

FĀGOGO: “UA MOLIMEA MANUSINA”

A qualitative study of the pedagogical significance of
Fāgogo—Samoan stories at night—for the education of Samoan
children.

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Attestation of Authorship

“I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgement), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or another institution of higher learning.”

Su'eala Kolone Collins_____

Date_____

ALOFA'AGA

DEDICATION

Avea lenei galuega ma alofaaga mo nai o'u matua pele ua momoe mai Tiasa, Kolone Aumua and Mulimai Aumua. Tau ina ia viia le Atua I lenei galuega ua ou mafaia. Ou te alofa tele mo oulua.

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved parents, the late Rev Elder Kolone Aumua and Mulimai Kolone Aumua. (nee Fogavai) Let the Lord be praised by the humble effort of your daughter.

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O lo'u Atua lo'u malosiaga.

“Lo'u agaga e, fa'amanu atu ia i le Alii, o mea uma fo'i oi totonu ia te au ia fa'amanu i lona suafa paia.”

Salamo 103: 1.

Mai le taele o lo'u agaga, ou te momoli atu ai lenei fa'afetai tele i e uma sa lagolago i lenei taumafaiga. Fa'afetai fa'apitoa I le malo Samoa ma le NZAID mo lenei avanoa taua. Fa'afetai i le Auckland University of Technology, School of Education staff, Research and Ethics committee mo le taliaina o le faamoemoe.

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Fa'amanuia le Atua ia outou uma.

Psalms 103: 1

“Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name!”

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Abstract

This study explores “*Fāgogo*”–the Samoan stories of the night– as a source of pedagogy. It argues that ideas useful to inform practices that could transform and improve the teaching and learning by Samoan children can be obtained from deep and critical understanding of Samoan language, values and cultural practices.

The thesis draws upon Samoan knowledge of good pedagogical ideas. These ideas are drawn from critical examination of the lived-experiences of highly educated, successful, and, are key Samoan people, in Samoa who were raised and socialized in *fāgogo*. I argue that *fa’afailelega*, a notion that is discussed in the thesis can be used to ‘frame’ the good pedagogical ideas drawn from the *fāgogo*. The wisdom required in the teaching and learning by Samoan children is in the heart of *fāgogo*. Hence *fāgogo* offers a useful Samoan source of pedagogical ideas.

As well as recognizing the real strengths of *fāgogo* as a pedagogical site, this thesis brings a sense of hope to the Samoan *aiga* who are currently facing the brunt of the economic and technological changes in the homes and their lives. I argue that educating Samoan children without the analysis of the Samoan wisdom merely serves, ultimately, to deaden the souls and dim the minds of the people, weaken, and devalue, the *fa’avae* of *fa’aSamoa*.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Fa'atomuaga* Background to the study.

“A’oga mea uma” Education is everything

“...Ia manatua lenei mea si a’u fanau, o a’oga mea uma. Pe o le peni ma le api, po’o le aso e sasa vao ai, alu e fai saka, pe o ta’aloga fo’i, o a’oga mea uma. E le aoga lou poto pe a leai se fa’autauta ma le alofa.” O le fa’aiuga o le fagogo umi a lo’u tama, e talatala ai lona o’otia i uiga vaaia o le olaga ua matou ola ai. E toso a’e le pito ie afu ma soloi ai mata aua e lagona e le loto le alofa i si ona leo e ta’u mai ai le mafatia.. A le omai tamaiti i galuega a le aoga e fa’amamā ai le fanua o le faifeau, e tumu le loto i le ita ae sili ai lona mafatia pe a manatu i le olaga o le tamaitiiti Samoa ua le mafai ona a’oa’oina.(personal experience)

“...A’oga means everything, whether it’s pen and paper, a day for cutting and weeding outside, when asked to make food or even a sports day, all that is education. Please remember that. Knowledge is nothing if you do not know how to make wise decisions in living our life as well as loving it.” My father’s voice touched our souls as each reached for his sheet to wipe tears. We were young but something in those words and the voice reached our hearts. When children stay away from a work day at church, he gets upset but mostly hurt and sad in the sense that Samoan children were disregarding their traditional a’oga.

My father’s *fāgogo* instils in me ‘A’oga mea uma’. My father’s *fāgogo* enriched the foundations of my learning through the warmth of relationships and the sharing of realised dreams. My father’s *fāgogo* sent me to sleep recognizing and knowing a beloved and valuable heritage of a unique place and people. In *fāgogo*, the *a’oga* slipped into my young mind and set structures and an understanding of life, and the decisions it requires, using Samoan metaphors and relationships that remain my first resource for reasoning and action. My father’s *fāgogo* gave everything a chance to develop in the calm and peace of the night so that the decisions I make are given with reasons built from and in Samoan experience and philosophical wisdom. This foundation imbues a confidence and assurance in who I am and what I do.

His words are a powerful reminder to me that in the bountiful, global life of today, the current generations appear to be losing our essential selves, abilities, natures that are

developed and preserved only through traditional Samoan non-formal pedagogical practices.

The significance of educating young children in Samoa using *Gagana Samoa ma Aganu'u*-Samoan language and culture has been a critical and pivotal issue to the Samoan people. The deep value of the *Gagana Samoa ma Aganu'u* as a basis for learning *poto salalau* equivalent of Western knowledge has not been understood well. In the desire to keep pace with a world full of technology and economic advancement, the majority of Samoan people focus their education on the formal, pedagogical constructs, imported and used by Missionaries who arrived in 1830 (Samoa Ministry of Education, 2006). For many years, the introduced Western formal education system overwhelmed the Samoan people thus denying the value of Samoan ways to acquire knowledge, to think and to learn. As a consequence, the ideas and beliefs of Samoan people about the *Gagana Samoa ma Aganu'u*, as the basis of the learning process, has become nearly insignificant. Furthermore, Samoan people, particularly the younger generation, take the *Gagana ma Aganu'u* for granted. This ignorance further undermines the contribution of Samoan language and culture as the foundation and means for learning and for living a life enriched by meaning cast by its cultural lineage, heritage, and history.

As an educator of Samoan children, I gained a clear understanding of where Samoan people position the status of *Gagana Samoa ma Aganu'u*. Moreover my own upbringing, as a Samoan who received formal education in Samoa, compels me to review the value of *Gagana Samoa ma Aganu'u* in view of current ideas and beliefs about educational purpose served by identity. I honestly believe that my own parents' keenness to implant in me the language and cultural significances of our ancestors contributed to deepen my thinking about ways of searching for *poto salalau*. As evidence, this study examines the importance of *fāgogo* as a traditional pedagogical tool.

Fāgogo are stories told, particularly by the elderly to the very young, at night. *Fāgogo* can be counted in the same pedagogical category as night tales, sagas, wisdom tales ballads and bed time stories. From the position that I stand at the moment, I believe it is

my duty and obligation to continue the unrelenting work that has been laid by my own elders. The way to do that is through educating the young children of Samoa to look into Samoan language and cultural practices for knowledge and skills in learning.

In order to provide evidence and strengthening the value of the phenomenon, the study attempts to explore *fāgogo* through *talanoaga* which reveals it as a pedagogical tool filled with knowledge and values. The participants in this research provided stories of their childhood experiences of *fāgogo* and have focussed on how *fāgogo* creates and recreates this tool of Samoan pedagogy. The *talanoaga* responses provide a framework for understanding the learning system of Samoan children in this culturally attuned context. The participants' information identify the cultural elements in *fāgogo* that are significant yet unrecognized in building practical knowledge and skills and centre on the question 'How is *fāgogo* a source of Samoan pedagogy?' The results of this study also hope to inform planning of educational policies that use Samoan traditional pedagogies practices to the benefit of Samoan children in learning about themselves, other people and their heritage.

1.2 A'oa'oga i Samoa Brief Historical look at Samoan Education

The formal education system of Samoa was introduced into the country during the colonisation period of the nineteenth century through the London Missionary Society (LMS) (Meleisea, 1987). During the establishment, the Western system of formal education replaced informal and non formal learning in traditional Samoa. The pedagogical practices and values used in formal Western education began influencing the Samoan people in how they acquired knowledge and skills of their own language and culture. The situation in education in particular denied the status or bearing of *Gagana Samoa ma aganu'u* in educating Samoan children.

In the early eighties, although twenty years had passed since Samoa gained independence, my own experiences at school revealed evidence of the lack of confidence

in Samoan language and culture as a foundation of learning within the education system. For example, speaking Samoan was forbidden despite the high percentage of Samoan students who spoke Samoan language at home. Learning was still focused on success in external examination from learning foreign concepts and ideas that were mostly unrelated to Samoa and its way of living. I experienced that the closer the learners got to formal Western knowledge and pedagogy the further removed they became from Samoan ways of life. In general, the ideas and assumptions of the Samoan people largely remained unchanged even after taking control of its education system.

The beginning of the 21st century hopes to bring a new era to education in the Pacific including Samoa. Throughout the Pacific, the failure of education systems to graduate young people who can become productive members of their own villages and urban communities was and continues to be a great concern (Puamau & Teasdale, 2005). From that concern, Samoan education reviewed policies and transformed curriculum to provide effective education for all learners. The Samoan Education Strategic Planning and Policies 2006-2015, says that education is "...a process realized through informal, formal and non formal systems, to which family values, traditional rituals, cultural and spiritual beliefs contribute towards its success" (Samoa Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 12). The document stipulates that an educational system that recognizes and uses cultural values and practices will be more successful. The Samoan Prime Minister, Sailele Malielegaoi (2007) also called for the revival and strengthening of Samoan language and culture in through out the education system at all levels. Obviously, the need to blend the best global approaches with local values and ways of thinking has been recognised. This research contributes study of a traditional Samoan pedagogy and defines *fāgogo*'s contributions to the system of education, as a traditional, non-formal pedagogical practice.

Of importance, as a Samoan in Samoa, our culture is our education, simply because life evolves around our *fanua* (land). Education is how to understand and make successful use of the *fanua* to make our lives better. Today globalisation requires people to bring out the best of their *fanua* to combine with Western knowledge for effective learning

about the world. Our *fanua* is our education and it also gives us the opportunities to make ourselves believe that traditional education is not as insignificant to academic opportunities as many Samoans have been led to know and believe.

1.3 *Faitoto'a avanoa* Door of opportunity.

It seems that educational policy is ready to equip the collective Samoan society to engage confidently in a 21st Century of rapid change. However, all Samoan people can first consolidate a common foundation of learning based in the local traditional social and cultural practices, which can subsequently be used as a shared plan and common 'ground' for comprehension of culturally-external professional and technical knowledge and skills. When the core values of *fa'aSamoa* are in place to underpin learning, then academic, social behaviour and cultural excellence are likely outcomes. For more successful learning, decisions of educational planners, policy makers, educators and parents in using the society's and culture's past experiences, can shape any change in a more co-ordinated and integrated way. Decisions now require recognition and use of Samoan indigenous knowledge, skills and values.

The Samoan educators and people need to re-affirm faith and trust in the deep values and effects of the traditional culture in order to re-develop and reclaim solutions to Samoan educational challenges and problems.

This study explores the Samoan language and culture from a Samoan perspective, by unpacking *fāgogo* for insights and understanding of Samoan deep culture as an essential base for learning. In particular, the study pinpoints the pedagogical elements in *fāgogo*. These elements then can inform the teaching of Samoan children in their traditional language and culture and uses them as the foundation for learning other foreign languages and knowledge.

As Western influences and globalisation expand, the desire of most Samoan children to keep up with the changes, encourages disregard for the significance of the Samoan language and culture to their learning. The acculturated ideas and beliefs from external sources have literally stolen away Samoan trust in our inherited wisdom, as well as our self-confidence and self respect in the Samoan language and culture. My contribution does not dismiss the importance of learning other cultures' knowledge and skills that have contributed and still contribute to the development of education in Samoa, but rather argues, re-affirms and re-creates a foundation of success that already existed within the Samoan language and cultural practice of *fāgogo*.

The use of Samoan language words and expressions in this work is essential to highlight its significance in educating young Samoans. Often, translation of Samoan words does not capture the deep and contextual significance of them. Therefore, use of Samoan words best communicates their meaning.

1.4 *Fa'ataatiaga* Overview of the thesis content

Chapter one contains background information of the status and value of *Gagana Samoa ma Aganu'u* in Samoan education. A brief historical look at the Samoan education system and a quick current view are discussed. In brief, the place of this study is highlighted. Chapter one ends with an overview of the thesis content.

In Chapter Two, the literature begins with Freire (1970, 1987) and Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) work with the education of indigenous people. The ideas address converting 'the poor' and 'oppressed' into self-initiated learners and actors. Freire states that "man's ontological vocation" (as he calls it) is to be "...a Subject who acts upon and transform his world, and in so doing, moves toward ever new possibilities of fuller and richer life individually and collectively," (1970 p. 140). Freire suggestions ideally suit this study that says that educating man about himself and his immediate surroundings also defines and suggests possibilities of a successful life. This study explores the importance of

fāgogo to Samoan people in a search for richer pedagogical ideas to transform both the thinking and practice of conventional Samoan educators who currently use mostly Anglo-Western originated models and technique.

The literature discussed offers insights into the significance of *fāgogo* for people's language and culture. Moreover, the review positions the main question, "while the literature proves the significance of *fāgogo* to Samoan language and culture, how can *fāgogo* act in the pedagogy of Samoan children?" This chapter further describes the significance of pursuing this study from the researchers' position as a Samoan teacher, born and raised where *fāgogo* is practised. The limitation of this study, contribute content as well.

Chapter Three looks at the methodology utilised in this study. The initial section reviews the challenges of researching Pacific peoples within their home cultures. The methodological approach is based on work of Smith (1999), who in "Decolonising Methodologies", reminds researcher that methodologies are critical in revealing the people and deep findings within the questions space. Smith's says that with, for and by Pacific people should implement research methodologies that are familiar in form. In Samoa, the *Talanoa* approach, also critical dialogue was appropriate. The *Talanoa* approach is explained with reference to studies and work by Pacific and Samoan researchers, such as Manu'atu (2000), Vaai (2002), Vaioleti (2003), Halapua (2005) amongst others. This chapter explains the significance of my position as an insider researcher in the process, particularly with regard to ethical issues. The final part of the chapter discusses how participants were found, recruited and describes the collection of data and its analysis. The chapter ends with discussion of limitations of the *Talanoa* approach.

Chapter Four focuses on the main findings and some results of the study. The *fāgogo* experiences of the participants are reported and the responses are categorised into the most commonly occurring themes. The responses are provided in the Samoan language, highlighting the significance of Samoan language and culture as central to this study. At

the end of chapter four is a brief summary of the participants' responses which summarise the data collected. The 'voices' of the participants enrich the analysis of participants' meaning which strongly influenced and guided the analysis in Chapter Five.

Chapter Five is the pinnacle of this study where a critique of the results is conducted in a highly structured and analytical manner. In discussing the responses in depth, the researcher explains *fāgogo* within a cultural analysis framework, providing a relevant perspective on the people and context of this study. The 'night' metaphor, as in *fāgogo* in the night, is discussed in depth to further reveal how *fāgogo* embodies a significant pedagogical tool for those teaching Samoan children.

In the final chapter, the conclusion returns to the main questions of this study. How does the ritual of *fāgogo* or stories told in the night fulfil a pedagogical role? Why is *fāgogo* in any Samoan cultural context, whether in Samoa or with those who immigrate, of pedagogical significance? What are the merits in teaching and learning the Samoan language and culture for young Samoan children? A summary of the main findings and discussion form the conclusion of the thesis. Additionally, recommendations and ideas for further research are forwarded specifically addressing *fāgogo* and its significance to Samoan people and Samoan culture.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Fa'atomuaga* Introduction

O le gogosina po'o le manusina e pei ona iloa ai i Samoa e nofo i le tuasivi ae fāgota mo ana meaa mai le sami. O aso uma lava e usupo ai le gogo i tai i le sami e fāgota mai se i'a ma lana fanau. A o'o ina lele le gogosina aga'i i le sami, e maualuga ese lava mai nisi manu, lea e maua ai le alagāupu, "E manusina le soā." A taunu'u le gogosina e saili ma su'e le mea o lo'o i ai le mafūa, ona iloa fo'i lea e le aufaifaiva le mea e tatau ona maua ai i'a. O le ala fo'i lea e fa'aaoga ai e tautai e fai ma fa'asinoala. Ua o'o i le afiafi, a vaaia fo'i pe a fāgota savali le gogosina aga'i i atumauga, ona iloa lea ua le toe lagā atu ma ua tatau ona fo'i i fanua. A uma le faiva o gogosina ona a'e lea i atumauga i le mea o lo'o faatali mai ai manu lāiti i le tuasivi, ae le fo'i fua e fo'i ma i'a e aai ai, e maua ai fo'i le isi alagaupu " Ua fo'i i le tuasivi le faiva o manusina." O i'a e fo'i ma le gogosina mai le faiva mo manu lāiti e fa'apea ai tamāli'i "Ua molimea manusina."

The gogosina or manusina is a fish of the mountain who survives on fishing or faiva each day. Each early morning the gogosina makes its way to the sea to fish for food. Usually, the gogo flies high in the sky by itself to and from the sea hence the Samoan proverb originates " *E manusina le soā.*" When it reaches the sea The gogosina or manusina is a bird of the mountains who survives by, the gogosina flies over the deep sea looking for a school of fish. The gogosina is known to the fishermen of Samoa as an intelligent bird that predicts the tides and leads them to huge catches. Gogosina becomes the fishermen guidance. In the evening when they saw that the gogosina is starting to walk towards the mountains then that is an indication of less possibilities to catch more and should return home. The gogosina never returns home without a fish for its young. It goes back to the mountain in the evening to feed the youngs, sleep and return the next morning, hence the proverb " *Ua fo'i i le tuasivi le faiva o manusina.*" The food that the gogosina brings back from faiva for its young is the origin of the Samoan saying " *Ua molimea manusina.*"

When there is hope for greater possibilities ahead the search shall never come to an end. Copied from the *gogosina*, this modelling of a positive behaviour for survival, historically provided an additional insurance of life to the Samoan child. Traditional cultural practices, like *fāgogo* ensure the continuation of behaviours and actions that aid in the survival in a particular place.

This chapter explores the literature relating to '*fāgogo*.' There are few publications, since *fāgogo* has not been widely researched particularly from a Samoan perspective. A few Samoan academics highlighted *fāgogo* in their writings and research which are included in this part of the thesis. I also draw upon the available literature and my own experiences as a Samoan person who was raised within the context of *fāgogo* and in the Samoan culture, to inform this study.

To begin with, the studies by Freire (1970, 1987) and Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) are provided as the lens through which the literature has been reviewed. In the heart of these authors' work is a desire to inspire students to have strength and faith in their own language and culture which equips them for the struggles in the world around them. The authors constantly remind the reader that people consolidate pride in their identity and are empowered through having deep knowledge of their own language and culture.

The ideas of Freire's "Pedagogies of the Oppressed" are used as a basis to review the literature relating to *Fāgogo* (the Samoan-context stories told in the night) throughout this chapter. Freire believed that understanding the strengths of one's own culture is a source of pride and empowerment. A great example is his work which influenced the lives of the landless people in Chile and Brazil to name a few (Freire, 1987).

Similarly, the studies of indigenous communities by Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) also highlight how the devaluation of the heritage language and culture of Indigenous people disempowers them and removes their sources of knowledge and strengths. The author suggested that people must not disregard their own ways of learning because losing them means defeating their power and freedom to express. The ideas from the work of Skutnabb-Kangas and Freire pointed to the significance of one's language and culture through education to develop self-awareness of what that offers and naming the world in one's own words. The outcomes of working with indigenous people in their struggle for empowerment prompted similar studies in other communities around the world.

Samoa people are natives of their own land; however, the process and ideas used in their education during the period of colonialism greatly impacted on how Samoan people think about Samoan language and culture. For example, in Samoa, there was a consistent educational message that to learn and speak the English language was superior to learning and speaking Samoan language. The colonial theory was English provided additional, superior opportunities beyond what the Samoan language and culture possibly could. In this way, oppression of Samoan-specific deep philosophical structures and understanding, developed over a millennia of living in Samoa, were taken from the Samoan people. The ability to explain life and cultural-educational concepts in the familiar Samoan context, was no longer emphasised. The Samoan's own language and culture were further devalued and underdeveloped through lack of formal use during the formative, foundational years of schooling, ages five to eighteen.

In a desire to change the colonial perception of the value of Samoan culture, I present *fāgogo*, a Samoan ritual, as a pedagogical practice. The *fāgogo* is specific and unique to Samoan people. In this study the context of *fāgogo* spotlights ideas that are most useful for educating Samoan children in Samoa. It also serve as a source of knowledge and strength that empowers all Samoan people.

Studies by Wajnryb (2003) and Grenbole & Whaley (2006), discuss the significance of stories in other cultures to the education of their people, and both set *fāgogo*, stories told in the night, as significant to the Samoan context. This literature focusses on the significance of *fāgogo* in relation to educating children in the *fa'aSamoa*.

The *poto fa'aneionapo* or success in the modern world is highlighted in the work of Wendt (in Mallon 2002, Sharrard 2003) and Figiel (1996) which states that *fāgogo* of the elders prepositions its listeners to better understand the conduct and meaning of life. They contend that *fāgogo* has a place even in the modern world. These reviews also show that *gagana muamua* or first language is vital in educating people about Samoa because indigenous language expresses the fundamental understanding of the relationship of people and their life in the place of Samoa.

The significance of *fāgogo*, as highlighted in this literature, asserts that the *fāgogo* offers pedagogical value that can extend and enhance the teaching of Samoan children in Samoa. This study contributes additional evidence that further testifies to how vital it is to revive the Samoan language and cultural practices that strengthen and enhance educational work within the community.

As a Samoan educator and researcher, instead of looking elsewhere, an in depth examination of the Samoan language and cultural traditions appears to be more useful. The Samoan language and cultural practices hold concepts that are more accessible for the education of young Samoans. Language and cultural traditions from environments and contexts (England or America) that are far removed can not readily make use of the children's and students' daily experience and lived understanding.

As Freire (1987) and Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) highlighted in their work, every human being is capable of looking into the world in a dialogical encounter with others and in doing that people discover their potential as they name the world in their own word.

***Aga e a'oa'o ai* Learning model**

'Aga' is a component of the Samoan concept *aganu'u*.

Aga refers to all the behaviour and movements of every member of the group, while *nu'u* refers to the group as a whole. *Aganu'u , o tu ma amioga a tagata o nu'u ta'itasi sa masani mai ai anamua e tutusa uma ai nu'u o Samoa* (Mailo, 1992). In translation the sentence says the customs and traditions of each village, since the beginning of time, are common to all villages in Samoa.

