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Tongan Business Obligation:

Across a sea of enterprise

A thesis

submitted in partial fulfilment

of the requirements for the degree

of

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ABSTRACT

Dubbed as the only remaining monarchy in the South Pacific. The Kingdom of Tonga seeks to provide a unique history, tradition and culture. Economically though, Tonga comes in as one of the 'least developed countries' in the world. This research seeks to provide small to medium size businesses as the solution to reforming Tonga's economic disposition. Prior literature has identified cultural obligation as what impedes business success. However, employing the *Talanoa* methodological approach, within grounded theory, secondary literature and interpretive paradigm, this research disproves cultural obligation as the only cause to business failure. Tongan business is ingrained within the Tongan way (anga-fakaTonga) of being, therefore, cultural obligation is a way of life. Furthermore, other challenges such as book keeping, management, and government assistance seeks to also contribute to the failure of Tongan business; to which business owners have provided various solutions in this study. A total of thirty-eight research samples participated in updating and conceptualizing the understanding of Tongan business especially in regards to its cultural diversity. Future research into Tongan business is need especially in comparison to western businesses.

Key words- Business, obligation, challenges, Tongan culture

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Seuke, ‘oku tefito ki he ‘ene ‘Afio, pea fou ‘i he ‘ene Afio, pea iku ki he ‘ene ‘Afio, ‘a e me’a fulipe. Ki ‘he ‘ene ‘Afio ‘a e kololia ‘o lauikuonga. Emeni.

Loma 11:36

‘Everything there is comes from him and is caused by him and exists for him. To him be glory for ever. Amen’.

Romans 11:36

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‘OFA ATU & GOD BLESS YOU ALL

This thesis is dedicated to the women who have inspired me: To my mother Lapama Fili; my aunties Mele Manu’ofetoa and Fuatapu Vaipulu who passed away during the production of this thesis.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Tongan business obligations, across a sea of Tongan enterprises, are an important component of Tongan economy growth. Central to the discipline of tourism and management this study seeks to examine Tongan owned and operated businesses within the context of the Kingdom of Tonga. While successful small to medium size (SME) businesses seek to contribute financially to Tonga's economy, others fail. Studies have pointed towards cultural obligation as the cause for the collapse of Tongan SME business.

Previous literature which has contributed to this research will be constructed as follows. Firstly, from a global spectrum on the understanding of innovation and entrepreneurship, focus will also be on small to medium size enterprises within Pacific neighbouring countries such as Samoa, Fiji and Papua New Guinea. While more specific studies conducted on the nature of Tongan business as well as other key themes such as migration will lay the ground work for this research.

These secondary texts; paired with grounded theory; and interpretive paradigm informs the research design. *Talanoa* methodology is the chosen tool to guide the semi-structural interviews. It collected thirty eight interviews in total.

The research gap is the empirical identification of the dynamics and effects of cultural obligation. As well as the importance of cultural obligation in contributing to Tonga's moral wealth. This study provides a deeper understanding to various cultural challenges Tongan (SME) businesses face while also providing solutions. Other issues outside of cultural obligation, this research will also be exploring the constructed reality of the Tongan way (*anga-fakatonga*). This research was conducted in with the hope it will encourage future businesses to succeed to enable the development of Tonga.

The Kingdom of Tonga

The Kingdom of Tonga is geographically allocated within the Polynesian Triangle, about 23° and 15° S and between 173° and 177° W - Southwest of Samoa and to the East of Fiji. Tonga is comprised of 169 Islands, but only 36 are inhabited sprinkled over 700,000 square km of ocean, (Stanley, 2004). These inhabited Islands are divided into three main groups of Islands. The Ha'apai group, Vava'u group and

Tongatapu, which comprises of the capital, Nuku'alofa. These archipelagos also include 'Eua which is much closer to Tongatapu. Niuafu'ou and Niuaotupou which are the most Northerly Islands of Tonga.

Tonga is also known as 'The Friendly Island' and is the only remaining Polynesian Kingdom within the Pacific. Tonga is also the only Pacific nation which was never colonized.

Moreover, Tonga has a population of 1,032,52 as of the 2011 census (Department of Statistics, 2011) and the average Tongan is expected to live up to the age of 71 (Fall & Drezner, 2011). Tonga has a Tongan and/or English literacy rate of 99.4% while the main source of currency being agriculture, tourism, and remittances. According to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA, 2016) Tonga is considered within the 'least developed countries' of the world with a gross domestic product (GDP) per capita of \$5,100.

Tongan culture is founded on the communal sharing of land ownership, income and assets. While it's hierarchical structure dictates various traditional values and protocols enforced within the family, micro communities as well as its society (Frederick, 2010). Tonga is ruled under a monarchy with a constitution, in which a total of 33 representative make up the Legislative Assembly, but the King has the final say. Representatives of parliament also illustrate the social construction of Tongan society, in which the Royal family is at the head of the pyramid, followed by the Nobles of the Realm, and then commoners.

The constitution was drafted on Methodist principles, which is also the dominant Christian religion within Tonga, followed by Roman Catholics, Mormons as well as other Christian denominations such as, Free Church of Tonga and Latter Day Saints. The royal-red Tongan flag symbolizes the blood of Jesus Christ, and the Tongan national anthem is composed as a prayer. On Sundays, all Tongans are expected to go to church, therefore it is unlawful to do any work, commercial trade or hold any sporting events on Sunday. Tonga and its culture is considered a relaxed and happy place with a peaceful, content, and hospitable life-style (Stanley, 2004). Tonga has a tropical climate, with a dry season during the months of May to October, and a wet season from November to April. The wet season is also known to bring tropical cyclones, also known as hurricanes (Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, 2012)

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Extensive literature has contributed to an understanding of the unique nature of Pacific business within the global context. This dissertation builds upon that research and seeks to explore business challenges that affect the success and failure of Tongan businesses. It also explores the issues of cultural obligation and Tongan business management values, of which there are gaps in the research literature. A wide range of perspectives are gathered to address the principal aim, to identify key elements that need to be in place for Tongan businesses to succeed within the Kingdom of Tonga. This chapter is divided into four sections. The first focuses on innovation and entrepreneurial identity, with specific attention to small and medium size enterprises within the Pacific. Second, a section explores the notion of cultural complexity. The third section examines the role of obligation within the context and nature of Tongan enterprise. Fourthly, this section explores other key factors affecting Pacific enterprises, such as, migration and remittances.

Innovation and Entrepreneurial Identity

Firstly, the origin of the term entrepreneurship can be traced back to France in which the term '*entreprendre*' which means to undertake or to take in one's own hands. This term emerged during the period of the Industrial Revolution in which various new ideas enabled the development of new business ventures which had a huge impact on the market at the time (Schaper, Volery, Weber, & Gibson, 2014). The term 'innovation' is defined as the advancement of business in various elements, whether through products or services. The term was first used by Schumpeter (Schumpeter & Opie, 1934) the proclaimed father of innovation (McCraw, 2007) who was an economist who reinvented himself multiple times; in the process the notion of innovation was born.

Innovation is also a process of business development or a response to competition (Camisón & Monfort-Mir, 2012; Solvoll, Alsos, & Bulanova, 2015). Innovation seeks to provide an impact upon business. Camisón and Monfort-Mir (2012) argues that measuring innovation in relation to tourism, falls short on two counts. The first is that evaluation of innovation is usually done through manufacturing scoreboards at a company level which immediately excludes various tourism sectors. While employing this scoreboard might be applicable to some, an issue

remains about how and what data is to be collected in order to measure a tourism innovation that exceeds the corporate level or technological advancement to include human resources and activities at tourist destination levels (Figueiredo, Gomes, & Farias, 2010; Kozak & Baloglu, 2011).

Building on the original understanding of Schumpeter, tourism researchers have expanded the palette of innovation headings (Hjalager, 2010) to include measurements of innovation from a national, regional, or individual level (Camisón & Monfort-Mir, 2012; Kozak & Baloglu, 2011). In this, innovation has been identified as an influencer of national politics for tourism and vice versa (Hjalager, 2012). Yet “innovation in tourism suffers political restrictions because public policies supporting innovation do not recognize it as a particularly innovative field and they instead focus on high-technology industries” (Camisón & Monfort-Mir, 2012, p. 787).

A general description of Tourism innovation literature covers a range of continents. Malaysia’s tourism industry for example is always in constant competition with Thailand, . While in Brazil and Italy, technological innovation and services have provided the key component of innovation as providing for improvements of outcomes and as the provider of business advancement over the competition. Innovation is to introduce something new or to alter something in order to solve a problem or in this case better business. For example, in 1950, Toyota introduced the *Kanban* innovation. This focus on a strict product process which measured the, quantity, materials, and the amount of time required in the production of Toyota vehicles. By sharing this information manufacturing was able to reduce cost and increase efficiency (Arakji & Lang, 2010).

These articles however focus on large scale businesses rather than the individual or small businesses (Camisón & Monfort-Mir, 2012). On the other hand, innovation within the tourism industry remains at its early state of research. Due to various complications, such as, it’s intangible / tangible services, cultural and destination diversification (Carvalho & Sarkar, 2014). For example, there is only so much an individual can do to innovate a culture, especially within small to micro-sized businesses as they are often tied to traditon. Conversely, hospitality innovation can come in the form of faster internet services and updated hygiene practises (Di Foggia & Lazzarotti, 2014). This combination of technological and

non-technological innovation are just a few examples where innovation enables small business competitiveness (Figueiredo et al., 2010).

In regards to Pacific innovative literature, relatively little is published on Tongan innovation let alone small to medium-sized businesses. The few found focus on agriculture, obesity, and Tongan and Fijian handicraft. Agricultural innovation draws attention to simple innovation, such as, providing a wheel-barrow to better transport the crops within remote villages of Tonga (Anonymous, 2012). While on the other hand obesity innovation seeks to introduce new policies which tackle obesity within Tonga (Snowdon & Thow, 2013), while handicraft innovation focuses on new designs introduced within Tonga and Fiji's tourism market (Naidu, Chand, & Southgate, 2014). The research includes "value adding, design uniqueness, new product development, cultural uniqueness, advanced technology, owner experience, ability of owners to adapt to trends in the market, and the quality of raw materials" (Naidu et al., 2014, p. 318). This literature applies to this study in terms of the notion of advanced technology and the ability of a business owner to adapt to the market. Nevertheless, it does not provide in-depth understanding or insight into Tongan business practices.

Pacific Entrepreneurship

This section situates the study and explains its significance within the tourism and management disciplines. It also explores existing research on Pacific entrepreneurship in small to medium-sized Pacific businesses and highlights the complexity of aligning a Pacific cultural context with small to medium-sized New Zealand/Western structured enterprise models.

In the context of New Zealand small to medium-size business, it is defined as having five or less employees (Higham & Williams, 2007, p. 402). It establishes a strong number of small businesses provides employment and a contribution to New Zealand's economic wealth. "New Zealand SME's are underpinned by strong cultural norms which arise partly from the country's geographical isolation... [and] a strong national self-image which respects rugged individualism underpins the self-employment ethic in New Zealand" (McGregor & Gomes, 1999, p. 95). This refers to a business owner's personal characteristics which greatly influences the development of the business as well as cultural norms, technology, marketing and other various business disciplines.

On the other hand, relatively little literature has been published on Pacific entrepreneurship (Curry, 2005; Morrison, 2008; Prasad & Raj, 2006). Pacific entrepreneurship literature review is divided into the following sections: the first provides a background into small business and entrepreneurship. The second section documents the history of Pacific business and the ways in which research on Small Pacific Business (SPB) is conducted. The emphasis is on what drives a successful Pacific Business and what are potential reasons for its failure. The final section presents a model based on the literature and identifies the gap within the literature which shapes these Pacific research questions for the study.

In regards to Pacific entrepreneurship, key authors emerge from the literature, names such as Jenny Cave (Prideaux, Cave, Thompson, & Sibtain, 2012; Trinh, Ryan, & Cave, 2015; Zhang Nancy, Ryan, & Cave, 2016), Keith. G. Brown (Brown & Cave, 2010; Brown, 1994) and John Connell (Connell & Rugendyke, 2008) appear frequently. Their work not only informs research on the Pacific also known by the labels Asia Pacific, South Pacific or Oceania. These core phenomena include the concepts of migration, tourism and cultural or/and tradition. These key Pacific elements have become the pinnacle of attention.

In terms of Pacific enterprise and economic growth, the topic migration is a key contributor (Brown & Conneil, 1993). The increase of migration (Baldacchino, 2011), to overseas countries such as New Zealand has increased since the 1960s and 1970s (Department of Statistics, 2011). As a result remittances was introduced and over time this has become the main source of income for various Islands of the Pacific such as Tonga and Western Samoa (Brown, 1994). Surveys conducted on these Islands have concluded that 90 percent of Tongan families rely heavily on remittances as their main source of income (Brown, Connell, & Jimenez - Soto, 2014). This has led to a number of remittance focused studies, especially in the case of Tonga (Brown & Conneil, 1993; Gibson, McKenzie, & Rohorua, 2006; Jimenez & Brown, 2011).

Besnier is considered another key author in Pacific studies and especially in cultural anthropology within Tonga. Besniers work on Tonga has developed from a focus in the role of gender and sexuality in 1994, 1997 and 2002. These studies examining the role of culture in male, female or transgender community in Tonga. In 2004 , his research focus shifts to the role of consumption and modernity, as

well as gifts as commodities 2007, and modernity and the Tongan middle class looking at various elements such as the informal economy. His more recent work in 2011-2012 looks at modernity anxieties and sports and the Tongan body as a vehicle of global connection (Besnier & Brownell, 2012).

One of his most influential articles examines the effects of class structure within the Kingdom of Tonga. In this he provides a significant analysis on Tongan traditions and how the class structures factor into modernity, cosmopolitanism and the rise of middle classes in the context of Tonga. The economic growth of the country, family obligations and basic needs such as the consumption of electricity, water and education are effected by class in Tonga. Land ownership in Tonga is traditionally under the control of “matāpules” (Besnier, 2009, p. 223), or nobles who then have the power to allocate land to commoners. These traditions also provide the foundations on which the Tongan law is constructed and which has significant effect on the production of export agriculture, and the economic development of Tonga. This study draws on 14 years’ fieldwork. It provides a realistic and objective analysis of Tongan tradition with the use of Marxist notions of the middle and working classes. The credibility of this fieldwork needs to be acknowledged due to its longitudinal nature however one would question its relevance to the present. There is also a gap in this research as there is no mention of tourism. The tourism sector is equally economically beneficial to Tonga as agriculture and fisheries. For just as Tongans are migrating overseas, those who remain behind still maintain income through labour, selling of goods or as demonstrated by Brown and Cave (2010) participating in Island Tourism.

Island tourism is one economic source of income that seeks to provide a communal revenue in which all aspects of Tongan society (Hjalager, 2012) benefit from Brown and Cave (2010) by providing four main elements that seeks to underpin Island Tourism. It also drew emphasis on the role that Island culture and tradition has on tourism and the experiences of tourists. Tourism provides a positive economic income for the Islands, however this article failed to provide a balanced argument on the social and natural implications tourism has on its residents. It clearly states that cultural exchange, or a give and take-relationship, between the tourist and residents reflect the history of encounters between “the

producer and the purchaser, the history of these relations, and their ethnic identities” (Brown & Cave, 2010, p. 89).

This producer of Island Tourism seeks to put a price on culture which becomes purchasable for tourists. The effects and gains are provided by a parallel analysis with the notion of the arrival of the first Westerners in Tonga. One could even track back in history and argue that the Portuguese were the first tourists in the Pacific while the Dutch explorers, Captain James Cook, John Thomas and Thomas West were amongst the first tourists to Tonga (Backer & King, 2015). Missionaries also came as religious visitors (Vinnie & Gunjan, 2010). However, “the Wesleyan missionaries as a crusader for their cause, a man who would fuse the new religion firmly with the traditional structure of rank and power in Tonga” (Spurway, 2002, p. 54). In these encounters, goods were exchanged thereby introducing the concept of cultural exchange into Tonga. These cultural exchanges can be seen when Captain Cook and Tomas West first introduced horses into Tonga in the late 1850s. Horses have become a valued food source for Tonga and are still bought and sold for their meat, especially on the occasion of a big celebration. Daly (2003) also went on to give accounts to the first introduction of horses to Fiji in 1851, by William Owen of Adelaide, and a missionary called David Hazelwood and his wife. Nowadays, however, airplanes and various marketing strategies for isolated small-sized businesses have made these warm-water Islands more accessible than it first was in the 1980s (Hine & Carson, 2007).

While Connell (2007) and Sahlins (2000), argued against the romanticizing of the Pacific by Westerners, as remote ‘others’ (2007, p. 116). While stating that indigenous people have the power to mould global modernity into their Pacific way through the will of power, kinship, religious values and respect within a chiefly structure. Connell notes that although Pacific Island groups are pushing on like a ‘boat on the current’ of development, migration, and internal development, a note of caution sounds since these notions of development are Western models which disregard culture.

Connell suggests that this misconception of Pacific culture and tradition is incoherent. And yet, he goes on to state that Pacific culture is adaptable, which is what differentiates it from other parts of the world. The perception of culture is not only what constructs their identity, but also informs modernity in the Pacific (Curry, Koczberski, & Connell, 2012). Modernity or modern advancement in the Pacific is increasingly growing due to the introduction of the internet, technology and contemporary ideas, such as the introduction of a democratic society in replacement of the Tongan constitutional monarchy.

Migration is also identified as a contributing factor in the evolution of Pacific modernity and development. For example, migrants who have moved overseas to work, not only send remittances but also provide funds for enterprise ventures within the Pacific (Cave & Koloto, 2015). Although this might be considered an advancement often such development also lead to multiple complications and cultural conflict. Despite these conditions (Connell, 2007) argues that Pacific people are still able to navigate through challenges that derive from migration, modernity and development (Besnier, 2009). Some even use these challenges to their advantage by migrating overseas to work in order to send money home to families which usually enable the beginning of a small to medium size enterprise.

Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) & Pacific

There has been extensive research worldwide on entrepreneurship which can be defined as the process in establishing a business or in this case it refers to small businesses (Ciampi, 2015; Lazear, 2005; McDaniel, 2002). A Small to Medium Enterprise (SME) can be defined as a business managed by one person, or a number of people but no more than nineteen employees in the context of New Zealand (Hawkins, Rahiri, & Quinby, 2014). Small business has a less formal structure than corporate enterprise. Employee numbers, assets and turnovers are a few of the factors that can determine what is a small to medium-enterprise. Futuremore, small market shares, and independent and personalised management are also differences between a large business and a small to medium-sized enterprise (Burns, 2011).

Entrepreneurship has been identified as a worldwide source of reformation that has changed various countries' economic (Panikar & Washington, 2011), social,

and even public disposition (Salaman & Storey, 2008). Entrepreneurship can be employed by an individual on a micro level (privately) (Folta, Delmar, & Wennberg, 2010), right through to the macro level which is usually developed and run by an organization or a nation (publicly). The first is when an opportunity arises for a potential new market (Beckman, Eisenhardt, Kotha, Meyer, & Rajagopalan, 2012) in which an organization can expand and develop. This is often associated with the term self-employed. The second is when an individual establishes a business in order to make a living (Salaman & Storey, 2008).

