develop the context for this study, were provided in New Zealand by the Migration Research Group at the University of Waikato. Relying on New Zealand sources of migration data or any other overseas source does not give a full account of the contemporary international movement of Tongans.

The current departure and arrival card system in Tonga (refer Appendix I) does not allow for adequate recording of the socio-economic characteristics of departing and arriving travellers. It is strongly recommended that close attention be given to improving the collection and recording of migration into and out of the Kingdom. This will enhance the provision of more accurate and detailed analyses of population movement in and out of the Kingdom, not only of Tongan people but also of citizens of other countries who are crossing Tonga's borders.

Evidence from the survey carried out for this study suggests that transnational return migration is a critical dimension of contemporary debates about development in Tonga, especially in the context of the adverse effects of 'brain drain'. The ability of transnational returnees to engage in the labour force as well as to create new employment opportunities needs to be acknowledged more as Tonga seeks to develop its economy. Nonetheless, return migrants are confronted with various social, economic, political and cultural challenges when they re-integrate back into Tongan society. These challenges also need to be better acknowledged and, where possible, mitigated to facilitate successful re-incorporation of returnees into mainstream society.

A series of strategies employed by returnees to encounter the re-integration challenges that were identified, are presented for consideration. These include:

(1) building capacity by attaining new skills abroad; (2) engaging in the traditional Tongan way of living through *fe'ofa'aki* and *fetokoni'aki* (be kind to one another and give generously); (3) being subordinate to parents and committed to maintaining the close-knit social structure of the family; (4) being adventurous and treating the difficulties of re-integration as life challenges; (5) 'walking the talk' guided by good planning practices.

In the context of nation-building, return migration contributes to achieving two of the national development goals in the Government of Tonga's current Eight Strategic Development Plan 2006/07-2008/09. However, the extent to which return migration can make a direct contribution to development will depend on successful re-integration into the domestic society and the ability of returnees to act as agents of socio-economic transformation.

Tonga can not fully maximise the benefits generated from transnational return migration without a thorough understanding of the contemporary mobility of Tongans. This study has shed some new light on a crucial dimension of that mobility – voluntary transnational return. Should the Government of Tonga be serious about

pursuing a direction suggested by His Majesty the King in his closing speech of the 2006 Parliamentary session, when he stated that “[Government]... will reach out to all Tongans in Tonga and overseas” (see Chapter Two, page 11) to engage the diaspora in the nation-building in Tonga, then a consolidated commitment of all relevant local and international stakeholders to formulating of a comprehensive migration policy is essential.

Potential Research Areas

The scope of this study was limited to transnational return migrants who had obtained permanent residence or citizenship overseas, and who voluntarily returned to live in Tonga. Evidence from the research suggests that return migration has the potential to be an important contributor to sustainable development in Tonga. HOW to attract members of the Tongan diaspora to return to Tonga to live is an area that was not explored. It is anticipated that the outcomes of such a study would address questions relating to the appropriate strategies Government might adopt if it wished to develop a diaspora engagement policy.

Quite a bit is known about the potential of returnees to invest their human as well as financial capital in economic activity, but little is known about the detail of their investments and the snowballing effects of these at the micro and macro levels of Tonga’s development. The extent to which return migrants act as agents of socio-economic change has not been explored in great detail in this study; this is another subject for future research.

Evidence of ‘push factors’ motivating return from the host countries is less clear-cut in this study. Further research on this topic would contribute to the debate surrounding the extent to which return is attributed to the failure of migrants to adjust to life in the host nation. This topic is important in light of any diaspora engagement strategy where the objective is to attract back migrants with skills and resources accumulated abroad.

This study has shown that despite the fact that Tonga is ‘home’ for returnees, social, economic, cultural and political issues can obstruct the re-integration process of return migrants. The issue of whether re-integration is a success or failure for the migrants concerned, as well as the communities they come back to live in, requires more detailed investigation. Such a study would explore whether and to what extent the re-integration is successful – a logical follow-up to this research on the characteristics and motivations of voluntary transnational return migrants as well as the rationale for their repeated movements.

It is anticipated that the implementation of these potential migration research topics would collectively contribute towards the ‘written chapter’ of Tonga’s return migration.

APPENDICES

IMMIGRATION ARRIVAL CARD			No. 117530
1. (Surname).....		(Given or First names).....	
2a. Country of Citizenship:.....		2b. Country of Residency.....	
3a. Passport No:.....		3b. Date of Birth:.....	
4a. Flight No:.....		4b. Date of arrival in the Kingdom:	
5. Sex (tick the appropriate box):		Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Female <input type="checkbox"/>
6a. Occupation:.....		6b. Marital Status:.....	
7. VISITORS TO THE KINGDOM			
(a) How long do you intend to stay in Tonga?.....			
(b) Main Purpose of Visit?.....			
(c) Address in Tonga (name of hotel):.....			
8. TONGAN VISA HOLDERS			
(a) Date of expiry of visa:.....			
(b) Issue/Ref No.....			
(c) Category/Type of Visa (eg Student, business or employment).....			
9. RETURNING RESIDENTS			
(a) How long have you been away from Tonga?.....			
(b) Country you spent most of your time?			
10. CUSTOMS DECLARATION			
10. Are you bringing into Tonga: (See Customs Notes) TICK APPROPRIATE BOX			
a. Goods that may be prohibited or restricted?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Goods over the personal concession for alcohol and tobacco products?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
c. Goods for commercial or business purposes?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
d. If you answered yes to any of the questions in 10a, b, or c, please declare the goods below:-			
Description of Goods	Value of Goods	Official Use Only	
11. AGRICULTURE QUARANTINE			
11. Are you bringing into Tonga:- (See Agriculture Notes) TICK APPROPRIATE BOX			
a. Food of any kind?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Animals or animal products?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
c. Plants or plant products?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Other items such as used tents, spiked sporting shoes/boots soil or water?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
e. In the past 30 days have you been on a farm or forest outside Tonga?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
12. DECLARATION			
I certify that the information I have supplied on this form is true, correct and complete to the best of my knowledge.			
Signature:.....		Date:.....	
Immigration Officer will detach DEPARTURE CARD Please complete numbers 1 and 2 on arrival in the Kingdom PLEASE SUBMIT TO IMMIGRATION OFFICER ON YOUR DEPARTURE FROM THE KINGDOM			
1. Surname and Initials:.....			
2. Date of Arrival:.....			
3. Date of Departure:.....			
		117530 No. 1-	