Fāgogo is one such tradition that is common to all villages in Samoa, hence it is very much a part of the *Aganu'u*. *Fāgogo* is a *aga* that commonly serves both the entertainment and educational needs of Samoan children.

Fāgogo, uses the model of an elder storyteller who employs the Samoan language in a powerful yet gentle way to help the young obtain knowledge for survival in their time and place. *Fāgogo* employs both the strong Samoan oral literature and the well-practiced storytelling ability of the eldest family member. *Fāgogo* flows from the oral literature reservoir and wellspring characterised by genealogies, oral traditions songs and stories. *Fāgogo*, as an Samoan art form, explores the relationships of people to people and people to their life in this place, Samoa, providing knowledge and hard-won wisdom.

2.2 *Faavae mai le lotoifale* Foundation is inside

Culturally, people gain knowledge through various experiences and rituals that are unique to their own cultures. Two cultures rarely have exactly the same words or expressions to define the unique rituals and cultural experiences that serve life in their particular place. Moreover, the rituals and traditions offer greater benefits and advantages to those who initiated and practiced them than anyone from a different place or time can fully appreciate.

Just as the gogo must act in a particular way to assure that the chicks are fed, so too unique ritual and traditions protect and ensure the survival of generations of human inhabitants.

Manu'atu (2000) defines pedagogy as the science of teaching and learning, drawn from Paulo Freire's philosophy (Freire 1970). In this definition, science refers to knowledge. The knowledge of teaching and learning produces ways of how we can make sense of the world that we live in everyday. Pedagogy gives human beings the opportunities to form relationships amongst themselves, be it in the family, the school, the community or even in a foreign place. Put simply by the words of the renowned Freire, 'Pedagogy is concerned with relationships between the 'words and the world'(Manu'atu, 2000 p. 90). Understanding the conducts and traditions of how one learns in her or his culture

provides an explanation to how people form the crucial bonds and connections among the concept, the words and the world.

When people no longer feel free to think their own thinking and cannot name the world in their own words, they are easily assimilated into new dominant cultures with new knowledge that is totally foreign and meaningless to them (Freire, 1970, 1987). Freire (1970) in his book “Pedagogy of the Oppressed” talks about the experiences that influence the lives of landless people in Chile, Sao Tome, Brazil, Principe and Guinea-Bissau. In his work, Freire aimed to convince those peasants and landless people to think and change their current situation by learning more about themselves, their identity and knowledge to empower them in their struggle with the Western world. Freire posits that the “anthropological concept of language and culture is central and indispensable to the education of the people in their coming to know the world” (Manu’atu, 2000, p. 89). Freire asserts that teaching and learning one’s own home language and culture is crucial so one can understand the significance and value of one’s self.

When people fully understand and appreciate their historical and traditional ways of learning, only then are they grounded firmly in their heritage and culture. In that sense, neither foreign ideas nor change can be easily accepted or understood (Freire 1987). Freire states the one’s own cultural strengths constructed through one’s own cultural pedagogies, is the foundation of the thinking and conceptualization that supports a critical view of the world. This supports the theory that the strength and values in one’s identity come from knowing and understanding one’s own *fāgogo*, one’s own cultural stories expressed in one’s own home language. Freire realised that those with whom he worked with lead difficult lives and that freeing themselves relied on recreating or re-expressing their own significant stories that defined their identity.

Samoan people learn about their identity in ways that are specific to themselves, such as *fāgogo*. Even though Samoan language and culture dominated everyday life under colonisation, the powerful influences of Western ideas proved too strong as people sought a different standard and way of living consistent with the material wealth of the

colonisers. The attention and value given to the Samoan pedagogical culture of learning decreased to near non-existence and that situation continues to greatly impact people's thinking.

Over the years, however, the cultural environments have changed, for both the colonialists and the Samoans. Interestingly, both sets of people now search for knowledge about and wisdom of the Samoan culture that was previously taken for granted. The recognition that culture is an attribute of a person in a particular place and time, is more prevalent and more credited as a contributor to successes psychologically, economically and ecologically.

Contributive pedagogies theoretically rely on relationships created and produced in valuable learning contexts which are not fixed, but are created and recreated as students and teachers engage in the process of coming to know (Freire, 1993). Relationship is important as a source of *fāgogo*. As a Samoan cultural pedagogy, *fāgogo* in the Samoan context, explores how it can produce relationships and worthwhile learning contexts to support the learning process. Moreover, contributive pedagogies are created from language and cultural practices that are commonly used and familiar, which value and use the behaviors that are common and understood within the community of learners.

2.3 O Tala/fa'amatala Stories/storytelling

Every culture has its own set of stories that are repeated and evolved. These stories have been told and modified to fulfil changing purposes for a variety of audiences. The content and effect of the cultural set of stories go beyond the initial entertainment they offer. Beyond the immediate pleasure that uplifts, excites, and provokes emotion and thought at the moment of telling, there is also a constant contribution to intellectual, emotional and moral development that is the after-thought conveyed and instilled in the purpose of story or story telling.

In the interpretation of stories as a resource for language teaching in the classroom, Wajnryb (2003) referred to stories as serving two main purposes; one is to provide a means of teaching and learning in general; and two, they provide a means of teaching language specifically. Stories in a daytime classroom, offered by teachers, provided the data for Wajnryb's study. The author states that while he finds stories useful to classroom language learning in particular, stories shouldn't be confined to the classroom. The cultural and linguistic nature of stories provides additional important insights for students to gain. Taking on both oral and written literacy in another language requires acculturation to the genre and intent of its story language. This acculturation helps the learners become consciously aware of the rich socio-cultural, pragmatic and discursive knowledge held within the stories, especially in those of adult native speakers working in their first or home language (ibid. p. 17). The author indicates that stories and the story telling, beyond the classroom experience, can and do contribute largely to academic and procedural knowledge. The effect of story, its *magic* "is to offer an infinite well of vicarious experience with the capacity to transport the hearer/reader beyond all boundaries of time, space, language, ethnicity, class or gender" (Wajnryb 2003, p.4.). The researcher says stories/storytelling are universal to humanity, because they entertain and instruct the language through use of structures and embedded meaning. Wajnryb warns that while exposure to stories contributes to holistic learning, not all stories serve universal educational purpose. Stories specific to a particular cultural setting, suitable for those values and beliefs, may not serve another culture as well. Wajnryb's study proved stories and narrative action in the classroom provide additional benefits beyond the initial effect of listening to a story.

According to Pellowski (1996) "storytelling is the entire context of a moment when oral narration of stories or prose, is performed or led by one person before a live audience"(ibid. p.18). The author states that all kinds of stories and storytelling occur throughout the world's human community and giving a single, absolute, all-inclusive, definite definition of story and storytelling is very difficult. Every cultural tradition the author reviewed, however, defines story and storytelling that services its own language and highlights its particular cultural values and beliefs.

The author differentiates types of storytelling which are specific to a purpose. One type is 'Bardic' storytelling, where the 'bard' as the storyteller creates or performs poetic oral narratives that chronicle events or praises the actions of illustrious forbearers and leaders of tribal, cultural or national groups. The author found throughout the Pacific, there have been and in a few cases still are, performers of a bardic nature. The Polynesians are found to have an especially rich history of such epic styles. As Katherine Luomala (cited in Pellowski, 1996) stated, they "had a name for every narrative and poetic form, and each had its proper time and place" (ibid p. 38). In Pellowski's discussion, names, places and times of narratives are often unique to each culture, however there are some stories which share concepts like the founding of the culture or the source life. The *fāgogo* of Samoans was found to be unique in its time, place and narration styles. Culturally, the unique structure of *fāgogo* is based on *talanoa* that creates the inter-relationship for exploring the pedagogical ideas in Samoan language and culture for Samoan children. The author stated that stroytelling, though seemingly held in high regard for its maintenance of cultural traditions and their content, is diminishing in common practice and the reasons for that are obscure.

Stories as a component of oral traditions play a significant part in the culture and lives of indigenous societies. "In most indigenous societies throughout the world, oral traditions are pervaded with metaphors, proverbs and highly developed wordplay that display themselves through verbal repertoires" (Grenbole & Whaley, 2006 p. 119). The implication is that stories serve as the vehicle of history and traditions that connect the spoken and the spiritual world. Taonui (2006 in Howe p. 22) also draws attention to the significance of mythologies of oral cultures, that reflect deep-seated philosophical, religious, cultural and social beliefs about the nature of reality and the unknown, being and non-being and the relationship between all things; hence they are regarded as the most sacred of all traditions.

2.4 *Fa'apitoa* Uniqueness

Aiono Fanaafi (2005) urges Samoans in her book “*La Ta Gagana*” (our language) that

*‘fāgono o le tasi o fausaga o la ta gagana i ona fatuga
e uiga ese le taua, uiga ese le suamalie o ona lagona ma lana
tofamanino.’(p.163)*

translation

*fāgono is one of the foundations of our language because
of its chants and emotions, that presents a deep clear view.*

Aiono states that *fāgogo* is unique to Samoans because it carries fundamental values of Samoan language and culture and the *fa'avae* that hold the Samoan culture and its people together. Aiono signifies the utmost importance of the seeking knowledge pertaining to the foundations of Samoan language and culture. The author maintains that this is highly necessary to inform people(s) who undervalue their home language and culture because of the powerful dominance of western knowledge and foreign ideas they have been drawn into for generations. Moreover, Aiono speaks about the greatness of her culture and places herself as the role model in the Samoan Indigenous University that she set up.

“Written stories are only a very improvised form of spoken ones; nowhere in the written text can you discern the tone of voice, loudness, excitement, gesture, facial expression or tempo, all those things that make a story alive” (Harrison, 2007 p. 145). The comment by Harrison once again elevates the nature of oral story telling in comparison to written stories in oral communities. The author implies that the beauty and freedom of the oral art such as in Samoan *fāgogo*, reside within the delivery. Since *fāgogo* is an oral ritual, the written *fāgogo* misses the *agaga*, meaning the spirit that comes alive during the oral *fāgogo*. The spirit not only draws out the magnificence of *fāgogo* in the Samoan context, but seems to be the most vital element in telling *fāgogo*. All the elements of *fāgogo*, from the tellers to the context and content, interconnect in a way that is only one of its kind.

Tupua (2003) in his paper, “In search of Meaning, Nuances and Metaphor in Social Policy” gave an explicit explanation of the culture of oral traditions in the Samoan

context. He states that the ritual of *fāgogo* has the power to impart spiritual, emotional, physical, mental and cultural nurturance. He also agreed that these traditions are slowly disappearing. “The demise of the *fāgogo* is a tragic blow to our culture”(p. 59). Speaking from the heart, Tupua speculates about the demise of *fāgogo* as the end of cultural *fa’afaiilelega* (nurturance) of the younger generation in its cultural values, language, beliefs and identity. The *fāgogo* with its stories of wars and victories, and the pride, love, strength and courage these provide, serves to enlighten the minds, hearts and souls of any Samoan. This enlightenment identifies the qualities of Samoans and the value of the language and the culture in building those qualities. Tupua says this “frame of mind” is what Tupua refers to when he regrets the disappearance of *fāgogo* from common and current Samoan culture. Tupua, in his unrelenting work in Samoan language and culture, exposed a gap in *fāgogo* that is worth analysing for pedagogical ideas in teaching Samoan children about themselves.

In recording *fāgogo*, one or more songs sung by the narrators was the focus of Moyles (1981) research on collecting and analysing Samoan stories in English and Samoan. Without the *fāgogo* or stories, the text of the songs are incomprehensible and thus *fāgogo* is the contextual foreground in which songs are understood, appreciated and analysed. Moyle’s suggests *fāgogo* is the foundation of all other Samoan oral rituals including song because the *fāgogo* explains the story which the songs extend or enhance. Moyles wrote that *fāgogo* often highlights the contrast and conflict between culturally accepted and unaccepted behaviour. The author also highlighted that *fāgogo* attracts children centres with humour, which was not the case for adults. Moyle’s work is significant in analysing the structure of *fāgogo*, but more research is needed to further clarify how *fāgogo* is a source of childhood pedagogy for Samoan cultural knowledge.

2.5 Poto fa’aneionapo. Intelligence

There are numerous success stories of the Pacific people, but it is necessary to relate a few significant stories in relation to cultural knowledge and skill and the modern world.

Today, many Samoan storytellers explore familiar themes and use a similar mechanism of telling *fāgogo* in order to tell their stories through the written word (Mallon, 2002). The developments in Samoan written literature have been well documented in an essay by Fairbairn-Dunlop (1994). In a detailed account, Fairbairn-Dunlop suggests that the ‘search for Samoan writers has been to capture on paper the elusive essence of the *fāgogo* art they remembered from their youth’ (ibid. p.164). The statement by Dunlop is probably true for the majority of Samoan writers, particularly those who were raised in Samoa, but the present generation includes writers who have had little access or exposure to *fāgogo*. What has been suggested by Fairbairn-Dunlop is that *fāgogo* has a place in the modern world and its success stories. She asserts that when writers of today search for ideas and mechanisms valid in the Samoan context, then *fāgogo* is a significant contributor to living and understanging the modern world, just as it was in the past.

In an interview by Sharrard (2003), Albert Wendt acknowledged his grandmother’s skills in telling *fāgogo* as a significant source of inspiration for his prolific work in writing. Wendt is one of the first in the Pacific to acknowledge the significance of informal cultural learning in his work. The bulk of his work is presented in the English language and Wendt is sighted as an inspiration for many other Pacific writers, as he incorporated many elements of Samoan oral tradition into his work. In Mallons’ book ‘Samoan Art & Artist’ (2002) Wendt wrote, “I have always had an interest in telling stories because I came from a family very rich in oral storytelling and traditions. My grandmother was a great storyteller and was an authority on *fa’aSamoa*, history, genealogy and so on. She handed a lot of this to us in the form of stories”(ibid. p.167). Wendt’s work is the being of ‘*Samoaness*’ that Fairbairn-Dunlop wrote “he was a Samoan, and writing about topics, emotions and feelings Samoans could identify with, using imagery that had instant appeal” (ibid. p. 165). From the rich background of *fagogo*, Wendt provided a huge and successful view into Samoan knowledge and its perceptions and thoughts about the world. Wendt admitted that there were critics whose misinterpretations of his work probably sprung from little or no knowledge of *fa’aSamoa* and an apathy towards that knowledge and its understanding.

Sia Figiel, known to be the first Samoan female novelist, was inspired by the style and content of Wendt's writings. Sia like Wendt, grew up frequently exposed to *fāgogo* and *solo* (poems), and has admitted their great contribution and value to the way she writes today (Figiel, 1996). She referred to the imagery and music of *fāgogo* and *solo* as "the greatest influence in her work" (ibid. p.122). Figiel, in addition to authoring books, is also a live storyteller and performer. In the year 2000, Figiel released some of her poetry on compact disc with Kiribati poet Teresia Teaiwa. Entitled *Terenesia*, the CD provides performances of Figiel's work and allows new audiences to experience the spoken performance of it (Mallon, 2002). The work by Figiel is an example of how the art of *fāgogo* lives on in the new generation, though in a modified form. Like Wendt, Sia provides her experiences of *fāgogo* in a more widely accessible form to a broader audience and has provided a "voice through writing" of the younger generation of Samoans to the English-speaking world.

There are other talented Samoan writers whose works were also influenced by the *fāgogo* and storytelling traditions of their youth. Author and poet Ruperake Petaia's evaluations of the impacts of modernization in Samoan society has been widely studied in classrooms throughout the Pacific, as they are more relevant to and comprehensible in the Pacific island situation. Momoe Malietoa von Reiche, a poet and artist, also recalled the *fāgogo* of her childhood, "it was so much more fascinating because your mind would work overtime creating fantastic images and places"(Mallon, 2002 p.164). The images Momoe talked about inspired images in her artistic work throughout her career. As a young child listening to *fāgogo*, the beauty it described created fantastic images in Momoe's mind that later in life were explored and exposed to the rest of the world through poem and illustration.

There is great admiration from other Pacific and European writers in these works; as Figiel (1996) pointed out, these cultural models have the ability to effectively express perceptions from their native standpoint. The superb effort defined in the events shows that informal cultural experiences play a crucial part in the modern world success. The *fāgogo* inspired the successful writers with unique works that Samoan people could well

relate to and understand. The big challenge lies in how to understand and encourage the pedagogical merits found in *fāgogo* to benefit Samoan writers and storytellers of the present and future generations of Samoa.

2.6 Gagana. Home Language

The Prime Minister of Samoa, Sailele Malielegaoi (2007), endorsed the importance of Samoan language and culture as a means of advancing the education of the Samoan people. This endorsement stated that a critique and analysis of Samoan language and culture can provide the basic knowledge and *fa'avae* (foundation) of Samoan education. Recently, the call for strengthening Samoan language and cultural education was reiterated by the Samoan Education Policies of 2006-2015. The policy statement states clearly that “children should be fully literate in Samoan language and culture and have the opportunity to explore ideas in their first language before advancing to other languages” (Ministry of Education Samoa, 2006 p. 32). Interestingly over the years, many educators have expressed the same insight for “Samoan first” (Tagaloa, 2006, as cited in Nunes). Obviously, there is an urgency to explore and analyse in depth the sources of language pedagogy including *fāgogo* in the Samoan culture. Language is a first medium in learning, and its pedagogy, especially in the home and family, provide grounds for later practical and academic knowledge growth.

The prominent Samoan educator, Aiono Fanaafi (1996) advocates the significance of Samoan language and culture as the basis of Samoan knowledge, identity, pride and wisdom. After years of academic studies, Professor Aiono reflects upon the significance of Samoan language. In her own words,

‘O la ta gagana o le fale o oloa taua; o le punavai magalo; o le lagi tuasefulu o lo o i ai le fa’atufugaga ma le atoa lio o le tofamanino’ (p.8).

Translation

“Our language is a house of treasured goods; the source of pure water; the ten heavens of creation with wholeness of pure wisdom.’

The Samoan language has *utuvagana* (vocabulary) that is deep and full of meaning as demonstrated by Aiono's statement illustrates. Her statement indicates the immense meaning that is contained and obtained from the language used in *fāgogo*. The ability to express such fullness of Samoan-particular thought is rarely encountered in the *utuvagana* of the younger generations of today's Samoa. These generations, are often deprived of any exposure to *fāgogo*.

The establishment of the Samoan Indigenous University "*Le Amosa o Savavau*" signifies the great respect of the populous for Aiono and her colleagues and an awakening of the importance and value of Samoan language and culture. The principal aim of the university is to encourage Samoan people to maintain language and culture in traditional ways and to prevent further interference and dilution by 'Western' or other external ideas. "*O la ta gagana o le meaa ma le meainu*" (ibid. p. 22), literally means that the Samoan language is our food and our drink. The ancestors knew from the start that the language has a duty for the young people, to feed their minds and their souls with *upu* (words) and *tala* (stories). The *upu* and *tala* are meaningless without the *fāgogo* that connects the body, mind and soul to the land, sea and other matters that support and sustain life. Aiono clearly verbalizes the necessity to nourish Samoans with cultural forms, like *fāgogo*, so they know and use their inheritance delivered in *utuvagana* of creative expression and informational communication.

The present Head of State of Samoa, Tuiatua Tupua Tamasese Efi (2003, 2004, 2006) has focused his work and writings on specific Samoan contexts to highlight the power of knowing Samoan history, language and culture in the governance of the Samoan people and the land. Tupua researched traditions to highlight the values and significance for education in Samoa. Although he has explored many Samoan traditions and their significance, he acknowledges that there was more to find in rituals or cultural practice like *fāgogo*. Tupua encourages in the paper "In Search for Meaning, Nuance and Metaphor in Social Policy", a in-depth studies into language and culture that are found in ritual and practice, because ritual and practices give context, context gives meaning and meaning gives insight. (Tupua, 2003 p. 49). Tupua states his belief that Samoan

knowledge and pedagogical ideas that are based in cultural rituals are eroding. Samoan people must deeply understand the pedagogical significance of language and cultural rituals in their search for success in life.

Kepa (2001) in her study into immigrant languages and education in New Zealand, argues that learning a foreign language requires deep knowledge of cultural concepts, and the constant devaluing of cultural knowledge removes pedagogical anchors or foundations that help an immigrant understand how to learn in a foreign place. The study concluded that there is benefit to using cultural knowledge and its pedagogies in any learning situation, but especially in formal education in school.

2.7 *Tomai i Aganu'u.* Indigenous knowledge

In framing understandings of *tomai fa'aleaganu'u* (Samoan cultural knowledge), similar ideas can be drawn from the actions of the indigenous Māori in Aotearoa. Māori people are retrieving and reviving their language and culture by establishing educational initiatives such as Wananga in 1980, Te Kohanga Reo in 1982, and Kura Kaupapa in 1985. These institutions of learning teach Māori knowledge such as whakapapa (genealogy), waiata (songs/poems) korero Māori (talks, stories in te reo Māori) and Māori pedagogies (Smith 1997, 1999; Hemara 2000, Macpherson, Spoonley & Anae, 2001). Moreover, these educational developments have directly supported Māori action in and aspirations towards reclaiming Tinorangatiranga through re-instatement of the place of te Tiriti o Waitangi. The initiatives are also a partial answer to increasing and raising academic achievement of Māori through a return to Te Reo e Tikanga Māori. Smith and Hemara argue that the re-instatement of ancestral knowledge and status may eventually alleviate a myriad of social, economic and political issues which have plagued the indigenous Tangatawhenua o Aotearoa since approximately 1880 (Walker 2000, 2005; Smith, Hohepa & McNaughton 1992). The current movement in universities is to research Māori knowledge by cooperating and collaborating with Māori people using research methodologies that are drawn from Maori language and cultural practices

(Smith, 1999, Durie 2000, 2003, and Jones 2007). There have been no simple resolutions to the struggles of Tangatawhenua o Aotearoa; however, published research reveals that learning first about Māori historical strength and abilities, has empowered creative approaches for resolving disagreements with the Crown government of New Zealand.

The diverse Pacific peoples residing in New Zealand, Samoan people included, are experiencing a sense of loss of ancestrally-based identity, language and culture (Macpherson, Spoonley & Anae 2001). According to Taumoefolau (2004), the declining number of Pacific islanders who could speak their home language is the most apparent sign of losing home cultural identity and practice. Studies in the education of Pacific groups in Aotearoa have highlighted the significance of culture in language learning. For example, Pacific children, and in particular, Samoan children, have shown great benefit from grounding their early years of learning in the Samoan language and culture (McCaffrey & Tuafuti, 2001, 2005; Podmore, Tapusoa & Taouma 2006). The researchers found that the use of the home language and cultural practices provide essential footings for successful learning.