Relatively little literature has been published on Pacific entrepreneurship (Addinsall et al., 2016; Nah, 2016). Research in the Pacific presents two main reasons that an individual might use to pursue a business career (Schaper et al., 2014). There has been a great shift within the Pacific entrepreneurship literature in the research data and attention is no longer given to reasons why individuals become entrepreneurs, but rather looks toward the maximization of the opportunities that derive from the entrepreneurial process, migration and effects of globalization such as constant voyaging / cycles of return (Cave & Koloto, 2015).

This research focus is solely on Tonga, however there is a need to explore business in other Pacific Islands as well as Pacific business within New Zealand, Australia and the United States, which is where many Pacific migrants have settled.

In the context of New Zealand's small businesses, there are no clear statistics on why small businesses fail or succeed Higham and Williams (2007); Hodgson (2005), speculate that success or failure is highly determined by the ability of the individual who initially established the business. Timing, finance, and management are presented as influential factors for the establishment of a successful business while, independence is presented as the key factor that seeks to inform business decisions (Hodgson, 2005; Oliver & English, 2002). Within this perspective the responsibility for a business's success falls on the individual's management skills, financial knowledge and personal ability to multi-task and hold out under pressure.

In contrast, the non-Western 'Pacific way' (Crocombe, 2001) of entrepreneurship is constructed around one's cultural, heritage, traditional and communal

involvement. Other studies have considered the relationship of health (O'Connor, 2014), education (Corcoran & Koshy, 2010) and international law (Stephens, 2008) and the Pacific way. In regards to health the Pacific way extends from small things such as individuals not being able to keep health appointments or the church being a point of connection and concern in which individuals within Hamilton, New Zealand give so much to the church that they are depriving themselves of basic needs (O'Connor, 2014). After all, one might argue that identification of the "Pacific Way" provides a colonial 'othering' of Islanders (Lawson, 2010).

Yet the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) study makes a clear distinction between Western ideology and the Pacific way. Tonga as well as other developing Pacific Islands are distinguished by various terms such as 'developing'; 'poor'; "the small but growing populations, limited resources, remoteness, susceptibility to natural disasters, vulnerability to external shocks, excessive dependence on international trade, and fragile environments" (Frederick, 2010, p. 5).

This author went on to state that although Tonga's entrepreneurship falls short of developing countries, there is still a comparative difference in regards to other countries, such as Togo, St. Vincent and Congo in that ownership of the business takes a holistic and collective approach. This holistic approach emphasises incorporating the Pacific way into training and educating the individual in the South Pacific towards improving and developing tourism (Butler & Hinch, 2007).

For these reasons, individuals seek to pursue a business career as well as ownership of the business. South Pacific Business is often developed for the survival of one's family more than just a source of income for an individual (Fairbairn, 2006). One of the earliest studies provided the idea of *Collectivism and Individualism as Cultural Syndromes*. 'Cultural syndrome' is defined as "a set of elements of a subjective culture organized around a theme" (Tzeng & Jackson, 1991, p. 156). For example, a collective culture is based on family, collective ethnic groups and tribes as its themes. In which individualistic culture is heavily labelled by vocabularies, such as I, me, and mine while a collectivist culture is ours, we, and us (Duncan, 2008; Saffu, 2003). Furthermore, collectivism within island countries also establishes financial resources, goods/services and obligation. In a survey conducted of 700 South Pacific island entrepreneurs,

personal and social obligations were found as to be more important as a business objective than economic growth (East-West Center, 1987).

The link of individualism with geography, gender and class suggests that the upper class are more prone to live an individualistic lifestyle especially in English speaking countries such as the United States (Tzeng & Jackson, 1991). Although this study seeks to provide an insight into the characteristics of an individualistic and collective culture, one may question its relevance in 2016 / 2017. It does, however, provide a clear distinction between an individualistic and a collective cultural syndrome which can inform this research and is consistent with other, more recent studies noted below. As Hooper (2000, p. 3) says, “culture plays a much more significant role in national economies and in national life of Pacific countries more than in other regions of the world”.

The next section explores the traits of small businesses and entrepreneurship in the Pacific, focusing on case study research in Fiji, Samoa, Papua New Guinea and Tonga. Cultural influence enterprise has a huge impact on enterprise and the following will explore the differences and commonalities between Melanesian, Polynesian and Micronesian style of entrepreneurship.

South Pacific

The South Pacific is divided into three groups, the Polynesians, which include light skinned Tongan, and Samoan, which generally have a light skin and straight hair characteristic while the Melanesian, which includes Papua New Guinea has a darker skinned curly hair portfolio. Finally, the Micronesians are made up of tiny Islands. The majority of the small businesses in the Pacific are made up of small corner stores, taxi, touristic based business, such as accommodation, handicraft and fishery, and agricultural markets (Duncan, 2008).

In this study by Yusuf (1995) they found that the majority of the indigenous individuals started their businesses from scratch while the non-indigenous would either marry into, buy or inherit their business. “Overall the four most critical success factors were perceived to be good management, access to financing, personal qualities, and satisfactory government support” (Yusuf, 1995, p. 70). One would argue that this study’s contribution is out-dated, however, Fairbairn (2006), also provided a consistent result to this study in which she explored

various businesses which exemplified success in the Pacific. For example, Mere's Hot Bread Kitchen in Fiji, Garant's Taro Chips, Cyril's soft drinks, and Eddy's confectionery products from Samoa, as well as Feleti's Cured Hams from Tonga. Although this study makes various contributions in identifying the key to successful businesses, running a business is hard work and includes, education, prior business experience, governmental service, and overseas travel. Nevertheless, the majority of this study focused on Samoan business practices, therefore it fails to provide a detailed comparison between the businesses she had looked at.

Samoan Enterprise

Cahn (2008), also adds to Samoan SME literature, but provides a different perspective to Duncan (2008) in regards to the role the Samoan government plays in Samoa's SME.

It states that the local government is trying to provide a more hands-on approach by providing training programs and financial assistance in order to develop smaller businesses. These monitorial programs are provided through, "the ADB (Asian Development Bank) loan, is that 80% of Samoan businesses are small or micro in size, having five or fewer employees, and most of these businesses do not have adequate skills to increase the size of their businesses" (Cahn, 2008, p. 9). Also, non-government organizations step in by assisting in developing rural businesses, such as fine mat weaving and coconut oil production. Women in business also provide a key contribution to business development of small Samoan businesses (Stewart-Withers, 2011). For it also identified that the obligation to the 'fa'aSamoa' or the Samoan way can result in the loss of income for the business.

The Samoan way is very similar to the notion of the Tongan way in which kinship or 'aiga' in Samoan is when the individual is expected to contribute to weddings, birthdays and other traditional celebrations. This is referred to as 'fa'alavelave', or gift giving, which maintains and upholds traditions of the 'aiga'. The expectation of giving can be in the form of free labour or financial contribution through a person's wages or salaries. Samoa also has a traditional common ownership system, therefore security for a loan from bank is not available. In light of communal sharing it was also identified that Samoan businesses valued meeting

cultural obligation over the notion of Western success which is identified as maximising profit. Furthermore, 'the notion of gift giving to the 'aiga' works in harmony with enterprise, in which financial burden would be eased by family sharing the responsibility. However, it goes on to identify remittances as a cause of laziness in which Samoans are unable to start a business due to reliance on remittances. While this might not be the case for Fiji, the next study provides various other similarities between Samoan and Fijian business practices.

Fiji and Samoa Enterprise

The notion of business providing a contribution to the well of the collective community can also be found in Fiji and Samoa (Daye, 2009). Where social responsibility is also an element of reciprocity just like the Samoan notion of 'fa'alavelave in which an individual obtains cultural responsibility to its community in return for protection and sustainability of the business. These elements are also exemplified in a more recent comparative study that Singh, Pathak, and Naz (2010) conducted on Fiji and Samoa's SME in which they labelled government disorderly paperwork and regulation as one of the most problem area in regards to Fiji and Samoa's SME. It is through these supportive measures and policies which has a huge impact on the growth of the Samoan and Fijian SME, and in which the local government fails to maintain. While this study did not take into account the Samoan and Fijian traditions and cultural differences. It, however, provided inside information into Samoa's SME problematic areas, "everyday sales earnings, estimating future sales, maintaining profit levels, and variable profits and pricing" (Singh et al., 2010, p. 170). While Fiji's most problematic areas provided to be "Fiji economy, government regulations, locating qualified employees, keeping skilled employees, maintaining profit levels, and employment regulations" (Curry et al., 2012, p. 171).

Fijian Enterprise

What's more, another study (Baldacchino, 1999) of Fijian employment also found a similar collective, common approach to business as Samoa. They also sought to utilize cultural values, traditions, and differences to maintain profit. This case study was conducted on a small company of producing a natural soap called Pure Fiji. This small business is run by locals on the outskirts of Fiji's main city, Suva, and based on the concept of selling an 'Island paradise' experience in a soap,

which is handmade by indigenous Fijians. Marketing the business proved to be successful, however when it came to the technical operations of the business the indigenous individuals utilized the business knowledge of Westerners who had migrated to Fiji. The indigenous individuals capitalized on Western knowledge in order to build and sustain their business while maintaining and promoting their cultural heritage.

The Fijian Baldacchino (1999) case study identified four strategies that led to the success of this business. These are: marketing the product and selling the ‘dream’ of a romanticized paradise, then utilizing the experience of the industrialized world of foreigners who moved to live in Fiji. This view is supported by a more recent study conducted by Pandaram and Amosa (2010) on Fijian family businesses. They found that families made up the largest percentage of business and they leave a huge impact on Fiji’s economic growth. Looking at challenges these businesses have faced since 2005 while looking ahead to the next five years. Specific to Fiji, various challenges to business came in the form of the 2006 Fiji coup. While Baldacchino (1999), recognizes employment is family oriented and therefore loyalty and dedication to the brand is maintained alongside cutting costs and reaching the wider target market via internet sales. Pandaram and Amosa (2010, p. 116) reemphasize the importance of “choosing and preparing successors, family employee compensation, family conflicts, financial expectations of non-active family members and consensus on family values”.

Papua New Guinea Enterprise

Similarly, to the Fijian traditional enterprise (James, 2002), Papua New Guinea, kinship plays an important role in the establishment of, daily operations and even networking (Greve & Salaff, 2003) and investment of a case study – a local village trade store. Again, the operation of a business is driven more by the kinship relationship than profit. For example, Curry (2005) conducted a study exploring the notion of small business within the context of Papua New Guinea. This identified how the traditional customs and values of Papua New Guinea highly influenced how small business is conducted. As such when purchasing a cigarette from the local store the cigarettes are sold individually just for the consumption of the buyer, for there is an expectation if you have more than enough then the social demand is to share this with relatives. Labour payment is

also provided as a gift more than as a wage or a transaction (James, 2002). While, on the other hand, when it comes to understanding the problem and how these business fail a Eurocentric solution is provided Curry (2005); Duncan (2008), argues that the idea of measuring success by profit is too narrow. In the case of Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Tonga a more social-cultural approach should be taken into consideration.

Cultural Complexity and Nature of Tongan Cultural Enterprise

Historical and archaeological accounts of Tongan society date back to the late 1900s (Brown, 1916; Schmerzler, 1900). Since then other themes/disciplines, especially in relation to Tongan economic structure, have emerged which are heavily guided by transnational relationships and post-migration cycles of return (Cave & Koloto, 2015; Koning, 2005; Lee, 2004), development and migration (Connell, 2007) and remittances (Gibson et al., 2006).

Tongan society is constructed with a hierarchical class structure (Besnier, 2009). Tongans have migrated as far as Iceland, Mongolia, and the United States. This movement between Tonga and overseas has had immense effect on the status quo, especially for the 'middle class individual'. Besnier characterizes the Tongan middle class as the commoners or the working class according to Karl Marx and Max Weber's analysis of the social class structure. In regards to middle class individuals, Besnier identified three main characteristics that differentiate them from, lower class, Nobles and the Royal family which is the third and most prestige characteristic. In these three different types of social groups. "The monarchy, elements of the state bureaucracy, and commoners' relationship with their nobles are all expressed by various sorts of ceremonial activity, and the flow of material before, during and after such ceremonies" (Evans, 2001, p. 153). The first is, how well aware these individuals are of what is happening within the outside world or being informed of the extra-local (Besnier, 2009). The second is the emphasis on buying and selling and its importance; and the display of consumption. Thirdly they display kindness as well as the potential for commercialization. Thereby creating a new lifestyle in which kinship and traditional formalities are replaced by a give-and-take relationship and a commoditized living.

Enterprise and the Kingdom of Tonga

Historically, the Kingdom of Tonga began to embrace modernity from the mid-nineteenth century (Besnier, 2011). First literal introduction of the Kingdom of Tonga provided focus on its culture, religion, migration overseas, and language ('Aipolo & Holmes, 1990; Ahlburg & Brown, 1998; Forman, 1978). While one of the first business references was made as a response to local Tongan protesting against Europeans dominating the Tongan trading market in 1909, Tonga's copra was controlled by "the white men" (Rutherford, 1981, p. 26) which left locals dissatisfied, therefore The Tonga Ma'a Tonga Kautaha, Tongan for the Tongans Associations (Tonga ma 'a e Tonga), was created which reinforces native trading companies. The beginning of modernity has been shaped by the constant foreign influences and the movement and migration of local Tongans across the various "sea of islands" (Hau'ofa, 1994). Primarily, Tongan-owned businesses in Tonga are established through remittances from family members who have migrated overseas. However, over time, these businesses, which are generally a roadside trade store, collapse under the weight of kinship obligation (Besnier, 2011).

Another issue that is evident in Tonga business is the increase in Asian migration which has also greatly influenced Tongan business. In 1983, King George Tupou V authorized the sale of Tongan passports to Hong Kong-Chinese, Republic of China and other Asian countries (Stanley, 2004) to raise revenue for government coffers. This produced a sharp increase of Asian migrants into Tonga in which many of the buyers ended up establishing small businesses within Tonga. This came to a stop in 1998 when 'Akilisi Pohiva, a representative of the people, and the self-appointed voice for 'Pro-Democracy Movement' which was later renamed as the 'Human right and Democracy Movement of Tonga' (HRDMT) took the government to court on the unlawful selling of Tongan passports as well as other illegal activity. By November 16 2006, a riot broke out in central Nuku'alofa as a result of a six-week strike from dissatisfied civil servants who demanded fairness in terms of a government pay-rise due to civil servants struggling with daily increases in living costs while parliamentarians voted themselves a 60 percent pay-rise. This riot lead to the burning and looting of businesses owned by prodemocracy politicians as well as Asian business owners (Besnier, 2011).

Traditional Enterprise in Tonga

In order to maintain an understanding behind the construction of the modern Tongan business there should be an exploration of the traditional (James, 2002). Prior to modernity, 'business' was conducted in the traditional form of enterprise as a collective culture (Prescott & Hooper, 2009), with its "traditional enterprise defined as economic activities undertaken in support of these traditional family and household goals" (James, 2002, p. 275).

Tongan business is still highly influenced by its traditional form of business as well as its cultural values and traditions. "Traditional enterprise defined as economic activities undertaken in support of these traditional family and household goals" (James, 2002, p. 275)

There is then, a strong notion of sharing, social responsibility, and communal obligation towards family and extended family. This can come in the form of paying for an extended family member's education or employing a family member to share in the daily operation of the business. Usually when employing a family member for labour (James, 2002), payment is made in the form of a gift rather than wages. This reinforces the understanding of a collective business that by working for the business, the money remains in the family.

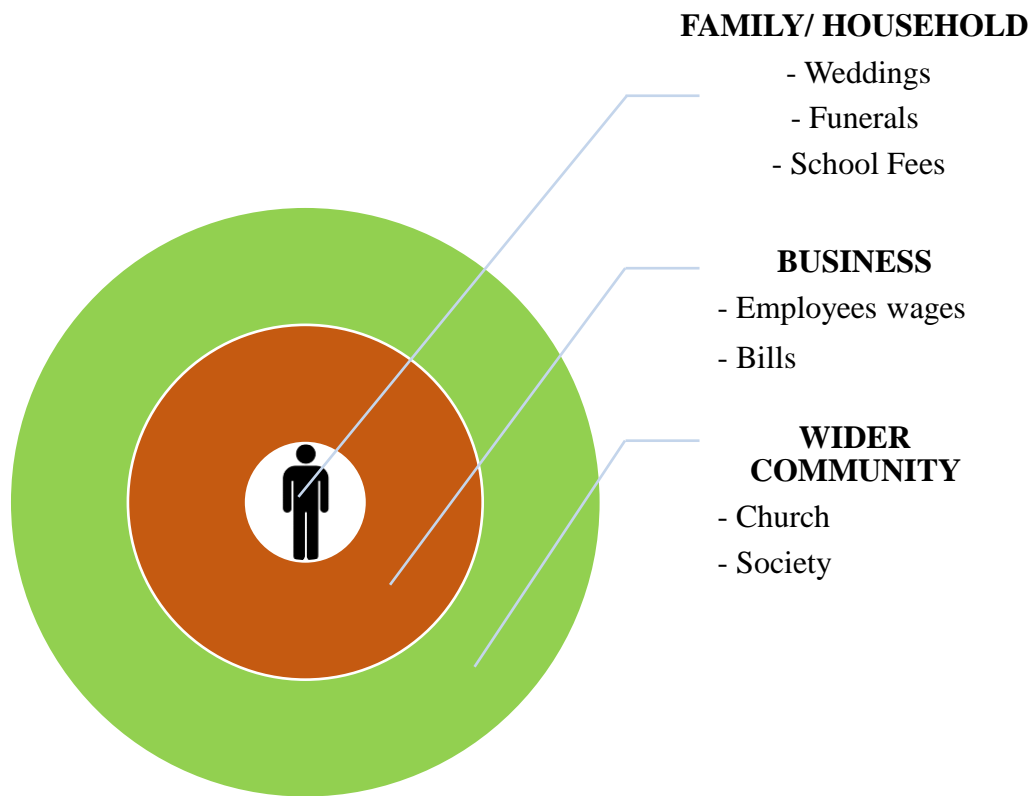


Figure 1. The Obligation Circle of a Tongan's Life

Figure 1 provides a visual illustration of Tongan obligations and how its multiple layers extend beyond the individual. As James (2002) states, first obligation priority would go to imitate family in regards to school fees and education. Then extended family matters such as a cousins' wedding or an aunt's funeral. This outward look also extends to the business in which a business owner would also provide employees gifts in the passing of a parent of a close relative of the employee. This may also vary accordingly in regards to the employee as such if the employee is a close relative of the business owner or not. Then, in the outer most layer of the model is the social obligation to church, community and country. It is choice, which is given if business owners want to support various obligation therefore this research seeks to explore these notions future by testing out these research questions in the field.