THE INFORMATION SHEET

Master of Social Science Research Programme
Department of Geography, Tourism and Environmental Planning
University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105, Hamilton
New Zealand

Researcher: Viliami Liava'a
Email: vtfl1@waikato.ac.nz
NZ Contact Phone: (64) 0211382957
Tonga Contact Phone: (676) 41 605

Supervisor: Prof. Richard Bedford
Email: rdb@waikato.ac.nz
Contact Phone: (64) 7 838 4770

Date: _____

Dear _____

Thank you for considering the prospect of participating in my survey. The survey is a significant component of my study for the degree of Master of Social Science (MSocSc) in Geography. This study is the first of its kind to take place in Tonga in the area of transnational return migration. The study is expected to achieve two objectives. They are: firstly, to unravel the socio-economic characteristics of Tongan transnational returnees; and secondly, to provide insights into the process of reintegration of returnees into the Tongan society. This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of the University of Waikato.

You were identified through a process of snowballing through friends, working colleagues and community members. This research will involve a self-administered survey and subsequently an interview with about 10 participants.

Every participant who agrees to take part in the study will be given a consent form to be signed (*Refer to Consent Form - Appendix 3*). Once the consent form is signed, a self-administered questionnaire will subsequently be given out. At the end of the questionnaire, the participant is asked whether she/he is willing to take part in the second component of the data collection, the in-depth interview. Out of all those who are willing to take part in the second component, 10 people will be randomly selected for the in-depth interview.

Each interview will be tape-recorded. The interview will be carried out in Tongan language (or bilingual) unless the interviewee is comfortable and fluent in English (*Refer to Interview Guidelines - Appendix 5*). The interview will last about an hour. If the participant feels the interview is too long, further negotiation will be made to break the interview into two sessions. I intend to conduct two interviews a day, morning and afternoon, at a time, place and day that is convenience to each single interviewee. Subsequently, the interview will be transcribed and translated into English.

I will be responsible for all analysis of the data. If you are involved in the in-depth interview, it will be my responsibility to tape record the interview and subsequently transcribe it. All materials from the survey and interview will be kept confidential and only I will have access to the data (refer to informed consent sheet). Your anonymity will be guaranteed at each stage of the research through the use of a pseudonym in the place of your name and by disguising any identifiable features concerning your individual circumstances.

You are free to refuse to answer any questions or to withdraw from the exercise at any time. You may choose to have your survey form and/or tape recording and interview transcript return to you after July 31st 2007, otherwise they will be destroyed. Findings of the study will be used to write up my thesis and some information may be extracted for publication (refer Section 9 of informed consent sheet).

You will be asked to sign a consent form agreeing to participate in the survey and/or interview. I will discuss what is required of you and ensure that you

understand what your involvement in the research means prior to signing the consent form. If you have any queries or require further clarifications regarding any part of this research exercise, please contact me on 41 605 or email vtfl1@waikato.ac.nz.

Yours sincerely,

Viliami Liava'a

Researcher.

CONSENT FORM

**Master of Social Science Research Programme
Department of Geography, Tourism and Environmental Planning
University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105, Hamilton
New Zealand**

Researcher: Viliami Liava'a
Email: vtfl1@waikato.ac.nz
NZ Contact Phone: (64) 0211382957
Tonga Contact Phone: 41 605

Supervisor: Prof. Richard Bedford
Email: rdb@waikato.ac.nz
Contact Phone: (64) 7 838 4770

1. I am undertaking a field research as part of the Master of Social Science (MSocSc) in Geography. The research is aiming to: firstly, establish characteristics of Tongan transnational returnees across the various types of return migration; and secondly, to provide some insights into how returnees' reintegrates into Tongan society.

2. I would like to obtain some information from you by filling in the survey questionnaire.

3. The approximate time for filling in the questionnaire is about 30-40 minutes but it can be faster. Once you complete filling in the questionnaire, I will personally come and pick it up.

4. If you are willing to further participate in the in-depth interview by marking YES in Question 29 of the Survey Questionnaire, your name will be pooled together with other people for a random selection of 10 interviewees.

5. If you are selected again to take part in the in-depth interview, the interview will approximately last between an hour and two hours.

6. I would like to tape record the interview for transcription. If you wish, I will send you a verbatim (word for word) transcript of the interview. You may add to the transcript or edit parts from it if you wish.

7. When I complete my analysis and writing up of my thesis, the survey questionnaire, and/or tape recording and transcript will be either returned to you, if you wish, or destroyed six months after July 31st 2007, the deadline for the submission of my thesis.

8. If material from my thesis will be published in an academic article, care will be taken to ensure that your anonymity will be preserved by using pseudonyms.

9. If you agree to take part in the survey and interview, you have the following rights:

- a) To refuse to answer any particular question and to terminate the interview at any time.
- b) To ask any further questions about the survey and/or interview or research project that occurs to you, either during the interview or at any other time.
- c) To provide information on the understanding that is confidential to the researcher and the supervisor.
- d) To remain anonymous - anything that might identify you will not be included in the research report.
- e) To read and add to the transcript of the interview if you wish and to indicate any part of it that you do not wish to be used. You may withdraw your consent and be given all material relating to you at any time up until a week after the interview.
- f) To discuss further the conditions of your consent at any stage.
- g) If you are interviewed, to receive a copy of the findings.

h) To take any complaints you have about the survey and/or the interview to the Supervisor or to the Dean of Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (email: dzirker@waikato.ac.nz or telephone: (64) 7 838 4526) or to the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (secretary Charlotte Church, charl@waikato.ac.nz).