Manu'atu (2000) explained in her study of pedagogical possibilities for Tongan students in Aotearoa, that through the specific cultural sites of '*Kātonga Faiva*' and '*Pō Ako*,' some insights and useful approaches to teaching of and learning by Tongan students can be drawn. Tongan students experience *mālie* (deep pleasure of understanding since the mind and soul can relate and connect to the ideas, lyrics, songs and actions) in their '*Kātonga Faiva*' and '*Pō Ako*' since their cultural knowledge and Tongan language are central in creating and practicing the activities. The students accepted learning as they feel *mālie* and *māfana* (affection) during the events. In childrens' quest for formal academic success, the intellect forms through the home language and culture, and the knowledge embedded in those particular pedagogical practices (Manu'atu, 2000, 2004). The concept of *mālie* is the creating of peace and satisfaction within people. The *fagogo* as an entertainment for children would be very significant in exploring how it brings *malie* to the Samoan children.

Thaman (1995) argues in the study of “Concepts of learning, knowledge and wisdom in Tonga and their relevance to education” that a continuing process of reclaiming indigenous discourses is achieved by placing greater emphasis on home cultures and vernacular languages in curriculum planning, teacher education and research activities. Thaman suggested that indigenous societies lose cultural knowledge relevant to learning, hence the education system must contribute to the education of indigenous people about the significant ideas in their language and through their cultural practices.

Samoans must continue to research knowledge that is specific to them before it is lost forever. Now is a critical period in the education of Samoan people, since Samoa is becoming increasingly influenced by external forces, so that today’s generation demonstrates a dramatic disinterest in Samoan language, values and ancestral customs. The Samoan Ministry of Education language and culture specialist Ainsley So’o (2006 cited in Nunes) wrote that Samoan children are losing competency in their own language and exposure to their heritage. The loss of interest and competency are clear indications that revival and recapture of specific knowledge genuine to Samoan people and its culture may be necessary. *Fagogo* provides cultural knowledge that is specific to Samoan people, like the *Kātonga faiva* with Tongan students. Moreover, *fāgogo* can be explored further for pedagogical ideas for Samoan children in Samoa, as in *Kātonga faiva* for Tongan students.

The tangatawhenua of Aotearoa returned to establishing Māori language and cultural institutions where cultural rituals are taught and Māori pedagogies are obtained that have partially raised the academic achievements of Māori students. The significance of exploring *fāgogo* as a specific ritual for Samoan children and people could also provide successful pedagogical ideas for Samoan children in their learning.

2.8 Taua Significance of this research

‘O le fāgogo o tala e maua ai le gagana ma le malamalama I le tupuaga o talitonuga ma faavae o le aganuu Samoa. O tala e mitamita ai le samoa ma le

mafai ai ona faaitiitia ai le fa'ainaelo ma le fa'atuatua'ni o le gagana ma le aganu'u samoa'(Aiono, 2005.)

Translation:

'The Fāgogo are the stories of language learning and understanding basis of beliefs and foundations of Samoan culture. They are stories that make all Samoans proud and lessen ignorance of Samoan language and culture.'

The uniqueness of *fāgogo* go beyond the entertainment value they offer. The *fāgogo* in Samoa are distinctive and irreplaceable because only Samoan people identify with them and understand them. *Fāgogo* is a fundamental to *fa'aSamoa* through its effect on expression and language learning. The individual aspects of *fāgogo* should be thoroughly analysed to uncover how they open up 'windows' of opportunities to successful learning of cultural knowledge as well as academic success. Currently *fāgogo* is rarely practiced in Samoan homes. Even while its demise can be counted as a blow to the Samoan culture; *fāgogo* custodians are taking their knowledge to the grave.

The loss of language and culture of other Pacific nations is chronicled and now researched. Samoans have sympathized as they found a way back to their historical identities, languages and cultural practices. The lessons learned from those nations and peoples must stand to encourage us to sustain Samoan cultural knowledge, as it is our only strength when competing with other worlds unknown to us.

The research of *fāgogo* gives the opportunity to bring insights into the deep culture of Samoa, its values and beliefs. Amidst all the introduction and long history of crossings and people coming together, is there a thick vein of distinctiveness that enables the Samoan arts to retain a unique character? For some it would be difficult to answer this question but I would say, yes it lies within the way things are done, the structuring principles underlying the surface manifestations that people are conditioned to see as constituting art. In Samoa some of these structures are found in the abstract conceptualisation of space, and also in the ways rituals and traditions like *fāgogo* are performed.

While many studies have identified the significance of first language and culture, none has sought a deeper analysis of the *fāgogo* as a site of pedagogical knowledge for Samoan children. Fairbairn-Dunlop (1987, 1994) came close “in searching for written *fāgogo*” as her work actually focussed on presenting the art of *fagogo* in written form, therefore offers little in-depth analysis of oral *fāgogo* as a source of Samoan pedagogies.

Another point of significance in this study is what the contribution of the Samoan language, as a medium of instruction at primary school levels, may be to overall improvement in literacy and numeric skills (Ministry of Education 2006). *Fāgogo* is a fundamental source of language that enriches the *utuvagana* (vocabulary) of Samoan children at an early age as well as for the rest of their school life. It is hoped that findings of pedagogical ideas in *fāgogo* may serve in preparation for policy recommendations and implementation strategies for literacy methodologies for Samoan children.

At a personal level, this study gives me the opportunity to re-think and reflect on my own identity as a Samoan. My participation in the language and culture and experiences through teaching Samoan children is very significant in positioning myself in the study of *fāgogo*. Therefore my place in my Samoan society is of paramount importance to inform education policies and planning about the outcome of this study, so that Samoan children can advance knowledge from within Samoan language and culture. Furthermore, the education system emphasizes the significance of learning language and culture.

This study adopts *talanoa* methodology that was almost absent in the reviewed studies. The Samoan language is given priority because it is the first language of the researcher as well as the participants during data collection. I believe that one can only express himself or herself better in his own *gagana* as reminded by Freire (1987).

The *fāgogo* are specific to Samoan pedagogy, language and culture and its knowledge is kept alive by those living ‘inside’ the culture. Generally, there are not many Samoan people and elders who still have the deepest knowledge of *fa’aSamoa* let alone *fāgogo* therefore it is crucial to find those people so that they can impart knowledge to the

younger generation. The significance of this work is to portray the inner values exclusive to learning Samoan language and culture for Samoan children, thus *fāgogo* should be revitalised before they cease to exist.

While *fāgogo* as a context captures the depth of Samoan language and culture in all its elements, none has gone into a deeper analysis of *fāgogo* as a conceptual framework for teaching and learning Samoan language and culture by Samoan children. I believe that the outcome of this study in identifying pedagogical ideas from *fāgogo* will assist in implementing the aims of Samoan education policies in strengthening the teaching and learning of Samoan language and culture for young children in particular.

Research Questions

The research focuses on the cultural analysis of *fāgogo* from a Samoan perspective for its pedagogical significance and merits.

The main research question is: “How is *fāgogo* a source of Samoan pedagogies?”

The focus question is: How are Samoan pedagogies created (and re-created) in *fāgogo*?

2.9 Pa pui pui Limitations of the Study

The following limitations govern this research project. Firstly, my position as an insider and a researcher with prior understanding about *fāgogo* could interfere with the participants’ responses. To overcome the biases of being an inside person, I explained to the participants my own views of *fāgogo* first, and from there the participants should be able to critique and present their critical views during data collection. I also present the data in the language the participants use to reveal authenticity of the responses and the participants voices heard. I signed an AUTEK pledge that I would adhere to all ethical principles that pertain to this research and its subjects. The *fāgogo* is not observed during night time which could be a limitation of this study, in the sense that the *fāgogo* being played in its natural context could make a comparison with the informant experiences.

However, the informants had the experience that the study needs to reflect on for pedagogical ideas from the *fāgogo* context.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 *Fa'atomuaga* Introduction

Diverse methodologies and tools have been used to study human society, its language and culture from many different perspectives. This research on exploring *fāgogo* as a site for cultural pedagogies for Samoan children in Samoa employs the *Talanoa* approach (Manu'atu, 2000; 2004; Morrison, Vaioleti & Vermullen, 2002; Vaioleti, 2003; Halapua, 2005; Nabobo-Baba, 2005; Latu, 2006; Otsuka 2006; Prescott & Hooper, 2007). The data collection is conducted in Samoa, hence the language and culture of the participants is of utmost importance. The advantages of the researcher's fluency in Samoan and knowledge of values in the culture is most useful in exploiting the *Talanoa* approach and *talanoaga* method to obtain the rich data required.

The research approach is also informed by Smith's (1999) work in 'Decolonizing Methodologies,' which strongly advocates research methodologies for specific people. This chapter discusses *Talanoa* approach with reference to the work of Pacific researchers in the forefront of Pacific research, including Samoan people. The *Talanoa* in the Samoan context is also highlighted. The processes of data collection comprise the second part of this chapter. I will also explain what I believe to be the limitations of this research approach.

3.2 *Fa'atāua tatou auala* Decolonizing methodologies

Smith (1999) in her book *Decolonizing Methodologies* speaks about the research experiences of Māori people that expose the necessity for research methodologies that are specific for Māori people. The extensive work in research with Māori by Smith critiques Western ways and tools for researching indigenous people. Smith argues that those research methodologies and methods promote Western historical and philosophical bases that are not necessarily applicable to the values and beliefs of indigenous societies.

Smith also mentions “research of Māori was marked by history that has shaped the attitudes and feelings that Māori people have held towards research” (ibid. p. 183). Smith refers to the production of theories that dehumanize Māori, and practices which deny the validity of Māori knowledge, language and culture to Māori people. Undoubtedly, there is a suggestion from Smith’s work that research methodologies must reflect the historical and philosophical basis of the people and societies being researched. The work by Smith also suggests that research methodologies are not universal.

Tamasese (1997) supports Smith when researching Samoan perspectives on mental health, stating that the “construction of methods should emerge from, and faithfully reflect the intrinsic source of its participants’ needs and knowledge bases” (ibid. p. 12). Thus, when researching by, for and with Samoan people, a culturally appropriate research approach that reflects Samoan values is crucial.

3.3 *Talanoa fa’apasefika* The Talanoa approach in research

‘*Talanoa*’ is a Samoan word that is roughly translated as critical dialogue. *Talanoa* is also a Tongan term that has been the origin of *Talanoa* approach, and that is now commonly employed in other academic research of Pacific peoples’ language and cultures. In most of the Pacific islands, *talanoa* is a contextualised and purposeful activity for understanding the deeper meaning of events or concepts such as in the analysis of “*Talanoaga na loma ma Ga’opo’a*” (intended conversations with Ga’opo’a) in Samoa by Vaai (2002).

Manu’atu (2000) explains in her study of pedagogical possibilities for Tongan students in Aotearoa New Zealand, that sustaining a good relationship, having the experience of language and culture, and creating a commitment to working together with participants are key factors where the process of *pōtalanoa* (night talk) is a construction, reconstruction and a deconstruction of Tongan social ‘realities’ (ibid. p. 56). For the researcher, framing knowledge from the Tongan perspective is a potential that she

carries, hence *talanoa* with participants in their language is rightful and rewarding. Otsuka (2006) supports *talanoa* as the most appropriate research approach in Fiji after his study of cultural influences on the academic performance of secondary school children. The researcher concludes that *talanoa* is the optimal way to connect, when the researcher is culturally sensitive, observes customs, respects relationships and remains loyal to the community. In contrast he admits that his limited knowledge of Fijian cultural protocols and language were a disadvantage for him during some parts of his study.

Vaioleti (2003) in her study of the use of *talanoa* approach in relation to researching Pacific people, also emphasises that *talanoa* removes the distance between researchers and participants as the face-to-face verbal interaction provides a human face to which the participants can relate. While *talanoa* is about chatting, it involves a deep, interpersonal relationship, the kind of relationship upon which most Pacific activities are carried out (Morrison, Vaioleti & Vermullen, 2002). These important facets of *talanoa* are also highlighted in other studies by Pacific researchers who promote research approaches that are most suitable for Pacific people(s) language and culture (Nabobo-Baba, 2005; Latu, 2006; Prescott & Hooper, 2007).

Talanoa has also been used in political science studies across the Pacific. For example, *Talanoa* is mentioned as a means of reconciling and resolving political issues, in an interview with Halapua (2005) in the 'Matangi Tonga' newspaper. Halapua believes that *talanoa* is a story from the *loto* (soul) and to get through to the *loto* you have to *talanoa*. Halapua successfully used the *talanoa* with stakeholders on Cook Island to bring economic recovery programmes in 1996-1997, *talanoa* to bring conflict resolution to the coup in Fiji in 2000, the *talanoa* to solve ethnic conflicts in the Solomon Islands, and most crucially, the *talanoa* with his own people that ended the seven-week strike of Tonga's public servants in 2005. Halapua convincingly reached the people and addressed the issues through *talanoa* from the *loto* to the *loto*.

As highlighted in all these studies, the power in *talanoa* is building a trusting relationship with participants. Indeed, there is a need to *talanoa*; at first the researcher seeks to share

their humour, emotions, critiques and their views of the world. As the researcher comes to understand and accept the participants' stories, the bonds of the relationships strengthen. Moreover, *talanoa* qualifies the purpose, determines the significance, provides the consequence or produces an output. In this sense, *talanoa* is a critical approach of sharing knowledge and analysing ideas with someone or a group of people (Manu'atu 2004). Finally, the *talanoa* from the *loto* can resume without hesitation, to hold stories that unfold based in an affirmed, trust-filled relationship.

3.4 *Fetufaa'i ma soālaupule Talanoa in Samoa*

Since this study is located in the context of Samoan language and culture, the *talanoa* approach that stems from a culture in which oratory and verbal negotiation have deep traditional roots, is most appropriate. The verbal communications that exist as part of Samoan life are a base for building respect and trust within relationships. *Talanoa* approach used in this study reflects the significance of the Samoan language, its values and beliefs.

Talanoa in Samoa is a verb which means to talk, and it can be done informally such as at a gathering of friends or formally in a village *fono* (meeting). When *talanoa* takes place, the result is the *talanoaga* such as in a recorded version or simply the outcome of *talanoa*. Put simply, *talanoaga* is the noun formed from *talanoa*.

The significance of *talanoa* in the Samoan context is that spoken words are believed to be magical, and they are reliably used to settle differences, to arbitrate disputes, to heal sickness and to relay various senses of deep emotions (Tagaloa, 2006 as cited in Nunes). *Talanoa* varies from *fetufaa'iga* or simple and casual conversations used in greeting, sharing news or entertainment to the more complex *soālaupule*. *Lau-pule* in the Samoan context refers to authority usually holds by a *matai* to make decisions and *soā* originates from the word *fa'asoa* which means sharing. Through *talanoaga*, authorities are shared to reach good decisions.

Traditionally, *talanoa* can take place between the young and the old on a one to one basis or amongst people or groups of people. In the immediate *āiga*, parents *talanoa* with their children about past experiences that may encourage better futures for them and most importantly they *talanoa* about maintaining good relationships with their *āiga*. In the *āiga-potopoto* (extended family), the *matais* (chiefs) of the family *talanoa* about family matters such as land and other family inheritances, passing on and acknowledging family *gafa* (genealogy), the place and role of the *aiga* in the *nu'u* (village) as well as in the *itumalo* (district). In the village level, *talanoa* is the most commonly used approach for the *matais* (chiefs) of the villages during their *fono* or meetings to negotiate and solve issues to maintain or re-establish order. During *talanoaga a fono*, the *matais* make laws, strengthen *tapu* (taboos) of the village, bring peace and harmony to every family, and build agreement for new developments and planned changes leading to better living.

Talanoa is a way of creating and recreating trust filled relationships while observing the values of *fa'aaloalo* (respect) and *vā-fealoa'i* (respectful relationship). In the context of Samoan culture, *fa'aaloalo* is defined by *tu ma amioga lelei* (respectful behaviour), which is the foundation of a healthy relationship. Relationship binds *Fa'aSamoa* together and that binding is a result of *talanoa fa'aaloalo*.

In pursuing this study, the participants' experiences of *fāgogo* definitely need an approach that encouraged the heart to open up willingly and to express mutual interest. Hence the *talanoa* approach was chosen since it suits the Samoan context, and puts the participants most at ease. The use of the participants' first language provides a comfortable medium of expression, particularly when critiquing Samoan language and cultural topics. *Talanoa* provides time for the participants to express themselves well in their home language. Additionally, the researcher can be assured that there is no reservation in participants that might result in a refusal to express their views or hesitancy about their real meaning being understood. *Talanoa* is ideal for the researcher who is a fluent speaker of the Samoan language and has constant contact with the culture of the participants.

Talanoa in the Samoan context is sometimes like telling stories filled with much emotional content and enthusiasm. *Talanoa* may also be interactively used for problem solving and policy-making.

Data Collection

3.5 *Iloa tu, savali ma tautala* The Insider Researcher

How one does research, specifically for Samoans in Samoa, is normally reinforced by the way one “*tu, savali ma tautala*”, literally meaning “the way one holds oneself, walks and talks” (Amituanai-Toloa, 2002). Samoan people are identified, defined, and judged by their presentation, speech and movement. As a researcher in Samoa, it is vital to be aware of the protocols of speech and behaviour that avoid actions that might disrupt the *vā-fealoa’i*. Significantly, empowerment and confidence are shared among participants and qualitative researchers who conduct *talanoa* using the same home language and commonly shared cultural experiences.

My position as an insider, a Samoan woman and an educator in Samoa, came with pride as I thought of the significance of this work and at the same time wondered how I would be received by my own people. Before actually embarking on the data collection in Samoa, I knew that I would have to prepare myself to come face-to-face with people who are positioned in the social and cultural hierarchy high above me because they are highly respected by the whole country. There was excitement, but fear as well, that I might not be able to prove to the participants my deep commitment to the work I was about to do. I admit that the most critical issue for me was observing the *vā-tapuia* (sacred relationship), and the *vā-fealoa’i* (respectful relationship), because these qualities would define me in the eyes of the participants.

With some participants, it was most appropriate to find a *matai* (chief) to accompany me. Unfortunately, time constraints were a factor that often prevented this practice. Since I am a fluent speaker of the Samoan language, with knowledge and understanding of the

customs and protocols of *fa'aSamoa*, I decided to present myself without a sponsor. Moreover, this was the chance of a lifetime to prove that I had the confidence to *talanoa* with participants, such as Pule and Selau, who are exceptionally respected by the people of Samoa, especially me.

In order to obtain guidance and advice during the fieldwork in Samoa, an advisor was contacted to provide supervision. This person has been closely and widely involved in education for years. The advisor agreed to assist in randomly selecting the most appropriate participants for the *talanoaga*. The advisor also demonstrated during our *talanoa* how this study was of interest to her given her long career as a teacher trainer.

3.6 *O e filifilia* Participants in the study

The participants for the study were all Samoans who live and work in Samoa. These people were asked to participate in the study as they are mature, respected and experienced individuals within the current Samoan cultural context. The informants were chosen from their lived experiences, having listened to and been raised with the practices of *fāgogo* in their childhood. Significantly, the participants were from three different areas that are crucial to the Samoan cultural context, Education, Church and Politics, and they are well respected in their roles. The participants range from the age of fifty to eighty years. Of the fourteen who were initially contacted, only twelve participated. Two could not participate due to unforeseen circumstances. All participants were/are fluent speakers of the Samoan language.

The remaining five males and seven females were divided into three groups. Group One consisted of three prominent Samoan educators who are considered important leaders and policy-influencers within Education and Culture, Church, and Politics. Their stories would identify the significance of *fāgogo* in their leadership roles. Group Two was made up of five educators, two from the Samoan Language and Culture department at the National University of Samoa, while the others work in the Language Curriculum Unit of

the Education Department. Their contribution was to be comparing the interest of students in *fāgogo* at present with their own experiences. Group Three consisted of four parents whose contributions would be to identify the educational role of *fāgogo* that might be inspired the use of *fāgogo* by their own children. These particular participants' sets of experience were hoped to enable the participants to identify, describe and critique the pedagogical values of *fāgogo* for use with Samoan children.

All participants were given their choice of time and place for *talanoaga*. Without hesitation some participants offered to pursue with *talanoaga* as soon as they were approached. This process was very hopeful for me.

Each participant was given a copy of the participant information form, (see Appendix A) consent form (Appendix B) and a list of guiding questions (Appendix C) for the *talanoaga* after a thorough verbal explanation of the intended fieldwork. All participants were given pseudonyms, Ana, Eli, Laki, Selau, Misa, Nina, Fia, Uti, Gau, Pule, Oliva and Isa, to protect their real identities and ensure their anonymity.

3.7 *Va-nononofo* Ethical Issues

Although all the research participants were adults and highly capable of comprehending the nature of this qualitative study, there were ethical issues that needed to be adhered to and upheld. An ethics application, Number 07/229, was approved by AUTEK for this study.

Firstly, the site of the fieldwork required the researcher to follow culturally appropriate protocols which were guided by *vā-fealoa'i*, human relationships based on trust between the researcher and participants. The researcher obtained oral consent through *talanoaga* face-to-face with all participants. This is the most appropriate behaviour in the Samoan cultural setting, before the signing of the written consents.

All personal information about and from the participants or their families was to remain anonymous.

The participants were informed about the aims of the study in advance and the reasons for their selection to take part, prior to their approval. They were given a choice of language, Samoan or English, whichever they were most comfortable with using. Furthermore, the participants were given ample time to decide whether they chose to participate. Opportunity was provided to ask any questions relating to the fieldwork prior to beginning the *talanoa* process. The participants were assured of their rights to check, add, omit and edit any information that they gave. They were also told that the information they provided would be used only by the researcher for the sole purpose of this research.

For recording the *talanoaga*, all participants were asked for their permission. After six years the information will be destroyed. The *talanoaga* proceeded when participants were willing to sign the consent forms.

In the Samoan context, it is respectful to give a “*meaalofa*” or koha or gift even though it is not always expected, to someone who does a favour for you. Given the limited amount of time for data collection, the effort and commitment of the participants deserved great acknowledgement. For me as a Samoan researcher, it was most appropriate to acknowledge my participants through provision of some monetary gifts, food or a bouquet of flowers; whatever was most suitable for the particular participant.

Fa’amaoni (honesty) was the basis of our trust relationship and was held in high regard between the participants and the researcher.

3.8 *Talanoaga* Method of collecting data

Talanoaga was the method utilised to collect data for this qualitative study of “*fāgogo*” for pedagogical significances. *Talanoaga* was the recorded version of *talanoa* between the researcher and participants. A later analysis reviewed the *talanoaga*.

The reliability and validity of the data collected depends largely on the researcher’s approach to the participants, and the warm trusting relationship they have built (Otsuka, 2006). Since the topic under study involved life stories, I believe *talanoaga* was the most appropriate method. At the same time, my own involvement and understanding as an insider was a major factor in promoting accurate and truthful *talanoaga* with participants.