Communal responsibility can also be in the form of almsgiving to the Church and in return this generates a network as well as a good reputation within the community. Therefore, the success of the business is determined more by the family and community support rather than the capability of the individual. Family and culture obligation can also be the cause of a business failure, however, from the Tongan perspective there is no sense of a real loss if obligations are met at the cost of the business (James, 2002).

James (2002) argues that traditional enterprise and the social family orientation of the Pacific Islands is the saviour of the economic element for the success of business in the Pacific because the mentality of the Pacific individual differs from the Western business for they value the collective more than the individual and/or profit. An effect of this Pacific collective approach is the elevation and promotion of their family member into a better position than might otherwise be possible. In current day Tonga, status is highly influenced by cultural values in which responsibility and obligation is communally distributed.

What's more, in Pacific enterprise research there is a phase in the movement of a nuclear family into commercial enterprises in which the formal meets the informal. No one man is an island, the family becomes an element of resource of the business at hand whether formal or informal (Gibson-Graham, 2008) traditional or modern as in this case. The informal is identified as the international gifts provided by migrant remittances. In urban living the reciprocal gift giving is identified as what holds back Pacific families and communities from participating in a capitalistic environment (Auckland Council, 2015).

Tongan cultural values are set centrestage with the communal challenge in which gift giving in the form of donation to one's church becomes a financial burden to the business, however some "strong-willed business people" (James, 2002, p. 290) are identified as individuals who are not willing to conform to the public show of open declaration of donating to the church. In order to provide a successful working model for a Tongan SME an individual should seek to address the human relationships which shape a social setting. In addition, each individual context requires a personalised solution.

Employing an individual within a Tongan business, however, allows for the notion of sharing within the operation so that solutions to business viability and personal contributions become more collective. However, James does not offer solutions or proposals in regard to opportunities that could emerge from traditional enterprise in and be used in a modern form of Tongan business (Eckhardt & Shane, 2003). The Tongan research reported in this study seeks to explore these ideas identified by James (2002) and provide the empirical base which his work lacks.

Tongan Migrant Community

The notion of migration, remittances and exchange is well demonstrated in an article by Cave and Koloto (2015) in which they analyses the transnational enterprise relationships between Tonga and New Zealand. This research concentrates on the level of interchange with the level of the family, micro level or cultural exchange on a communal level, and finally the benefit it generates on a national level or in the case of the Kingdom of Tonga (Cave & Koloto, 2015).

Cultural understandings are also transferred along with the migration of Tongans into New Zealand. Prescott and Hooper (2009), found that the Tongan way of conducting business within New Zealand, within the Western context of New Zealand, is still structured around the Tongan cultural principles of sharing, almsgiving (Addo & Besnier, 2008) and a collective approach. While this provides a collective benefit for the Tongan families and community (Cave & Koloto, 2015) it also leads to complications such as cultural clashes or identity crisis's. For example, although the collective approach works among Tongan, other individuals from other cultures might see to take advantage of this.

While Prescott and Hopper may argue that these complications are due to culture one might question the knowledge of western financial systems of entrepreneurs. Connectedness to markets, obligation, enterprise intent and identity Island-born or second generation New Zealand were identified as other factors (Cave, 2009). Prescott and Hooper (2009) suggest 'common' and 'anti-common' approaches to Tongan business.

‘Anti-common’ presents a Western approach in which a business is individually owned and resource usage is privileged to one individual more than to the community. For example, the majority of the New Zealand businesses are individually owned and operated thereby, profit gained lies with only one person.

An approach more favourable to Tongan businesses is the ‘common’ business model. This is when assets are commonly shared through employment for family members, sending remittances (Jimenez & Brown, 2011) to overseas family members as well as giving donations to the Church. Cave and Koloto (2015), identify a heavy reliance and some interwoven family and community dependencies as a result of remittances and gift giving (Addo & Besnier, 2008).

However, there is a blurred line between personal and business affairs when it comes to the Tongan way which often results in the overuse of resources, and can eventually produce business failure. Suggestions are made on family budgeting but the authors offer no explanation of why Pacific businesses operate in this way. A closer look shows that the 20 businesses sampled in the study were most operated in a Western context such as immigration consulting, health advisory services, financial services and leading specialists (Prescott & Hooper, 2009) and were not specifically Tongan businesses.

Pacific Business Failure and Success

Research on Pacific Island countries found that factors such as privatisation, foreign aid and external support from government and remittances key issues for the failure of Pacific Business (Prescott & Hooper, 2009). Foreign aid plays a huge role in the development of small businesses, government policy (Gani & Clemes, 2015) and is also a key operator in indigenous small businesses (Yusuf, 1995) within the context of Samoa, Tonga’s, and Pacific Island enterprises (Yusuf, 1995). In Samoa, Australia is estimated to have given \$37.0 million through aid programs for the year 2015- 2016 (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade).

While in Tonga financial contributions from Australia as well as New Zealand enables the establishments of the Tonga Business Enterprise Centre and Tonga’s Labour and Tonga Chamber of Commerce in Tonga. In these cases, every year the Australian and New Zealand governments would send an auditor to see how the

money is spent therefore they can withhold or completely cut off funding. This has a huge impact on Tonga's government, for these programs rely solely on funding.

However, such actions are often problematic because foreign donors usually contribute to businesses with an agenda, usually structured from a Eurocentric mentality. For example, this gives rise to the privatization of a business as well as various other aspects involved, such as land ownership (Duncan, 2008). However, Pacific culture is collective and so too is the ownership of land. The notion of sharing is ingrained into land laws within Pacific Islands. Therefore, businesses established through aid programs can fail if they overlook Pacific protocols (Gani & Clemes, 2015). However, there is still a need for future research to be conducted on the traditional systems of trade and how these can be instituted and developed (Yusuf, 1995).

Financial record keeping has been identified as a key cause for the failure (see Figure 2), of a Pacific small enterprise (Prescott & Hooper, 2009). Marketing, management and a technical ability is also required for the smooth maintenance of a business (Higham & Williams, 2007). Social coherence is also identified as the common thread within Pacific Island enterprises, thus further research into how cultural practices (Bailey, 1994) shape businesses would be beneficial. For just as there are limitations to starting a gross domestic product Gross Domestic Product (GDP), there is also a lot of potential in tapping into collective and cultural strengths. Another research investigation would be to investigate if the cooperation of an indigenous individual working together with non-indigenous in order to tackle the biggest challenges one faces with a business within the Pacific as well as in the context of New Zealand (Prescott & Hooper, 2009).

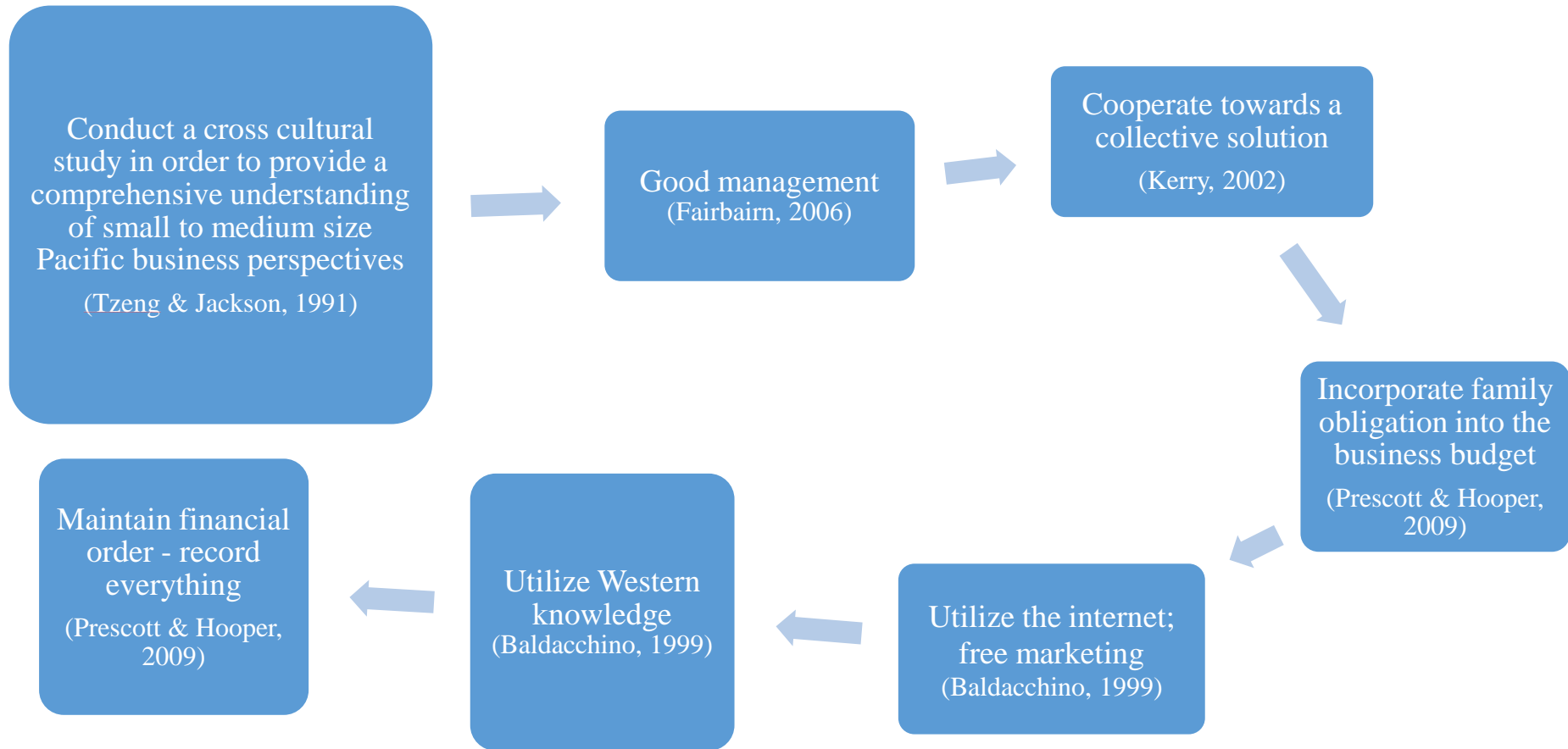


Figure 2. Possible Solutions for Small Pacific Businesses

As seen in Figure 2, this diagram seeks to provide possible solutions for small Pacific business based on the literatures. These suggestions are provided in conjunction with Table 1, which compares, and contrast the Pacific way with Western models for business. It seeks to highlight various element of the discussion above identifying that the Pacific Island provided a different way of operating businesses to Western businesses. While each Pacific Island such as Samoa, Fiji and Papua New Guinea also have their own unique way of being, however it is seems that all Pacific Island groups share a notion of communal sharing, a sense of obligation to the society more than the individual.

This then identified as the 'Pacific way', starting with language use, ownership of land are labelled with words such as 'our land'. Employment is a labour of love for the family, while knowledge is shared collectively as can be seen in Fiji where business knowledge is being passed down through families and generations. Family members also take on employment in family-run businesses while Western entrepreneurship is self-centred. When comparing and differentiating non-indigenous and indigenous businesses, the non-indigenous appears to have a clear advantage in gathering starting assets as well as having a better knowledge in the operation of a business (Hodgson, 2005; Oliver & English, 2002). Then, in Western contexts, the key to successful business ventures lies within the individual, who runs the small business. A requirement for the individual is that they obtain creditable trades through good education or a business background in order to succeed (Higham & Williams, 2007).

These parameters are the elements, which formed my research questions, looking at Tongan businesses and what contributes to the success and failure of the business and the role of obligation. In this, my research question was constructed in alliance with the literature. The first question, asks the Tongan business owner to define their idea of a Tongan business owner and to provide examples on what Tongan values guide their business. Another interview question asked the Tongan business owners themselves to voice their opinion on foreign ownership. Finally, other issues such as family, church and communal obligation are in the interview questions.

Table 1. Western Entrepreneurship versus the Pacific Way

	The Pacific Way	Western Entrepreneurship
<i>Difference</i>	<i>'Collectivism Cultural Syndromes' - ours, we and us (Triandis,1993)</i>	<i>'Individualism Cultural Syndromes' - I, me and mine (Triandis,1993)</i>
	Common approach (Prescott & Hooper, 2009)	Anti-common approach (Prescott & Hooper, 2009)
<i>Pros</i>	Sharing	Self-reliance (Prescott & Hooper, 2009)
	Benefit for the whole more than just for the individual	Minimal use of resources (Prescott & Hooper, 2009)
	Employment for family and free labour	Profit lies with only one person (Prescott & Hooper, 2009)
	Sharing knowledge on business operations	
	Strength, family and social bond through donation and arms(?) giving	
	Loyal employees (Baldacchino, 1999)	
	Dedication to the business (Baldacchino, 1999)	
	Successful Networking	
	Shared work load	
<i>Cons</i>	Family obligation	Waste of resources (Prescott & Hooper, 2009)
	Community obligation	Profit lies with only one person (Prescott & Hooper, 2009)
	Business can create unwelcomed household dynamics	
	Blurred line between business and personal lives leading to the failure of the business (Prescott & Hooper, 2009)	
	Remittances (Curry, 2005; Duncan, 2008; James.E, 2002)	

Conclusion

In summary, understanding the traditional Tongan enterprise allows for the identification of the goals and values of a Tongan business. Based on the literature above, obligations are identified as the potential challenges, however these studies fail to identify practical ways in dealing with obligation. Therefore, with the use of the following research method, this study seeks to meet this research gap by providing solutions. In addition, there is a need for a clear framework of study which clearly outlines what these obligations are. To conclude, this research theorizes that the key to success lies within the management of obligation. Which not only applies with the context of Tonga but also throughout the Pacific Islands.

CHAPTER 3

RATIONALE AND METHODOLOGY

This section discusses the research design; nature of knowledge; my positionality as a researcher; the epistemology and ontology of a Palangi (Western), indigenous and a Tongan; and then move on to research methodology used for this study of Tongan enterprise. The author proposes that Talanoa methodology, secondary data literature review and grounded theory to provide an objective approach in the research design in order to cultivate Tongan knowledge of business practices. Finally, the limitations of this research will be provided.

Research Profiling

During a visit to the Kingdom of Tonga, in December 2015, a pilot study was conducted to begin the grounded theory process. Conducting research in December proved to be problematic. Service-based businesses were very busy; thus, business owners were not available for interviews during the time. While other businesses had closed down for the holidays with owners away on vacation, others were preoccupied with visiting friends and family. The second round of data collection was conducted in April 2016 which proved to be more of a quiet period, for example one business owner responded to my December request for an interview in April.

Emails listings on websites provided contact details of business owners; door knocking, cold calling and referrals followed this. There were twenty-eight participants in total; this included twenty-four business owners and four government officials. While conducting the research there was a clear sign of resistance from some of the Tongan business owners and government officials especially in disclosing sensitive information such as financial details.

The use of a grounded theory enables the development of the research from the data rather than the other way around (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). This approach allowed for a first hand encounter with the business owners views of the world but, moreover, how they ran their current business (Silverman, 1993).

The pilot eliminated predetermined assumptions and biases while testing the research questions and identified alterations required to the survey instrument and the process. The pilot processes stimulated local interest in the research topic, which enabled linkages and referrals to other businesses that have facilitated the snowball sampling used in the data collection phase.

The pilot study involved a number of challenges, as a researcher; I lacked confidence in collecting, and identifying new or existing research knowledge. On one particular occasion, a business owner criticized my research topic stating that it was irrelevant and proposed that I redirect my study to focus on areas such as technology. This enabled me to think about the importance of this research and its application to Tongan society.

Expected and unexpected research complications came in the form of recording devices malfunction, last minute cancellations, interview delay and the rejection of interview requests. The use of the Talanoa methodology also provided problems for interviews since they would often side-track into various other issues, which was time consuming. Talanoa's interactive nature also affected the nature of my involvement in the research due to my subjective opinion, background, and identity on various occasions. These notions will be elaborated further upon in this thesis. Finally, translating between Tongan and English conversion with some interviewees was challenging, but the majority of participants preferred to respond in English.

Research Design

This study navigates between various paradims, theory and methological approaches in order to explore the causes and effects of Tongan business (Sousa). Which often results in the success or failure of their business while exploring the constructed reality of the Tonga's business knowledge (Jennings, 2001). I hope this can permit a better awareness of a Tongan business paradigm. Key themes from existing literature informed the content of the research questions.

Research Paradigm

Research publications first referenced the notion of paradigm in the 1970s (Dubin, 1969; Forray & Prasad, 1993); Kuhn & Sternfeld, 1970). The term paradigm often holds more than one meaning (Fabian, 2000), founding authors Hassard & Wolfram Hassard and Wolfram Cox (2013) identified paradigm as a statement of values or truths, which guides the individual within their research practice. Whereas, Kuhn (1962, p. 8) identified, “paradigms [as] ...universally recognized scientific achievements that for a time provide model problems and solutions to community of practitioners”. Paradigms guide methods conduct and data collection (Byrne, 1998; Kuhn & Sternfeld, 1970) while pursuing an intention to analyse, contrast and compare phenomena in order to understand the world (Jennings, 2010). This research will focus on the interpretive paradigm and indigenous critical praxis (Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2001), with clear emphasis on Tongan underlying epistemology, ontology and its applications to this research. The research is conducted on the Islands of Tonga by a Tongan-born researcher whose focus is Tongan business. However, collection of data situated within the Tongan context and allied with secondary sources, while providing my own interpretive paradigm as a researcher.

Interpretive paradigms and resultant interpretive empirical research are usually subjective, qualitative and hold meaning (Jennings, 2001). The concept of constructivism enables assembled reality so that epistemology comes before ontology. Guba and Lincoln (1998) claim that when using interpretive paradigm its ontology and epistemology often coalesce so that values and understanding are always open for interpretation. Interpretive paradigms claim some relation to positivism, since its origin derived from Descartes’s famous quote, “*Ego sum cogito*”, “I think therefore I am” (Jennings, 2010, pp. 1596-1650) which implies an understanding beginning with the positionality of a researcher’s mind. In addition, the ontological foundation of the interpretive paradigm argues an internal truth is subjective to multiple realities (Goulding, 1999). Multiple worlds are therefore acceptable but susceptible to change over time, just as an individual changes his or her mind (Tucker, 2005).

In terms of cultural context, the interpretive paradigm's ontological and epistemological foundations influence the nature of insights and so underpin the cultural framing of Talanoa, the Tongan research method used in this study. Thus, the study is an immersive, exploratory personal philosophical stance and is not defined from a pre-existing understanding of materials or the empirical evidence of knowing (Compton, 2014).

Positionality

Research is not value free therefore, as a researcher, my understanding and perspective of reality and experiences may change in step with the perspective of the participant's realities (Hassard & Wolfram Cox, 2013). A clearer illustration of this relationship will be established in my positionality, as part of the epistemological approach in interpretive paradigms (Romani, Primecz, & Topçu, 2011).