“I wish to have my survey form and/or tape recording and transcript returned to me six months after the completion of the evaluation of your thesis” (please circle)
YES NO

“I consent to be surveyed and/or interviewed for this research on the above conditions”

Signed: **Participant:** _____ Date: _____

“I agree to abide by the above conditions”

Signed: **Researcher:** _____ Date: _____

“If interviewed, I wish/do not wish to receive a copy of the findings” (*Circle one*)

Te Whare Wananga O Waikato

TRANSNATIONAL RETURN MIGRATION SURVEYFOR CODING
ONLYTHANK YOU FOR AGREEING TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY!!

As you know, I am studying the characteristics and reintegration process of those who have obtained permanent residence or citizenship in overseas countries but which have returned to live in Tonga after living overseas for a year or more. **ALL YOUR ANSWERS WILL BE CONFIDENTIAL!!**

WHERE APPROPRIATE PLEASE TICK THE BOX THAT MOST BEST REFLECTS YOUR ANSWER OR WRITE ON THE LINE PROVIDED. WRITE IN TONGAN OR IN ENGLISH, WHICHEVER LANGUAGE YOU ARE COMFORTABLE WITH.

PROFILE OF RETURNEES

1. Which country and town/city/village were you born?

Country: _____ Town/village: _____

2. If BORN IN TONGA, in which Island and village/town did you mostly live before you migrated overseas?

Country: _____ Town/Village: _____

3. Gender: 1 ☐ Male 2 ☐ Female

4. Date of birth: _____

5. Where did you live for most of 2005? Please state the country and city/ town/village

Country: _____ City/town/village: _____

6. a) Have you previously lived in any overseas country for 12 months or longer?

1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

- b) If YES, please state name of country or countries and years of stay:

Country: _____ From year: _____ to year: _____

Country: _____ From year: _____ to year: _____

Country: _____ From year: _____ to year: _____

7. Please indicate the YEAR that you INTENTIONALLY RETURNED TO LIVE in Tonga?

Year: _____

Te Whare Wananga O Waikato

Please rate the importance of the following factors in your decision to return to Tonga to live. **FOR CODING ONLY**
(Please *ONE* box that best represent your answer)

8. The availability of suitable employment:

1 ☐ Not important 2 ☐ Some importance 3 ☐ Very important 9 ☐ Not applicable

9. The inflation:

1 ☐ Not important 2 ☐ Some importance 3 ☐ Very important 9 ☐ Not applicable

10. A sense of Tonga as “home”:

1 ☐ Not important 2 ☐ Some importance 3 ☐ Very important 9 ☐ Not applicable

11. Availability of land:

1 ☐ Not important 2 ☐ Some importance 3 ☐ Very important 9 ☐ Not applicable

12. Family reunification:

1 ☐ Not important 2 ☐ Some importance 3 ☐ Very important 9 ☐ Not applicable

13. Political reform:

1 ☐ Not important 2 ☐ Some importance 3 ☐ Very important 9 ☐ Not applicable

14. Investment in business initiatives:

1 ☐ Not important 2 ☐ Some importance 3 ☐ Very important 9 ☐ Not applicable

15. Church obligations:

1 ☐ Not important 2 ☐ Some importance 3 ☐ Very important 9 ☐ Not applicable

16. Retirement:

1 ☐ Not important 2 ☐ Some importance 3 ☐ Very important 9 ☐ Not applicable

17. Starting with the MOST important, please list the 3 main reasons why, you intentionally returned to live in Tonga:

- i. _____

ii. _____

Te Whare Wananga O Waikato

**FOR CODING
ONLY**

iii. _____

18. How many people came back with you to Tonga? _____
List Ages: _____

19. If someone came with you, what is your relationship to them?
i) _____ ii) _____
iii) _____ iv) _____

20. What was your marital status when you arrived back in Tonga?
1 ☐ Never married 2 ☐ Now married/de facto 3 ☐ Widowed, separated,
divorced,

21. What is the highest level of educational qualification you have attained?
1 ☐ None 2 ☐ High school certificate 3 ☐ Diploma
4 ☐ Degree (eg. BA) 5 ☐ Post graduate degree (eg. MA, PhD)
6 ☐ Other, please specify _____

22. a) Did you acquire any of your educational qualifications overseas?
1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No 9 ☐ Not applicable

b) If YES, name countries and qualifications
Country: _____ Qualification: _____
Country: _____ Qualification: _____

23. What are you currently doing for living while you are in Tonga?

24. Please mark the category that fits your current occupation/job.
1 ☐ Full time in a job 2 ☐ Part time in a job 3 ☐ Self employed
4 ☐ Mainly household duties with one or all of farming, fishing and handicrafts
5 ☐ Full time student 6 ☐ Retired
7 ☐ Unemployed
8 ☐ Other, please specify _____

Te Whare Wananga O Waikato

**FOR CODING
ONLY**

25. a) Is your present occupation the same as it was before you migrated from Tonga?

1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No 3 ☐ Unsure 9 ☐ Not applicable

b) If answer NO or UNSURE or NOT APPLICABLE, what were your previous occupation?

26. a) Has your overseas experience influenced your present occupational status?

1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No 3 ☐ Unsure 9 ☐ Not applicable

b) Give the reasons for your answer in Q26 (a):

i.

ii.

27. What were/are the 3 main challenges you encountered since return?

i.

ii.

iii.

Te Whare Wananga O Waikato

28. Do you intend to travel in the next 12 months?

1 ☐ Yes

2 ☐ No

3 ☐ Unsure

**FOR CODING
ONLY**

29. Would you be prepared to assist by answering some further questions later in an interview?

1 ☐ Yes

2 ☐ No

Name: _____

Village: _____

Phone: _____

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE SURVEY

**TRANSNATIONAL RETURN MIGRATION
REINTEGRATION GUIDELINE SCHEDULE**

THANK YOU FOR AGREEING TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY!!