Talanoaga is a simply performed yet complex, everyday action, because it involves expression of *mana* (power), *iloa* (knowledge), and *lagona* (emotions). Moreover, there was an opportunity to interact, clarify and confirm information at the same time. In this culturally related fieldwork, I came to acknowledge that the simple actions I take for granted may be the most important and useful when used to reflect on my and others lives.

3.9 *Ta’iala* The guiding questions

The purpose of these questions (see Appendix C) was to guide and rekindle the participants’ interest in their experiences of *fāgogo*. The questions were used also as the method to keep *talanoaga* focused in order to most fully obtain the desired data. Some of the participants wrote answers for these questions and referred to them, now and then, to revive their lived experiences. These responses were explored further in the *talanoaga* during the live recording. The guiding questions were used to provoke both the thoughts and emotions of the participants.

3.10 *Taimi o talanoaga* *Talanoaga* with participants

Talanoaga took place once for each of the twelve participants. As the topic of research was exploring the *fāgogo* experiences of the participants, I realised the importance of sharing their emotions and their stories individually. I also considered the difficulty of bringing the participants together because of their age and status. Moreover these are life stories that would be more freely shared with emotion in a less crowded environment. The individual *talanoaga* was the most appropriate as many of the participants had numerous important work commitments, therefore were available at different times. However, as the *talanoaga* proceeded, I shared information that benefited from additional critique amongst participants from one *talanoaga* to another.

The participants' satisfaction with the project stemmed from a trust that their contribution of *tofā ma le fa'autaga i le aganu'u* (wisdom and knowledge of Samoan language and culture), based in their thought and emotion filled experiences of *fāgogo*, would better inform academia and thereby enlighten others of the benefits of *fāgogo*. At times, the researcher felt nervous about the possibility of being rejected by participants if I failed to communicate in a clear, respectful manner. To sustain trust, each participant was given a set of guiding questions for the recorded *talanoaga* later, or in some cases, immediately after our *talanoa*.

The *talanoaga* with participants were conducted at their work places or in their homes, depending on their availability and convenience. The atmosphere was always full of excitement, warmth, curiosity and encouragement expressed by both participants and the researcher. At first, there was casual talk to make both parties feel at ease before proceeding with the actual recording of the *talanoaga* based on the guiding questions. The interest of participants and the good relationships built were evident by the ready and eager participation. I noticed that *talanoaga* brought interest to the participants as they recalled, talked and critically discussed their lived experience and practice of *fāgogo* in the home. From the first few moments of *talanoaga*, even though I had less status than them, I was assured of their willingness and devotion to my work. Hence, the places of *talanoaga* were mostly undisturbed and peaceful, allowing for a sustained flow of their stories.

Sometimes at some participants' homes, we would only be disturbed when the wife, husband or children of the participants served tea or a meal for us. This was a very humbling experience, especially for me, who might be considered as a *fanau* (child) to my participants. The *alofa fa'amatua* (parental love) was evident in their facial expressions; and their talk where they downplayed themselves to *talanoa* with me in a friendly and respectful manner. That caused many cheerful emotions to arise in me.

One unforgettable memory of this study is when one participant even wrote from his hospital bed. This communication contained memories he was not able to recall on the day of our *talanoaga*, he said "*ia o nai mea ia ua toe manatua pe aoga i lau su'esu'ega, ae ua alofa atu i si au sa'iliga sau mamao, fa'amanuia tele le Atua i lou taumafai.*" In translation, "here are some things I recalled whether they are useful to your study, but I feel for you in your long journey here to do your research. God bless your endeavours." Upon receiving this, I had no doubt that there was *tapuaiga* or silent prayers and caring thoughts that my work would finally be completed. Moreover, I knew then that my work is required by my people. I also felt great humility in considering that the pleasant relationships with participants were a sign of hope for my success in achieving of the goals of this research.

There were moments of laughter, tears, sadness, regrets and all kinds of emotions during these *talanoaga*. Sometimes after turning off the recorder, *talanoaga* carries on for quite a while with more words of encouragement for me, and appreciation on the participants' side for opportunities to share their knowledge. For them it was an honour to be chosen. It was always hard to leave after a *talanoaga*, as for both me and participants it seemed that we had known each other for years, longing for more *talanoaga*. When appropriate, notes were also taken of gestures and emotions that could not be captured by the tape recorder.

At the end of *talanoaga*, I would offer a small monetary gift for the participants. Since I was only a student, away from my home and searching for knowledge that is of common interest, most participants respectfully rejected the small gifts. The refusal of participants

to take monetary gifts urged me to make other choices in the form of food or bouquets. Those other ways could not be refused. I insisted to offer *meaalofa* because their sacrifices were worth more than any amount of gift I might give.

The *meaalofa* comes from the researcher's heart and wish but not necessarily a must. In the *fa'aSamoa*, 'reciprocity' that can be explained in Samoan as *alofa fetufaa'i* is based on the *vā-fealoa'i* or respectful relationships. This relationship is founded on the mutual understanding that the beneficial acts you do for me should never go unnoticed. In the same way, I should give in return for our respect and love for each other. The small gifts for my participants were not a *totogi* or payment for the participants in their involvement as other cultures believe; rather it was a symbol of understanding and acknowledging the protocols of *fa'aSamoa*.

Usually before I left, the participants would say “*A i ai a se i si mea e mana'o ai feso'ota'i mai pe vala'au mai*” literally meaning “if there is anything else you need to know just come or call me”. I would leave without any doubts that the participants had given the best of what they had. Some participants further suggested books and named other people who might be interested in this work. Lastly, I would be given a *fa'amanuia* (blessing) “*ia fa'amanuia le Atua i lau galuega* ” this means “may the Lord bless your work”. In the Samoan context, a blessing from an elder is an assurance of satisfaction and wishes of good will that goes a long way with great significance and power.

Obviously, there was great interpersonal relationship between the researcher and participants. The observance of the *va-fealoa'i* (respectful relationship) between both parties developed confidence and trust in each other. In recognition of that, the researcher was not sceptical in any manner of the reliability and validity of the data collected during *talanoaga* in this study. Overall, I was humbled and overwhelmed by the generosity, love, patience and commitment given by the participants of this study.

3.11 *Fa'aliliuina auiliili* Transcription and data analysis

The written transcripts of all *talanoaga* were made by the researcher to facilitate the analysis process. In some *talanoaga* there was a mixture of the Samoan and English languages. Although there was a need for a person to transcribe because of time constraints for researcher, it was difficult to find a person who was available at the time. Without any choice the researcher transcribed all the *talanoaga*.

When the tape recorded *talanoaga* were transcribed, selecting some parts that would be included in the findings and analysis part of the study started. The data was categorized into main themes highlighted in the researchers' questions, as well as the themes that had emerged from the *talanoaga* with participants. The themes were again classified according to their consistency within every *talanoaga*.

In the desire to be accurate and not to lose the meaning of the participants' responses in Samoan, I use the exact words before their translations into English; these are used mainly in the results and analysis chapters of the thesis.

3.12 *Tuāoi o le talanoa* Limitations of *talanoa* approach

Talanoa approach seems simple on a surface glance, but if it is used in a culturally inappropriate and insensitive manner, it provides unreliable and invalid data. The researcher must have a deep understanding of the cultural values, beliefs and bases of knowledge of the place and participants to avoid any false interpretations of the data and information gathered. The researcher must speak the language of the participants, as well understanding the protocols in the cultural setting, and most importantly must be able to build a trusting relationship. This means that the in-depth knowledge of the participants' culture is a prerequisite to the successful use of *Talanoa* as a research approach.

The participants of *talanoa* must be carefully selected from those who hold in-depth knowledge of issues within the scope of the research so that the time of *talanoa* does not prolong into unnecessary talk. Researcher must constantly be aware and maintain a control of time and focus.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

4.1 *Fa'atomuaga* Introduction

The content of this chapter highlights the crucial role of *fāgogo* in *fa'afailelega* (nurturing) of the mind, body and soul of the Samoan child. Through *talanoaga* with the twelve experienced participants in this study, themes unfolded.

The stories from participants that were obtained by using guiding questions during the *talanoaga* are divided into common themes. The themes which are vital to *fa'afailelega* at an early age constitute the socializing and academic processes of *fāgogo*.

To begin with, the participants shared views about the sources of *fāgogo* and their common purpose. The main setting of *fāgogo* is highlighted as well as its traditional nature that aided in retaining its value in the Samoan context. The participants' responses then revealed commonalities in cultural and academic importance.

The participants' responses that focused on the significances of *fāgogo* in the *fa'afailelega* of Samoan children will be analysed further for pedagogical ideas in the next chapter. These pedagogical ideas from the context of *fāgogo* served as the focal point of this study. Moreover these significances are barely recognised by Samoan people.

4.2 *Tasi le a'uga* The Common purpose

The *tala o le po* in Samoa is known as *fāgogo* and/or *fāgono* according to the participants. Despite having numerous sources of *fāgogo*, *the tala o le vavau*, *tala tu'u*, *tala fatu*, *tala Tusi Paia* provided *gagana* (language), *tu ma aga* (behaviour) and *metotia* (skills) for the *faafailelega*.

The participants revealed many different perspectives that pointed to a common purpose. In Samoan culture, there is always room for different perspectives “*e maueseese Samoa*” or there are numerous versions of a story. The numerous *fāgogo* versions gain validity through concrete proof and other evidence. Participants consistently reported that all *fāgogo*, despite the variety of sources, contributed to a single purpose; the grounding of character.

Some participants traced back their responses to the missionaries’ work when speaking of the terminology ‘*fāgono*.’ However, use of *fāgogo* and *fāgono* is not as important as the stories that gave many lessons of being a Samoan person and living a Samoan life. Ana, one of the participants said:

“..fāgogo a e sau mai le fa’aSamoa lava ma lana gagana.e maua mai le gogo..ae o le “n” pei na fai mai fāgono, e mai misionale ma latou teachings..ia ae tutusa a, aua o tala moni, po’o ni tala fatu e a’oa’o mai ai” (16-01-08).

Translation.

Fāgogo is from the true Samoan language... it is from gogo (a bird) but the “n” in fāgono is from the missionaries and their teachings...well they are the same anyway... they are true or creative stories that we can learn from.

Eli however found that *fāgogo* and *fāgono* are stories of four birds and four rivers that are significant (10-01-08). These stories tell of the historical events and heritage of Samoan people. This view is supported by Laki when he said:

“...e eseese fuaitau a Samoa.. e lua mau..o fāgogo o se tala le moni...fa’amatala e fa’afiafia ai le fa’alogo.....o le fāgono o le tala moni..talatu’u, tala fa’amaugagana..o le api a le Samoa sa fa’aaoga aua sa leai se gagana tusitusi a Samoae kukusa... a folasaga ae eseese auga o mea e lua”(08-01-08).

Translation

There are two interpretationsmind you Samoans have different views. The fāgogo is not a true story... it is just a story to please the ears...the fāgono is a true story... a traditional story....the origin of words.... it is the book of knowledge for Samoans since there was no written language....they have the same structure but serve different purposes.

Selau believed that whatever the terminology used by the Samoan people, *fāgogo* or *fāgono* are especially for the children and are always told at night in an entertaining manner.

Selau:

“ ...ou te manatu lava o *fāgogo* a o *fāgono* foi, o le mea lava e tasi. O tala ia sa fatu e toeai'ina ma olomatutua e fa'afiafia ai tamaiti a'o faia se galuega...e leai se manatu autu pe sa'o pe sese ia tala ae sa faia lava e fa'afiafia ai tamaiti (14-01-08).”

Translation

..I think *fāgogo* and *fāgono* are the same....these are the stories created and told by old men and women as rewards for jobs done by their children....I would not say if they were true or not but they entertained the children very much.

The responses also revealed that *fāgogo* were not confined to traditional stories. At a young age, the Biblical teachings played a major role within the realm of the *fa'aSamoa* or Samoan culture. From time to time, Biblical stories were told as *fāgogo*. Nina's childhood included both traditional and Biblical *fāgogo*. She said:

“ Ia o le isi mea e rich ai lo'u backround, a ou sau i makua o lo'u kiga, o faifeau. Ia o makou *fāgogo* o Kavika ma Koliaka...o *fāgogo* o le kusi paia...ia o le mea lega e leai ma se kala o le kusi paia ou ke lei iloa (ata)...aua ua ground lelei ai a'u. Ia a alu fo'i la i le kiga o lou kama i Savai'i ia o kala o Nafanua..o Saveasi'uleo, o kala ga o lea iku.(.ata)(10-01-08).”

Translation:

When I went to my grandparents on my mother's side, who were church ministers, I got *fāgogo* of David and Goliath....biblical stories...that is how I had known lots of biblical stories (laughs) and was very well grounded on those. When I went to my father's side of family in Savai'i, we had *fāgogo* of Nafanua and Saveasi'uleo, the traditional ones, those were the *fāgogo* from that side (laughs).

The participants reported that *tala o le vavau*, *tala tu'u*, *tala fatu* as well as Biblical stories were part of the *fāgogo* in their childhood. Although *fāgogo* entertained, it also highlighted values and behaviour encouraged by *fa'aSamoa* for the child to respect, to learn, to cherish and to appreciate. *Fāgogo*, despite differences in interpretations served a common purpose of entertaining and at the same time teaching Samoan children.

4.3 *Itula of fāgogo* Hour of *fāgogo*

Fai-fāgogo The tellers

Whenever a *fāgogo* is told, the storyteller was as important as the *fāgogo* itself. The participants significantly revealed that *fāgogo* telling displayed the creative skills of the elders that amazed and satisfied them as well as other children. They also agreed that the tellers of *fāgogo* were usually the *tama'ita'i matua* (old ladies) in the family.

On every occasion, the teller usually tested the listeners before the *fāgogo*. In a loud voice the teller would ask “*e logofa'atutuila pe aue?*” this was asking the listeners whether they would prefer to *logofa'atutuila* (listen without interrupting) or respond frequently by saying “*aue*” (to exclaim) through out the *fāgogo*. By responding ‘*aue*’ the teller would assure that the listeners were still attentive. The elders’ tactics aimed to keep the young ones entertained and alert at the same time.

Fia and Ana pointed to the significant role of the old ladies in telling *fāgogo* however there was also room for the old men according to other participants.

Fia:

Ia o tagata matutua na muamua o'u fa'alogo ai i fāgogo o tuafafine matutua o lo'u tama, o lo'omatutua na e omai I lo matou fale ona talatalanoa a lea ma fai ai ma matou fāgogo, o nisi taimi o le lo'omatua o le matou aiga sa fai ma matua tausi o lo'u tama (01-01-08)."

Translation:

The first people that I used to hear *fāgogo* from were my aunts, my father's sisters. They usually come to our place and then talk amongst them and later on we had our *fāgogo*. Sometimes, it was an old lady of our family who we referred to as our grandmother

Ana:

" o le tina o lo'u tama sa fai ma ana galuega, ole lo'omatua o lana masani lea..e pei o se tau'i lea o a matou feau..o mai si a'u fanau e o e la'u mai le oneone e tanu ai le mea lea..aua o nanei fo'i fai le fāgogo... o i si taimi e le fai mai ae matou o lava la'u mai aua matou te manana'o i le fāgogo...e le mafai ona galo ..(solo loimata)ia e fa'aaoga uma leo eseese...o le intonation o le leo, fegauaiainao le leo, e le monotonous.. e pei o Pat Mamaia, .. I guess o lona foi experience mai lona tina..(16-01-08)."

Translation

...my grandmother was doing this job...she always does this as a reward for our work each day she would say.....go and get some sand to spread here..and tonight we will do the fāgogo... sometimes we would not ask but just get the sand because we want the fāgogo at night...I will not forget..(wipe tears)...she uses all kinds of voices...the intonation of the voice..it is not monotonous...just like Pat Mamaia (famous fāgogo teller),..I guess it was an experience from his grandmother.

Misa

“... *Ia o si lo’omakua po’o si koeaiga a e faia...aua foi a fia ku’i vae ona valaau lea...la’a fai le fāgogo.. pei o le a le sau o le kuli... kiga a ga fa’amakala fa’afia le fāgogo ae pei a e fou i le fa’alogo i kaimi uma e fai ai....kalofa e...ua makua misi a ga mea i gei aso..(maligi loimata)..(31-12-07).”*

Translation

Well...the old lady and sometimes the old man does it...when they need to massage their legs they call out...it is time for fāgogo...everybody comes running near the teller...even if this is the fāgogo we heard before..it is always like a new one to us. We miss out a lot these days..(tears).

Nina also highlighted that the old ladies or fāgogo tellers not only gave fāgogo as rewards for their childrens’ daytime chores but sometimes they created fāgogo that taught children about unacceptable habits, attitudes and behaviour in the Samoan community and fa’aSamoa.

Nina:

“ *Ai e vaai pea le lo’omakua a ai makou kolo e fa’apaepae solo a ..Ia fai le fagogo a le lo’omakua I le loi....o si loi ma si loi sa alu le la Malaga, kau aku I le auala o paepae pa’ukolo, sa aki e keige ma kama...(ata) ia ae rhyme, ae o le a’oao’oga o kaika, ia e fai fai a keu I loka mafaufau, akili la pe aka alaku o la e kumu mai ai loi, ia ga ka iloa lea oi e sa’o a si lo’omakua e le kakau oga koe fa’apaepae. Ia o le isi mea fai mai o le loi e koaga...Ka ke le’i iloa iga kaimi o kala ia o le kusi paia ae vaai i le symbolism, ga lea e pick up e le kamaikiiki, like I did, o gei mea uma lea e fai ai loka character. Vaai I le beauty o fāgogo, le subtle o le learning process la e i ai (10-01-08).”*

Translation:

.... The old lady sees us eating sugarcane and throws them everywhere, so she makes the fagogo about the ants.Two ants go on a trip, on their way they find eaten sugarcane laying everywhere, thrown away by girls and boys...(laughs)...it rhymes...and it was done to teach us. We learn from it, especially when we come across a piece of sugarcane full of ants then we think about the old lady and what she was trying to teach us. They say

the ant is a smart creature...I did not know that these are Biblical stories at the time, but look at the symbolism that the children pick up like I did. These are the things that shaped my character. The beauty of fāgogo also has a subtle learning process in it.

The participants value the role of the fāgogo tellers particularly in the application of all their senses and imaginations to entertain the listeners. From the experiences remembered by the participants as children, the voice, gestures and emotions of telling fāgogo were the most beloved memories of their fāgogo times. Tolu stated in the talanoaga “o le kagaka e active, maka, guku, lima, gaoiga a le kigo o mea sili ia oga magaia ia a’u ia,” this means that the active person, the facial expressions, and body gestures was the most interesting part of fāgogo. In fact all participants agreed that the tellers of the fāgogo during their childhood were indeed entertaining, creative, and had great sense of humour.

Some participants decided to continue the role of becoming fāgogo tellers as a result of the great experiences of their childhood.

For participants like Fia, fāgogo tradition must be passed on to her own children.

Fia:

“..O fāgogo e fa’amatala i la’u fanau ua ou iloa ai le fiafia tele e fa’alogo i se mea e logo malie ma fiafia ai le mafaufau...o le entertainment value.. a’o la foi ua amata fa’agaioi ai le mafaufau ia (07-01-08).”

Translation.

When I share fāgogo with my children, I realized that it is not only the joy of giving pleasure to the soul but also to the mind....so it is the entertainment value. At the same time, the brain is also imagining things.

Uti, one of the interviewees who presented fāgogo on the radio, believed that even though fāgogo may be given in a different setting, the same skills of fāgogo telling still applied. The participants revealed that the task of fāgogo telling over the radio also resonated with the elders. Uti replied “e mamalu a fāgogo pe a voice e se tagata matua” this means that fāgogo are more sacred when told by an elderly person. Uti also reported that the radio experience gave her the realization that fāgogo is a form of general entertainment in its own right and has a huge impact on the listeners regardless of their age. Uti believed that

there are other reasons why *fāgogo* is an interest to many Samoan people from different generations. She said:

“ ..o *fāgogo* ou te talitonu e le na o ni mea fa’afiafia.. they are educative, and informative...mo nai o tatou tagata. e a’oa’o ai tagata o se atunu’u aemaise lava tamaiti, i..a..sa ou matauina mai i lau galuega ..i tagata Samoa e fiafia i *fāgogo*.. ona ou manatu lea e tatau ona i ai se isi e fa’aauauina...aua ua ou iloa e fiafia tele tatou i tala mai anamua.. e le gata i le au matutua ae curious fo’i le au laiti.. (16-01-08).”

Translation:

I believe that *fāgogo* is not just for pure entertainment but they are educative and informative for our own people... to teach citizens of a country especially the children. I saw from my own work that Samoan people love to hear *fāgogo* from the old days...it is not only the elders but the young ones are curious as well.

Uti also recalled that she was asked many times by the listeners why there was no *fāgogo* on the radio when it was suppose to be done, “ e misi loa le *fāgogo* vili aku loa ..o tagata matutua, o tamaiti.. aisea ua leai ai se *fāgogo*..ua leva na nonofo si a’u fanau e faatali...” this means when the *fāgogo* is not done, people rang up asking why the *fāgogo* was not done and that the children had been waiting.

The participants have reiterated in their responses that *fāgogo* has been the task for the elders including the grandparents but usually the *tamaita’i matua* or *olomatua* (old ladies). In their own childhood, the cheerful and creative skills of telling *fāgogo* effectively inspired children to become closer to their *matua tausī* or grand parents, and elders of their families especially the *olomatua*. The responses also indicated that the elders provided *fāgogo* with enthusiasm as rewards for their childrens’ tasks of the day and in appreciation while messaging the elder’s feet and backs.

4.4 *Po mo fāgogo* The night time

Fāgogo was told only at night. I also grew up to experience the significance of the *po* in *fāgogo* telling while I lay beside my grandmother in peace with an environment full of love and care. The soul completely felt light as if a new force has entered to remove the

pain and stress of the day. “*O ai e fia fa’alogo i se fāgogo*” (who wants *fāgogo*) this was the voice the children had longed for. “*O a’u, o a’u*” (me) each of us would reply as loud as one could, so that the *olomatua* would hear your voice and start with your favourite *fāgogo*. One by one our bodies, minds and souls drift into the peace of the night.

The participants agreed with Aiono that *fāgogo* was an attraction at night. Aiono (2005) pointed out that there is an appropriate time for *fāgogo* in the Samoan context.

‘Silasila fo’i, o le itula taua tele e fai ai fāgono, ua uma galuega o le aso; ua maea tapuaiga e ula ai afi ma faamusaesae fanaafi o faamalama; uma talisuaga, a o lea ua fofola fala ma tatau siapo. O le itula faatoa taoto ai ma falo, faasaosao itu tino sa soona faagaoioi i feau ma le amoga o avega. Lenei ua faagalegalemoe ma nofogofie mauli o le au fa’alogologo’ (Aiono 2005, p. 164)

Translation:

The crucial time of *fāgono*, is after the day’s work, after evening prayers where fireplaces are fanned to bring more light. After meals, when the sleeping mats are spread out and *tapa* cloths are hung. It is the time of lying down and stretching, straightening the parts of the body that were over stretched with chores and carrying of loads. Now we are about to sleep and the listeners’ nerves are in place and steady.