Dilemmas often arise within research when an individual decides to conduct research within their own social group (Moore, 2012). As a researcher, I stand between the boundaries of a Tongan and a Western-trained researcher. In conducting a study in the Kingdom of Tonga, it is important to be objective of my appearance, actions and position within my own social group (Weiner-Levy & Abu Rabia Queder, 2012). This position can also be beneficial in providing access to my research data and understanding nuances in problematic and complex context, since relationship bias can occur.

Weiner-Levy and Abu Rabia Queder (2012), note that in cultural studies, defining positionality can provide a critical insight. As a young Tongan woman, various protocols restrict communication, dress codes and "self-evident" (p.1, 153) behaviours. Obtaining insights can provide relatability to respondents; however: it could be more difficult to distinguish other perspectives as it might be for an outsider (Milner, 2007). In order to prevent this, I have needed to constantly evaluate and reflect on my own actions and experiences, while at the same time maintaining an awareness of various other perspectives.

For example, within the research, my roles will switch, from context to context, so as a researcher, a Tongan born expatriate [sic], member of the transnational diaspora and a tourist my behaviour and perspectives may have consequences for my research.

Since my positionality within the research is vital to its conduct, it is then important to identify my personal epistemology and ontology. My own epistemology and ontology resembles a glass of water. The glass holds my values, beliefs and experiences, as my ontology is fixed and transparent to others. Since what is real is the past, and the depth of my Tongan culture and heritage (5,000 years) is what has shaped me, as a person today, various collective experiences and realities are unchangeable. Yet on the other hand my epistemology is fluid – it is how I know and how I confront my knowing, which of necessity, changes over time.

The essential knowledge of my world is pre-constructed within my own cultural background as a Tongan, a Catholic as well as my demographic profile. Each stage of my life is governed by various identities based on my Christian beliefs. The first stage of my life is defined by my position within my immediate and extended family; I am a daughter, a cousin, an aunty and so forth. The second stage expands into the community, as a Tongan; raised in Tonga, further a title-holder of Miss Tonga 2014, this defines my identity as a Tongan. Now, having migrated to New Zealand in pursuit of an academic career, my current epistemology is defined by my position as a Pacific Islander navigating through the challenges, tension and contradictions of a Western academic world. In conducting this research, by maintaining an opened mind with no predetermined views in order to understand other epistemology and ontology.

Epistemology and Ontology

Epistemology is the science of knowledge or the analysis of the general understanding of how humans access knowledge (Hannabuss, 2007), including the source, content, and limitations of knowledge (Peter, 2007). Epistemology, in general, identifies the relationship between the knower the inquirer and the known or knowable (Guba, 1990) thus asking, how might the researcher understand the world and then communicate this knowledge to fellow human beings? What

forms of knowledge can be obtained and how can one sort out what is regarded as 'true' or 'false'? How do proponents view the nature of knowledge itself? Is it indeed possible to identify and communicate the nature of knowledge as being hard, real and capable of being transmitted in tangible form?

Or perhaps 'knowledge' is softer, more subjective, spiritual or even transcendental, based on the experience and insight of a unique and essentially personal nature (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p. 2).

Is knowledge something that can be acquired or does knowledge have to be personally experienced? Or is it both? Epistemology can also be described as a mind-set, a way of thinking or the core beliefs and values each individual holds in line with their demographic, cultural background and up-bringing that influences how they acquire knowledge of the world around them (Benckendorff & Zehrer, 2013; Foo, 2007).

While on the other hand ontology is the study of what already exists in the world or the nature of knowledge (Petrov, 2010). It explores reality, existence, the nature of being and how they interact and interrelate with each other. Ontology also questions whether this reality is only in the mind or outside the mind (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). The term ontology can be traced back to the philosophical field of metaphysics. This term was also derived from a Greek word, 'ontos' which means 'being' and 'logos' means 'word' (Baek & Kang, 2015). Ontology in paradigms categorize nature, structure, practices and relationships of individuals, social interrelations and physical phenomena within the world (Baek & Kang, 2015). Ontology wants to answer: What is the nature of the 'knowable'? Is reality external to the individual, 'out there' or is reality the product of individual consciousness, thus the product of one's mind? (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). Ontological questions often answer queries regarding existing entities and how they can be categorized, external and/or a product of the human mind (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). Each paradigm has their own epistemology and ontology which guides their understanding of phenomena (Foo, 2007; Jennings, 2001) which I will develop future in regards to indigenous epistemology and ontology, specifically from a Tongan worldview.

In summary, epistemology first asks what does knowledge mean (Guba & Lincoln, 1998), second, how a person cultivates knowledge (Jennings, 2001), and finally, what is the base of true or subjective knowledge? (Burrell & Morgan, 1979).

Thus, ontology and epistemology bring together pieces of the research puzzle, “ontology forms the goal, epistemology the consequence of that goal and methodology a means that may be selected and amended in seeking the goal” (Zahra & Ryan, 2005, p. 3). There is, however, an element of difference which remains between Western, Pacific and other world views, each to their own; so separate epistemologies and ontologies guides their distinct understandings of phenomena (Foo, 2007; Jennings, 2001).

Palangi Epistemology and Ontology

This section discusses Western understanding from a Tongan perspective in which focus will be given to the Eurocentric influences of colonial philosophy. The first introduction of these ideologies to Tonga and how it has been filtered in its structural systems such as health, education and the Pacific way.

England, The United Kingdom and America have been perceived as the centre of the world providing Eurocentric influences to research that refer to past colonial structures of the humankind (Battiste & Henderson, 2009). Colonial models have reconstructed and Eurocentric geographical, historical and Western philosophy. Therefore, it has been thought that non-European regions lack rationality, proper spiritual values, and understanding while the great European dualistic approach separates the mind and the body, rationality and embodiment, nature, and culture (Johnston, 1994).

There is different variation of the Western epistemology but from a Tongan perspective, Palangi is the term given, meaning white people or Caucasians within the surrounding of Tonga, this notion of the Palangi world is painted with terms such as ‘developed’, ‘powerful’, “... colonial administrative systems, missionary zeal, philanthropic international donations, debt relief ...” (Brown & Tower, 2002, p. 43) and ‘eurocentrism’. The Western ideology was first introduced to Tongans by the Dutch in 1616, then by Captain Cook in 1733 and again by the English Methodist missionaries in 1822 (Nairn, 1999). The Western model was

transferred across the Tongan spectrum into education, health, religion, and even the management of tourism and hospitality facilities.

However Butler and Hinch (2007) question the appropriateness of this model in empowering the indigenous' own knowledge and the 'Pacific way'. This refers to a unique Pacific way of carrying out various task. This is usually a holistic and communal approach align with cultural and traditional protocols, which differs from a Western approach.

Indigenous Epistemology and Ontology

In contrast to the last section, this provides a collective understanding of indigenous epistemology. The notion of what Tongan knowledge means and how a person cultivates their knowledge, is a major factor in constructing the questions, interview process and the construction of the intellectual components of the findings (Thaman, 1995) for Tongan research.

The understanding of the 'exotic other' (Ofahengaue Vakalahi & Taiapa, 2013) has been dominated by the Western academics for years. However, there is a growing dispute from indigenous researchers against the capacity of Western academics to provide an authentic representation of indigenous (Sam & Ktunaxa, 2011). The tension between 'us and them', in regards to Western verses indigenous (Aikau, 2010; Perez, 2009) is a thorny issue in the heart of an indigenous identity, nationhood and human rights (McCarty, Borgoiakova, Gilmore, Lomawaima, & Romero, 2005).

Indigeneity is defined within tourism research (McIntosh, 2004) as a, "cultural group's ways of thinking and of creating, reformulating, and theorizing about knowledge" (Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2001). Cultural tourism advocates for an understanding of indigenous understanding of their own culture, tradition and world views so that as a Tongan reseracher I have a duty of care in verifying indigenous epistemology.

Ofahengaue Vakalahi and Taiapa (2013) challenged the notion of Western epistemology as a basis for indigenous research, by encouraging Māori researchers to go beyond Western outlook and cultivate Māori understanding in alignment with the role of colonization, Māori identity and the Tiriti O Waitangi. This

decolonisation movement within Māori indigenous studies followed the founding effort of Professor Lynda Smith (Denzin, Lincoln, & Smith, 2008; Roberts, Hudson, Smith, Hemi, & Tiakiwai, 2012; Smith, 1999, 2005) and has influenced other conceptual frameworks such as indigenous critical praxis and critical reflection of an individual on their own world (Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2001). Correspondingly, McIntosh, Zygodlo, and Matunga (2004), reemphasize Smith's (1999, p. 153) 'reframing' concept which refers to the rejection of Western categorization, labels and ideals. This study included a collaborative effort from both Māori and non-Māori individuals in demonstration of the Kaupapa Māori of Māori tourism businesses for example, they identified spiritual values and ideals as the basis for Māori business. Furthermore, there is "a very big difference between Māori businesses that incorporate Māori values and those that primarily focus on profits and efficiency" (McIntosh et al., 2004, p. 338). These concepts also apply to Tongan research epistemology.

Tongan Epistemology and Ontology

The challenge of contexts in which natives have been "warding off foreign wolves" (Wood-Ellem & Tonga Research, 2007, p. 1) while also maintaining Western alliances has prescribed indigenous history. These issues are not new to Tonga but still provides an underlying sensitivity within this research. This however does not discredit the remarkable work various western research has contributed to the understanding of the indigenous world but also calls into question the understandings possible when research in a cultural context is undertaken by researchers who are not of the culture.

Separating the, 'us from them', gives rise to the concept of Eurocentrism (Battiste & James Youngblood, 2009), retrieved from the notion of Western colonizing indigenous society. This argument provided Europeans a view of selves as the civilized central while an indigenous epistemological framework was considered a non-privileged norm which raises concern in the representation of indigenous identity. The acceptance recognition and voicing our own way of being, whether in the issue of indigenous outlook on the outside world, or lower level of research in the field (McCarty et al., 2005; Smith, 1999).

Aikau (2010) defines, an indigenous person as an individual who is native of a particular country or the minorities of a particular culture, for example, the Māori people are considered indigenous to New Zealand as its first peoples. This definition would identify Māori as the minority of New Zealand while Europeans are the hegemonic group which provides a clear identification of an ‘us and them’ discourse. In applying this to Tonga, the definition may be correct when referring to Tongans who have migrated overseas (Aikau, 2010). This leads to the question - are Tongans, who remain in Tonga, considered indigenous to Tonga? Even if Tongans are the dominant ethnic group within Tonga.

Furthermore, I would argue that the key point of difference between Tongans and other indigenous island groupings in the Pacific, is colonization. The term ‘colonization’ in regards to Western displacement or control over the original inhabitants. There is no denial of foreign influence on Tonga, however it is evident (Petersen, 2000) the Tongan Empire was never formally colonized. Therefore, one could dispute the lack of formal colonial influence as incorrect categorization of Tongans living within Tonga as indigenous. Future, non-colonization may establish differences in perspective comparative to other Pacific Island cultures such as Samoa and Fiji (Ofahengaue Vakalahi & Taiapa, 2013). On the other hand, this historical repetition could also offer an account to the rejection and failure in integrating Western ideology into business.

The Tongan world-view is governed by the unique traditional structure in which the monarch is the head of state, accompanied by privileged nobles with chiefly titles and commoners. This hierarchical structure was formulated prior to the introduction of Western Christian doctrine. The national motto however followed the arrival and settlement of the missionaries, “Ko e ‘Otua mo Tonga ko hoku Tofi’a” (Wood-Ellem & Tonga Research, 2007), which translates as ‘God and Tonga are my inheritance’. God, and Christian beliefs were provided as the first and foremost important element that constitute the Tongan way (Besnier, 2011) or “anga faka-Tonga”.

Tongan understanding comprises a complete view of all elements of the whole person; body, mind and soul. Therefore, the inseparability of each element is reflected by the Tongan law, which prevents defiling the day of the Lord. Sunday is sacred, therefore by law, the Kingdom of Tonga is not allowed to operate

businesses on Sunday. This Tongan law represents the Island way of living which differs from the other social norms.

It also informs the notion of the 'ulungaanga faka-Tonga' which means the 'Tongan way to behave' or the 'Tongan way of being'. These practices are framed by the four Tonga pillars known as the Faa'I kaveihoula 'a e Tonga, the four golden knots of Tonga. This is a key value and is very important in constructing, defining and outlining everything a Tongan stands for. These principles are the key elements that not only inform this research but also define the identity of a Tongan person (Ministry of Social Development, 2012).

The first principle is, faka'apa'apa, (respect) and this is not just acknowledging, but, also returning respect to your elders, peer and others. The second, is anga fakatokilalo/loto or humility and openness to learn and be taught. The third, networking and maintaining relationships, is called tauhi vaha'a/vā. This concept differs profoundly from Western understanding of maintaining a relationship. For example, there are a lot of Tongan informal traditions which falls under the restriction of tauhi vaha'a such as giving a plate of food to your neighbour every Sunday or the yearly visitation to extended families and relationship every first day of the year. These traditional gestures not only maintain the family bond, but also enforce it. The fourth principle is mamahi'i me'a, this concept is made in reference to loyalty, passion and devotedness to Tonga. The term mamahi'i means 'to feel pain', and mamahi'i is to be committed or dedicated to something to the extent that you will feel a sense of pain or lost.

Now, all of these principles are grounded in the philosophy of 'Ofa, which is love, kindness and caring for one another as a country, community and individually. These are foundational to the epistemology that every Tongan carries with them both within and outside of Tonga when viewing Tongan business customs, culture, and tradition (Ministry of Social Development, 2012).

Methodological Approach (grounded theory, theory behind adopting a Pacifica paradigm)

Tongan business owners are the focal point of this research. The research design for this study is informed by interpretive paradigms carried within grounded theory (Farrelly & Nabobo-Baba, 2014; Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and the 'Talanoa'

methodology (Fairbairn-Dunlop & Coxon, 2014; Farrelly & Nabobo-Baba, 2014; Vaioleti, 2006).

My relationship with the participants is pivotal to obtaining in-depth data to inform the development of a grounded theory. In the context of the Pacific, “relationships are important because they are central to personal as well as to group identities and they provide the frameworks for appropriate behaviour and performance” (Thaman, 2010, p. 335).

Grounded theory allows the researcher to initially observe the phenomena. A systematic, inductive and comparative observation of the data will then identify patterns of a framework upon which theory can be based. As a popular qualitative research method (Medlik, 2003) this approach allows the research to be developed purely from empirical data gathered rather than the researcher hypothesizing about the phenomena prior to undertaking research.

“A grounded theory is one that is inductively derived from the study of the phenomenon it represents. [In grounded theory], one does not begin with a theory, then prove it. Rather, one begins with an area of study and what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge” (Corbin & Strauss, 2015, p. 23)

This process allows for the researcher to navigate as needed between inductive and deductive reasoning, by allowing the raw data as well as the emerging concepts to “ground” the theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Eisenhardt, 1989; Miles & Huberman, 1984).

Grounded theory and its family of interconnected methods aims to identify interconnected patterns and similarities. It is an appropriate Western framework to support the Talanoa methodology because it permits understanding of the interconnected cultural challenges of this research context as well as the challenges faced by Tongan enterprises and the innovation result. The ‘Talanoa’ methodology is a research approach, which resembles semi-structured interviews injected with a Tongan approach.

The Talanoa methodology (Fairbairn-Dunlop & Coxon, 2014; Farrelly & Nabobo-Baba, 2014; Vaioleti, 2006) brings together a theory and practice approach grounded in a Tongan worldview of research. It includes: researching to maintain

cultural knowledge more than research to discover ‘evidential facts’; as well as exploring the process of traditional fabrication of this Tongan product. The Talanoa method allows the collection of data from informal open-ended interviews within a Tongan cultural context and enables an in-depth, empathetic apprenticeship in the basis of Tongan knowledge, from which grounded theory can emerge.

Talanoa Methodology

There are various other Tongan research methods as well as Talanoa. The ‘tauhi va’ method by Māhina (2008), emphasizes the relationship of Tongan linkage. The ‘Kakala’ method, by Thaman (1988); (Thaman, 2002), and ‘mālie-māfana method’, by (Manu’atu, 2000) are two pieces of an individual puzzle. The ‘mālie-māfana method’ actually is an extension of the Kakala method. The Kakala is a delicate Tongan necklace made out of flowers, and part of the custom of entertainers. The whole process of how the Kakala constructed is transferred and represented by a metaphor for the construction of academic research (Ministry of Education and Training, 2012). Its component parts are Teu, which means to prepare, Toli is to collect, and Tui is to work on constructing the necklace (Kakala) into a pattern. Luva means is to present the Kakala to someone, and Malie is when everything from the Kakala, to the entertainer and the composition of the dance compliments the ceremony. Mafana represents the audience receiving the performance and responding well.

Talanoa, as refined by Vaioleti (2003, 2006), is an everyday, common form of communication among locals in Tonga. The word derives, “to talk, in an informal way, to tell stories or relate experience, to talk about or to say” (Churchward, 1959, p. 447). The informality of Talanoa does not intimidate locals, compared to an ‘interview’ which is a foreign concept to some Tongans.

While there are other Tongan research models, the construction of their underpinning metaphors in academic research do not correlate with this research. For example, the terms Teu, Toli, Tui, Kakala, malie-mafana and Luva are all associated with ceremony, dancing and performance. This association does not comply with business research so that the Kalala method is not suitable.

Furthermore, the notion of Teu, directly translates to ‘preparation’ which is contrary to the purpose of utilizing grounded theory.

In addition, one of the most important features of Talanoa is to provide an equal relationship between the researcher and the participants in which discussion and understanding is shared (Prescott, 2008). This approach aligns well with emergent grounded theory. Talanoa is also consistent with the opinion of a Pacific research method which maintains cultural knowledge and traditions, rather than discovering evidential facts.

Farrelly and Nabobo-Baba (2014) argues that ‘Talanoa’ is an in-depth personal conversation in which there are no restrictions. It is however structured and confined by traditional protocols and social norms of the Tongan culture such as, dress code, mannerism and the understanding of the use of everyday language. This method allows the collection of data from informal open-ended interviews within the Tongan cultural context and consciously takes the cultural complexity of Tongan lives into consideration.

Talanoa is identified as a method in which to discuss, communicate and, illustrate of the truth (Prescott & Hooper, 2009) while emphasizing the nature of the Tongan way. Although Talanoa methodology resembles semi structured interviews, there is a danger in assuming a sameness between Western and Pacific knowledge (Vaiolleti, 2006), which is not the case. The origins of this knowledge must be cultivated by using its own tools in order for it to be creditable, thus emphasizing that a pilot study is essential in constructing culturally relevant research tools. The Talanoa interview interaction also enables networking and relationships to be formed between participant and researcher while injecting a Tongan approach, which produces collection more in-depth data. The method has the same validity in a traditional Tongan setting as an interview does in Western research.