As you know, I am studying the characteristics and reintegration process of those who have obtained permanent residence or citizenship in overseas countries but who have returned to live in Tonga after living overseas for a year or more. **ALL YOUR ANSWERS WILL BE CONFIDENTIAL!!**

**QUESTIONS REFERING TO YOUR DECISION TO MIGRATE OVERSEAS
(Tonga-born ONLY)**

1. What was the year that you first migrated overseas with the intention of staying more than 12 months?
2. How long
2. What was your age at the time?
3. Why did you decided migrate overseas?
4. Who migrated with you?

**QUESTIONS TO DEPICT CONDITIONS BEFORE INTENTIONALLY
MIGRATING OVERSEAS**

1. In your opinion, what were your family (parents, brothers, sisters, relatives) do for living before you migrated overseas for the first time?

NOTE: *occupation of family members?; housing conditions; any family business?*

**QUESTIONS REFERING TO YOUR DECISION TO INTENTIONALLY
RETURN TO TONGA**

1. Given that you are a citizen of a foreign country or a permanent resident, why did you return?

Te Whare Wananga O Waikato

2. Did you ever think of returning when you migrated overseas?

a) Ask respondent to give reasons for his/her answer (Why?)

3. How significant is your returning to you?

a) Elaborate on the significance – ask in what way?

4. When you say return, what do you mean?

NOTE: *May need to clarify, give example*

5. Do you still consider your foreign country of residence to be a significant home?

NOTE: *Ask to give reasons to his/her answer – In what way is it significant or not significant?*

6. Who came back to Tonga with you?

NOTE: *If other family members have not returned, clarify why they did not return with the you?*

NOTE Q8-Q15 IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE:

CLARIFY WHY THE FACTORS THAT INFLUENCED HIS/HER DECISION TO RETURN ARE VERY IMPORTANT, SOME IMPORTANCE, NOT IMPORTANT OR NOT APPLICABLE.

QUESTIONS REFERRING TO THE REINTEGRATION PROCESS ONCE RETURNING

1. Are there any significant difference between your current way of living and the situation you had before you intentionally departed overseas?

NOTE: *Why is it different?*

2. As a returnee, what did you do in order for you to be feeling accepted by family/relatives and the community?

NOTE: *Any socio-economic, political and/or cultural changes occurring because of his/her involvement in the household/community?*

3. What were/are challenges that you faced since coming home?

Te Whare Wananga O Waikato

4. Do you intend to travel in the next 12 months? Why?
5. When you were/are in your overseas country of residence, what do you do for living?

**OBSERVE ANY SIGNIFICANT PHYSICAL CHANGES & TAKE
PHOTOGRAPHS**

PROBING:

“What do you mean...?”

“Tell me more about...”

“How do you feel about...?”

“I see”, “Oh really”

Transnational Return Migration Survey

Coding Manual

Q1. *COB (Country of birth):*

1	Tonga	4	USA
2	New Zealand	5	Fiji
3	Australia		

VOB (Town/village of birth):

1.10	Kolofo'ou	2.1	Christchurch	3.1	Sydney	4.1	San Bruno, CA
1.11	Kolomotu'a	2.2	Wellington	3.2	Melbourne	4.2	Los Angeles
1.12	Tofoa	2.3	Auckland			4.3	San Francisco
1.13	Kolovai						
1.14	Pangai, Hp						
1.15	Kolonga	1.21	Ma'ufanga			5.1	Suva
1.16	Vaini	1.22	Sia'atoutai				
1.17	Neiafu, Vv	1.23	Toloa				
1.18	Kanokupolu	1.24	Leimatu'a				
1.19	Niutoua	1.25	Fasi				
1.20	Ha'avakatolo	1.26	Ha'ano, Hp				

Q2. *CML (Country did you most live before you migrate):*

1	Tonga	4	'Eua
2	Vava'u	5	Niuafo'ou
3	Ha'apai	6	Niuaotuputapu
		9	N/A

VML (Town/village did most live before you migrate):

1.10	Ma'ufanga	2.1	Talau	3.1	Ha'ano, Hp
1.11	Mataika	2.2	Neiafu		
1.12	Kolomotu'a	2.3	Leimatu'a		
1.13	Halaleva				
1.14	Kolovai				
1.15	Ha'avakatolo			99	N/A
1.16	Fasi				
1.17	Haveluloto				
1.18	Kolonga				
1.19	Vaini				
1.20	Kolofo'ou	1.23	Sopu		
1.21	Kanokupolu	1.24	Transient (parents were teachers)		
1.22	Ha'avakatolo	1.25	Ngele'ia		

Q3. GENDER:	1	Male
	2	Female

Q4. DOB (Date of birth): dd/mm/yr

Q5. LIV_2005 (Country you live for most of 2005):

- | | | | |
|---|-------------|---|-----|
| 1 | Tonga | 9 | N/A |
| 2 | New Zealand | | |
| 3 | Australia | | |
| 4 | USA | | |

VLIV_05 (Town/village you live for most of 2005):

- | | | | | | |
|------|------------|------|------------------|-----|--------|
| 1.10 | Ha'ateiho | 2.1 | Auckland | 3.1 | NSW |
| 1.11 | Sopu | 2.2 | Palmerston North | | |
| 1.12 | Halaleva | 2.3 | Christchurch | | |
| 1.13 | Fangaloto | | | | |
| 1.14 | Haveluloto | 4.1 | Hawthorne, CA | 5.1 | Oxford |
| 1.15 | Tofoa | 4.2 | Los Angeles, CA | | |
| 1.16 | Ma'ufanga | | | | |
| 1.17 | 'Eua Is | | | | |
| 1.18 | Fua'amotu | | | | |
| 1.19 | Mataki'eua | 1.24 | Kolovai | 99 | N/A |
| 1.20 | Pahu | 1.25 | Sia'atoutai | | |
| 1.21 | Kolofo'ou | 1.26 | Nuku'alofa | | |
| 1.22 | Fanga | 1.27 | Mataika | | |
| 1.23 | Kolomotu'a | 1.28 | Ngele'ia | | |

Q6. a) OVA_12 (previously live overseas for 12 mths or longer):

1	Yes	2	No
---	-----	---	----

b) COUNTRY1:

1	NZ	2	Australia
3	USA	4	Spain
5	UK	6	Singapore
7	Fiji	8	PNG
9	Germany	99	N/A

YEAR1:

COUNTRY2:

1	NZ	2	Australia
3	USA	4	Spain
5	UK	6	Singapore
7	Fiji	8	PNG
9	Germany	99	N/A

YEAR2:

COUNTRY3:

1	NZ	2	Australia
3	USA	4	Spain
5	UK	6	Singapore
7	Fiji	8	PNG
9	Germany	99	N/A

YEAR3:

Q7. IR_YR (year that you intentionally returned to live in Tonga):

- Two respondents: "Did not intentionally returned to live in Tonga".
 - Came for holiday and ended up staying here in Tonga
 - Return to Tonga because of various factors

(Q8-Q16: rate using the same scale in Q8)

Q8. EMPLOY (availability of suitable employment):	1	Not important
	2	Some important
	3	Very important
	9	N/A

Q9. INFLATN (the inflation):**Q10. HOME (a sense of Tonga as 'home'):****Q11. LAND (availability of land):****Q12. FAMILY (family reunification):****Q13. POLITICS (political reform):****Q14. BUSNES (investment in business initiative):****Q15. CHURCH (church obligation):****Q16. RETIRE (retirement):****Q17. 3 main reasons WHY you intentionally returned) (RANKING) (create Reasons as variable)****REASON 1:**

1 Family reunification - Tonga was where my parents and siblings permanently resided

2 I migrated overseas to seek better opportunities and to educate my children, now I've retired so I return

3 Work experience, initially to apply skills

4 a need to raise my young children in Tonga to accustomed to Tongan culture & traditions

5 Stay with ailing mother

6 Church obligation

7 family

8 return to be with partner

9 family

10 help family business

11 family reunification

12 did not intentionally return to live in Tonga but began to adapt and build a new life here with my family when it was evident that I was not returning back

13 to stay with my father

1 Family reunification (1, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 16, 21, 23, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 43, 45)

2 Retiring (2)

3 Employment (3, 6, 32, 35, 36, 38, 42, 44)

4 Accustomed to Tongan culture (4, 17, 19, 20, 33, 34, 46)

5 Business (10, 26)

6 Home (14, 15, 18, 22, 24, 40)

7 Contribute to development (25, 37, 39, 41)

- 14 home
 15 loan to build a house
 16 family
 17 enable children to learn Tongan and know Tongan culture
 18 I have my own house in Tonga
 19 familiarise with the Tongan culture
 20 cultural identity – to connect and discover more about my cultural background
 21 wife was deported from the US
 22 to invest and put something back to Tonga
 23 I have been away so long from the member of the family. I have to come back to see parent and grandparents
 24 Tonga will always be home – I never intended to look for a better life in NZ. We migrated to give more educational opportunities for our children
 25 to help people in hardship to go overseas to enable them to help their families
 26 returned to help in the family business and possibly establish my own
 27 employment: I've been obligated to return to work so as to assist my parent
 28 family obligations – taking care of my mum as she was sick
 29 to be with my family
 30 to stay with my mother and grandparents
 31 to be with my parents so that when they'll die I have been with staying with them
 32 Availability of suitable employment
 33 essential part of my life experience because I was born in the States
 34 my husband's duty and obligation to his territory and people are here in Tonga
 35 my husband obligation to Sia'atoutai theological college
 36 church commitment
 37 give back to the community after I finished my MA in NZ
 38 employment and to help government's development effort
 39 contribute to the future of the people of Tonga
 40 a sense of Tonga as home
 41 give something back to the country and local community. Obviously I'm not here for the great salary!
 42 my husband has got to return to work for the Church here in Tonga
 43 to stay with my grandparents as they raised me as a child and were getting old
 44 availability of suitable employment
 45 to be with my father who returned to Tonga due to health reasons two years earlier
 46 family title
 47 Tonga as home, already have a house but not occupied since we left to NZ
 48 Tonga is my home of which I always wanted to return to for retirement and for the rest of my life

REASON 2:

- 1 A sense of Tonga as home – Tonga was instilled in me by my parents as home and where I had spend all my holidays while away
 2 I return to my home ('api) because Tonga is more peaceful for the mind, soul and spirit.
 3 familiarise myself with Tonga
 4 A sense of feeling to serve in the Tongan government as an educated Tongan & to use skills gained to assist with development of the Kingdom for the benefit of entire country
 5 secured a post within Tonga's public service whilst still in NZ which made returning to Tonga easier – financial wise
 6 Education
 7 getting away from monotony and routine

- 1 Family reunification (15, 18, 19, 21, 12, 28, 30, 35, 41, 42, 44, 45)
 2 Retiring ()
 3 Employment (4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 23, 33, 34, 43)
 4 Accustomed to Tongan culture (3, 22, 27, 29, 31, 37, 46)
 5 Business (13)
 6 Home (1, 2, 26, 14, 20, 38)
 7 Contribute to development (16, 17, 24, 25)
 8 Not comfortable abroad (7, 26, 32)
 9 Availability of land (8, 40)
 10 Education (36)
 99 N/A (9)