Aiono spoke of the crucial role of the night in *fāgogo* telling. She stressed the significant timing of *fāgogo* in the lives of Samoan people. Apparently, the participants’ responses also marked the time and place of *fāgogo*. The *po* has been set aside in the daily living of the Samoan people especially the children for their *fāgogo*.

The participants also indicated that it was not unusual to tell *fāgogo* at another time of the day but from their own childhood experiences, the main setting for *fāgogo* was the *po* after meals, while getting ready to sleep. On other occasions the children were entertained while doing a favour like ‘*tu’i*’ or ‘*lomi*’ (massage) for their elders as Laki recalled.

“.. o le fāgogo o le mea lava e fai i le po..aemaise lava pe a fia tu’itu’i vae o le toeaina pe lomilomi vae o le lo’omatua ia pe tu’i le tua.....fai loa lea o le tala ae fa’asaga tamaiti fai le galuega seia o’o lava ina fia moe le toeaina pe ua fia momoe foi tamaiti. . O nisi taimi ua fai tala o lona aiga,

po'o le vai, po'o le nu'u...ia a'o le taimi lea ua amata fo'i ona fa'alogoma taofi ai e tamaiti mea o lo latou aiga (08-01-08)."

Translation:

fāgogo is done at night.. when the old men and women need a massage on the legs or the back...they will tell the fagogo while the children carry out their tasks until either of them feels sleepy. Sometimes stories are told of the family history or about the river or about the village...and at the same time children are absorbing information about their families

The other important point given by the participants was that *fāgogo* was almost the only form of entertainment at night before most families received or purchased televisions and radios. Misa recalled his own time of *fāgogo*

"...ia o taimi a o le afiafi, uma mea'ai, fa'atao'oto moega..ia taimi e leai ni t.v. tau leai fo'i ni leitio i le matou nu'u. Ia o le taimi lena e saili ai le vaega a le tagata ia e taoto atu ai I tafatafa o le toea'ina ma le olomatua ae sei faamatala le fagogo (31-12-07)."

Translation

.... it was always done at night ..after our evening meals..getting ready for bed..there were no t.v's. (television) hardly any radio in our village. Well, that was the time to look for your own space near the teller for the fāgogo.

One participant added that *fāgogo* at night was also used by his father to put him to sleep while he sought entertainment for himself. Eli recalled that by giving him the *fāgogo* his father would put him to sleep early before he could sneak out for a night of fun with other elders.

" e lua pe tolu itu sa fa'aaoga ai e lo'u tama le fāgogo. A mana'o e lomi vae pe futi sina o lona ulu... a le o le na fo'I pe ua fia sola i le suiipi a toea'ina ma evaga o le po, ona fai loa: lea o se fāgogo malie..e le umi ae ou moe loa..ona alu loa lea o le toaina..e poto tele si ali'i e fai lana togafiti (ataata fiafia) (10-01-08)."

Translation

There are two or three ways that my grandfather used fāgogo. When he wanted a massage..or to pluck grey hair from his head or when he wanted to escape to a game of cards and be with other elderly friends at night... he would tell a sweet fāgogo...and before he knew it I was fast asleep then he went...he was good at tricks..(giggles).

The moment of *fāgogo* was always fun-filled, inspiring and motivating for the participants. The night time of *fāgogo* was crucial in rewarding and appreciating of the childrens' efforts throughout the day in the Samoan context. The participants agreed that there was no better time for their own *fāgogo* than hearing them at night. It is also

important to note that in the participants' childhoods the usual form of entertainment readily available for them was *fāgogo* from the elders at night.

4.5 *Fāgogo e tu'utaliga* Nature of *fāgogo*

Fāgogo tu'utaliga refers to the orality of *fāgogo* or expressing *fāgogo* in spoken form as oppose to written *fāgogo*. *Tu'utaliga* is a combination of two words, *tu'u* in this context means to release and *taliga* means ears, so *tu'utaliga* in simple words means releasing into the ears. The oral nature of *fāgogo* has long been a tradition for the Samoan people, and in that manner, *fāgogo* resonates its rhythm.

The *fāgogo* as an invaluable component of oral tradition in Samoa has undergone documentation for the past thirty years but a transcript of oral *fāgogo* should never be perceived as the art of its entirety (Mayer, as cited in Nunes, 2006, p. 32). In this sense, even though the art of *fāgogo*, now has an alternative in writing, people must recognize that literature does not exist only on paper. The totality of *fāgogo* presentation was in its oral nature as the participants affirmed in the responses. Through listening to the variation of the voice brought emotions and feelings that touched the soul, and prompted anticipation for more as Ana explained in her response.

“.. o le faamatalaina, aemaise i leo eseese, o lagona eseese, o lona uiga e fa'atupu lagona. O le i si kaimi ua e le makua fiamoe a..a aue so'o foi se I si ua e ika ua le lagoga ai le kala..sometimes you even cry..e ke fa'anoanoa..you always feel the emotions even as a child. O le fa'amakala o le fagogo o le mea piko sili lea oga kua aua o iga o lo'o I ai le malie, o le mea fo'I lega e fiafia ai la ka ika fa'alogo ma saga maga'o pea e fai so'o ma fai pea fāgogo a le olomakua (16-01-08).”

Translation:

it is the actual telling, the different voices, the different feelings that means, it bring about emotions. Sometimes you don't feel like going to sleep, when someone repeatedly says aue! you get annoyed because you could not hear...sometimes you even cry..you feel sad...you even feel the emotions even as a child. The telling nature of the fagogo is the most exciting for me, because in there I experience enthusiasm and inspiration...then anticipating for more fāgogo from the old lady.

One participant said that his childhood experience of *fāgogo* gave an understanding and knowledge of skills that can now be applied to his own career. The greatness of *fāgogo* from Eli's childhood experience was being able to see, hear and participate in the moments of *fāgogo* with the elders. He believed that reading about a *fāgogo* does not bring real emotions as in the *fāgogo tu'utaliga*.

Eli:

“ So'o se fāgogo e fa'amatala gutu, o le fa'alogo lea ua tapena mai, ia lelei la'u matau ia ma pu'e i le faiai ia maua, ia ma ou maua a aga foi ia pei o le fesui'ai'ga o lona leo o lo'o omai fa'atasi ma lagona eseese faaletagata. E le mafai ona ou maua mai na mea I se tusi fāgogo na ona faitau e pei ona I ai nei I tusi. Ua o'o foi la I la'u galuega ua ou iloa lelei le mea e fiafia ai tamaiti (10-01-08).”

Translation:

Every time a *fāgogo* is told there is a desire to listen more and more. The oral *fāgogo* prepares me to listen... be good at observing and absorbing messages. It also teaches me voice variations that relate to human emotions. I can not get that from reading *fāgogo* in a book like we do now. In my own work, I know exactly what the children like.

The *fāgogo tu'utaliga* as revealed also by Gai, appealed to the listeners despite differences in language and identities. As a *fāgogo* teller to others who are non Samoan Gai responded that:

“Ia o le faamakalaga lava, e o'o foi i la'u vasega lea palagi..le Samoan as second language ia a o'o gei ina fa'amakala fāgogo in English..ia e ese foi le fia fa'alogologo o lakou ia....ia a o'o gei iga fa'amakala le kala ia Sina ma lana tuna ia ua ka vaai aku ua fekagisi..ua maligiligi ifo loimaka ina ua fai le dying wish a..a ai foi lea a le tuna..a...(ata) so o le mea la lega, o la e fa'alogologo mai i le faiga o upu ma le facial expression...ia o iga fo'i e makua lagoga fo'i e lakou ia..e makua fekagisi a ...o le fa'amaogiga lega o le kaua o le ku'ukaliga o fagogo, kusa pe le o oe o se Samoa e ke lagoga mai le fa'amakalaiga... a.. ia ou ke iloa o le mogi o le vaai mai i le kagaka mogi lea e fai aku le kala..gai lo le faikau ai a ea (21-01-08).”

Translation:

Well it is the way it is told, even my class with palagi,(Europeans) that is Samoan as a second language. When I translate *fāgogo* in English....they are very keen to listen... especially when the story of Sina and the eel is told....they cried...I saw tears when the story tells of the eels' dying wish...(grins)...they hear how words are used, the facial expression.....so from that they could really feel the emotions...they shed tears...that proves the significance of *fāgogo* telling, even if you are not a Samoan,

you will feel the emotions through the telling. I think it is seeing the real person telling it that makes it more real than reading about it.

As discussed by Rumsey (2001), the works of theorists such as Eric Havelock, Marshall McLuhan and Walter Ong characterized primary orality as additive rather than subordinative. The authors' idea simply means that oral traditions should not be replaced. Replacement of oral ritual by other form of communicative practices loses the authenticity in expression. *Fāgogo tu'utaliga* as pointed out by the participants highlighted the excitement of their *fāgogo* experiences as young children. Listening to the intonations of voices in *fāgogo* inspired their feelings and emotions. In addition, basic academic skills of listening, observing and thinking were established at a very early age.

4.6 Matega “Tagi le fāgogo,” Chanting the fāgogo, the guessing game

“*Tagi a le fāgogo*” is an expression of *fāgogo* telling when the teller changes the telling into chanting in order to bring the message of the *fāgogo* into the attention of the listeners. Highlighted in the participants' responses was *tagi a le fāgogo* that portrayed the nature of Samoan chiefs' *matematega-tupua* or guessing game. *Tagi a le fāgogo* is about meaning. Through poetic rhythm, the *fāgogo* at its best thrills the minds and souls of the audience (Aiono, 2005).

Aiono presented in her book “*La ta gagana*” meaning ‘our language’ the layout of *fāgogo* where *tagi a le fāgogo* is described as a more exciting way of presenting key messages to the listeners (Aiono, 2005). The messages must pass on to the ears and souls of youngsters at this crucial time of nurturing the whole person. *Tagi le fāgogo* is a unique way of *fāgogo* telling because it makes the listeners search deeper into their imaginations for meaning. Fia, one of the participants vividly remembered the amusing moments of *tagi a le fāgogo*.

“...(ata) ia e ese le malie fo'i o lena mea..a ta nofo ma fa'apea po'o le a tonu a le uiga o le upu lea tagi... ia aua a tagi loa le fāgogo ..o le chant

a..it is a chant...na e fa'alogo loa lea ua ese le gagana la ua sau ai, a ua sau ae i ai lona beat..e i ai lona musical beat...lea la'a sau...e o'o fo'i la i le faiga o le gagana a..e rhythmical fo'i..e sau fo'i ua i ai lona rythym lena e le'i i ai muamua..ae a e fa'alogo loa la i le uiga o upu ia la'a fai mai I le tagi lea e.e..iloa ai e eseese ituaiga chants..pei o le lament...tagi ua fa'anoanoa ona o se mea ua tupu ia te ia..a..o le isi pei o le tagi fa'aulaula..fa'aamuamu..a'o le isi tagi ia te a'u e pei e faigata la..o le tagi lea e pei e camouflage ai se message. E pei e i ai se surface meaning ae tanu ai ni mea lilo....it is a guessing game..o uiga loloto ia o fāgogo e le tatau ona aveese (07-01-08).”

Translation:

(laughs) well..it is funny ...I ask myself many times...what does it mean by crying the fāgogo...because when they say that,it is a chant...then you hear a different language, there is a musical beat added...it comes with a rythym that was not there before....and when you listen to the words..you can tell that there are different types of tagi...like lament....cry of sadness when something happens...the other one is a cry of contempt,..mockeryand the other difficult one for me is the cry that... is trying to camouflage a message...that there is a surface value but hiding deeper meanings.. .it is a guessing game...these are the depths of fāgogo we must never throw away.

The *tagi a le fāgogo* for some participants is always a reminder of the *mafutaga* with *matua* and *olaga* (life) in the past that could never be erased from the memories. Pule, Misa and Gaui shared these responses of how *tagi a le fāgogo* revealed the uniqueness of *fāgogo* in their past and how it brought back memories at the present time.

Pule:

“...Na ou alu I le ofisa o Roy (le o le igoa moni) ae tu'u ane ai tape o fāgogo sa ia pu'eina i Samoa,o le lo'omatua o le matou aiga...ia e tele le mau sa I ai foi I lea loomatua (malolo ma mafaufau).ae ina ua fai mai fāgogo ma tagi mai fagogo..e le mafai ona tuua... ua e toe foi I lou talavou ma mea o lea e ola pea...o mea la na e le tasi se mea o lo'o u'unaia ai a'u e fa'aolaola mea na e pei o fāgogo, ae o a'u a ia o lea ou te taumafai aua o....o tatou o Samoa. A o'o ina tagi le fagogo e le mafai ona e ai upu aua e solosolo malie lona faiga (14-01-08).”

Translation:

I went to Roy's(not real name) office one day and he gave me a tape of fāgogo that he recorded in Samoa.... the old lady who was the teller was a relative of mine....she was rich in tradition (pause and think)... and when I heard the chant of fāgogo..I would not want to leave. You will go back to your past ...and things that are still alive in you. There are many reasons that push me to revive these traditions like fāgogo...and I am still trying...because we are Samoans.....When the fāgogo chants, you can not swallow the words because it flows gently.

Misa:

“..O se tasi mea pito malie i le taimi o fāgogo o le taimi o le a tagi ai loa le fāgogo.. e usu le pese fa’atosotosololoa a...ia ua ta fa’alogologo ai...a o’o ina tagi le fāgogo ua usu le pese...pei e ta’u mai ai se lagona ua i ai se mea ua tupu pei la o le tagi lea a le isi fagogo... (usu le pese)

Tafitofau ma Ogafau

Galulue le mafaufau

O o’u mata nei e fai ai o luau.

Ia e pei a ua ta vaai atu a i nei mea uma... e ese le malie o leo o le toaina pe a tagi le fāgogo (31-12-07).”

Translation:

One of the most beautiful times is the moment of chanting the fāgogo... it is singing gently... I used to hear that. Chanting the fāgogo is to sing it ...like it is trying to tell a feeling that something has happened, just like this chant...(sing softly)

Tafitofau and Ogafau

Working without brains

Here are my eyes made into luau (luau is food made from taro leaves and coconut cream)

It is just like I see it actually happen..... it is so beautiful when the old man chants the fāgogo.

Gau:

“..o le climax lea o le fāgogo.. e ese foi le gagana...ese fo’i lou leo..a chant fo’i ..a o’o i le mea e kakau ona sui ai o leo...e sui ...ae a o’o foi I le mea e sui ai lagoga o le kagaka e kakau fo’I oga sui....e ke kagi..e ke aka...(21-01-08).”

Translation:

that is the climax of the fāgogo. It has a different language and a different voice...when it is chanted...you have to change your voice when you have to. When you need to change the feelings of people...you do it...you laugh and .you cry.

According to the participants, the *tagi a le fāgogo* was the best part because the harmonious tunes were full of humour and emotions for the listeners. The rhythm, words and emotions have a hidden message that the listeners must find themselves. The *tagi a le fāgogo* characterises the unique nature of *fāgogo* telling in the Samoan context. As one participant explained that the *tagi* is like a guessing game. In the *tagi*, the listeners experience *malie* (pleasure). The *tagi a le fāgogo* was also important for the participants as a way of remembering the past, especially the times spent with *matua*. The interviewees agreed that the skills expressed in *tagi a le fāgogo* make the stories of the night unique to Samoan people.

4.7 *Fāgogo ma le fa'asinomaga* The identity

Gagana Language

When one has knowledge and understands their first *gagana*, they empathize with *fāgogo* of their culture and finds pride in them. *Gagana* is inseparable from *fa'asinomaga* or identity. Mutu suggested in the study of *Researching Pacific people*, that the only true way to access the knowledge about who we are, is through the language that defines us” (Mutu, 2004, p. 56).

Tupua Tamasese (2008), in his address to the Maori and Pacific Leadership programme at Auckland University pointed to the significance of Samoan rituals that capture and celebrate our worldviews and values, our sense of place and identity. Tupua referred to the value of language in understanding and naming our worlds, the appreciation of what we have that are most essential in accepting our identity.

Speaking of language, the *fāgogo* is a source of language derived from the oral tradition of Samoan people that defined who they are. The participants Nina and Laki in describing Tupua’s concern further agree that the *utuvagana* of *fagogo* teaches Samoan children about their place and their identity.

Nina:

“ O fāgogo o le kasi lea auala o lo’o fa’aolaola ai le identity o le kamaikiiki Samoa, lo’o avaku i fagogo le a’oa’oga o values, principles, skills...le va-fealoa’i, le va-kapuia a..skills uma gei lea e ke maua ii. Ia a’oa’o le kamaikiiki ia usika’i ma fa’alogo, e muluai kuu aku le kaimi e kaukala ai ae muamua fa’alogo. O le olaga ga o le kamaikiiki Samoa and that’s the key to learning, e koko mai iiga basic values, basic principles a so’o se akugu’u mai aga kala ma fāgogo, e le ke’ike’i fai, aua e kakau ona fa’afailele mai le kamaikiiki i lona laikiki, i loga identity. Ga ground mai a’u I gei mea o o’u laikiki, mai fāgogo. I was lucky I le ikuaiiga backround ga ou ola a’e ai a’u ia. Ou ke mafaufau pea i ai, e o’o lava I legei kaimi....gee...what wisdom he had!”(soloi loimata)(10-01-08).

Translation:

Fāgogo is one way of reviving the identity of the Samoan child. The teaching of values, principles, skills, the respectful relationships, the sacred relationships, you will find all of these in here. The child must be taught to obey and listen, later she/he will be given a time to talk but have to listen first. That is the life of a Samoan child and that is the key to

learning. Stories and *fāgogo* is where basic values, basic principles of any culture is grounded, that is why they are done and because the child's identity must be well nurtured in an early age. I was grounded on these things when I was young through the *fāgogo* I heard that secured my identity. I consider myself very lucky in the upbringing I had. I think about it all the time even now.....gee..what wisdom he had!! (wiping tears

Laki:

“ E kakau oga muamua iloa e le kama ma le keige Samoa aga fāgogo, kalaku’u o lona gu’u ma loga aiga, suafa makai o lona aiga , o fea kogu fagua o lakou, kuaoi, o ai le suafa makai o loga aiga... e kakau oga iloa gafa o aiga. O mea ia e auala mai I fagogo ma e kakau oga mauku lau aia kakau fa’aSamoa..ua saosaoa kele le aia kakau mai fafo. O i e fofoa mai ai le identity o le kamaikiiki Samoa (0-01-08).”

Translation:

The Samoan girl and the Samoan boy must know his or her *fāgogo* first and foremost, the legends of the family, the stories of the village, the chief titles of the family, the land boundaries of the family, these are the things he or she must know. Those things are given in *fāgogo* which helps to consolidate your rights as a Samoan child. It is here that the identity of a Samoan child is grounded. These days the rights from outside have taken over so quickly.

When the identity of a person is grounded firmly at an early age, the sense of belonging and pride in one's identity remains secure for life. *Fāgogo* provides a significant source of *utuvagana* (vocabulary) through legends and genealogies that gave Samoan people their *fa’asinomaga*, *alofa i le aganu’u* (love of culture) and *mitamita* (pride) in their own language and Samoan *tupuga* (heritage). The participants agreed that *fāgogo* imparts crucial *gagana* that creates and consolidates the Samoan child's cultural identity.

4.8 Mafutaga mafana ma Matua Bonding with Matua

The *po fāgogo* is an important setting where relationship is enhanced in the *fa’aSamoa*. *Matua* in Samoa refers to the parents, grandparents and all other older relatives of the same age group, who mostly stay home with young children. During *po fāgogo* with elders, the *mafutaga mafana* is created where children share, communicate, and exchange

stories with their elders. As one participant puts it “*the Samoan child is born into a golden world of having multi parents*” (Nina 10-01-08).

The participants confirmed in their stories that the desire for the elders to build a close relationship with their young children is created through *fāgogo*. Likewise, the children are taught to have *alofa* (love) and *faaaloalo* (respect) for their elders.

As Selau recalled:

“I believe that the central element in the development of Samoan fāgogo or mythology, is the desire of the elderly to have a very close friendly relationship with their young ones, through the personal touch of their (children) hands in the messaging. This makes the elderly feel good and also makes them fall asleep quite easily. Sometimes they (elderly) fall asleep before their young ones, and sometimes vice versa. But the effort of the elderly to create more and more stories, is a grateful gesture on their part to their children or grandchildren for the job well done. Very often the young ones are never tired of doing the “tu’itu’i” or “lomilomi” (message) the back or feet of their elders when they are taken by the deep interest in the legends or simple stories (their fāgogo) (17-01-08).”

Oliva and Gaui added that the strong relationship is indicated by the *fa’atuatua* (trust) built between them at all times. Furthermore, *fāgogo* revived memories of the past where close relationship with elders is valued.

Oliva:

“ e ave le fāgogo ma auala e mafanafana ai le mafutaga ma le fanau, o taimi ia e fa’asoa ai matua ma fanau, e pipi’i tamaitiiti i matua ae talitonuina fo’i e matua fanau (06-01-08).

Translation:

The *fāgogo* is one way of building that warm relationship between the children and parents, grandparents and elders. This is the time to share, the children come closer to the elders and the elders trust their children as well.

Gau:

“ o le isi mea pito sili ona taua o le toe fo’i i le past, o le ave I tua o lou mafaufau I le taua o le past po’o le revival of the past. Koe kepa I kua ma le auala sa fofoa ai oe e ou makua. Appreciating the past. E mamafa ma fa’ataua le mafutaga po’o le close relationship with grandparents..e pele ai pea latou (21-01-08).”

Translation:

One crucial point of having *fāgogo* is the significance of the past...the revival of the past. Looking back at the way our parents raised us, appreciating the past. Valuing the close relationship with grandparents, who are always dear to us.

The participants revealed also that during the *po fāgogo*, a very close relationship with *matua* was established. There was great respect for elders as being the sources of *tomai* (knowledge) for *fa'afaiilelega* and entertainment for the young children. The participants also highlighted that the valuing of relationship within the family was a product of having the time to spend with each other sharing feelings and emotions. The *matua* in their role as *fāgogo* tellers brought themselves closer to the young children and hence loved and respected.