Incidentally, some argued against the Talanoa methodology as “talking about nothing in particular’, or ‘gossip” (Farrelly and Nabobo-Baba, 2014, p. 319). Nevertheless, Talanoa is a method of learning and communicating for both the researcher and the respondent and reaches the depth and understanding a researcher when dealing with Pacific individuals. Further, in maintaining a

relationship between the researcher and participants, changes in tone, mood and circumstances can be monitored. Interview guide will see to provide a constructive element in which knowledge and information is imparted by both sides. The role of the researcher is generated within the conversation. Whilst contributing to the personal development of each research participant, and, in this case, their business processes as issues are discussed and contributions made by both sides of the conversation but the focus and pace is driven by the business owner's answers and knowledge base.

The primary data collected by interview are compared with secondary data about the wider research context and triangulated with literature. Secondary sources are collected from various personal contact and recommendations. The focus of is on the role of innovation and the entrepreneurial identity small to medium size Pacific businesses, and traditional knowledge about enterprise and modification of business concepts within the context of Tonga. Elements that also effect business within Tonga such as migration, obligation and other fundamental aspects that indirectly or directly impact Tongan business will also be included.

Sampling

What's more, building on the 'Tauhi va' and 'Talanoa' methodology I have created my own research sampling method called, "lea 'a e vā", or in English, "relationship is key". This sampling method emphasises the importance of a researcher's relationships with the Tonga community. Who you know can highly influence the research sample you can cultivate. For example, through my reign as Miss Tonga 2014 this experience has provided me with an exposure to the Tongan business class. In conducting this research, I was able to use these networks to my advantage. This sampling method might be considered similar to snowballing. However, in the "lea 'a e vā" research sampling the first person to incite other research subject can be individual outside of the research sample or in this case business owners themselves. Whereas, snowballing is defined as "a technique for finding research subjects. One subject gives the researcher the name of another subject, who in turn provides the name of a third, and so on" (Baltar & Brunet, 2012, p. 60).

Tongan research there is always an essential element of establishing or building a relationship before the data collection occurs and maintaining these relationships between the interviewees and the researcher, whether it is for in-depth interviews in regards to the values and practice of a Tongan social worker (Mafile'o, 2004), or the contesting concept of transgender within the context of Tonga beauty pageant (Besnier, 2002). Therefore, the notion of “lea ‘a e vā” sampling is vital for it could undermine the credibility of this research for future implementation (Anae, 2001) within the Tongan society. In the Tongan society, credibility is not only given to what is being said, but also to the individual who says it. For example, in regards to the business world there are numerous household names in Tongan business enterprises that have operated for generations. Therefore, their contribution to the research will be invaluable for they have been in business for longer periods of time. This; however, does not discredit all contribution from various research samples.

In using “lea ‘a e vā” I was able to obtain a business listing to the population of possible businesses to interview. A variety of different types of business were identified to enable a cross-check whether the sample were obtained by snowball or convenience sampling is representative of the population as a whole. The same “lea ‘a e vā” sampling method was applied to businesses with mix Pacific and Western business modes of operating.

Data Collection

Sampling and data collection employed by the Talanoa approach (Vaioloti, 2006), are uniquely different due to the origin of Tongan understanding. Therefore, the collecting and analysing of this data is not the same as Western or Eastern knowledge. To each is their own knowing and lived realities so when a Western approach is the only given there is a danger of interpreting these indigenous narratives incorrectly. For example, unspoken interpretations can often be overlooked or misunderstood when transcribing written notes. Therefore, being a Tongan researcher and employing Talanoa provides an advantage to this research. A daily research journal was kept to record interactions and observations about the research. Open codes (Corbin & Strauss, 2015) will be given to general themes that will arise from these interviews, field notes and the journal, then closed coding. In employing grounded theory, this research provides a flexibility

in using inductive and deductive data analysis. Inductive allows for the codes, categories and themes to be drawn from the data collected while deductive coding begins from prior knowledge of the literature review (Cho & Lee, 2014).

Transcription is necessary in order to manage analyses, compare and examine collected data. The interviews were bilingual, undertaken in the respondent's choice of language. The use of Talanoa methodology in the Tongan context however extend beyond the formal to informal forums and other conversation that might otherwise be considered gossip will be included (Fairbairn-Dunlop & Coxon, 2014). As a result, my research journal with exceeded person interaction with interviewees to include humour and stories. For example, humour or sarcasm in the Tongan context is often use to mask various issues an individual would like to draw attention to without offending anyone.

Therefore, cultural meanings and emotions can be lost in translation, transcription and writing between languages. However, I have tried to overcome this by providing the individual's answer within a description of its context and by reviewing the transcripts more than once (Cope, 2009). Tongan cultural protocol in regards to the notion of Tauhi vā, or nurturing the social ties. "For Tongans, vā is organized through one's genealogy and kinship ties...[and] tauhi vā: taking care of socio-spatial ties with kin and kin-like members" (Ka'ili, 2005, p. 114), can also be a problematic factor in collecting data because the up-keep of these linkages can be very demanding and sometimes difficult. Although there is an informal association result from conducting an interview, in the Tongan context there is an additional responsibility for the researcher once an individual has established a link to respect the cultural assertion to maintain that relationship (Smith, 1999) beyond the interview. When I have completed this research I will return to thank my participants with a copy of my thesis and a 'thank you' mea'ofa (gift). This is not a time bound phenomenon but this will be the final step, which rids me of all responsibilities.

Methods of Analysis

This research employs content analysis which "seeks to quantify content in terms of predetermined categories and in a systematic and replicable manner" (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 195). Common themes will be organized alongside (Bremm, von

Landesberger, Bernard, & Schreck, 2011) and contrast principal themes that emerge from the research. Content analysis fits with Talanoa, it allows for the researcher to take part in the deep analysis of the research as the interview process. As Vaioleti (2006), states Talanoa is the sum of 'tala', (to tell) and 'noa' (zero), or to be silent and let the data speak to the researcher. This enables a depth of understanding in regards to the process of analysis and interpretation. When translating and interpreting, I had to return to the raw data, multiples times in order to ensure I wasn't overlooking or providing false assumptions.

This research analysed with the use of Nvivo, a qualitative data analysis software. Nvivo provided an effective way to organize the raw data in regards to each question asked while also identifying various relationship and key common themes that have emerged from the data. This organizational tool allows storage of all data in one particular place. In addition, when going through each transcribed interview Nvivo enabled determination of various relationships between answers and questions from the data. This also enabled me to look at the data systematically and to find quickly correlate evidence and direct quotes, whilst recording my own reflections. It also provided a methodical way to construct conclusions and future recommendations.

Nvivo is an effective in organize data however it did not complement the Talanoa methodology. In separating and categorizing various key themes this took away from the holistic context of the narratives or the stories. In addition, various elements also overlapped each in which this tool neutralized into a western network which over simplified it. Therefore, issues occur in regards to categorizing various data. The system was not able to analyse dual relationships, but cultural and emotional translation were lost. Recommendation would come in the form of the development of a Tongan methods of analysis which incorporates cultural elements.

Limitations of the Research

In this research it is essential to identify my positionality since I might face challenges and adversity as a researcher, working within my own culture and highly networked, hierarchical Tongan society. As a 24-year-old, female student I am well aware of my financial limitations, therefore research expenses such as

printing, travel cost was restricted, although I obtained a MA scholarship. The sensitivity of the data collected in relation to business competitiveness and full cooperation from business owners were a challenge since I expected some businesses to be apprehensive in revealing sensitive information especially in relation to the failure of their business or even the success of the business.

Time constraints is expected to be a challenge; the ideal situation for this project would be a lifetime contribution in accordance with a business life cycle (Strobl & Kronenberg, 2016). Given that this is just a ten-month research project with four weeks of data collection one might question its validity, but research is almost always time, resources and place-constrained. Another challenge to the research would be its universal application. While this research will be conducted within Tonga, one would question its relevance to other countries or businesses within the Pacific and around the world and whether it might be generalizable.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the research design is key in establishing the following findings and discussion in regards to the nature of Tongan knowledge. My positionality within the research seeks and elevates the notion of the different Western and Tongan epistemologies. While the Talanoa methodology provide a Tongan flavour to the Western secondary data, grounded theory and interpretive paradigm.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Research findings and discussion will be divided into two separate sections. My findings include, participant's responses to the research questions. Profiles of each of my research sample and challenges and solutions provided by these participants. Discussion will incorporate prior literature while identifying my positionality as a researcher and ways that I may have influenced participant responses. Issues such as cultural complexity, Tongan entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial identity and obligation will also be examined. The final section offers recommendations for effective Tongan businesses.

Respondent Profile

This research targeted Tongan owned businesses, however two foreign business owners were persistent about wanting to participate. Interviews totalled to twenty-eight participants with twenty-six Tongan and two non-Tongan; sixteen males and twelve females. Interviews were approximately forty-five minutes long, ranging from thirty minutes to three hours. Table 2, 3 and 4 seeks to provide a profile of all twenty-eight of my research participants.

The focus of this research is to provide a balanced representation of Tongan owned businesses, and what influences their business practices. This study acknowledges that twenty-eight interviews provide a limited scope, but due to time and resources constraints of a master's thesis more interviews could not be undertaken.

Businesses from various tourism sectors tallied eight interviewees. These included; accommodation, handicraft, events, conference venue, food and beverage, and transport trades such as a taxi and an airline operator. Other business profiles which support the industry indirectly comprised a newspaper outlet, bookshops, supermarket, beauty based businesses, a local corner store, and a home/sport/office centre.

Table 2. Pilot Research Sample

Pseudonyms	Gender	Ethnicity	Type of Business	Starting Year	Motivation
1. James	Male	Non-Tongan	Media	2012	“I wanted to come in and help the local media in Tonga especially in publishing a English newspaper for I know that is something that is not present here that is absent”
2. Andrew	Male	Tongan	Local Store	1964	“I liked Maths... 9 kids and I could see that the shop took care of my children”
3. Mary	Female	Tongan	Accommodation	2004	“I always like to work but I always like to have something on the side to run, in Tongan is not enough to take care of our family. It might be enough for food but nothing else”
4. Francis	Male	Tongan	Accommodation	2012	“I am in tourism because my product is to empower and encourage people... I bring 1000 thousand people to Tonga and tourism is my passion now”
5. Matthew	Male	Tongan	Accommodation	2003	“me and my family all moved to New Zealand... it so we decide to renovate it and tidy it up and make it into a bed the decision to change this to a bed and breakfast it was not a hard decision for it was something we knew to do”
6. Esther	Female	Tongan	Accommodation	2003	“my husband had a lot of abandon vehicle in his workshop and somehow I was working for the airline for 15 years and during the time the airline was liquated in 2003”
7. Peter	Male	Tongan	Office Equipment Store	1999	“I have always had an inclination to come back and run the business so that was always on the back burner and we decided last year was the time and also retirement”
8. Deborah	Female	Tongan	Beauty Products Cultural Event Centre	2011	“I enjoy business I enjoy the freedom and working for myself being able to be creative free to do what I want whenever I want”
9. Philip	Male	Tongan	Media	2003	“This is something I was passionate about... I thought I would do my own business, so it was an idea that I had within me and then the encouragement came from outside”
10. Hannah	Female	Tongan	Nail and Beauty Salon	N/A	“do stuff that you know that will make money”

Table 3. Second Research Sample

Pseudonyms	Gender	Ethnicity	Type of Business	Starting Year	Motivation
1. Simon	Male	English	Backpacker Property for rent Shuttle	N/A	“I didn’t enjoy working in winter, and I saw Tonga and came...”
2. Tomas (Manager)	Male	Tongan	Restaurant Hotel Rental Cars	Restaurant 1996 Hotel 2008	“maybe we can say he wanted to come to the Pacific”
3. Adam	Male	Tongan	Beach Resort Attraction Food and Beverage	1970	“Dad came and started the business he was one of the Tongans passion for tourism... I was kicked out of school at the age 17, so I came and stayed in the bush for 2 year and I did all the work, and I watched from my dad and learn”
4. Jemima (Sectary)	Female	Tongan	Conference Room	N/A	“church function is not always on so we hire it out”
5. Joanna (Manager)	Female	Tongan	Handicraft	N/A	“her Majesty decreed that there is a need for women who cannot maintain a stable income - can stay home and take care of their children”
6. Joseph	Male	Tongan	Adventure Recreational activity Accommodation	2003	“I am an ex-military man, I was in the navy for 15 years...my wife was a Tongan Australian and we decided to settle here, she had a good job as an Economist ...I left the military and she left her job and we started building boats and slowly from there”
7. Siena	Female	Tongan	Supermarket	1999	“there was an opportunity to rebuild –as it is to be part of Tonga and to take a risk ,yeah uhm I think that’s what we did - we took a risk ...now we are here in Tonga”
8. Paul	Male	Tongan	International and Domestic Airline, Aviation Transport ...etc	N/A	N/A

Pseudonyms	Gender	Ethnicity	Type of Business	Starting Year	Motivation
<i>9. Clare</i>	Female	Tongan	Bar Conference room Ice cream shop	N/A	“it was a glass ceiling I’ve gone as far as I wanted to go at the company and I wanted to change and this was a huge challenge...[and] opportunity”
<i>10. Joan</i>	Female	Tongan	Café Ice cream shop	N/A	“I worked at Ocean of Light School and when the boss told you to do something you followed it and I am not like that and I told them I would rather do my own thing so no one will tell me to be like this and like that”
<i>11. Cecelia</i>	Female	Tongan	Car yard Rental cars Pumpkin Export Agent	1980	“we live in Japan and in this we are eligible to the same privilege as all Japanese resistances so we are able to go auctions and we have a card and a business license to do business in Japan”
<i>12. Michael</i>	Male	Tongan	Accommodation Attractions Events and Conferences Food and Beverage	2008	“The main reason was we didn’t believe in chasing money...and if your employers say that you have to work 10hours shift you away from your family all that time so we decided that even if we come back to Tonga it’s going to be a lot of work but as long as we got the kids running around it makes a big different”
<i>13. Faustina (Manager)</i>	Female	Tongan	Book Shop	1972	“it’s a real profit maker for us cause no one does it but on the other hand we know there is a need , we are owned by the church and that is why we were set up and it’s a real contrition and we give back”
<i>14. Patrick</i>	Male	Tongan	Guest House Local Alcoholic Brew	2010	“the idea to make an accommodation is due to the land and the space so the idea was no planned”

Table 4. Government Entity Research Sample

Pseudonyms	Ethnicity	Gender	Government sector
1. <i>Malo</i>	Tongan	Male	Tonga Chamber of Commerce
2. <i>William</i>	Tongan	Male	Ministry of Tourism
3. <i>Regina</i>	Tongan	Female	Tonga Tourism Authority
4. <i>Teresa</i>	Tongan	Female	Tonga Business Enterprise Centre

Among these businesses, ten interviewees also disclosed owning more than one business. One in particular owned a restaurant in Tonga as well as in New Zealand. The sample businesses were solely owned, and run with the help of family members. While other business within the research samples included a business owned by the Roman Catholic Church, a small business managed by a committee allocated under the Free Wesleyan church and a commercial establishment created by the HM Queen Salote III. These three businesses were identified as licenced enterprises but proved less competitive in comparison to the solely owned businesses. For example, when interview about the Church conference hall, the secretary, Jemima, stated that they hire it out when the church does not have any functions on, but they make no effort to advertise or to compete.

There are many conference rooms, for example there are conference rooms in the big building in town but we don't compete. The conference room is just there and any one needs it they come and hire it [INT17: Jemima, 15 April, 2016].

In addition to having a different governance structure the chief decision makers in the businesses were employees. Therefore, the operations of these business had a point of difference.

Most privately owned businesses identified their own unique way of operating. Similar to the New Zealand notion of SME business which is defined by each individual business owner's personal characteristics (McGregor & Gomes, 1999). While under closer observation each business owner seeks to run theirs in accordance to the type of business they have. For example, Deborah who runs a small family business describes how she operators as business:

I have my little sister who goes to high school and she tries to help out after school like I just try do it myself but I have a good employee who I was working with for 3 years... [And] I have my employee staying with my kid and she has a 10-month old baby and I tell here whenever she doesn't have someone to baby sit she can bring her baby to work, for us working mums it is very hard [INT8: Deborah, 21 January, 2016].

Hannah who also runs a home-based nail and beauty Salon credits her personalised customer service in maintaining current customers and also as to what attracts new customers:

I like to mingle more with my customers on a personal level, and like ...I might invite them, hey! I am eating would you like to come over to my house and have some food, my husband cooks and everyone comes over and you know in the Tongan way, I am like hey come! Come! Come let's eat, you know, so yeah, that is like what I do like when I serve like I serve alcohol to my customer... when they are doing the pedicure chair, we also serve coffee, teas, water or apple juice, or like if you want a wine or beer and champagne. And they are like getting "mafana" (warm or tipsy) and they getting turned up in our living room and I am like- I am really happy that you're really comfortable and enjoying yourself when I am pampering you (laughter) [INT10: Hannah, 22 January, 2016].

These two businesses owner specific devices that allowed them to operate their business differ to other participants. As such, Peter who owns a home/sport/office centre provided a dissimilar approach to how he operates his business:

Weekly management meetings with the head of department" outlines expectation on employees. In which he states that in "a matter of principles I don't employee relatives. For it makes it harder for me to fire them (laughter), family have different expectation from you. They think that they can get more leeway then other employee and I make it very clear to them when I came in that they are just like every other employee, from 8 to 5 you are just like every other employee you're not my cousin – outside of here yes your my cousin [INT 6: Peter, 7 January, 2016].

The majority of the businesses interviewed had only been conducting business within the last ten years. Business establishments dated from the 1980s to 2011.

As a direct result of the pilot study, business owners identified concerns on the effects of government policies on local business, which I will explore further in this study. Therefore, it was essential to voice a response from the government sector. Interviews were conducted with specific selected government sectors such

as the Ministry of Tourism, Tourism Authority, Chambers of Labour and Commerce, and the Tonga Business Enterprise Centre.

Moreover, this study originally intended to explore transnational enterprises or Tongan businesses operating within Tonga as well as in overseas markets. The pilot however, indicated that the majority of Tongan businesses operated solely within the local market. Therefore, research focus was diverted to Tongan businesses, operating solely within Tonga.

Clash of Western Policies on Tongan Structure This notion of maintaining Tongan business within the local market also sees to translate into the no foreign ownership land system in Tonga. And while this protects Tongan business interests, and Tongan people, this also prohibits foreign banks from evicting or declaring bankruptcy on a Tongan business. Consequently banks are therefore stricter in granting loans and financial assistance. Also, foreign investors are more reluctant to invest in Tonga due to this land tenure prohibition. Even if a ninety-nine years' lease is permitted, it is still not ideal, in regard to investment returns.