- 8 availability of land
- 9 No response
- 10 to seek possible career opportunities, believe would be exposed to more business opportunities in Tonga as opposed to NZ
- 11 Church obligation
- 12 I came for holiday and my dad decided for me not to go back but to...
- 13 help my father with his business (build & run)
- 14 Tonga as place of origin – easier to start own business
- 15 be with family
- 16 support development of Tonga
- 17 economic opportunities
- 18 my husband don't have a PR
- 19 Joined my sister who had returned to Tonga the previous year and worked as a civil servant
- 20 being part of the community
- 21 daughter was living in Tonga with my in-laws
- 22 touch base with roots
- 23 I got a job before return to Tonga. I was happy about the job description and wages
- 24 contribute to the development of Tonga through our professional skills
- 25 trying to make the price of gas, petrol and construction materials cheaper
- 26 the lifestyle of earning enough to live comfortably without the stress of being in the fast lane
- 27 better environment to raise my children while they're still young. I have family support back here and I would like my kids to grow up in Tonga to learn life and attributes
- 28 family reunion – most of my family migrated back here to Tonga due to employment
- 29 to bring up my two boys to understand their culture and speak their mother tongue
- 30 I'm the eldest in the family so I have the leading role and taking charge in family kavenga
- 31 development is slowly progressed hence a suitable environment for family rearing
- 32 get away from typical overseas life for a while
- 33 my trip to Tonga is part of my capacity building training
- 34 I still have a job in Tonga which is not much in pay wise so waiting for a redundant package to come so I can establish in NZ
- 35 be with my husband
- 36 study theology in Sia'atoutai
- 37 learn how to speak Tongan
- 38 sense of Tonga as home
- 39 contribute to the efficacy of the church
- 40 Availability of land
- 41 reconnect with family ties, meet the extended family and learn the language and culture
- 42 to be together as family as my husband has got to return to Tonga after study
- 43 availability of suitable employment
- 44 family reunion
- 45 just completed my studies and therefore felt was in the best position to return to Tonga and live with my father
- 46 responsibilities to my estate, King and family
- 47 just graduated from University, an ideal time for me to return and find a job and stay in Tonga
- 48 I got family in Tonga

REASON 3:

- 1 Availability of suitable employment – my family had instilled in me the priority of serving the government
- 2 good environment for me to establish a small business
- 3 Exposure to development issues
- 4 To reside with and assist my parents who live here in Tongatapu
- 5 a lot of family here so looking forward to reuniting with them and also receiving their support
- 6 No response
- 7 To retire and relax back

- 8 Tonga as a home
 9 No response
 10 Believe Tonga a better place to raise a young family
 11 retirement
 12 seek employment here
 13 get married and have a family
 14 not feeling comfortable in NZ society
 15 stay for the work experience
 16 contribute to community
 17 dissatisfaction with future prospects in NZ
 18 I have a business currently in operation
 19 contribute back to Tonga and it's development programs
 20 contribution to Tongan development
 21 No response
 22 semi-retire
 23 to raise my kids in Tonga
 24 have land and properties
 25 I see opportunities here in Tonga. I can get the life style in the US here in Tonga through agriculture and livestock
 26 contribute my experience and knowledge to society
 27 comfortable: I am feeling comfortable in Tonga providing that I do a job and what I need here in Tonga
 28 employment
 29 make sure we have our piece of land available for our sons
 30 establish a business to help with the 'fua kavenga'
 31 Getting away from the stress and advance life overseas
 32 Learn in Tonga to contribute to the Tongan community in US
 33 N/A
 34 just to be with husband
 35 N/A
 36 obey to church authority with regards to employment roster
 37 learn about Tongan culture and to understand how it works for my mother to grow up here
 38 political reform
 39 reuniting with the people of my parents upbringing
 40 retirement
 41 advance career – as Tonga is small, advancing within the Ministry is much faster than overseas
 42 for kids to educate in Tonga to absorb language and culture
 43 to experience life in Tonga especially the work environment
 44 availability of land
 45 suitable employment available at TV Tonga which just opened in July 2000
 46 duty to serve the government
 47 could feel obligated to assist my home country
 48 run business to support me financially in Tonga
- 1 Family reunification (4, 5, 13, 34, 39)
 2 Retiring (7, 11, 22, 40)
 3 Employment (1, 3, 12, 15, 28, 32, 41, 45, 46)
 4 Accustomed to Tongan culture (10, 23, 36, 37, 42, 43)
 5 Business (2, 18, 30)
 6 Home (8, 25, 27)
 7 Contribute to development (16, 19, 20, 26)
 8 Not comfortable abroad (14, 17, 31)
 9 Availability of land (24, 29, 44)
 10 Political reform (38)
 99 N/A (6, 9, 21, 33, 35)

Q18. a) NUM (Number come back with you):

b) AGE1, AGE2 etc:

Q19. RELATIVE (If someone came with you, your relationship to them):

1	Son	2	Daughter	3	Husband
4	Wife	5	Children	6	Grandchild
9	N/A				

Q20. MARITAL (marital status when return):

- 1 Never married 2. Now married/de facto 3. Widowed, separated, divorced

Q21. EDUCATN (highest level of educational qualification attained):

- 1 None
2 High school certificate
3 Diploma
4 Degree
5 Post graduate degree
6 Other (eg. certificate)

Q22. a) EDU_OVC (acquire educational qualification overseas):

- 1 Yes 2 No
9 N/A

b) IF_YES (if YES, name country and qualification):**COUNTRY:**

- | | | | | | |
|---|-------|---|-----------|----|-----------|
| 1 | NZ | 2 | Australia | 3 | Fiji |
| 4 | Spain | 5 | UK | 6 | Singapore |
| 7 | PNG | 8 | USA | 99 | N/A |

QUALFCTN (qualification):

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| 1 | High school certificate |
| 2 | Diploma |
| 3 | Degree |
| 4 | MA |
| 5 | PhD |
| 5 | Other (eg. certificate) |

Q23. OCCUPATN (occupational status):

- | | | | |
|----|----------------------------|----|--|
| 1 | GOT administrator | 16 | Import & seller of construction materials, gas |
| 2 | Retired | 18 | Managing own business |
| 3 | GOT Director | 19 | Account & admin manager of Tonga Print Ltd |
| 4 | GOT Assistant secretary | 20 | Volunteer – TNYC |
| 5 | Teaching | 21 | Work for TCC |
| 6 | Practising law | 22 | Director of 3 businesses & founder of new technical school |
| 7 | Sales & customer manager | 23 | Farming |
| 8 | Finance manager | 24 | Minister |
| 9 | Housewife | 25 | Managing retail shop |
| 10 | GOT Executive officer | 26 | Accountant – civil servant |
| 11 | Private business manager | 27 | Director – TNYC |
| 12 | Operating private business | 99 | Not stated |

- 13 Sales & marketing manager
- 14 Consultant
- 15 Managing photo shop

Q24. JOB (category that fits your current occupation):

- 1 Full time in a job
- 2 Part time in a job
- 3 Self employed
- 4 Mainly household duties with one or all of farming, fishing, and handicrafts
- 5 Full time student
- 6 Retired
- 7 Unemployed
- 8 Other
- 9 Not stated