4.9 .*Talitonuga fa'aSamoa* Samoan perceptions

The Samoan people have their own knowledge of the origins of their world. These origins in history are believed to be stored and passed on through *fāgogo* as agreed upon by the participants. Traditional *fāgogo* gives knowledge that enables Samoan people to perceive and interpret the environment from the Samoan perspective. Without profound knowledge and understanding of *fagogo*, a Samoan can not explain and interpret the 'world' from a Samoan perspective. The participants reiterated in their responses the importance of having known the *fāgogo* as explained by Fia in the *talanoaga*.

“ O le fa'avae o fāgogo, sa fa'atalanoa ai iina tatou perceptions of the world. The cosmogony, o fea na tatou o mai ai, why are we here, e fa'afefea ona tatou interpret le environment. O tala o le vavau e amata mai ai iina ona iloa e tagata Samoa, there is a different way of perceiving things, mai le perception fa'awestern, e ese fo'i latou perceptions. A'e tago e faauiga mai tala i le va o matua ma fanau, va o tamaloloa ma fafine, concept of romantic love or compassion or whatever..ae tago e fa'auiga mai i totonu o tala fa'aSamoa, e ese mai lava fo'i i tala mai isi atunuu..you know there is a whole richness of meaning in there that is really really interesting (07-01-08).”

Translation:

The basis of *fāgogo*, is the opportunity to learn about our perceptions of the world. The cosmogony, where do we come from? Why are we here? How do we interpret the environment? Our myths and legends is the

stating point of how we (Samoans) know that there is a different way of perceiving things from the western perception, they have their own perceptions. If you look for meaning from stories about parents' relationship with children, men and women, concept of love or compassion or whatever.. you will find different interpretations of stories in Samoa and from other cultures...you know there is a whole richness of meaning in there that is really really interesting.

Fia believed that as a Samoan who lives in Samoa, it is necessary to uphold the *fāgogo* of how Samoan people comprehend their world and how that makes them unique from others. The knowledge and understanding of the *fāgogo* about the origins and value of ancestral history not only enables Samoan people to critique other knowledge but bring meaningful explanations to their own perceptions of the world.

4.10 *Metotia fa'alea'oa'oga* Cognitive skills

***Tamaiti* Children**

As revealed from the participants' childhood experiences of *fāgogo*, the setting was specifically informal however *fāgogo* is an invaluable asset for Samoan children in the classroom. The participant expressed in their own stories of their childhood that *fāgogo* are presented with skills necessary and are required for academic learning.

The participants disclosed many vital skills, learned from the informal settings of *fāgogo* that are demanded in the classrooms. Fia explained that the concept of story is taught as well as active listening and being imaginative.

“Ou te iloa o le mea muamua lava e a’oina mai fāgogo o lona iloa o le mea e ta’u o le tala, o le a fa’amatala atu la’u tala ia ona fai loa lea o le fāgogo. Ia o le tala e i ai lona amataga, ogatotonu ma lona fa’aiuga, afai e I ai se tagi a le fāgogo e te taua ai, afai e I ai sona a’oa’oga e te taua ai fo’i. O mea uma la na e mafai ona a’oina e le tamaititi I le taimi lea na o le fa’alogo a, ua fai fo’i lau fanau ma fai ai fāgogo ua ta iloa ai le fiafia o le tamaititi e fa’alogo. O fāgogo fo’I e matua maatiati ai le vaai fa’alemafaua a le tamaititi. E pei la o lou fai atu o Aloaloolela afa tagata afa saualii, ona mafaua lea o le tamaititi pe faapei foliga o lea tagata (07-01-08).”

Translation:

“I think fāgogo teaches the children about a story... I am going to tell you a story... then tell a fāgogo. The story has an introduction, a body and a conclusion, if there is a chant, do it, if there is a message then tell the children. These are the first things you can teach the children at the crucial time of listening. I have children that I tell fāgogo to, and it is there that I pick up childrens’ eagerness to listen. I also think that fāgogo fires imagination. For example, when you tell the story of Aloaloolela, a person that is half deity and half human, children try hard to imagine what that person would look like.

Nina and Ana also highlighted other significant skills as well as the basic Samoan philosophy of giving fāgogo to Samoan children at a very early age. The basic skills such as observing, thinking, patience and self-motivation have been emphasized. For Ana, listening to fāgogo built imaginations well before she attended school.

Nina:

“ia vaai la oe..e cultivate mai ai le hunger of le kamaikiiki e learn, e inculcate mai ai I lega early age ia skills la gei, they are not only basic social skills, very basic academic skills...ia o le listening, train ai le concentration, e le demand iga ae e motivate, o le motivation le isi skill o lo’o train ai I mea gei o stories, o fāgogo. O le early age lega e fai ai fāgogo, o le kofa magigo a le Samoa i le lega kaimi, o le kaimi piko I sili lea oga crucial I le training o gei basic skills.. observing, listening, thinking skills and also very importantly, patience. O fāgogo e fiafia kele kamaiki e motivate ai lakou , self-motivation and there is always hunger for more a ea (10-01-08).”

Translation:

it cultivates the hunger of the child to learn. It inculcates from that early age the skills of learning; they are not only basic social skills, but also very basic academic skills. They are listening skills, which train concentration that is not demanded but motivated. Motivation is another skill that is trained through these stories or fāgogo. The Samoan philosophy of giving fāgogo at that early age is that, it is the crucial time of training these basic skills, observing, listening, thinking skills and also very importantly, patience. The children really like fāgogo that motivate. Self-motivation and there is always hunger for more.

Ana:

“ O le fāgogo e mafai ona develop ai imaginative world o le tamaititi. O le fa’ata’ita’iga ou te alu I le aoga ae ua rich I le vocab lea e fa’alogo so’o ai I fagogo, e pei o le sauai, purinise, tupu ma le masiofo, e le’i vaai I na mea ae sa mafai ona picture I le mafaufau seia o’o ina iloa atili ina ua alu I le aoga (16-01-08).”

Translation:

Fāgogo helps to develop the imaginations, it helps to develop the imaginative world of the child. When I went to school, I was rich in the fāgogo vocabulary, words like ghosts, princess, king and queen, none of those did I ever see but I was able to imagine how they look at the time until I knew more about them at school.

The place of *fāgogo* in educating the Samoan child at home and later on in the classroom was stressed in the responses. The participants revealed that the basic learning skills present in *fāgogo*, are required for children when entering the formal school environment. Before the Samoan child engages in formal learning, the basic skills of listening, observing, critical thinking, patience, motivation and others were present if nurtured well through *fāgogo*.

***Faiaoga* Educators**

For educators in Samoa, some participants' experiences exposed the need to prioritise the development of deep understanding of *fāgogo* as a teaching and learning tool in the classroom for Samoan children. As one participant explained that Samoan traditional knowledge is essential for themselves as educators and for the children they teach in the classroom.

Fia:

“ Na toe fafagu mai tala fa’afagogo ina ua ave’a a’u ma faiaoga, ae e ese lona uiga. Po’o le a lona aoga mo le a’oa’oina. Tulaga la lea o lo’u fia iloa i uiga o lea mea ma lea mea i le aiga, nu’u...o le tulaga fia iloa lea ua I ai I le taimi nei. Sa ou tusia loa le course Cultural Pacific Studies (CPS) e aofia ai tala na o myths and legends o lo’o i ai i totonu le tele o tatou talitonuga, o tatou values ma e le na oni stories, o lo’o i ai le fa’aaogaina o le gagana po’o semantics of language e fa’amatala ai se mea. O le tasi vaega taua ia te a’u o le tasi lea resource taua o le pre-history ona e leai ni tatou tala tusitusia, ae sa tu’ugutu mai e maua ai la mea nei (07-01-08).”

Translation:

The revival of fagogo for me was when I became a teacher, but in a different way. What is its significance for learning? At that time, I was curious to know the meanings of certain things for the family, the village... i am still curious about lots of things. I decided to write a course, the Cultural Pacific Studies that include myths and legends that carried a lot of our beliefs and values. They are not only stories..they show

how language or semantics of language are used to explain something. Fagogo is one most important resource of our pre-history because there was no written history only oral traditions passed on our history to us.

Fia hesitatingly disclosed an experience she had, that gave her the realization of a gap in teaching *fāgogo* at the time to Samoan children. The experience was thought-provoking in her career then and many years after.

Fia:

“ Se’i fai la’u tala i la’u experience, i Niu Sila I le course i le English na ou alu ai, ia ua fai mai nei e fai atu ni tala fa’aSamoa..ia amata loa ona toe taumafaufau atu..ae ua matua leai ma se mea..leai ma se mea e tasi..ia ua oso ane loa le ma, le matamuli..o lea e lauvivilu i tala a isi atunu’u e te le’i o’o i ai ae o lea e te leiloa tala a lou atunuu..o i ua question ai e ita lava ia ..o oe ea o se Samoa po’o oe o se a pe afai e te le iloa tala o lau tu ma lau aganu’u ma le olaga o la e ola ai tagata? O le mea la lena na ou iloa ai oka se tele o le gap la ei totonu o le a’oa’oina o le tamaitiiti Samoa i le primary ma le secondary level ona taumafai loa lea e address le issue e ala i le a’oa’oina o le course pe a ma le sefululima tausaga. O le toe fa’amanatu i tama ma teine Samoa le taua tele o le knowledge lea, e leo i ai ona e le’o faatauaina i totonu o aoga (07-01-08).”

Translation:

Let me tell you about my experience in New Zealand during an English course. I was told to tell Samoan stories, I started to think and think but there was nothing...nothing at all. I felt so embarrassed, humiliated, I knew more about the myths and legends of other countries that I have never seen and been to before, and now I could not tell my own stories. I question myself, am I a Samoan or what if I don’t know fagogo of my own culture and the way my people live? It was there I came to realize that there was a huge gap in the education of Samoan children in the primary and secondary level. So that was the beginning of the Cultural Pacific studies course that I taught for about fifteen years. For me it was a reminder for Samoan girls and boys of the great knowledge that was not there, simply because it was not recognized at formal schooling.

Fāgogo is a home ritual in the Samoan context and its rare practice currently is a challenge for educators, with knowledge and experience, to continue to distribute *fāgogo* to the children under their care.

4.11 *Ta'ita'iga* Leadership

The participants are saddened and concerned of the demise of *fāgogo* because they believe that *fāgogo* nurtured them with skills, values and beliefs that developed their characters well, making them the people they have become. Moreover, the love and pride of Samoan language and culture was influenced by their exposure to *fāgogo malie*. The language and knowledge of *fāgogo* have become very useful and meaningful in their roles as *matai* in families, educators in villages, policy makers in church and in the country. Even at the time of this study, they still seek elders to remind them of the *fāgogo*.

Oliva and Fia discussed the significance of the knowledge and language gained from their *fāgogo* experiences in becoming leaders at the present time. The participants realized that the only way to hold and embrace the knowledge of *fāgogo* is to pass them on to their own children.

Oliva:

“ O le taimi nei e toe fesili i le toeaina e toe fa'amanatu mai, aua ua taua i le taimi nei. Sa le'i manatu tele i ai i lena taimi ae ua iloa le taua i le taimi nei i mea fa'aleaiga, fa'alenuu ma le fa'alemalo. Taimi nei o mea sa fa'afāgogo mai i aso ua mavae ua fai ma galuega i le taimi nei, tautua fa'ataule'ale'a, tautua fa'amatai, tautua o se failauga. Ua fafagu mai e aoga e tu'utu'u taliga i tamaiti e a'oa'oina mai ai (06-01-08).”

Translation

At the moment, I ask old man to retell and remind me of *fāgogo* because they are useful now. I never thought of that at a young age, but now it is very useful in the leading of families, the village and the nation as well. The *fāgogo* of the past have become work of today through serving the village as a young man, as a chief as well as an orator. It reminds me that I should tell my children now so that they can learn.

Fia:

“Mo a'u ia o totonu o fāgogo ia sa fa'alogo ai, o lo'o i ai le oa o le gagana, le gagana lena ma le vaaiga fa'alemafau fau ina taimi ao faia fāgogo ua ta iloa nei i le taimi nei o lo'o i ai le iloa lea o tatou, lea ua amata ona leiloa. Ua tataui ai lava ona toe fa'aolaola i le taimi nei (07-01-08).”

Translation:

For me, in *fāgogo* that I used to hear is the richness of language. In this language and imagery, I come to realize now, hold our knowledge. This knowledge is losing today. We need that today, so it has to be restored.

One participant quickly pointed to the significance of the successful work of Māori in reviving their language and culture. Pule highlighted that the revival of Māori traditional knowledge by *tangatawhenua* is a call that should be taken seriously by Samoan people. In Pule's opinion, the Māori people have gone back to search for their knowledge because they have realised its value and significance to leading *tangatawhenua*. In the same way, Samoan people must embrace the traditions they still have and revive or search for the lost ones. Pule also believed that *fāgogo* is precious to Samoan ancestors and so it should remain to the present generations.

One other important aspect revealed by Pule is that *fāgogo* is the origin of other Samoan traditions such as *pese* or songs and chants. The participant acknowledged that his knowledge of *aganu'u* assisted in his leading role in re-discovering of *fatuga* Samoa (Samoan tunes).

Pule:

“ E taua tele le toe vaai i aganu'u ia pei foi o le fāgogo, o le mea lena e taua ai tele le mea lea ua fai e Māori, ua toe fo'i i tua e vaai a latou solo ma su'e mai le fa'auigaina o upu , o le fesili aisea ua toe fo'i ai i tua e tau su'e mai mea nei? Ona e taua, e tele le loloto o le aganu'u ua misi. O tatou ou te iloa i la'u galuega ua fai nei i le tau aoina o fatuga pese fa'aSamoa moni, e le mafai ona e iloa le feau o pese pe a e le malamalama i fāgogo e mafua mai ai pese, o lona uiga o se vaega pito taua lea i le tala fa'asolopito o tatou (14-01-08).”

Translation:

It is of huge importance to look at these cultural traditions such as *fāgogo*. Look at Māori people, they have gone back searching for their poems and their meanings, the question is why?..... Because they are significant, they have lost cultural knowledge. Our *fagogo* is the key to understanding our own Samoan chants. You would not know the message of the song if you don't know the *fāgogo* behind it. This means that *fagogo* is a very crucial part of Samoan history.

The revitalizing of *fāgogo* was a fact clearly articulated with the *talanoaga* with all participants. Obviously, there is urgency in searching and researching the Samoan

fāgogo that they believed have maintained the wealth of history and culture of Samoan people. The revival of *fāgogo* is the revival of roles and responsibilities of a Samoan person in his and her own society. Most significantly, the *fāgogo* provided cultural and academic learning skills for them at their early years.

The twelve participants in this study shared their childhood experiences of *fāgogo* with enthusiasm and willingness. The views commonly shared the significance of *fāgogo* to them as Samoan children and later as educators and leaders of Samoan people and society. When asked about the role in the modern classroom, the participants emphasized the wisdom of the elders in nurturing basic learning skills. In my own experience, I understand that most Samoan people take *fāgogo* only for its entertainment value without realizing the history, knowledge, wisdom and *fa'aSamoa* contained within its words.

During the course of this data collection, I am convinced that all the participants' stories were told from deep in their hearts with the high hopes that *fāgogo* continues to live and is passed from one generation to another. Not only that, they stressed the wisdom of elders in nurturing basic social and academic skills through the *mālie* of *po fāgogo*. The art of *fāgogo*, discussed by the participants, gave them a meaningful vision into the *fa'aSamoa*. The participants whole heartedly believe that *fāgogo* has special meaning in their cultural nurture as well as academic progress. The next chapter contains the analysis of the participants' responses.

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1 *Faatomuaga* Introduction

In Chapter Four, the themes identified from the *talanoaga* presented a summary of the participants' responses to the focus question, 'How are Samoan pedagogies created and recreated in *fāgogo*?' This chapter focuses on further discussion and analysis of the participants' responses in Chapter Four and to the literature reviewed, to shed some light on the main question of this study which is 'How is *fāgogo* a source of Samoan pedagogy?'

Firstly, I will discuss the process of *fa'afailelega* in Samoa in the hope that it provides a framework for this discussion. In understanding the process of *fa'afailelega*, I will explore the *fāgogo* from a cultural perspective, to highlight the socio-cultural and political constructions of beliefs, values, knowledge and relationships. These are created within the *fāgogo* ritual that shows how the constructions produce Samoan pedagogies and are produced by them. The *po* as the setting for *fāgogo* is explored metaphorically for its beauty to explain the creation and recreation of Samoan pedagogies. From this discussion, I will pinpoint the argument that *fāgogo* is an invaluable source of Samoan pedagogical ideas that are highly significant in the teaching and learning of Samoan children. Where appropriate, my voice is heard in the interpretation and analysis of the data.

5.2 '*Fa'afailelega*' 'Nurture'

Fa'afailelega can be described further in three other words in the *Gagana Samoa*, they are *totō* (to plant) *fa'asūsū* (to water) and *tapu'e* (trim and tidy). *Fa'afailelega* in general is the whole process involved in taking care, loving and respecting a newborn human soul or a newly planted tree. In the *fa'aSamoa*, the goal of *fa'afailelega* is to become *poto* (knowledgeable) *fa'amoemoeina* (reliable) *alofa* and *aogā* (useful) to serve the *āiga*. The

fa'avae of *fa'aSamoa* is daily use of respectful behaviour and respectful words showing the importance of respect in human relations, hospitality towards all and good order in the *matai* and land system (Mailo 1992). To raise Samoan children in the *fa'avae* of *fa'aSamoa*, the *fa'afailelega* is crucial. Samoan culture values the *fa'afailelega* within the *aiga* as soon as a Samoan person is born into the Samoan culture. *Fa'afailelega* is based on the belief that the family, particularly the parents and elders, are the first educators of any Samoan child or as we say in Samoan 'o *matua o faia'oga muamua*'. The participants' responses during this study clearly articulate that *fāgogo* is the basis for *fa'afailelega* in the early years of life because *fāgogo* provides for holistic development of the Samoan child.

The *tofamanino* (philosophy) of the Samoan *fa'afailelega* is marked in the phrase '*Fafaga lau tama i upu ma tala*' (Aiono Fanaafi, 2005) which is compared to the young of the birds that are fed on flowers. Metaphorically, the expression explains the difference on the *fa'afailelega* of *tamaitiiti* Samoa and *tama a manu*. The *tama a manu* is fed just to live whereas the *tama a le Samoa* is fed not just to live but know how to live. The significance of *fāgogo* in the *fa'afailelega* is the provision of *upu ma tala* that feed the child how to live on his own and in relation to others. I believe that *fagogo* in Samoa is a theoretical and practical approach in learning for Samoan children since the *tala fa'afāgogo* speak of what the past holds that is practical for today and for the future of Samoan children. The participants have clearly identified in their responses that the Samoan child is educated through socialising within the *āiga* and at the same time establishing and nurturing academic skills. The *tofāmanino* is also implemented in the enriched fostering a Samoan child receives in having multi-parents. What is significant in having multi-parents is the possibility of having more *lima* (hands) and *leo* (voices) that willingly *fa'afailele* the young minds and the innocent souls.

Tupua (2003) speculates about the demise of *fāgogo* as the end of cultural *fa'afailelega* of the younger generations in Samoan values, language, beliefs and identity. I agree with Tupua's concern because the *gagana* of *fāgogo* carries *uiga anoa* (allusions, allegories) of *fa'aSamoa*. However, from an academic view, *fāgogo* also give academic

fa'afailelega deep from the soul. The discussion of this study adds to Tupua's speculation from another dimension. That dimension is the *fa'afailelega* of the pedagogical skills of Samoan children that will be lost with the demise of the *fāgogo*.

5.3 Tagata atoa Whole person

Fāgogo in Samoan culture is not just a story to settle young children to sleep. There is a lot more to it that is unique to Samoan language and culture. The most important elements for this study are the pedagogical ideas from *fāgogo* that give young Samoans the skills of learning for the *mafaufau* (mind) *loto* (soul) and the *agaga* (spirit). The participants believe that the experiences of *fāgogo* in their childhood played a significant role in producing their own characters both in Western-style academic intelligence and cultural intelligence. When one participant said “*I did not realize at the time that I was well grounded for life*” shows deep appreciation and acknowledgement of *fāgogo* for the whole person. Furthermore it is an indication that *fāgogo* is always a sweet and an unforgettable memory in the heart. One would ask, how does *fāgogo* create appreciation in one's heart? I believe that the quality of *fāgogo* resides with its delivery, when the *po filemu* and the humour of the *fai-fāgogo* touch the *loto* of the children thus creating *mālie*. The *loto* is the motivation of everything worthwhile which is why reaching the *loto* is significant for young children in the learning process. I also believe that when knowledge reaches the *loto* it holds fast, is deeply rooted and is hard to forget. *Fāgogo* is a source of sound pedagogical practice for Samoan children for the reasons revealed, and most crucially, *fāgogo* enlivens the soul to desire for more of the beauty of the uniquely Samoan ways.

I was drawn into this study because I truly believe from years of experiences as a teacher in secondary schools as well as with young children in Sunday school, that Samoan children urgently need the *po fāgogo*. I am also convinced that *fāgogo* is a simple solution for *fa'afailelega* of basic academic skills and the Samoan character which best

expresses the traditional strength of *fa'a Samoa*. Yet, *fāgogo* is unrecognized for its value.

When you ask a Samoan person this question “What do you think causes the increase youth problems we are experiencing in the village and in schools? I guarantee that the answer will always point to the lack of *mafutaga fa'aleaiga* or family relationships. Is it the relationship that is enhanced and nurtured by the *itula* of *fāgogo*? I believe that the *itula* of *tu'itu'i* and *lomilomi* the backs and feet while nurturing the mind and soul of the loved ones with *fagogo* is diminishing. Sadly for children of today's generation, nurturing the *loto* and *agaga* to bring *mālie* to the whole person is not found in the classroom. Samoan people are beginning their search for the cultural knowledge, as confirmed by Pule one leading participant that “*lea ua ausulusulu e toe saili mea ia, ae ua lealea i le matagi*” literally means that people are desperately searching for these things but most are gone with the wind. Why are Samoan people, including the leaders, seeking for the cultural knowledge amidst their desire for Western *poto*? I believe that it is because Samoan intelligence is about the whole person, the person that is nurtured in the mind and in the soul. In fact all children must learn in the mind applying the soul so that *mālie* is experienced and learning is a sweet habit in life. *Fāgogo* is a source for both *fa'afailelega* for the Samoan child.

Fāgogo is a cultural practice that everyone can access; it is free of conventional costs unlike the televisions and computers that most parents can hardly afford. I would like to strengthen this discussion with the words of Tupua (as cited in Samoan Ministry of Education, 2004).

I am convinced that for far too long we have inherited and imitated forms of development, life-styles, ethics, dress, thinking etc. Over the years these have taken a toll of the vitality of our own ways, of our own pride in our inheritance, and of our self-confidence and self-respect. I am equally convinced that we must rediscover and re-affirm our faith in our values, the vitality of our past, our future so that we may develop our own uniqueness, our own way of doing things our own solution to our problems’(p. 127).