When interviewing the manager of Langafonua 'a Fafine Tonga (Women's Council of Tonga) a non-profit handcraft shop. Established by HM Queen Salote III in 1953 for the purpose of "working in one accord" – which translates as Ngaue loto taha pe – to ensure a better quality of life for all women of Tonga and their families. The handcrafts provide a centre for local women from the community to sell and price their own work. All of the profit goes back to the individual with only 15% deducted for the organisation's costs:

So when an item is stole we take 15% from that sale so in the beginning we started with 5% and then we increased to 10% and it's been 15% since we have increased it to 15% and it is just to help admin to pay for some bills and we rent the room too just to help the whole organization and we have three employee and we try to pay them from that 15% percent. [INT18: Joanna, 15 April, 2016]

She said one of the main challenges they faced was obtaining a bank loan for the maintenance and the upgrade of their shop. This law prevented the use of the land as a security but the Tongan Development Bank wanted, a \$10,000.00 guarantee,

so Joanna (the manager) decided to take matters into her own hands and mortgaged her personal vehicle and Tongan mats to secure the loan.

This handcraft shop was established by the late Queen Salote with the intention of helping women in less affluent communities to maintain a stable income and is currently governed by a communal body under the royal family. However, due to the nature of this business Joanna had to find her own security for the loan in order to upgrade the shop with some more shelves as well as to make repairs to a leaking roof which she hopes will attract more customers. She went on to state that she does not fault the bank for wanting more to guarantee the loan and she jokingly added,

But I guess everyone has a right ...from our part we usually take out the money and use it for something else [INT18: Joanna, 15 April, 2016].

Solution In part because of such issues, banks now give instalments instead of a lump sum and the government provides soft loans to help businesses, through the Department of Labour and Commerce. It is evident these banking policies are made from a Eurocentric mentality which fails to incorporate Tongan practices. This finding provided identical concern in regards to the establishment of foreign donations (Yusuf, 1995). Duncan (2008) indicated a similar problem in which foreign aid would contribute to businesses with a Eurocentric mentality and often fails to include Pacific protocols (Gani & Clemes, 2015). This seeks to have a huge impact on Tongan business and vice versa but Joanna suggested that these ‘cut and paste’ policies should be reviewed.

In analysing Joanna’s interview, another issue which was also illustrated was the issue of land and land ownership. It was clear that from a Eurocentric mentality it’s a given to have land privatized, therefore an individual can buy and sell land as they would overseas. However, in the Tongan context, land was community owned. Furthermore, there is a clear prohibition of foreign ownership of Tongan land, therefore (foreign) banks and foreign donors have no power. However, at the same time Tongan business owners are being short-changed due to the fact foreign policies are unable to incorporate Tongan spending habits, land protocols and cultural phenomenon. Therefore, the question remains, how might Tongan

banks and business owners work collectively to provide a more collective solution?

Furthermore when analysing Deborah and Joanna's interviews, they both identified the same challenge for their respective businesses. In her tourist attraction and beauty based business, she says local government always introduces new legislation which do not fit the local Tongan system. For example, in the morning of the interview, local government had announced a new licencing regulation which was passed without the knowledge of business owners. With these changes impacting and restricting businesses. Deborah discredits local government for making transient decisions without consultation. She also warned business owners to be more active and mindful of these changes:

Sometimes they cut and paste the regulation from New Zealand onto Tonga and they are trying to mimic the developed countries but to be honest there should be a way we can do new things and new ways you know instead of copy and pasting we can find better ways [INT8: Deborah, 21 January, 2016]

Licencing Challenges These concerns were also voiced by a number of other business owners especially in regards to maintaining a business licence. Joseph, stated his frustration of maintaining a whale watching licence regulation that he believes has been manipulated by foreign operators.

It's not a good thing and I have been trying to preach to the local government, for we are facing the same problem as Vava'u- for Vava'u has 14 operators and most of them are foreigners and that is the problem. In Vava'u they run everything and they want to control everything and now to have a license... to have a whale watching is \$3000, just to have a license for 3 months a year.

No one pays \$3000 a year for a license, but the government jump it up for they know that it's the Palangi's who run it and those Palangi's are the once who help write the constitution and things and they have the regulation; have it; form it up; and the TVB [Tonga Visitors Bureau]) just says ohk we do that without thinking the reason why they jump it up so high is so no local can enter.

The different between the Palangi's and us is that the difference is we can't compare with them ...when they come in they bring things like a bigger boat and more luxury ...all our boats are local boatI advertise and do local fishing and that is the fishing I do ...it's the foreign way where you have [fishing] poles and things and that is not local and then we ask if they can differentiate the license but then they don't

*if you go look for them [foreign operators] they have gone back ...they only come for the whales [season] in June July and then they go back, right... when people come from Europe around this time [April: off season for whales] I am the only one here...around this time I don't get customers around this time but I am still here.... These people they just come and get the cream of the work ...and it's very hard and people have been waiting.
[INT19 Joseph, 18 April 2016]*

This is a challenge that local operators face in both the main Island of Tongatapu and the second most touristic Island of Vava'u where fourteen of the foreign whale watching operators have contributed in writing to the constitution and regulations under which whale watching licenses are set. This provides a disadvantage to locals for they are unable to maintain at \$3000.00 licence which is to be renewed every three months. During the quiet period of whale watching this is very difficult to achieve, which immediately creates a gap in the margin between income and expenditure. Tongan operators then cannot compete or even enter into the whale watching business. According to Joseph, this is something local government fails to recognise and should take into consideration. The representative of the Tourism Authority, Regina, also commented on this issue when interview about the role of government in business:

But you know the government also set the licence in rule for these operators so it's really difficult for businesses to run because of the restriction they have. For example, the liquor licence for outer Islands finds it hard to get it. They have to do it every year and they have to come to Tongatapu (the main Island) to do it they can't do it there and its very expensive to come to Tongatapu do the police record which they just did last year and do the whole process all over again every year so some just give up and have no licence but when tourist come they want to have wine

and you know you won't be able to server alcohol for you need a licence. Their ministry, is really messed up (Ministry of Commerce, Consumer trade, Innovation and Labour) [INT14, Regina 14 April 2016].

However, as Joseph stated these foreigners are the ones who helped local government develop regulations for whale watching. They have established themselves as the Tongan Whale Watching Operators Association, Inc., who have “developed” (Kessler & Harcourt, 2010, p. 1351) the Official Guideline for watching whales in the Kingdom of Tongan. Undoubtedly, there is a significant concern given to the matter. Tongan law is encouraging foreign operators to acquire a Tongan business partner, yet allowing a high proportion of these licences to be issued to foreigners. This puts forward the question of priority and, why government encourages co-owning with a foreign operator instead of supporting sole-Tongan owned?

Asian Influence While on the other hand Tongan business owners also went on to stated that although there is an increased number of Asian businesses in Tonga they did not have a negative attitude to the actual people or businesses but rather stated that the blame falls on government policies more than the individuals, for not restricting the number of licences also issued to Asian businesses and government relying heavily on Asian foreign aid.

If you see the different business the Asians owns food kind of business and the Palangi comes and start the resort and they have the money for it for we (Tongans) don't have money. The business that the Tongans could do the Asians have taken over so it's hard for Tongan to do that for there are so many other Asian.

We can't stop development and time for we have agreed to I think there should be a limit to the amount of licences given by the government, like if I have finished operating with that licences I could sell if and there should also be a cap with how much you are selling that licence for, when you leave it for free no one will get anything. That is another idea for example when you have a taxi licence the government should limit the number of licenses given out to taxi drivers and when one is done operating that taxi licence they can then sell it to another person. When you go to the airport

there are so many taxi drivers, Tonga is too small and we should have a limit on the licence we give out for business operation and you could also apply this to other things like the small shops if they are foreign then they would have a limited license issues but some foreigner are a cheat for the Asians go and partner up with Tongan but the Tongan don't have money and the Asians have the money [INT2: Mary, 4 January, 2016]

Solutions The representative of the Tonga Chamber of Commerce, named Malo, was also very critical of the selling of Tongan passports therefore allowing Asian access to local privileges. While the recommendation came in the form of government policies to tighten up taxation on import and export goods, especially through shipping and air freight while providing solutions to stop the issuing of illegal Tongan passports. Furthermore, priority for business licencing should also be given to locals while foreign owners can be encouraged more to invest more in Tongan partners through incentives. For example:

Samoan has introduced, its tax credit, so when business depending on how much investment you put in you can get credit off your tax that you pay of a certain amount and the president was trying to push this so if you put in 2 million dollars you can get a certain amount off even tax and we put that forward to tourism and they haven't come back and there is a lack of incentive and confident with the new government. [INT12: Malo, 14 April 2016]

In response to this, the majority of the interviewees provided positive responses on Asians because these introduced a level of competitiveness to business which Tongan businesses lack. Others also recommended the introduction of entrepreneurship subjects and classes within primary and high school's curriculum. In order to develop the interests of young Tongans in establishing their own businesses and to encourage them to look for opportunities:

Government say they do and they like to say that private sector is what drives the economy but in saying that they should follow that with action heheheh in allowing, and enabling business environment here in Tonga ae which is a still bit lacking with polices and things [INT12: Malo, 14 April, 2016]

Entrepreneurial Identity A specific definition of small and medium-sized enterprise was provided by the Ministry of Commerce and Labour Tongan Micro as shown in Table 5. This table provides an identical resemblance to the New Zealand definition of SME businesses (Higham & Williams, 2007). In the literature, it is established that New Zealand small to medium-sized business is defined by five or less employees.

SME lost in translation In the Tongan context family members are often employed for free therefore the question remains, does this still count as employment? And are Tongan employees still contributing to economic wealth if their employment is unpaid? The other issue I encounter when categorising business in regards to this definition provided by the Ministry of Commerce and Labour is the nature of Tourism business. Due to the fact some touristic businesses are also seasonal, this provided a complication in categorising each business according to the number of employees they had. For often the cycles of return in which visiting friends and family return to Tongan usually falls during Christmas and New Year. Therefore, accomodation and touristic sites are more likely to employ more staff during this time (Cave & Koloto, 2015).

Table 5. Definition of SME according to the Tonga Business Enterprise Centre & Tonga Ministry of Commerce and Labour

	Micro	Small	Medium	Large
No. Employees (Paid)	1 to 5	6 to 15	16 to 25	Over 25
Annual Turnover (TOP\$)	Less than 30,000	30,000 to 99,999	100,000 to 200,000	Over 200,000
Number of Businesses accoding to Research Sample				
Totals	13	9	1	1

(Source: Ministry of Commerce and Labour (n.d.).

Local government representative in the research was questioned about the Tongan entrepreneurial identity: How would you describe a Tongan entrepreneur?

[Researcher]

Well Tongans are not very entrepreneur (laughter), they are not creative or very innovative and that is what we are trying to do and we are also trying to make ideas...See that is one thing that we are trying to do here is one of the program is the business incubator. I was in Hamilton last year,

there is a Chamber of Commerce there too and they also got a things call smart, it's a ...A business incubator is all you people business idea can come to and we help them and nurture there idea going to a business.

[INT12: Malo, 14 April, 2016]

Labour and Commerce and Tonga's Business Entrepreneurial Centre stated that the communal system fostered co-dependency. Therefore, Tongans are less innovative, more comfortable with the status quo and less likely to be driven when compared to developed countries. This observation was also shared by other business owners when asked about Asian business influences in Tonga.

This study has discovered that Tongan entrepreneurial identity for those interviewed was based on their own unique values that guide their work. This identity is constructed by a combination of Western and Tongan understandings. Western understanding is provided through means of travelling overseas and returning to Tongan with various business ideas, goods and financial means. While Tongan understanding comes in the form of working collectively for a coherent society in which each business plays a major role. These businesses all share a common value in which obligations to their immediate or extended families, society and country are incorporated into their businesses. Therefore, the running of each business comes with an additional responsibility which the individual business owner personally prioritises. It is this prioritisation or management of these obligations that determines the success and failure of the business. There is a co-dependence between migration, cultural obligation and business.

The Challenge of Migration The majority of the research participants identified having some relatives overseas or having lived overseas themselves. They travel back and forth in order to bring goods, money and ideas for the business. However, when questioned about the desire to expand overseas majority stated that they could not be in two places at the one time and did not trust other people to manage their business elsewhere.

This started business in the 80s and it's my husband's business but my husband lives in Japan and he partnered up with a Japanese. Firstly, we live in Japan and in this we are eligible to the same privilege as all

Japanese resistance in Japan so we are able to go auction and we have a card and a business licence to do business in Japan. So we have been in Japan for 30 years for my husband was studying and he played rugby.

We have four children so I travel back and forth and they go to school there and they come and have a look at the business but we live and work in Japan to import the vehicle, so weather it is a second hand or a new vehicle we can see to import this to Tonga.

So we do not just have a car yard we also have a rental business and a hire equipment and for three years now we have been exporting pumpkins to the Japanese and the Korean market. [INT24: Cecelia, 19 April, 2016]

A lack of revenue also restricts them from starting a business overseas, but still, they would not mind expanding their business to the outer Islands within Tonga such as Vava'u and 'Eua.

These findings support previous research confirming the two main reasons for why Tongans start small businesses, is to make a living for their families (Salaman & Storey, 2008 & Fairbairn, 2006). On the other hand, seizing new opportunities was provided as the starting reason for medium-sized businesses.

Obligation The research also highlighted some of the arguments, for and against, challenges and solutions a Tongan business faces in regards to cultural obligations. Cultural obligation usually means financial or food contribution to a family funeral, wedding, birthdays, school supplies and school fees. This also extends to social obligations such as fundraising for an alumni reunion, local school or a local rugby team. Church donations and official celebrations such as the King's Coronation, the King's birthday and the election of the first democratic Minister of Tonga was funded by both locals and business owners. In analysing responses from this study, it was clear that there was a pre-eminent precedence of cultural obligation in the Tongan business context. Business owners identified that obligation starts with the family, then society, followed by the church, and finally to King and Country. Therefore, this section will seek to identify these obligations and their effects on the business and its operations.

Challenges of Cultural Obligation Studies conducted in a Western context, such as New Zealand, or Hawaii in which Tongans were immersed in a culturally different setting. Identifies that there is an element of choice in which the business owner can choose to conduct their business in either a Western or the Pacific way (Crocombe, 2001). These findings identified two views of cultural obligation. The first is:

The business and foreign view or people from overseas, if you are successful in business you have to be related to nobody in figurative language [INT15 William, 14 April, 2016]

William seeks to hold a prestigious position within the Ministry of Tourism.

This research was situated within the management and tourism sector, therefore it was essential to interview an individual from the tourism policy and regulatory sector to supplement the tourism industry respondents. In addition to this, tourism seeks to provide one of the main incomes to Tonga.

The second is the Tongan view in which business is holistic, and a collective approach (Butler & Hinch, 2007). In this William states we should stop blaming culture for business failure. Business failure is when businesses do not take into account various risks, weather financial or cultural:

To me this is just management, but we blame culture like this if someone comes and borrow and then they leave its' you ...it's all about controlling and running your business. The other thing is we mixing culture and business but you can't, we blame culture but you have to take what is your percentage so to be we must train Tongan business to be business minded and to maintain the principal of business.

Firstly, to me its management and secondly we blame religion but no it's you who control your business, so you need your business management skills for that and there is no record keeping. [INT15 William, 14 April, 2016]

Contrary to expectations, this response did not find obligation as a fault which leads to business failure. As a matter of fact, it seeks to contest (East-West Centre, 1987; Cahn, 2008 Besnier, 2011).

In addition, cultural protocols also provided restrictions on who can and cannot be employed. For example, brothers and sisters or daughters of a mehikitanga (aunty) usually cannot work in various environments such as ‘alu ki ‘uta, or when men go to the bush to grow crops. The idea of ‘faka’apa’apa’ (which refers to sister-brother avoidance of disrespectful relations) provides the basis for these protocols. For example, Patrick who is a 44-year-old family man who owns a Guest House expressed that:

if I bring my sister here to work (Guest House), remember the foreign customer will come here and they will swear as they please, that is something that restricts, [who I employ], in this type of work, so I can't employ girls like that faka'apa'apa. [INT28 Patrick, 18 April, 2016]

These findings, are consistent with Besnier's (2011) work on Tongan gender and sexuality in which the social role of females and males provides a very interesting dynamic. In a Western perspective, this might be seen as a discrimination of women, however from a Tongan perspective the role of the man is to protect. Therefore, they would not knowingly subject their sister to this kind of disrespectful environment. However, this is not to say women cannot operate their own business. One of the male business owners spoke about this issue by stating:

Tongan people are PROUD people and "fakamafutofuta" (to act or behave in a self-important manner) especially women, but you know why they are so proud of themselves... Where is a country that they respect their women like Tonga, they just come and do these things human rights and women rights...Bullshit! We are born with this kind of thing [INT 3 Francis, 3 January, 2016]

This interviewee argued against Western ideological movements that now try to introduce gender equality and women's' rights to Tonga. He goes on to state that these theories are not new to Tonga. He goes on to criticise this notion by stating that women are not equal to men but rather superior. This highlights Western

assumptions that differentiated gender roles and protocols always disadvantage women.

On the contrary, Clare stated she had to break a few barriers for other business women in Tonga.

I think when I first started here - the fact uhm this lacks proper communication from the various government there are things that are available for you... these are some of the licence that you like to look at it wouldn't be guide good if they were more open... I remember when I came back home at the time I didn't hold my Tongan passport so I use my work visa to run the business which became that you could apply for your Tongan passport if you had a Tongan grandmother or whatever we got our passport then so I guess my disappointment would been is that when we ...for your licencethese house are going assist you was you know the real faka-Tonga fietika (want to look good) and so I was really please when I got my Tongan passport cause I didn't apply for a work visor every year would be came up at night mare and I guess really when I look people saying being a womensmash the few feelings and it's made it easier for the women in business now. [INT 13: Clare, 14 April, 2016]

Now she is one of the four finalists of the Commonwealth Women in Business Award, 2015 and is successfully running multiple businesses. A comparative study on the role of women within the Tongan society and business would be an interesting area of study for future research.

For example, based on the common Tongan knowledge that those women, especially the *mehikitangas*' (aunty) (Nishitani, 2014), hold power within the Tongan family, research could show weather this transfers to women in business. In interviewing business women, they also expressed how being a woman in Tonga plays a big role in business. Clare stated,

There is a big difference, women see things that men don't see and like me and my husband and this guest house. [INT 3: Francis, 3 January, 2016].

In regards to the daily running of an accommodation business, a women's touch makes the difference. She shared personal accounts on the daily running of the

guesthouse with her husband, to which they both brought different strengths and weakness. For example, her husband's staff management approach would be different to hers because he was more a micro-manager while she is a passive manager.

The difference of how staff are managed is key to understanding an individual approach to their business. Clare said she had lost profit to theft by employees therefore having reliable staff is a key factor in business success.

Solution for Perceived Cultural Obligation This information provides a different perspective to previous assumptions on obligation being the cause of Tongan business failure. As a matter fact, one can argue that these obligations are what prevent poverty within the Tongan context. Often, there are various elements of donation given to charity by businesses. But, in the Tongan context there is a real notion of giving to society and the less fortunate. Therefore, I would recommend that Tongan and Western businesses should incorporate this notion into their business plan in order to better their society overs individualistic profitable growth (Prescott & Hooper, 2009).