Q25. a) OC_STAT (present occupation the same as it was before you migrate):

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 3 Unsure
- 9 N/A

* One person: was born in NZ but she was raised up in Tonga then go back to NZ for further study

b) NOT_YES (if answer No, Unsure or N/A, what was your previous occupation):

- 1 Student
- 2 GOT machine operator
- 3 No intention of remaining in Tonga
- 4 Secretariat for FWC president
- 5 Junior clerk
- 6 Child when migrated
- 7 public servant
- 8 born overseas
- 9 bank executive
- 10 farmer
- 11 sales person in family business
- 99 Not applicable

Q26. a) EXP (has overseas experience influenced present occupational status):

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 3 Unsure
- 9 N/A

b) REASON (reason for Q26 (a)):

R_EXP: 1 Application of overseas works culture & attitude to work

* attitude to work has been natured by an overseas culture which is a positive attribute to working in Tonga despite all the negative aspects of Tongan work cultures

* working long hours & hard labour makes the present job easy

* coming to work on time, finishing my job on time and done work with quality and precision.

* gaining experience and more knowledge help me put up my new business

* more exposure to professional skills and knowledge in NZ

- * *work place ethics and value's of money*
- * *I had to include my resume and job references for this volunteer position*
- * *experience working in a corporate environment assist me greatly*
- * *work ethics and standard of work*
- * *overseas experience has made me demanding and vocal in my current job, which is not the norm in the Tongan work culture*

2 Better time management

- * I start and finish work on certain time and have one day off

3 No intention of remaining in Tonga permanently

4 Exposure to cross-cultural phenomenon

- * perhaps the cross-cultural exposure may have contributed, but I cannot ascertain this

5 Similar professionalism skills applied

- * similar professionalism skills & knowledge at managerial level required overseas are also what's needed to be applied at my present occupation

6 Apply skills & knowledge

- * experience & skills acquired during period of employment in NZ – I was able to apply it here in Tonga with regards to customer service
- * I have been a chef and also had my own food business in NZ. I contribute ideas in menu planning and the running of the kitchen. I also repair jobs whether its plumbing, painting and if I can do it I will fix it.
- * “What I learnt from school were applied in the classroom when I was teaching and now I am utilising it for cooking for guests and takeaways”
- * “I am vocal, frank and up front with my staff. Being honest and transparent are important traits to have as a manager”
- * “I have been working for various contractors in Australia since 1985 till 1993. Definitely my overseas experience had build me up to the post I am undertaking at the present time. The standard, quality and professionalism had been influenced greatly by my overseas experiences”
- * gaining experience and more knowledge helps me to put up my new business
- * having worked for the Australian Federal Govt gave me an experience and insights to the public service which has been of great assistance to me whilst in the service in Tonga
- * return with higher qualification thereby get promoted to a higher level – extend knowledge and skill
- * because there is lack of tools and experience in Tonga
- * my past work experience has better prepared me for work here in Tonga. I am more computer literate and understand office politics for example. This helps me to exhibit a degree of professionalism in my work habits
- * I was qualified to be an accountant and I wanted to change careers
- * studied B/Com and now I am doing business management and finance in Sia'atoutai
- * I travelled extensively before moving back to Tonga seeing developing countries made we want to come back to my homeland to help before going to any other country to work in the development field
- * I used to work at an NGO with Polynesian youth in the US and this influenced my choice of occupation in Tonga
- * technical skills from previous occupation
- * Managerial skills from previous occupation
- * gathered valuable experience that I am able to use to my advantage in my current job
- * exposure to metropolitan countries broadens my perception to deal more successfully with local work problems

- * determination to utilize every single skill that I have to generate employment is something I gained whilst living and growing up in NZ watching my parents work 2-3 jobs just to ensure food, shelter and education for myself and my siblings (ofa)
- * work several part-time jobs in NZ really what I'm doing now in Tonga, every opportunity – I grab! (ofa)
- * utilise knowledge gained from my major in Political science

- 7 Occupation assigned to by the church authority**
- 8 Better qualification**
- 9 Unemployed overseas**
- 10 Work & studies overseas not match my work in Tonga**
- 11 Learning to be independent**
- 12 Working for other people made me want to be my own boss ie. Self employed**
- 13 Do something different**
- 14 Because the job requirements were directly inline with my post requirements/skills in Tonga**

* PSC stated that my legal experience in NZ is irrelevant to my work in Tonga but they started me at the same salary level as if I just graduated from University

99 N/A

Q27. CHALLENGE1: (challenges encountered since return):

CHALLENGE2:

CHALLENGE3:

1 Different working environment

- * Attitude of people
- * “had to build relationship with banking institutions. Job was at managerial level”
- * work – to set up an accounting system for the workplace. Previously system ad hoc
- * work environment was quite different to what I had experienced overseas
- * To keep the standard quality & professionalism high
- * difficult to manage attitude of workers
- * foreign people take charge in doing business in Tonga
- * I had do experienced what I studied and having promoted to a new job
- * pressure of my new job
- * lack of accountability. Few Tongans at work or church ultimately believe they are not accountable for their actions. This leads to a number of behavioural traits
- * lack of professionalism – things like telephone manners, lateness to work, long breaks – basically there's no accountability
- * lack of ‘team work’ within the Ministry. Everyone is looking out for themselves rather than the group as a whole
- * profound lack of resources. We just don't have the equipment to get things done efficiently
- * work environment is so relaxed – difficult for career building and development as work environment is not very competitive
- * lack of resources to operate new Ministry's with

2 Time management

- * working harder than before I was migrated overseas and better time management
- * commitment to study and work

3 Youth related

- * employ youth, encourage youth to work and well behave as well as helping poor people
- * youth misbehaviour

4 Political tension

- * reform
- * attitude of people towards democracy
- * had to assess the changing political climate in Tonga and to make my own decisions on which view to take
- * political tension here in Tonga
- * becoming a politician