What better way to *fa'afailele* our own unique ways than our own *po fāgogo* with our children, our future. Moreover, the uniqueness of *fagogo* sits with the dispersal of the knowledge for *fa'afailelega* of the *tagata atoa* from the darkness of the night when the body and the minds are relaxed and willingly to open and partake. The memories of *fāgogo* bring back tears for the participants as they share with appreciation their stories of childhood *fāgogo*. For them, there are many reasons for remembering those special times but there is one uniting factor for all, the moments of *fāgogo* that deeply touched their souls. The whole person was cared for by the voices of the elders, the patting of the feet and backs in the security of the *fale* and peaceful of the night. *Fāgogo* is the process of knowing as the informants of this study convincingly expressed in their emotions and responses.

5.4 *Atamai o le Po* Wisdom of the night

The time of *fāgogo* in the Samoan context reflects the significance of the *po* as the time for *fa'afiāfiāga* (cultural entertainments), *fa'afailelega* and *mafutaga* (bonding) between generations under the *mafanašana* (warmth) of the *fale* (houses) while telling and listening to *fāgogo*.

The *po* when *fāgogo* always takes place has been a crucial time for social gathering of Samoan people. However, the influence of the missionaries and their mission aimed to do away with 'paganism' convert Samoans to organised Christian religions meant that many traditional cultural practices such as *po siva* (night dancing) and *po ula* (night festivities) were either discouraged or banned. I understand from living in Samoa that one of the main religions still discourages *po siva* for church members. The colonists' idea of enlightening the Samoan people was a closure to some cultural practices that occurred at night. Moreover, the night is believed to be full of evil that would destroy the Christian beliefs they were preaching to Samoan people. The colonists' vision was at odds with the cultural view that night is a time of peaceful closure for Samoan people.

The *po siva* or *fiafia* are some of the cultural practices of the night. At its peak the dancers prepares to “Sasae le mata o le aitu” literally means “To rip open the eyes of evil” in practice dancers of the night may throw their *lavalava* away and be seen naked. In these events, the unknown is brought into the known and Samoan people experience more *mālie* (satisfaction) when the *siva* and *fiafia* are held in the *po*. In other words, the night is attractive because it is full of unknowns that can only be revealed then. Furthermore, for Samoan people the *po* is full of mysteries that must be explored and also full of knowledge that is best disseminated when people gather together when peaceful and at rest. The *fāgogo* is passed on from the darkness of the night with the hopes of the elders that children are enlightened by the knowledge of the night. What is now taught to Samoan children as knowledge of the day is from other cultures and other people. Daytime knowledge needs the full light for its full exposure. Likewise, the night serves a special purpose as revealed by all the participants. The purpose of attracting the children’s minds and souls to receive unknown yet vital knowledge that lasts a lifetime.

The Samoan people had been living and practicing *fa’aSamoa* where the *po* is very significant in the events in their lives. While, Christian beliefs have, in some ways, influenced the way Samoan people view the events in the *po*, not all events in the *po* should be regarded as worthless, and inadequate or destructive to Christian belief. For example, the *fāgogo* as a practice of dispersing the knowledge of the *po* has a very significant role in the *fa’afailelega* of the Samoan child’s mind and soul within the *āiga* before exposure to formal education.

The knowledge of the night also was inevitable in the participants’ lives because few people had access to televisions and other technologies. In the past there was no competition from technology, hence life was less cluttered and centred on the warmth of the elders and *āiga* at night. The night unites the innocent souls yearning for the light of hope that leads and protects the person until the daylight approaches. For participants, the *po fāgogo* was all they needed and longed for to satisfy their *loto* and soothe them to sleep. I believe that the parents of today are more concerned with filling up the *fale* with televisions, stereos and laptops to satisfy the human mind and eye. What happens to the

loto; is there a place to *fa'afai* in the home anymore? If the day is taken up with learning other knowledges and the night time is controlled by machines, will Samoan children of today ever be enlightened by the knowledge of the night? The knowledge that is unique to Samoan people and Samoan children must always have a place in the home.

5.5 *O le po filemu* Peace of the night

“Silasila fo’i, o le itula taua tele e fai ai fāgono, ua uma galuega o le aso; ua ma’ea tapuaiga e ula ai afi ma fa’amusaesae fanaafi o faamalama; uma talisuaga, a o lea ua fofola fala ma tatau siapo. O le itula fa’atoa taoto ai ma falo, fa’asa’osa’o itu tino sa fa’agaoioi i feau ma le amoga o avega. Lenei ua fa’agalegalemoe ma nofogofie mauli o le au fa’alogologo” (Aiono 2005, p. 164).

The peace of the night is a crucial moment for *fāgono* as revealed by Aiono, when she said ‘*ua fa’agalegalemoe ma nofogofie mauli o le aufa’alogologo.*’ The undisturbed surrounding was a factor in bringing the listeners’ nerves to rest and steady to listen. The participants agreed with Aiono, and added that the *po* was significant for family relationships when children were rewarded by elders through sharing *fāgono* in the peace of the night. I remember from my own experience that the *po fāgono* proceeded only when everything for meals was tidied and everyone was in their *moega* (sleeping place). There was no other attraction because the body and mind relaxed and the soul was at peace. The silence of the night draws in the body and soul of the listener that eases whole hearted attention. Nina speaks of the undemanding motivation in the peace of the night during *fāgono*. As discussed earlier, the notion of the night in the *po fāgono* is like exploring the unknown with peace and relaxation. The children are attracted to exploring the history, heritage, values and beliefs in their minds and souls while the body is relaxed.

The *filemu* (silent) of the night is also expressed in the *leo malie* of *fāgono*. When there is peace, there is love. Why did the participants as children love to have *fāgono* at night instead of the daytime? One would say that it was the time children rest from their daily chores as reiterated in the responses. However after this study, I believe that the most

important and unrecognised feature of the *po* for *fāgogo* is its peaceful moment where children relax and *mafaufau loloto* (think deeply). Nothing disturbs the peaceful atmosphere except the harmonious voice of the *fāgogo* teller. At this time, the mind and the soul open up to welcome new and unknown knowledge to be planted in the young person.

5.6 *Mālie in Fāgogo*

Loto malie Satisfied soul

Loto malie is in the essence of Samoan people social construction. The expressing of *loto malie* is usually observed by physical expression. The smiles, nods, tone of voice as well as the gestures are all indications of *loto malie*. *Loto malie* is experienced when the desires are fulfilled by seeing and hearing that eventually brings joy and peace to the *loto*. In Samoa, usually after an entertainment, people are heard saying ‘*ua malie mata e vaai, malie taliga e fa’alogo,*’ which translates to mean that the eyes and ears are satisfied thus *loto malie* is created. The participants indicated in their responses that the *mālie in fāgogo* is created by several aspects in its telling.

Loto malie motivates a person to ask for more. As suggested by one participant, sometimes the children did not wait for the old lady to call them but just brought sand from the beach for their *paepae* (front of fale). The *loto malie* was shown by a willing offer to perform chores without being asked with the understanding that the *fāgogo* will give them *loto malie* afterwards. *Loto malie* was also shown by the elders by rewarding the children with the *fāgogo*. The effort of the children to satisfy their parents and elders is supported by or evidenced by the willingness to perform when their souls are satisfied. Likewise the elders bring attention to the needs of their children. One fact that is clear is *loto malie* must be experienced by both parties in order to perform and pay attention to one another. At the same time, there is trust and respect shared by the tellers of *fāgogo* and the recipients.

I have seen young children at the start of their schooling years who refused consistently to stay in school. Often parents and teachers just ignored them with the general assumption that the children never like their first days at school. The *mālie* of *fāgogo* for children teaches that the willingness to participate and perform is a result of *loto malie*. When children get attention and rewards for their effort, they learn to trust and be trusted with satisfied souls.

5.7 *Leo Malie* Harmony

Another significant aspect of *fāgogo* voiced by the participants was the story teller's ability to keep the listeners awake throughout the *fāgogo* despite the peace of the *po*. The *leo malie* comes from the *fai-fāgogo* through intonation of the voice and humorous expressions. The first *leo* of *fāgogo* would be '*upu o fāgogo*' as revealed by the participants. '*Logo fa'atutuila pe aue*' would be the voice of the teller telling children that the *fāgogo* is about to begin. The *upu o fāgogo* is a tactic which shows the wisdom of *fai-fāgogo*. For the teller, it was important that both parties were taking part instead of the teller talking without response from the listeners. Moreover, the tactic keeps the children alert at all times. Sometimes, the participants preferred that all the listeners would *logo fa'atutuila* so that they could all hear and enjoy the teller's voice. The teller however assures that both parties are taking part in *fāgogo* beyond only addressing the children in a lecturing-style.

The participants revealed their excitement and eagerness to listen to *fāgogo* as entertainment for their minds and pleasure in their souls. One participant stated that the most exciting aspect of *fāgogo* was the voice that was not monotonous, that used tone and sometimes chants (16-01-08). The crucial point to learn from the participants responses is that when children learn about reality through voices and in the variations of *leo*, the images travel from the mind to the soul. The images and pictures formed by the voices created curiosity and as a result children formulated questions to ask. Questioning is a sign of critical learning and it occurred within the participants from the *leo* of *fāgogo*.

People often remark that sometimes it is not what you say but how you say it that makes a difference in peoples' feelings. The harmonious tones of *fāgogo* pleased the participants because to them the *leo* created real images they discovered themselves. Furthermore, they felt cared for and loved by the *fai-fāgogo*. The participants also agreed that though *a fāgogo* might be repeated several times, the level of enjoyment remained every time that same *fāgogo* was told. Why would a child want to listen to what was heard many times before? While there could be other reasons, for the participants, *leo mālie* that attracted them as children to listen and ask for more. The *fāgogo* opens up imaginative ideas in the listener's minds through language and the *leo mālie* of the *fai-fāgogo*.

5.8 Tapue le fa'alogo Nurture listening

The oral nature of Samoan culture gives Samoan people the urge to listen and talk more in place of reading and writing. Through this active listening people become more curious about learning more about themselves and their immediate environment. One participant responded that '*o le natura o tagata Samoa e fia faitala*' (gossip)(16-01-08) translated as Samoan people are keen to hear and talk. The keenness to hear is proved when people, regardless of their age rung up the radio station whenever *fāgogo* was not aired. Two important finding are highlighted in that report, that Samoan people still embrace their oral nature and *fāgogo* in its oral form is rarely or no longer done at home yet Samoan people are very much interested in them. *This means Fāgogo* encourages the children to listen without demand because *fāgogo* is always told from love within the soul. Through continuous exposure to oral forms like *fāgogo*, the participants reported developing active listening at an early age. The desire to listen is nurtured when parents spend more quality time and share more space with children to converse and to listen as in the hours of *fāgogo*.

When one participant expressed concern about the incompetence of children in listening skills at the secondary schools level (10-01-08), other participant's description suggest

that children's exposure to *fāgogo* at an early age as a simple solution. My personal experience with my own child, who often lost concentration on directions and requests, opened my eyes as a mother and an educator. For example, when asked to get a spoon, he got a knife. Sometimes when asked to get me a glass of water, he gave it to someone else. The desire to listen well may be affected because less time is shared as a parent with his/her child. The shared time of elders and young children in telling and listening to *fāgogo* directly nurtured listening skills of the participants when they were children learning the *fa'aSamoa* and in academic learning. The cultural practice of *fāgogo* reportedly provides insights in how the listening skills. The critical question is how parents and educators can best re-introduce this vital part of the Samoan *fa'afalelega*?

By learning vocabulary and as well and language structures and thought structures through listening, children can better read and interpret the text of the stories for themselves. The Samoan children after hearing *fāgogo*, can interpret text using imaginations and emotions in the mind and the heart just as the *fāgogo* is *tu'utaliga* (by word of mouth), but only if they experience *fāgogo*. As a person who was brought up by ways typical and traditional to a Samoan family, it was vital to listen carefully in order to 'read the minds' or understand the meaning of others. Reading is taught by listening, then 'hearing the words' with the mind and then working the words into meaning. At the same time, there can be eagerness and willingness to open up the heart to re-imagining and re-interpreting the voices heard when the read story is the same as one that has been told. The participants' responses emphasized that the listeners' concentration is trained without demand because children are absorbed into the *mālie* of *fāgogo*.

The peaceful environment of *fāgogo* and the peace of children are also seen as unlikely in other venues of learning and pedagogical methods. One participant noted a common perception of the Westerners about Samoan children, is that they are only seen but not heard (10-01-08). As a Samoan who believes in the *fa'aSamoa*, the silent environment of *po fāgogo* is the crucial and best moment in the training of basic skills of listening and imagining. Equally important are the development of deep thinking and patience. The values of *fa'aaloalo* and *usita'i* (obedience) are practised and nourished. In the

fa'afailelega, those are the values and skills to be moulded into the minds and souls of Samoan children.

The essence of these values and skills is reiterated in the response “*being in that upbringing of fāgogo, I did not realize that I was well grounded for life*” (Nina 10-01-08). When someone is well grounded for life it means that the mind and the soul are prepared for whatever comes along the journey in life. Only a great influence might elicit these words. Visible in those words is all the achievements *fāgogo* foregrounds when embraced.

5.9 *Tapu'e lagona ma le mafaufau* Nurture emotions and thinking

Tagi in *fāgogo* is the highlight of stories that usually takes the listeners to a more richly imagined world. *Tagi* is the expression of deep feelings and emotions such as in *tagi fiafia* (tears of joy) *tagi alofa* (tears of love) and *tagi tu'i* (tears of sorrow). My intention in giving these examples is to highlight the nurturing of deep, long lasting emotional memories and shaped emotional responses as revealed by participants' stories. *Tagi* is the unique ‘way’ of *fāgogo* telling because the listener is encouraged to go deeply into their souls for meaning. Additionally, *tagi* is a guessing game where the mind is provoked to explore the unknown so that it becomes known. The participants all agreed that the *tagi* is chanting in a rhythm and in alluring words that have great impact on their imaginations. The comment by Harrison (2007) that the beauty and freedom of oral *fāgogo* reside within delivery is emphasized and multiplied by the participants' responses.

Fia (7-01-08) stated that the *tagi* camouflaged the message to the listeners; while there is surface meaning, underneath exists even more to understand. *Fāgogo* has more to offer to attract the attention of the listeners beyond just the story that is told. The participants when young may not have understood the messages underneath some *tagi* but the feelings and emotions were developed by the *leo* of *tagi*. Gai stated that during *tagi a le*

fāgogo, she used to be very emotional. Sometimes she cried or got angry or excited just by listening to the *tagi*. Exposure to *fāgogo* at a young age, children are able to combine feelings and thoughts to draw within their imaginations as they listen to *tagi*.

My view is that *tagi* is perceived by Samoan people as a way of trying to unravel something by deep thinking as we say in Samoan '*le fa'ata'eta'ealuga*' translated to mean going beyond the surface. The colourful language, the musical beat and the rhythm used in *tagi* of *fāgogo*, encourage the mind to think deeply and longer in order to make sound decisions. *Tagi* of *fāgogo* allows the childrens' minds to wonder and speculate while experiencing *mālie*. I reflect on this element of *fāgogo* with awe and appreciation for how the wisdom of the elders inspires the minds of young children to ask for more and to superbly inculcate their thinking skills through reaching for their imaginations and emotions. I believe that that Samoan people must now reach for the wisdom that resides within *fāgogo* so that our own children are inspired into the *fa'aSamoa* and into academic learning.

As Samoan children, repeatedly emphasised in the participants' responses, they found inspiration in the singing and poetic chants which are expressed in *tagi a le fāgogo*. The ideas of *tagi* are related to the importance of reaching into the *loto* through the language applied, the tone of voice that express the feelings of the teller. The importance of *tagi* of *fāgogo* is the creativity of the teller that caters for the mental side as well as the emotions so that feelings are used to attract and motivate listening.

5.10 To'amalie Confidence

To'amalie is experienced when one knows and understands his *fa'asinomaga* (cultural identity point of *fa'aSamoa* reference). In order to do that, one must plant within oneself the *fāgogo* that tells of the *fa'asinomaga*. The participants' responses revealed that knowing the *fa'asinomaga* is knowing your *gafa* (geneology), your *fanua* (land), your *oloa* (wealth) and your *tofi* (place) in the collective. During the *talanoaga*, one

participant attributed her knowledge and upbringing in *fāgogo* to shaping her identity and making her the person she is at present. The participant proudly responded “*ou ke iloa o le mea lea ou ke ko’a ai I mea ia ka ke kalagoa ai, o le malosi o lo’u kalikogu I lo’u identity*” (10-01-08). Literally translated as ‘I know this is why I have confidence in these things, I strongly believe in my identity’. The words of the participants indicated that the *fāgogo* has given that knowledge of *fa’asinomaga* that opens up the opportunities to feel confident in searching and critiquing other knowledge.

Fāgogo in Samoa is part of the process of building cultural identity within a Samoan child by disseminating Samoan knowledge, pride and wisdom as highlighted by Aiono (1996). In the context of *fāgogo*, the tellers and listeners use and engage in Samoan language in a unique interaction that creates Samoan cultural identity. I think that language can never be culturally neutral; hence its use creates pride in one’s home identity by incorporating the connection to and relationships with the land, the sea and the matters surrounding a person into the spoken mental constructs of a people.

In education, when children understand who they are, particularly in terms of their social background and cultural heritage, they can more easily make connections with the knowledge encountered in school. Furthermore, confidence is built through already resident knowledge that enables the student to further learn about different people, places and thoughts through comparisons for similarity and contrast. By exploring the context of *fāgogo* I confidently believe that pride and confidence in one’s identity is created by the experienced pleasure brought by understanding and appreciating the uniqueness of who you are. Through understanding who they were, the children of *fāgogo* who were participants in the study were confident that they could do many things just like the Heros of the *fāgogo* and be successful.

5.11 *Mafutaga ma Va-fealoa'i* Connection and respect

Fāgogo reproduces the *mafutaga mafana* or warm relationship through sharing of unconditional love within the circle of the *āiga* be it the nuclear family or extended family. Selau expressed, “the central element in the development of Samoan *fāgogo* is the strong desire of the elderly to have a very close friendly relationship with their young ones” (14-01-08). From the participants’ responses, the *mafutaga* in the *āiga* was always close and strong as the elders or *fai-fāgogo* sealed that bond during *fāgogo*. Not only that, the elders as keepers of knowledge and wisdom of *fa’aSamoa* dispersed their values to the young children who could use them to further understand and respect the existing relationship. *Mafutaga mafana* is reciprocated by childrens’ *fa’aaloalo* and *usita’i* for the elders, while the elders *tausi* (care) and give *alofa* to their children. The creating of trust in *fāgogo* is through the personal touch of children’s hands in massaging or patting the elders’ feet or backs while elders create more and more *fāgogo* in gratitude for the children’s actions. In the *fāgogo*, the relationship created between elders and their young children is a result of the secure bond made by trust and confidence that each one is safe with one another. Security and trust are also constructed from the warm physical contact of parental love for their children and vice versa. While *fāgogo* tells about *vā-fealoa’i* in the *fa’aSamoa*, the *mafutaga* shown by patting of the feet and taking the position of a child during telling enforces *mafana* in the relationship. If there is no time for *fāgogo* in the homes today, then is there room for *mafutaga māfana*?

The human face that was vital in the *mafutaga* during *fāgogo* is usurped by televisions and information technologies. The situation tells us that the Samoan people and especially children no longer have soul control of elders’ minds and hearts. The *mafutaga* in *fāgogo* can retain the traditional human face to intervene and to guide Samoan children’s lives. The global economy has raised the quality of life and increased the price of living. Televisions and other information technologies can hardly be afforded by most Samoan families now. However, there is a way of entertaining that is free and also keep *mafutaga mafana* between parents and their children. Samoan parents can always have *po fāgogo mālie* for the children to enjoy. Based on my experience of

living in Samoa, the 21st century children are losing the *mafutaga* with *matua* and we can expect to see that *vā-fealoa'i* will no longer be observed in the near future if Samoan people do not reclaim and use the *mālie* of *fāgogo*.

The vā-fealoa'i is accurately and constantly replicated in the *fāgogo* of *tala tu'u* and *tala o le vavau* and elders also make a connection with the *tala o le Tusi Paia* or stories of the Bible when necessary. In the *fa'aSamoa*, the *vā-fealoa'i* is most important and is not confined to the aspect of children and elders. In the moment of *fāgogo*, Samoan children learn to observe the *vā-fealoa'i* through being patient, knowing that at the end of *fāgogo* there is a chance to ask more questions. The patience that is taught from the experiences of *fāgogo* strengthened the *vā-fealoa'i* of the participants and their elders.

The *fāgogo* that elders tell and create for their children teach about *vā-fealoa'i* between *tamaiti* or children, and between *matua ma fanau* or parents and children where children must *āva* (respect) their *matua*. Respect in the *fa'aSamoa* is generated from *vā-fealoa'i*. Children learn about the *vā-fealoa'i* from the *po fāgogo* with the elders, and understanding *vā-fealoa'i* embraces all forms of respect. In *fāgogo* there are stories of respect generated from love, respect generated from authority, from status or from demonstrated abilities. What I am emphasising and focusing on is when children understand *vā-fealoa'i* or relationships then they would know why all forms of respect are necessary to perform. I believe that it is from the processes of respect that obedience unconsciously becomes established in Samoan children. In other words, children instinctively learn obedience because they respect the people they love and trust as demonstrated in the *po fāgogo*. Children also obey from fear of punishment but in the context of *fāgogo* obedience is established out of love and enjoyment of *mafutaga māfana* with *matua*. The *vā-fealoa'i* taught by *fāgogo* urge children to have patience, to listen, to observe, to think and to feel before they express themselves. Samoan children need *fāgogo* that strengthens *vā-fealoa'i* because such an educated Samoan child has academic intelligence with a character that is accepted within the *fa'aSamoa*.

5.12 *Fa'afailele le gagana* Language

The words of Professor George Milner suggested that people must pay close attention to oral traditions and its importance in passing on the knowledge and wisdom of past generation. As well as a source of maintaining language, oral tradition is the principal guarantee of the preservation, transmission and enrichment of traditional values. Milner also says that the vernacular language can never be replaced as there is an overwhelming number of children who are destined to spend the rest of their lives in villages and whose happiness and prosperity will depend on traditional, that is, orally transmitted and vital knowledge of a particular niche (Milner, as cited in Aiono, 2005, p. 189).