Challenge of family the term 'family' in a Tongan context is broader than the Western understanding of the nuclear family. In a Tongan family, obligation goes out to my mother, to my father, my aunties, uncle and grandparents. Therefore, there is an expectation that business owners should not only contribute to the immediate family, but also the needs of the extended family. One of the interviewees stated that,

When there is a cultural obligation, such as a funeral, there is an expectation that my shop will cover the cost", however, "I told my family that we will share. [INT1 Andrew, 4 January, 2016].

All participants identified obligation as a potential threat to the business's success and went on to say that cultural obligation is a way of life and, businesses should always budget for cultural obligation and business does co-exist in a Tongan context; however, the success of the business is determined by the accurate administration of both of these elements.

Business owners interviewed in this study argued that one of these elements should not be blamed for the demise of the other, but is a risk which can be managed.

Aligned with previous research, all participants of this study identified business failure with a lack of financial knowledge and management skills (Higham & Williams, 2007):

To me this is just management, but we blame culture... the other thing is we mix culture and business but you can't, we blame culture but you have to take what is your percentage so to be we must train Tongan business to be business minded and to maintain the principal of business [INT15 William, 14 January 2016].

Furthermore, participants stated the significance of having family support in the daily running of their business (Beckman, Eisenhardt, Kotha, Meyer, & Rajagopalan, 2012). One example is Joseph, a Tongan ex-military man who owns an accommodation, adventure fishing and whale watching business who said he ran this business with the help of his wife and children. This differentiated his Tongan business from other operators. For example,

Got a local boat, a bush boat and we would take people including the family and the kids all got in and then we do a little dance on the boat when we are out there and that is how it started. [INT19 Joseph, 18 April, 2016]

The majority of participants within the research identified co-owning their business with a spouse and at the same time, employing their children. Joseph went on to say that his reasons for employing immediate family members meant the presence of reliable, loyal and dedicated staff. These Tongan findings can be differentiated from a Fiji case study (Baldacchino, 1999) which proposed that family were used in the business in order to cut wages and costs.

On the other hand, when it came to extended family members, there was a real concern in employing cousins, aunties and uncles. For example, Andrew said,

I had bought a brother into the business and other family but I saw that it was dangerous. So I just run it with my children. [INT1 Andrew, 4 January, 2016].

These findings identified an interesting dilemma in which immediate family members are expected to help, yet business owners showed mixed feelings about employing extended family. There was some hesitation due to the lack of trust. However, others stated that they would employ relatives over strangers because of the presence of trust. However, ultimately these individuals should be able to carry out the task required.

Solutions for managing family cultural obligation when operating a business were identified by respondents. Firstly, a business owner must learn to differentiate various obligations secondly, they should allow themselves to say no sometimes.

“Another big thing for Tonga is that we don’t use the word no, we say yes yes to things and we don’t get things done. A direct no is offensive, you can’t promise tourist things and then let them down. Another things that they are starting to do is meetings in Tongan and that is not allowed [INT 11: Simon, 17April, 1 2016]

This applies to cultural obligations but also to say no to “kole” (asking) or fakamo’ua (borrowing). Business owners even went on to say that when running a business, a person should use their common sense and say no.

Another solution is to incorporate cultural obligation into the business’s budget with a limit on how much one can spend and/or deduct of obligation costs can come from the business owners’ salary and not from the business itself. One participant proposed that each business owner should determine a fair wage for himself or herself as every other employee. This way cultural obligations are contained in order to maintain business profit. The management of obligation also included record keeping and limiting spending.

For example, when interviewing Patrick, as quoted before he stated that in regards to extended family obligation he only donates towards weddings and funerals, while birthdays are excluded. Cultural differentiation in accordance to family hierarchical structure also applied in regard to what side of the family is hosting the event:

If it is an aunty, and I am the only one here and the rest of my family are overseas so I am the only one that they look up to, so if it is a funeral I will provide a cow. So cows are a thousand and the smart way to do this for the family is that you don't buy one cow that is about three thousand you buy two small ones. Its' not the cash that is needed it's the meat, you will have to try and give more depending on the money you have and for the uncle I will give a box of chickens [INT28 Patrick, 18 April, 2016].

In regards to communal, and church obligation, business owners suggested these also should be budgeted into their business plans while prioritising which to give to and which to say no to, one participant even went on to recommend church leaders to advocate for the growth of business as well as individual families. Church leaders should work together with the Tongan people in encouraging them to go into business and to be more innovative. At the same time, a business can ensure that the churches only take donations when the business guarantee a profit growth that is sustainable.

Previous research identified family obligation as the determining factor in the failure of some businesses (Besnier, 2011; James, 2002; Prescott & Hooper, 2009). This study, however, has identified limitations in this attribution and has provided a critique of this argument.

Government

The Challenges of Disjointed Government As the one of the four representatives of government, William provided the voice from the Ministry of Tourism. When interviewed about tourism Tonga highlighted, although the role of the Tourism Ministry is to facilitate government policy there are other ministries that facilitate the process of Tourism by coordinating product development, economic policies, such as, tax holidays, business start-ups and soft loans that

provides lower interest to tourism businesses. Each ministerial sector, such as, the Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Land and Infrastructure maintained overlapping elements that affects various tourism businesses for example, land, infrastructure, road and signage, clean-up are all various tourist sites coordinated by separate entities.

We work together with them as a team rather than saying we are running the show. [INT15 William, 14 April, 2016].

In this, the Ministry of Tourism states they are striving to maintain an equal working platform to facilitate all Ministries to work together for the common good of Tonga's tourism. On the contrary, Regina, disagrees with the Ministry of Tourism's claims of working together but says that the Ministry of Tourism and the Tourism authority has a lot of inner office politics. She states that, although the department and the Tourism Authority are separate entities created by the previous government of Tonga and shaped by New Zealand aid to cater to separate entities to oversee offshore marketing.

We got funding from New Zealand and they really want to help with other projects. So one of them was the VIC (Visitors Information Centre) at the front of the office. The next major one right now is ...ummm... I hope that in your next visit here we would have sign post for the all of our touristic sights in Tonga. [INT14, Regina 14 April, 2016].

There is a lot of controversy, she says, with some saying that marketing needs to return to the Ministry of Tourism and do away with Tourism Authority. These government agents seek to provide a system in which it is evident that they are not working together, therefore the question is, how are they able to assist Tongan businesses when they have inner conflicts. Regina went on to say, that although Tonga has a lot of potential to grow within the tourism sector the current system is a:

*Big issues with tourism that you should understand, so Tonga Tourism Authority we have our own act so we are registered. The Ministry of Tourism is not a ministry because they don't have the law. They don't have an act to be a ministry they are just a department of a ministry (**Ministry of Infrastructure**) so they don't have a Minister but rumours are they are*

waiting ...for the King's to sign the documents to officiate their department, so we don't know what's happening so everything is in limbo. And if that's the stage of tourism how can we grow, you know what I mean? How can business be confident in like the government that's the presently supposed to held how we suppose to like be confident and the government who give us a funding, in order to market and help the smaller operators so this just a little inconsistent and it just all up in the air. [INT14, Regina 14 April, 2016].

Solution The participant from the Tongan Chamber of Commerce agreed that local government is still new and is still sorting out various sectors of their system. However, he/she went on to propose that one of the core reason for these issues is the lack of communication, whether it is within local government or when dealing with business sectors. As an agent of the government of Tonga funded by Australian aid and an advocate for the development of Tongan business, Stephen often has to be a mediator between the two.

here at Chamber is try to formulise some kind of structure and try and get some kind of agreement that is put in place so that way we can come and sit down ...business come...government come...and sit down and voice their concerns and start talking because it just comes down to the lack of dialogue and lack of communication [INT12: Malo, 14 April, 2016].

The information in this section is important to my research because it seeks to provide the challenges that business owners in Tonga seeks to face. In addition, in identifying the challenges it also provides solution on how it can be resolved.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Positionality

In this research, it was evident that a number of participants provided various commentaries on my involvement as a researcher and how, I influence the outcome of this research (Romani, Primecz, & Topçu, 2011). As explored in my methodology section, Weiner-Levy and Abu Rabia Queder (2012), stated positionality as a critical insight into a researcher's own culture which might affect the research outcome. However, in various interviews business owners commented objectively on my position as researcher. This not only changed my understanding and perspective of reality, but it also enabled me to tune into the perspectives of the participant's reality (Romani, Primecz, & Topçu, 2011).

In conducting this research, participants were interested in my own personal influence on the research as well as my position within Tongan society. This affected the way the research participant and perhaps the way they responded. This finding illustrate the notion of interpretive paradigm in which the multiple worlds of a participant and a researcher meets and there is acceptable but susceptible change in which the individual changes his or her mind (Tucker, 2005).

In employing the Talanoa methodology, common sharing between interviewee and interviewer is necessary. There was an expectation that a dilemma would arise due to the fact I was a Tongan conducting research within my own social group (Moore, 2012). However, I found a mixed reaction, in that my background as a Tongan help create empathy in various participants, who provided more in-depth personal information. For example, one of the participant within this study reconnected our family ties which produced an honest and deeper response while my position as a Western-trained researcher created a negative reaction (Weiner-Levy & Abu Rabia Queder, 2012). This could be an interesting area for future research in the unspoken silences of these relationships, both positive and negative.

I found that my positionality as a young Tongan woman, from a working class background, did not provide as much of an inhibitor to cultural protocols as initially expected (Weiner-Levy & Abu Rabia Queder, 2012). Growing up in Tonga and becoming Miss Tonga 2014, sealed my identity as fully embracing my ‘Tongan-ness’, while studying overseas also produced cultural diversity and enabled me to distinguish other perspectives, as it might for an outsider (Milner, 2007). So, when conducting this research, I found that majority of the restricted were, “*self-evident*” p.1153 protocols were more self-imposed than required. For example, when conducting each interview I would make sure to wear a puletaha and a ta’ovala, the equivalent of a suit. However, the majority of my participants provided a more informal approach in which they would dress, and their behaviour and responses were also very informal. For example, when conducting an interview one of the business owner provided dinner at the café while he had a drink and relaxed after work.

When collecting the data interviews I quickly found that interviews created a division or separation between myself and the participants as a consequence of my education. The interviewee would pass various comments directly and indirectly about the fact that I am educated overseas. In this, Paul said, “the trouble is people go university and they come back with degrees and they think they are smart, they know how to twist people around” [INT 21: Paul, 18 April, 2016].

There was an understanding that this participant’s experience realities (Hassard & Wolfram Cox, 2013) provided educated individuals which manipulate employees and other individuals to do what they want and were smart enough to get away with it. There was a real rejection of Western approaches especially in regards to individuals who have been educated overseas. The same dispute was also supported by Francis in which he said,

The thing is students go and study and then they come back with Western thinking. [INT 3: Francis, 3 January 2016].

There is a real resistance in regards to a local Tongan who have returned with a Western education. This mixed reaction was specific to my position as a diasporic researcher however as Cave & Koloto, noted, short-term visits from diasporic

families in New Zealand and Australia for a holiday or a vacation are welcomed by local Tongan families.

One can only assume the reason for this differentiation is the impact my role as a researcher might have over a friendly visit to friend and relatives.

In support of this notion Francis went on, to inquire about the purpose of my research and in this he commented on how my research will seek to influence business knowledge. In response he said that he was willing to participate in my research by providing local Tongan knowledge however he questioned how the research data would be utilized. He joked that:

After you have present your masters who will hold your data? (hehhe) tell that person I will hold them against this. For those doctors, there research is from what you're saying and what I say...So you come and find out my knowledge and use that in your paper and they come and supervise your paper and pass and then they take your paper and use that to publish their doctors [INT 3: Francis, 3 January, 2016]

Clearly there is real negative association in regards to Western researchers cultivating local knowledge and then exploiting it for their own benefits, and as a result my position as a researcher was problematic. Findings in this present study are consistent with the findings of other studies on the tensions between Western and indigenous knowledge (Briggs, 2005). Briggs, draws emphasis to the binary tension between Western and indigenous knowledge. He states that the real power is in the knowledge therefore crisis and concern arises in, who the ultimate holder of the knowledge will be? In this, Briggs provided an example from the highlands of Papua New Guinea in which Western science seeks to identify soil type while locals saw soil type in accordance to its local use. This argues that Western and indigenous knowledge is very objective of each other in this regard.

Although these two individuals provided a negative perspective on my position as a researcher developed from a Western education provider, conversely Patrick, Matthew, and Francis reassured the importance of this research by emphasizing that:

Someday you will go and sit in the high chair and you will be picky, I wish everyone had a good heart and we can give to the Tongans. When you say the economy has drop but we should give to the people. [INT 28: Patrick, 18 April, 2016]

This refers to the fact that I am educated overseas which he predicts will produce a position of power as a result. This notion was also supported by Matthew who stated that:

This topic is very relevant, to Tonga for the outcome will help the decision markers here in Tongan, government as well as business owners in things that they should watch out for, it will help me, it will help provide solutions to the problems. [INT 4: Patrick, 6 January 2016]

These comments and quotes provided a clear complexity of my position as an observer, and a researcher of my own culture (Weiner-Levy & Abu Rabia Queder, 2012). There was a complexity in my relationship with my own cultural group. Prior to conducting this research there was an expectation of bias because of my youth, however this did not occur. In addition, I believe being a young Tongan woman played to my advantage due to the fact that the Tongan culture seeks to elevate women. It was easy to relate to participants, however I did not expect that the respondents would distinguish me as an outsider due to my education.

This result of the Talanoa sessions supported by the grounded theory states that culture plays a key role in Tongan business. Contrary to Western ideology Tongan business success is measured by both profit and accommodating collective obligation. Each interviewee identified various challenges as well as solutions to these tension such as budgeting, prioritizing, keeping track and saying “no”.

Findings in this study are consistent with Prescott and Hooper (2009) who found that while ‘common’ sharing might, support sustainability of Tongan business, it can also lead to business failure especially when situated within Auckland’s non-common environment. For example, the common sharing of the wedding, funerals and school fees responsibility while non-common environment is an individual.

While Prescott and Hooper’s study was conducted in Auckland, this study was conducted in the Kingdom of Tonga. However, both studies address a gap in the

empirical identification of the dynamics and effects of cultural obligations in the success and failure of Tongan small to medium-enterprises. Further, the research identifies the role and importance of moral wealth amongst Tongan entrepreneurs which will be discussed below.

Cultural complexity and the nature of Tongan enterprise

This section discusses Tongan owned and operated businesses, while exploring how they operate and are governed. Interviewees acknowledged that their businesses were Tongan owned, yet some embraced their ‘Tongan-ness’ more than others. This raised the questions of identity and who is considered Tongan or not? And, what determines ‘Tongan-ness’?

When profiling themselves, a few participants identified themselves as ‘half caste’ [sic] Tongans. These individuals were born and raised overseas and had Tongan parents but have returned to live in Tonga for various reasons. This introduced a complex matrix in terms of the business owners’ identity. The diagram below illustrates how various participants oppose, recognize or fully embrace their ‘Tongan-ness’.

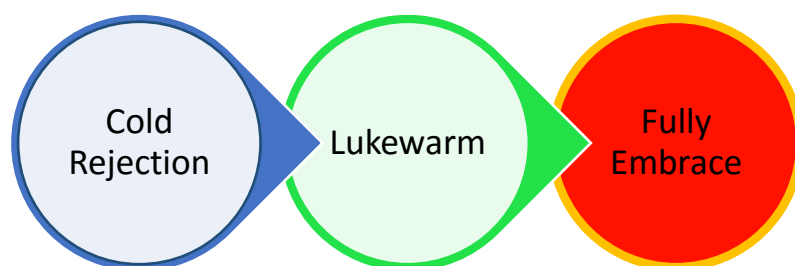


Figure 3. ‘The Tongan-ness scale’

In other cases, some people who live and work in Tonga distance themselves in terms of their identity from the culture, although they are self-aware. For example, Simon is an English man who had lived in Tonga for 25 years on a Tongan passport. He is married to a local with adopted Tongan children, Simon has no intention of returning to England; however, though he rejected identifying as a Tongan by stating:

“I am a Tonga citizen- I have not really learnt the Tongan language because being from England we claim to have the world language and also we are teaching everyone that is working for us and with us English, any tourist that come to Tonga through my gate does not speak Tongan... [And as for] Tongan values, as soon as they get a dollar its’ to show off to the church and even then once that have been educated overseas they come here and as soon as they set up a business it goes down within a year.[INT 11: Simon, 17April, 2016]

While Simon might provide an extreme rejection of Tongan values and the Tongan language, another Tongan participant offered a more lukewarm approach when discussing Tongan values and attributes.

Peter and his wife had been buying and selling shares in their business for years now. After spending various years overseas, they decided to return to Tonga for their retirement. Peter acknowledged as being a Tongan business owner, but when asked about what Tongan values guide his work. He said,

Apart from the fact that I am Tongan that doesn’t come into play [INT 6: Peter, 7 January, 2016].

When probed about the future he, however, disclosed having made personal contribution to his extended family by paying for their children’s’ school fees anonymously. Peter acknowledged a clear separation of his Tongan identity and the running of his business. Therefore, to him, obligation is personal and business is separate and when you mix the two that is when failure occurs.

On the opposite side of the spectrum Andrew, a 60-year-old shop keeper had been running his business for 52 years with the help of his wife, children and grandchildren. He had lived in Tonga for most of his life and had no intention of migrating overseas even though the majority of his 9 children lives overseas. When asked about the Tongan values he incorporated into his business at first, there was some hesitation and confusion regarding my question, but I quickly realised that a Tongan researcher asking a fellow Tongan what it means to be Tongan might seem unreasonable. Also one cannot compare ‘what is’ with ‘what is not’ if they had never fully experienced what is not.

This point was re-emphasized by Francis, who is a business owner who owns a lodge and an engineering consultancy company. When asked the same question, he showed a great deal of passion in being questioned about Tongan values and challenged the notion of subjecting the Tongan identity to a point of comparison. Therefore, his reaction was to justify what Tongan's have, and refuting Western ideology in order to redefine the notion of a Tongan entrepreneur:

"I have analysed the people if you are not homeless and you are not jobless and not food-less. For we are not included in poverty, we are on the level of the "maumea" (I think it is important to state this word and not translate it into the English for it will lost is authenticity and true meaning well-off, well-to-do, wealthy). For example, if there is a billionaire overseas when he dies people will sell their things and there is no legacy.