5 Family related works

- * obligations to extended family
- * help family to work hard, live in a rightful lifestyle and in peace
- * extended family crowded in one house
- * difficult to save money/income providing that there are lots of family 'kaveinga' that I had to contribute to
- * problem with family. I felt as though I never had freedom when I stayed with them so I moved to my own house

6 Skill related

- * job was not challenging enough at the beginning
- * I haven't come across people who have similar ideas as I
- * working with students who copy overseas problems and can't really deal with it
- * teaching students who are used to being 'spoon-fed' in the school system and can't really think critically at things
- * skills level of employment are really poor due lack of competition/exposure. Both technical and managerial skills are very poor

7 Adapting to Tongan culture

- * cultural shocks – peer groups and social systems were different
- * restrictive practices such as what are can say or do at home and at the work place
- * adjusting to the Tongan system of living
- * adjusting to family obligations
- * encountering the great differences in society and culturally
- * pressure of family restrictions/obligations on myself as an individual
- * trying to adapt to the Tongan way of living in such a close-knit society
- * to cope with local authorities
- * to work along with locals
- * sense of rejection in community
- * trying to adapt to lifestyle
- * different cultural values
- * cultural misunderstandings and behaviour
- * cultural and social integration is difficult due to language barriers
- * "language, I don't speak Tongan and trying to get my message across for others to understand me is sometimes difficult"
- * behavioural expectations are more conservative and have different set of rules in Tonga
- * slow pace of work & life in Tonga
- * getting back to the Tongan culture and flow of things
- * having adjusted to family/extended orientated obligations playing the role model of a Tongan
- * expected social behaviour
- * too much 'kavenga'/obligations here in Tonga such as funeral, wedding, church etc
- * strict adherence and Tongan cultural values and norms
- * cultural attitudes and behaviour that were negative towards my 'way of living'

8 Miss places & people overseas

- * “At times homesickness for places and people you’ve developed bonds with for about a decade at your formative years”
- * being away from friends & family
- * immediate family in US
- * had a son in USA, couldn’t be with him
- * miss children
- * at times homesickness for places and people you’ve developed bonds with for about a decade at your formative years
- * Education system: NZ syllabus for education is at a very high standard. Teaching methodologies in NZ schools are also at high standard & of high quality
- * homesick for family in the States
- * separation with part of my family living in NZ
- * separation from wife and children

9 Wage difference

- * low pay jobs in Tonga
- * salary level was considerably low to allow me to establish myself outside family. This has forced me to consider options such as marriage
- * employment salary: in NZ, salary is very high. Yearly packages & bonus offered depending on performance appraisal
- * not enough pay for my volunteer allowance. Rent is expensive
- * salary rate is low
- * lesser income

10 Inflation

- * inflation of goods, NZ goods & products are very cheap for daily living
- * high cost of food stuff and utilities ie. Petrol, electricity, water and gas
- * expensive to live/stay in Tonga
- * import products are very expensive
- * cost of living is high
- * high cost of food both crops and sea food
- * lower income but the prices of goods and services are very expensive
- * good quality food too expensive or not available therefore always resulting in eating unhealthy fatty foods

11 Receiving poor customer services

- * both in public and private sector companies
- * slow services
- * medicine is not enough and very limited
- * lack of ‘stuff’. It doesn’t matter how much you want or can afford something, if it isn’t available then you can’t get it
- * access to good services and good customer services

12 Lack of employment opportunities

- * suited to qualification
- * finding a job especially not completing my tertiary education
- * High unemployment rate

13 Export related

- * put emphasis of quality control on post-harvest system to open more market opportunities

14 Poor environment quality

- * dirty, dusty, unhygienic in bathrooms and toilets
- * environment

15 Weather

16 Changing society

- * attitude of people generally and attitudes to work as a whole
- * returning to a society which is a little different to where I grew up as a teen and as a young woman
- * village/small town mentality
- * high expectations in the community for me to contribute a lot to community development activities
- * life style
- * Gossip. Living in the US, people are more honest and upfront. I'm still not used to the back stabbing in the place
- * unfaithfulness in relationships. It's very different from the West
- * tongan way of living is deteriorating

17 Start a new life

- * since all my immediate family have migrated to NZ I had to start from scratch

18 Adjusting to Tongan way of doing business

- * starting own business

19 Finance

- * better financial management

20 Availability of trained and skilled HR in hospitality & tourism

21 Lack of young entrepreneurship

22 Establishing security of income from self employment

- * keep up with business missions and missions
- * limited knowledge on how to generate \$

23 Establishing friends/family contact

24 Material things & things to do on my free time

25 Doing business/work especially when I don't have the qualification (eg) immigration work, import rep. of gas at cheap price

26 Losing a lot of weight. This unhealthy and I get a lot of mosquito bites

- * health care

99 No response

COLLAPSED CATEGORY:

1 WORKING ENVIRONMENT:

9. Wage difference

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24. Material things & things to do on my free time

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- * Losing a lot of weight. This unhealthy and I get a lot of mosquito bites
- * health care

4 HUMAN RESOURCES:

20. Availability of trained and skilled HR in hospitality & tourism

21. Lack of young entrepreneurship

25. Doing business/work especially when I don't have the qualification (eg) immigration work, import rep. of gas at cheap price

5 POLITICAL ISSUES:

4. Political tension

- * reform
- * attitude of people towards democracy
- * had to assess the changing political climate in Tonga and to make my own decisions on which view to take
- * political tension here in Tonga
- * becoming a politician

6 ENVIRONMENT:

14. Poor environment quality

- * dirty, dusty, unhygienic in bathrooms and toilets
- * environment

15. Weather

7 MISSING OVERSEAS PLACES:

8. Miss places & people overseas

- * "At times homesickness for places and people you're developed bonds with for about a decade at your formative years"
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- * homesick for family in the States
- * separation with part of my family living in NZ
- * separation from wife and children

Q28. TRAVEL (*intend to travel in next 12 months*):

1. Yes 2. No 3. Unsure

- * Political situation has forced us to return to Australia

Q29. INTERVIEW

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 1 | Yes |
| 2 | No |

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