Here in Tonga same with my name and my family we are well off in our own context. There (overseas) wealth is defined by dollar but here it is defined by ownership. For overseas you go and buy land but you don't own it once you die and stop paying rent and paying tax, BANG! government will be knocking ...GO! ...so where is the millionaire? [INT 3: Francis, 3 January, 2016]

There is no one in Tonga who is going to go hungry unless they choose to be hungry. No one in Tonga is poor unless they choose to be poor. Everybody shares everything here. It's a way of life. I think it's great that we can do that but it does not lend itself to a commercial enterprise or to run a business [INT 6: Peter, 7 January 2016]

Its culture and we don't need to work for we live in paradise, if you don't work from birthday to death, no one has no words to go do work, you just sleep, no words to tell you go away, you have what they family will have to if you are interested in having something [INT 11: Simon, 17April, 2016]

The information in this section is important to my research because it reinforces the existence of Tongan epistemology and ontology while contesting the Eurocentrism (Battiste & James Youngblood, 2009).

This provided a real rejection of being labelled as the non-privileged norm in which Western colonizers are deemed the ‘civilized central’. One could go a step further to argue, that individualism has reached the point in which a parent no longer seeks to provide for their children.

A Tongan Worldview of Entrepreneurship in Tonga

This section will provide positive contribution from participants on their definition of a “Tongan” ‘entrepreneur’, as well as the Tongan values which guide their work and business. While differencing what could be distinctively ‘Tongan’ compared to “non-Tongan” and why? [Researcher]

Questioning Tongan entrepreneurs from a business owner’s perspective is intended to identify the values that guide their work, business actions taken that are distinctively ‘Tongan’ compared to non-Tongan practices and the reasons why. This section will also examine the notion of the foreign business ownership, and the growth of Asian ownership and its effects on local businesses and how Tongan businesses deal with competition. Finally, the benefits and disadvantages of owning a business and considerations in expanding ones’ business beyond Tonga will be analysed.

Francis self-identified as being born and raised in Tonga but has studied in Australia for seven years. He had returned to Tonga equipped with an engineering degree and now in his late fifties he said:

Tongan people are PROUD people, the background of the Tongan people, you have to know this country is the only country with land and people are given a piece of land. They have a little house to stand on it and they have a papaya to grow there and they have work to do, at the “api tuku hau” (a plot of bush land, used to grow crops). That is the basic of all this, Tongan talk about it but they are far from appreciating the values of these things [INT 3: Francis, 3 January, 2016]

Francis’s quote refers to Tonga’s unique land laws which emphasizes the value of land to the social identity of a Tongan which is defined by the piece of land in which an individual is borne into, raised and passes on in succession through the male line. This law entitles the eldest son by marriage to ownership of the land.

The 'tala 'api' system also enables the younger brothers to ask village nobles to allocate land for their own use (Besnier, 2011), instituted by the late King Tupou The First was a direct result of colonial outcomes in Australia that saw Australian Aboriginals living on the streets.

The Tongan Constitution Act, 1875, prohibits the sale of land to foreigners (Parliament of Tonga). This law enables the Tongan people an enviable freedom of a sustainable life style in which an individual can provide for themselves and their families. In comparison to Western structures Francis argued:

Being rich overseas is to gain money and a house and when he dies someone will get it for they don't have land and they do not have ownership! Here (Tonga) you are going to die and your son will inherit the land and you still own the place so you are rich for life [INT 3: Francis, 3 January, 2016]

In the literature, this notion of land is very significant for it affects everything in regards to business development, personal life and foreign aid. A similar notion is also suggested in regards to foreign aid and investment (Duncan, 2008) in which foreign donors usually contribute to the growth of a developing Island with a Eurocentric mentality of privatization of land ownership. However, one thing Tonga will need to be aware of is the notion of how aid programs can overlook its cultural protocols (Gani & Clemes, 2015):

Trust, empower and ownership are the principles, but the heart of the Tongan people is where it all sits...Tongan people are free, they are happy people and we are proud to run things the Tongan way."

to me the "anga-fakafonua" or Tongan way is not "fehangahanga'i (opposite or opposing) to business for the Tongan people are rich...I have analysed the people if you are not homeless and you are not jobless and not food less then you are at a level [hand gesture up]. Poverty level is here [hand gesture down] as you go to India, and China there is plenty and it goes in order until you get to the rich people and Tonga is included in being rich. [INT 3: Francis, 3 January 2016]

Francis says, that Tongan inherited land ownership emphasises the communal cultural system that shapes Tongan business. Land ownership empowers a sustainable lifestyle where Tongans can fish, grow their own crops, collect rain water and live rent free. Such a system bridges the gap of class division within Tongan society. This data is provided as an implication of negative romanticizing of the Pacific as remote (Connell, 2007), and the least developed of the MIRAB economies (CIA, 2016).

Obligation Revisited

Conversely, business owners also highlighted the element of reciprocity in regards to obligation in which business donations also leads to reciprocal networks. Deborah states she gets,

Help from my family to baby-sit, cook. [INT8: Deborah, 21 January, 2016]

In another case, one receives financial contribution for the business from children overseas and unpaid employment from grandchildren. This also applies when a business needs the services of various networks since cultural obligation underlines Tongan values of helping each other. For example, one of the non-Tongan participants identified this as an element of Tongan business that he admires. He was amazed by the level of support his Tongan allies would get from family members in the airline, bank and other sectors. In fact, when I interviewed this particular business owner he stated that when he had started exporting his newspaper to New Zealand, the majority of his newspaper sales were bought by family members.

There is a nexus of “*tauhi va*” (networking and maintaining a relationship) system that reflects the notion of body, soul, and mind in conducting business in Tonga. In this case, the mind, which I have discussed in the methodology chapter and the body can be identified as obligation, while the soul is the family. The combined notion of the body, mind and soul is transferred across the spectrum of the social structure of Tongan business. However, just as there is tension and sometimes opposing elements in body, mind and soul (Johnston 2009) there will also be complication and a lack of coherence in the social structure of the system that is constructed in communal society which is (Besnier & Brownell, 2012).

Westernization

Another theme which also emerged from this study was the effects of the Westernization. Since the 1980s, Tonga has left locals feeling that they are being cheated by “*the white man*” (Rutherford, 1981, 26). Tongans have always been proud to say that Tonga has never been colonised, however the fact of the matter is when Tonga accepted British protection in 1900, and it also meant British Agents would advise Tongans on the nomination of key government officials. They also imposed a Supplementary Agreement, which allowed Europeans favourable dominance over the Tongan trading market especially when copra was thriving. Now, although these issues were done away with by the creation of The Tonga Ma’a Tonga Kautaha (The ‘Tonga for the Tongans’ associations), it is evident that these tensions between the ‘white men’ [sic] and the disadvantaged locals still exists today.

The licensing findings within Joseph’s interview were consistent with Kessler and Harcourt (2010), study on the Tongan whale watching industry which looked at how swimming with the whales affects not only the endangered population of whales, but also local government and Tonga. The whale watching industry “*contributes approximately USD\$2.1 million to the Tongan economy each year*” (p.1351). This article recognises the significance of foreign operators verses local operators within the Tongan whale watching industry, and how profits might leak overseas. “*The high proportion of foreign ownership of whale watching businesses is a sensitive issue as there is concern that many of the profits are leaving the country and locals are missing out on employment opportunities*”.

In seeking to identify the level of western influences there were on those interviewed, it was found that the twenty-seven of business owners moved regularly between Tonga and overseas countries such as New Zealand, Australia and even Japan. Therefore, I questioned whether the success of their business was due to this regular travel. These business owners not only imported goods but also overseas knowledge and experience into Tonga that contributed to the operations and success of their business.

These notions of national identity provided a clear similarity between the present study and the transnational themes found in literature. The cycles of return (Cave

& Koloto, 2015; Koning, 2005; Lee, 2004) and transnational movement which effect national identity and everyday life is present. In the notion of fluid migration overseas had a clear effect on business. The cycles of return was evident in maximizing the success of Tongan business (Cave & Koloto, 2015; Eckhardt & Shane, 2003).

Outside Influences on Tongan Business

In 2014, following the win of the Democratic Party, the new Prime Minister Hon. Samuela 'Akilisi Pohiva, elected Hon. 'Etuete Lavulavu as the Minister for Infrastructure, which also oversees Tourism Tonga. 'Etuete Lavulavu was later, found guilty of conspiracy and bribery charges; therefore, he was stripped of his title. In his place Hon. Semisi Kioa Lafu Sika was then appointed Minister in 2016. However, with the change in government and the constant shift in Ministers this created a lot of uncertainty as well as a lack of confidence in Tonga's tourism policy which varies according to each Ministers' motives and objectives.

Other policies were introduced by the government in Tonga that have affected the growth of business. On the 6th of July, 2016 the Minister of Inland Revenue and Customs, Tevita Lavemaau announced a fatty meat tax on various stable foods such as chicken, mutton and turkey tails (Ministry of Information and Communications, 2013). This tax came as an attempt to reduce non-communicable diseases however, this also raised major concerns for business owners. A week prior to this the Minister of Police, Pohiva Tu'i'onetoa also announced, that Bakeries and tourist facilities are also prohibited from trading on Sunday (Ministry of Information & Communications, 2016). This announcement was in support of keeping the Sabbath holy as well as encouraging locals to return to their traditional healthy diets. In the past, tourist facilities and bakeries were only allowed to trade on Sundays due to a devastating cyclone that struck Tonga in 1980 in which the devastation destroyed majority of the crops so that the King allowed bread to be sold during this state of emergency (News from Elsewhere, 2016).

This prohibition on all commercial trade on Sunday has caused a lot of debate, especially within the tourism industry. Restrictions on flights, tourist activities and restaurants, and limits on tourist activity would be a key area for future research.

Recommendations for Tongan Business

Although the Sunday law seeks to restrict the movement of tourists on Sunday, however, business owners would argue a common ground should be established in which both locals and tourists could achieve desired goals. The Sunday law is unique to Tonga and it serves a higher purpose than money however, instead of restricting tourist movement I would propose various alternatives.

The first would be to educate tourists on Tongan culture. For example, when some expect to travel to Middle Eastern Countries such as Saudi Arabia there is an expectation that they will maintain Middle Eastern clothing and dress standards. Therefore, the same should be applied to the restriction of commercial trading for Tonga. There is no denying the loss of the business dollar values on Sundays, however one would ask at what cost is our culture worth? This should not only excuse business and government from providing a middle ground for tourists to be able to come in and enjoy Tonga. Secondly, local government should work alongside the Tourism sector and church leaders in order to facilitate tourists to participate in Tonga's rich culture on Sundays. Church leaders are very influential in religious matters. These proposals could include various churches inviting tourists to their Sunday services as well as inviting them into specific family homes for a shared meal. Specific tourist beaches can be allocated for the sole purpose of tourist picnicking on Sundays.

This literature talk about the notion of innovation in business however this study found a lack of the notion of innovation in Tonga. This is represented by the fact majority of the finding does not talk about innovation

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This dissertation builds upon that research and seeks to explore business challenges that affect the success and failure of Tongan business. It also explores issues of cultural obligation and Tongan business management values, of which there are gaps in the research literature. The principal aim, is to identify key elements that need to be in place for Tongan businesses to succeed within the Kingdom of Tonga. While provide solution which will benefits to a number of stakeholder including Tonga businesses, policy makers, foreign aid, the Tongan government business assistance programmers and the Tongan people in terms of employment and innovation.

Research design integrating grounded theory, interpretive paradigm and secondary text. A series of in-depth/ semi-structured interviews injected with a Tongan approach called *talanoa* was employed in this study. Grounded theory and its family of inter connected methods aims to identify interconnected patterns and similarities.

The study identified Tongan business within Tonga is not solely for profit however, the notion of common sharing and well as moral economic is very strong. And although common sharing and obligation can lead to business failure. Small to medium size business can prevent this by saying no, incorporating it to their budget or paying for cultural obligation from their own salary. Other solutions such as governmental support, overseas travel and hard work was also provide as the key to a successful business. Although the research data gathered provided a limited of only twenty-eight participant however this provides for a further research.

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APPENDICES

Appendix One- Information sheet for Participants

Information Sheet for Participants



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

TONGAN OBLIGATIONS - ACROSS A SEA OF ENTERPRISE

Overview

This research seeks to focus on Tongan owned and operated enterprises and entrepreneurs working in a global - for profit – commercial environment ‘across a sea of enterprise’. In other words, do does obligation (cultural commitments) enable or constrain Tongan “For profit” global commerce?

Often there is an assumption from overseas entities, that nations with a high tourism potentials such as Tonga should be willing to invest and fully emerge themselves within such entrepreneurial opportunities. However, often various entrepreneurial ventures fails. Therefore under the guidance of Dr Jenny Cave (Tourism & Hospitality Management) from the University of Waikato this research seeks to model the **challenges and innovations** for Tongan owned and operated transnational enterprises and entrepreneurs working for profit. This research will be driven by the business owners in which I hope that they will not only identify the challenges they face on a daily bases but also solutions.

What will I have to do and how long will it take?

I would like to invite you to take part in one of the following:

- In-depth Interview.** The interview will take up to 40 minutes and conducted by myself the Principal Researchers. I will contact you by telephone and email to arrange a meeting at a location and time of your choice. The interview will be recorded, but you can opt out at any time.

What will happen to the information collected?

Your responses will be grouped and used to write a report as a partial requirement for my Master of Management Studies thesis for the University of Waikato, as well as academic publications for conferences and journal articles. You cannot be identified, because no personal information will be gathered unless you give explicit consent. Only the research Principal Researchers will have access to the information you provide me and the interview will be treated with the strictest confidence. After the publications have been written, all questionnaires and notes will be destroyed and tapes erased.

Declaration to participants

If you take part in the study, you have the right to:

- Refuse to answer any particular question, and to withdraw from the study by July 1, 2016.
- Ask any further questions about the study that occurs to you during your participation.
- Be given access to a summary of the findings from the study when it is concluded.

If you have any questions about this research project contact

Rosemarie Fili
777 5242 or 021 250 6650,
filirosemarie@gmail.com

Dr Jenny Cave (supervisor)
838 6233,
cavej@waikato.ac.nz

Participant Information Consent Form for Interview

4-1-2016

Dear Sir or Madam,

Project Title: Tongan obligations across a sea of enterprise

This short note is to confirm that you are willing to take part in a research project about Tongan owned and operated transnational enterprises and entrepreneurs working in a global commerce - for profit – environment ‘across a sea of enterprise’ that spans cultural and economic requirements. Neither you nor your business will be able to be identified when the survey results are compiled. Information gathered will be aggregated. No specific details will be shared with any other business. More information on the project can be found in the Information Sheet. The interview should take about 45 mins to complete. Please be aware that you can opt out of the interview at any time, or indeed refuse to ask a question or to take part.

Declaration: I have read the Information Sheet for Participants for this study and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions about the study have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time. I also understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, or to decline to answer any particular questions in the study. I agree to provide information to the researchers under the conditions of confidentiality set out on the Information Sheet.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Thank you for taking part in this survey which will help me understand these issues. The information gathered will not be made available to any persons other than the researchers, and will be kept secure and deleted after 6 months of collection.

Yours sincerely,

Rosemarie Fili
University of Waikato

Dr Jenny Cave (Supervisor)
Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management

Appendix Three– Interview Sheet for Business owners

1. Interview Sheet for Business Owner

Semi-structured ‘Talanoa’



This interview schedule is an outline of some of the desired interview themes. You do not have to answer every question and you are welcome to bring up other issues this schedule does not cover.

Name _____

Business _____

Date/Time/Place _____

1. Is your business Tongan owned and operated, if not
Prompts: a. Please describe its ownership
b. how it operates
c. how it is governed
2. How would you describe a “Tongan” – ‘entrepreneur’?
Prompts: a. What Tongan values guide your work
b. Are there business actions that you take which you would call distinctively ‘Tongan’ compared to non-Tongan?
c. Which ones are “non-Tongan” and why?
3. Business Profile Q’s
a. What motivated you to start up a business?
b. How did you go about establishing it?
4. Who are your biggest competitions?
Prompts: a. Where is it (they) located
b. What type of business is it (are they)?
c. How do you deal with them?
5. What do you think of foreign business ownership, (example Asian ownership)?
a. How does it affect your business?
6. How do networks and relationships between Tongan business owners affect your business?
Prompts: a. Do local government regulations, affect your business?
b. Do local government help/hold back your business?
7. Do you have family and relatives working with or for you?
Prompts: a. Where are they based?
b. Do you and they have a business relationship?
c. Could you please describe how the relationship works?
8. Is your business have any ... involvement?
a. Religious
b. Community
9. How does this benefit your business and vice versa?
Prompts: a. Any disadvantages?
10. In what ways do cultural obligations affect your business?
Prompt: a. Can you identify 5 types of Tongan cultural obligation?
b. Do these hinder and/or benefit your business?
11. Would you like to expand your business beyond Tonga, (overseas)?
Prompt: a. If so, where?
b. How would you go about this?
c. What do you expect different requirements overseas? Compared to Tonga?
d. Are there other cultural requirements?
12. Can you please identify 3 other key issues that your business faces?
13. How does your business deal with these issues?
14. Have you developed innovations in your business to deal with these?
15. Other comments or issues not covered in this schedule
Prompt: a. Could you please comment on
b. Tourism Tonga’s
c. The fluidity of travel
d. Tongan and non-Tongan customers

Appendix Four Interview Sheet for Government Agents

Interview Sheet

Semi-structured 'Talanoa'



This interview schedule is an outline of some of the desired interview themes. You do not have to answer every question and you are welcome to bring up other issues this schedule do not cover.

Name _____

Government Position _____

Date/Time/Place _____

1. What is your view on Tongan owned and operated businesses
2. How would you describe a “Tongan” – ‘entrepreneur’?
Prompts: a. What Tongan values guide their work
b. Are there business actions that they take which you would call distinctively ‘Tongan’ compared to non-Tongan?
c. Which ones are “non-Tongan” and why?
3. Who are their biggest competitions?
Prompts: a. Where is it (they) located
b. What type of business is it (are they)?
c. How do they deal with them?
4. What do you think of foreign business ownership, (example Asian ownership)?
a. How does it affect business in Tonga?
5. Do networks and relationships between Tongan business owners affect their business?
6. What is your role in the Tongan business scenes?
7. How does your role affect or impact the way that Tongan business occurs?
8. Could you please talk about the government involvement in business?
Prompt: Government Policy
Industrial Incentive Act
WTO NAE
9. What are some benefit and disadvantage of the government relationship with Tongan business vise visa?
10. In what ways do cultural obligations affect Tongan business?
Prompt: a. Can you identify 5 types of Tongan cultural obligation?
b. Do these hinder and/or benefit Tongan business?
11. In the future to you think foreign investment will increase or has it increase over time?
12. Could you please comment on business development beyond Tonga, (overseas)?
Prompt: a. How would the government go about helping this happen?
b. What do you expect different requirements overseas? Compared to Tonga?
c. Are there other cultural requirements?
13. Can you please identify 3 other key issues that Tongan business faces?
14. How do you think Tongan business should deal with these issues?
15. Can you think of examples which have developed innovations to deal with these issues?
16. Other comments or issues not covered in this schedule
Prompt: a. Could you please comment on
b. Tourism Tonga’s business
c. The fluidity of travel
d. Tongan and non-Tongan customers