Samoan culture is rich in stories that from time to time have received *fāgogo* from numerous sources. The sources of *fāgogo* were all significant to the participants for reasons relevant to pedagogical ideas for Samoan children. As articulated in the Samoan philosophical view of “*fafaga le tama a le tagata i upu ma tala*” the Samoan people depend on their knowledge and understanding of traditional stories, as well as morals and principles from Biblical stories, to distinguish right from wrong and promote values of *fa'aSamoa*. Wajnryb (2003) suggested that the magic of stories is to offer an infinite well of vicarious experience with the capacity to transport the hearer beyond all boundaries of time, space, language, ethnicity, class and gender. The *fāgogo* has been reiterated in the participants' responses as a source of broad knowledge and learning through experience. Furthermore each source provided knowledge pertaining to Samoan language, culture and *fa'aSamoa*. The various sources of *fāgogo* created lessons and skills relevant to what is valued in the Samoan society and its people.

When one participant could not tell *a tala o le vavau* when asked in a language conference away from Samoa, the question of pride and dignity to her own identity was apparent. She felt embarrassed because initially the participant did not really see the value of *fāgogo* until the conference. The lesson was learnt that we must never take our own *gagana* and *iloa* (knowledge) for granted. After the incident, the desire to address the importance of *tala o le vavau* to the students was in the forefront. Most importantly,

the soul was touched, and when the *loto* is touched, that is worthy of our attention. These *tala o le vavau* teach the basis of Samoan perceptions that explain *fa'aSamoa* and its boundaries.

Tala tu'u is simply oral traditions. The prefix *tu'u* here is shortened from the compound word *tu'utaliga* that was defined in the previous chapter. The *tala tu'u* like *tala o le vavau* also explain the origin of words and phrases that name people, villages, rituals and traditions and places of historical significance in the Samoan culture. As revealed by participants, the *tala tu'u* was the book of knowledge for Samoan people before written language superseded oral tradition's place. Moreover, the *tala tu'u* are the sources of understanding the fundamental values and relationships within the Samoan culture.

The *tala o le vavau* and *tala tu'u* are the traditional *fāgogo* that also depict *gafa and faia* (genealogy and relationship). The elders would begin with stories of their own childhood. In these stories the elders *tala le gafa* or narrate their genealogy to identify how the children of the *āiga potopoto* (extended family) relate to each other. As Laki (08-01-08) imitated in the *talanoaga* how the elders would start “*o aso a la, si o matou tama'i fale a, na matou nonofo ai, ma o'u uso ma tuafafine, le tina o le tama o le ali'i lea ma le tama o le tama o lea ali'i.*” In translation “in those days, we lived in a very small house, with my sisters and brothers, the grandma of this boy (refers to someone) and the grandpa of this boy (refers to another).” How would a young child understand that the *gafa* is being passed on to them at this early age? The elders deeply trusted *fāgogo*, and by using simple language and loving tones of voice, passed cultural messages to the children. The children enjoyed the *fāgogo* and learned about their *aiga* simultaneously.

Sometimes the *fāgogo* were stories taken from the Bible. Nina and Fia remarked that Biblical stories were told as *fāgogo* in their childhood because their elders served as Church Ministers. When Christianity first came to Samoa, the *mau a Samoa* (Samoan traditional beliefs) were mostly opposed by Christian principles. However, the elders later realized and believed that within the depth of *mau a Samoa* are Christian principles. The belief of Samoan elders is supported by Pule when he said “*o la tatou gagana e tele*

ina fa'ailoilo, e le tu'usa'o ae nofo oe ma fa'auiga" this means that Samoan language is rich in metaphor. At present, people search to revive the *fāgogo* that treasure the depth of *mau a Samoa* because the *tofa saili* (search for knowledge) of Samoan people believe in a continuous search that is meaningful for guidance at different times. *Fāgogo* of Biblical stories added foreign *upu* to the participants' *utuvagana* that helped create their knowledge of other worlds at a young age.

Tala fatu or creative stories are created from the need to indirectly teach a lesson through inventing a story that children can enjoy and at the same time realize morals and values that are essential for life. The elders who are usually the *fai-fāgogo* create simple and yet powerful stories that influence the minds and souls of the listeners to needs of that moment. Like the *fāgogo* of the 'Loi'(ants) in Nina's response that taught her good habits and attitudes, *tala fatu* reveal the creativity of Samoan elders in *gagana* that appeal to the children. In *tala fatu* language is learnt by listeners because there is a need to be addressed and words are always chosen with care by the teller. When words are appealing, children place them in the heart.

Apparently the *gagana* of *fāgogo* from the numerous sources hugely contributes to *fa'afailelega* of the young Samoan child providing the abilities that facilitate intelligent cultural and academic expressions. Within the Samoan culture, the *āiga* particularly the *matua*, are the first educators of their children. So when a child's behaviour is unacceptable and lacking intelligence, the *aiga* is criticized. In the *po fāgogo* is the philosophical view of the Samoan elders articulated in the saying "*e fafaga le tama a le tagata i upu ma tala*" because *upu* and *tala* in *fāgogo* are basic to the *fa'afailelega* of the whole Samoan person.

5.13 "Ua molimea manusina" Food today, strength of tommorrow

When the *manusina* returns to the *tuasivi* (mountains) from the *faiva* (fishing) each day, they always remember to take a fish for *fa'afailelega* the young ones awaiting their return. The *manusina's* tradition is translated into the *alagaupu* "*ua molimea manusina.*"

The *fāgogo* is the *manusina* that is never short of food for *fa'afaiilelega* of the young children of Samoa. Most significantly, is that food is always within reach and most appropriate for the *tinu, mafaufau ma le loto*.

The *po* that sets the environment of *fāgogo* highlights the significance of the knowledge of the *po* that is unknown but can and should be known. The *po* also, is a remainder to Samoan people researchers of knowledge that there is unknown, and to continue searching for meaning that is appropriate for living. The *po* brings peace to the Samoan children by relaxing the body, mind and soul yet willingly listening to the *mālie* of *fāgogo*. During these hours of *fāgogo*, without sounds and disturbance, the minds and souls of Samoan young children prepare to welcome learning.

The *mālie* of *fāgogo* is constructed from *loto malie* or the soul that is satisfied. When the *fai-fāgogo* bring harmony into the ears of the listeners by *leo malie* and in *tagi a le fāgogo*, children keen to listen so that they can pass the voices to the mind. With interest and amazement in what they hear, children begin creating imaginative expressions of feelings. Moreover, they read the *fāgogo* texts and curiosity leads to more questioning. The critical mind of the children is encouraged in *po fāgogo*. The children of *fāgogo* experience *malie* from the *leo* and activeness of the *fai-fāgogo*. In order to create a fertile place for academic intelligence *fāgogo* nurtures listening with the mind and the soul.

The essence of the *fa'aSamoa* is in the *vā-fealoa'i* that enables the Samoan child to make well-considered decisions. While *fāgogo* nurtures *vā-fealoa'i*, *fa'aaloalo* is generated from love because of the *mafutaga mafana*. Children also *usita'i* because they appreciate and enjoy the privilege of being well cared for by sharing *po fāgogo* with elders. For Samoan children, when one is full of academic intelligence but without *vā-fealoa'i* and *alofa*, she or he can never enjoy the pride of the Samoan identity.

Having gathered and analyzed all this data, I believe *fāgogo* is the best source of *academic and cultural fa'afaiilelega* for the Samoan children because it nurtures the *loto* and the *loto* is the source of every good thing within people. *Fāgogo* is the *fa'afaiilelega*

of the *tagata atoa* by Samoan values and beliefs and most importantly for this study, the pedagogical merits for young children. Storytelling is a worldwide tradition but *fāgogo* is unique to Samoan people because of its culturally appropriate setting that deepens the mind and the soul

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 *Fa'atomuaga* Introduction

The significance of *fāgogo* in the Samoan context for children in particular and their accepting with interest gave ideas of how the Samoan pedagogies are created and recreated in the process of *fāgogo* telling. The window this study has taken was the one that focussed on the strengths of *fāgogo* for its pedagogical significance using a cultural perspective. During the course of this study, the *fāgogo* experiences of the informants reinstated it as an invaluable component of the educational process of the Samoan child. The foundations of learning as revealed by the informants have its roots at the home place before proceeding to the formal learning context. It was also strongly reiterated by the participants that the vital socializing process of a Samoan child including *fāgogo* at the early age established not only social but academic skills as well. The ritual of *fāgogo* simply served an entertaining purpose for children but most importantly at the same time exposed ideas for good pedagogical practices for better learning of Samoan children. In the conclusion of this thesis I will review the extent the main question of this research has been answered highlighting ideas from *fāgogo* that are useful for pedagogical practice of young Samoan children.

6.2 *Taua o e fa'atalanoaina* Experienced participants

With the assistance of the advisor in Samoa, I was able to find the most appropriate informants for this study. The twelve participants including seven females and five males live work and participate exclusively in the Samoan cultural life in Samoa. Most importantly, they experienced *fāgogo* as part of their childhood, which was the main reason for their involvement in this study. Moreover, the informants are fully engaged with education through teaching Samoan language and culture, curriculum development as well as advising political developments and leadership within Samoa. Each participant had one session of *talanoaga* without time constraints and at the best interest of the

informants. All of the participants speak fluent Samoan language and at times they use English language during *talanoaga*. The informants were extremely grateful to impart knowledge and there was great anticipation of good pedagogical practice encountered in the *fāgogo* ritual for young children in Samoa. In summing up the responses of the informants, it is clear that *fāgogo* provide cultural and academic knowledge and life learning skills for those who experienced it. Where necessary I also placed my personal views as a Samoan person who was born and raised in Samoa with some experience of *fāgogo*.

6.3 O Fāgogo, aganu'u ma le a'oa'oina Fāgogo and pedagogy.

Culturally, *fāgogo* is one most significant component of obtaining knowledge and wisdom of the Samoan culture. By having the experience of *fāgogo* in the Samoan context the participants undoubtedly believed that teaching and learning occurred in an exciting, entertaining environment. In the cultural analysis of *fāgogo*, there were many crucial points the informants revealed in the *talanoaga*. The informants pointed to usefulness of nurturing the Samoan child with *upu*(words) *ma tala*(stories) at a very early age to shape the good characters, habits and behaviour of the person. At that stage they listened, enjoyed and most crucially they placed logical thinking to the *fāgogo* they used to get. As a source of cultural knowledge *fāgogo*, consists of *tala o le vavau*, *tala tu'u*, *tala Tusi Paia* and *tala fatu* that children learn about *va-fealoa'i*, *fa'aaloalo* and *alofa* that contribute to the essence of *fa'aSamoa*. The participants felt that the main concern at the time for children as they experienced themselves was the entertainment value of *fāgogo*. These entertaining moments repeated regularly as their desires, as well as of the other young children for *fāgogo* increased.

The responses from participants suggested that *fāgogo* is an invaluable source of Samoan cultural knowledge for Samoan children. It brings back the significance of Tupua's comment that "the demise of *fāgogo* is a blow to Samoan culture" (Tupua, 2003. p. 59). The *fāgogo* and *fāgogo* telling pointed to the significance of *matua-tausi* and *tama'ita'i*

matua as the keepers, distributors and carer of cultural knowledge and traditions that any culture must keep and respect. In the Samoan culture, age is associated with more knowledge and wisdom known as the *tofa mamao and loloto* (long and deep view) when it comes to the cultural setting. Hence, the elders are highly respected people within the families and culture. In upholding the respect for Samoan language and culture, the informants pointed to *fāgogo* as an important source that tells of the *va-fealoa'i and va-tapuia* that every Samoan must understand and observe. These are cultural values that children learn which are crucial in the education process of a Samoan child in any setting, as they also enjoy the amusing *fāgogo* and humour of the *fāgogo* tellers.

It is also highly suggested from the participants' responses that the *fāgogo* purposes could not be completed without the delivering skills of the tellers. I believe the skills that are applied in *fāgogo* telling by the *fāgogo* tellers are the most enchanting elements in this Samoan ritual. As shared by informants, the creative skills of the *fāgogo* tellers were most influencing and appealing to them as well as other listeners.

Their experiences pointed to the usual setting of *fāgogo* as in the night time after evening prayers and meals and with every child in the household. To them, it was usually a treat for the well-done chores of the day or while messaging the elders legs and backs before going to sleep. It was not hard to tell that the childhood experiences of *fāgogo* for the participants were always filled with excitement, emotions and imaginations that produced some of their personal characters. Their social and academic well beings had been greatly developed from their moments of *fāgogo* with elders. From the participants responses I am also reminded of the times with my father, when we anxiously awaited the *fāgogo* as we said our one poem about the *pe'a* (bird bat) while messaging his legs. Rarely, the participants felt that *fāgogo* was a ritual of the daytime, but it does not mean it can not be done at any other time. I put it that it is because night time is for relaxation and entertainment time in the Samoan cultural context. It is also revealed by informants that sometimes the time of *fāgogo* for the children is also time for the elders to have their game of cards or other traditional games.

Fāgogo stories whether they were traditional, creative or Biblical stories, the informants believed that each positioned a crucial responsibility in their up-bringing as children as well as their personal and academic successes today. Through the oral nature of *fāgogo* telling they were able to build knowledge of language which explains the world around them as well as the imaginative ones. Not only that the informants strengthen their identity of being a Samoan through understanding genealogy and important legends that they can relate to. It was also noted that the through oral nature of *fāgogo*, the informants experienced different emotions and feelings leading to inspiration, motivation and anticipation. I see these as very significant in any learning to take place at a very young age. The oral *fāgogo* then prepared the informants to listen, observe, feel and think all at the same time.

The “*tagi a le fagogo*” (chanting/crying the fagogo) is revealed by the informants as the most thrilling and the highlights of *fagogo*. They described this as the most exciting message presentation that reached for deeper imaginations of the listeners. In saying that, the listeners will not only understand the message but marvel at how the tellers enthusiastically brought reality in a pleasing manner. In *fāgogo*, there is always room for improving not only our understanding of ourselves and our world but others and their worlds.

The responses from informants also highlighted the central element that developed through *fāgogo* and *fāgogo* telling. The warm friendly relationship between the elders and their young ones during *fāgogo* times gave the opportunities to teach the values, beliefs and traditions that must be passed on to the new generation. The informants always felt that, their grandparents or elders were the closest people to them, simply because they gave them happiness and entertainment. The proof was that they were never tired of doing the elders *feau* (chores) or even offered without the elders commands. In here the informants experienced obedience with respect as a result of appreciation, gratefulness and trust while the elders nurture their young lives with knowledge and values of life. The Samoan perceptions of the world are told in *fāgogo*, as noted from the informants’ responses. *Fāgogo* is the starting point of how we (Samoans)

perceive things that are different from other perceptions. So, it was important to gain knowledge from *fāgogo* because they talk about these important things.

6.4 *Taua i le poto salalau* The Academic implications

Academically, in the process of *fāgogo*, it established the mostly required skills of learning at a very crucial age. The *fāgogo* itself teach children about a story. At a very young age, the children understand that a story has an introduction, a body and a conclusion. While the children pick up their eagerness to listen, *fāgogo* fires imagination at the same time. The participants agreed that listening skills are motivated but not demanded because the *fāgogo* provided pleasure for the soul and promoted self-motivation. In the *fāgogo* tradition, participants also made connections to an imaginative world that a child produced in writing pictures in their minds. In terms of reading the words, the imaginations and language that the children are exposed to in *fāgogo* ensures a good ability in understanding the written words later on in school. The ability to speak is also encouraged during the inter-related communications of *fāgogo* telling of the elders and the young children where the children had to have patience and wait for their appropriate time to ask and respond. As clearly articulated by the informants' responses, the attitude and relevant behaviour is important in Samoan culture despite the circumstances. It is also noted from the answers that the development of the right social skills first and foremost also complements the development of good attitude and skills necessary for formal learning.

The overall picture of the informants responses is that *fāgogo* in the Samoan context capture Samoan world views, values the language, sense of place and identity, most importantly the nurturing of the young soul with happiness and love. It is very explicit from the analysis of my informants' responses that *fagogo* is ideal in developing good pedagogical practices for Samoan children where all social, mental; emotion and spiritual elements are nurtured. Learning can come alive if it involves communication, fun and trust.

6.5 *O nai fautuaga* Recommendations.

The information given by informants revealed that *fāgogo* is basic to learning Samoan cultural knowledge that captures what is core to Samoan cultural, political and educational leadership. Since there are huge economic and technological changes in the homes and lives of Samoan people at present, the *fāgogo* is most likely to become a rare practice at home. It is important that *fāgogo* is continued in the classroom as a substitute for the home environment however it is most significant as well to provide the expertise of elders in the telling. *Fāgogo* telling provides opportunities for teachers and the communities in sharing their responsibilities by providing good pedagogical practice for the young children. Not only that, there is participation in the part of parents and elders in education through their contribution of *fāgogo*. There are written *fāgogo* in books for children to read but as the informants suggested that the essence of *fāgogo* is in the delivery or the creativity of the *fāgogo* teller. I would suggest that the role of elders in *fāgogo* telling can also be incorporated into the education system where it can comfortably fit.

The relationship between the elders and their young children is key to developing the intelligence, the wisdom and the respect for Samoan *tu ma aga* (behaviour) the most crucial in the life of a Samoan person. Therefore, the encouragement of continual caring of elders as a custom that had been practised from generation to generation to provide for the cultural and academic needs of the young generation in Samoa. As the majority of Samoan people stay in Samoa and practice *fa'aSamoa*, it is vital that the sources of language and culture such as given in *fāgogo* are observed and revitalized at every possible opportunity.

The Samoan children as the informants revealed in their experiences of *fāgogo* as well as my experience, would love to listen, respect and obey someone that they feel comfortable with and trust. Also, they would need to be understood not only from the outside but the inside person as well. It is recommended here that the teacher-student relationship is a

vital factor for motivated academic learning. However, the *va-fealoa'i* and *va-tapuia* is always maintained.

The informants believed and I also strongly recommended that *fāgogo* is advisable to remain a crucial part of the social and academic life of every Samoan child.

6.6 *Su'esuega atili* Further Research.

The focus of this study lies within the power of *fāgogo* to reach the heart and soul of the children. The relationships that are created within and beyond *fāgogo* have provided ideas of good pedagogy for young Samoan children in Samoa. During the course of data collection I realised that the study could be extended to consider the current situation of *fāgogo* telling in homes of Samoan people. There is dramatic cultural change in Samoa. Whether the Samoan people are passionate to maintain their *fāgogo* through the Samoan language and culture would be another study. With the advent of Early Childhood education, there is further research required to explore the interface of *fāgogo* ritual and the formal teaching in the classrooms.

APPENDICES



Participant Information Sheet

Date Information Sheet Produced:

Dd/mm/yyyy

Project Title:

O le Fagogo: A qualitative study of the pedagogical significances of fagogo or Samoan stories at night for the education of Samoan children

An Invitation to participate in the study.

Talofa lava and Greetings

I am a Masters student in the School of Education at the Auckland University of Technology, Auckland New Zealand. My name is Su'eala Kolone-Collins; I am of Samoan descent and the researcher of this project. I would like to invite you to participate in my study to share your experiences and knowledge of O le fagogo as a cultural pedagogy for young Samoan children. Your participation will be completely voluntary. You will have the chance to exit from this study if you feel uncomfortable.

What is the purpose of this research?

This research is conducted as part of my Masters degree in Education. My supervisors for this research are Dr Linita Manu'atu who is a Senior Lecturer from the School of Education and Mary Russo also a Senior Lecturer in the School of Education. This thesis will be submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education. The primary goal is to explore the experiences and ideas from O le Fagogo that is useful for teaching and learning of the Samoan young children.

How was I chosen for this invitation?

You have been selected to take part because you have experience and knowledge of O le Fagogo and of the Samoan language and culture in general.

What will happen in this research?

In this research you will be sharing your experiences of O le Fagogo in your childhood, and whether that has influenced any moment of your schooling as a child. I will meet with you in person or in small groups at a convenient time at your home or your place of work for our talanoaga. I will analyse the data, use it anonymously in my thesis and in papers of my thesis.

What are the benefits?

Part of the information gathered from our talanoaga will be analysed to show the ideas from O le Fagogo that can be used in teaching and learning of the Samoan young children. It is the hope of all parents and educators to provide an enjoyable learning environment for their children. With this awareness, my hope is that Fagogo as a cultural tool for learning can be part of that learning environment. I hope that the knowledge and experiences you have will benefit your children and every Samoan child.

This study may also contribute to the literature surrounding the issues relating to Samoan language and culture. I am certain that the outcome of this research project will be very useful for future publications

regarding the issues that are addressed in this study. Information and findings from this study may be used in the future, when and where necessary.

How will my privacy be protected?

Your information will be used for solely research purposes only.

Signed consent forms, including your permission to be audio-taped, will be kept separately from the taped transcribed talanoaga. This way, your talanoaga will not be matched to your full name. You will be asked at the start of the talanoaga if you are still happy to continue, and that the talanoaga will be transcribed, audio taped and used for this research. All care will be taken to protect your identity and all written parts of the study will not be linked to you.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

My contact details are provided for you in case further information is needed and also to confirm if you will participate. This is a voluntary project and you have the right not to take part or withdraw your information at any point of the project until 30th April which is when I will have completed my data analysis. If you withdraw, your data will be removed from the data archive and destroyed.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

If you are interested in participating in my project then please call me on 22990/25226 or email skolonecollins@yahoo.com as soon as possible. I have included a consent form for you to read and sign before we proceed with talanoaga.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

Yes, a time will be arranged for me to personally bring you a copy of your transcript and summary of the talanoaga for the opportunity for you to check and authorise its use for the study.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor.

Project Supervisor: Dr Linita Manu'atu
921-9999 ext 7345
linita.manuatu@aut.ac.nz

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTEK, Madeline Banda, madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz, 921 9999 ext 8044.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Researcher Contact Details:

Su'eala Kolone-Collins

Master of Education student

021-2347243

Email skolonecollins@yahoo.com

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Dr Linita Manu'atu

921-9999 ext 7345

Email linita.manuatu@aut.ac.nz

For Samoa:

Gatoloai Tilianamua Afamasaga

21428 ext 181

t.afamasaga@nus.edu.ws

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Faamatalaga mo Su'esu'ega



Aso tu'uina atu ai nei faamatalaga:

dd/mm/yyyy

Autu o le suesuega: *O le taua o le fagogo e avea ma auala o le aoao atu*

Valaau ina ia auai I le su'esu'ega.

Talofa lava malo le soifua

O au o Su'eala Kolone-Collins, o loo ou aoga I le Auckland University of Technology. O au o le Samoa moni ma o le foi o loo feagai ma lenei suesuega. Ma lou ava tele ou te talosaga atu ai mo sou avanoa e te auai ai i lau suesuega. O le faatauaina o le Fagogo e avea ma auala e taitaina ai le aoao atu o fanau laiti, o le autu lea o lenei suesuega. O le taua o lou sao i lenei mataupu o se tasi sa mafai ona faalogo ma molimauina le taua o lenei auala e aoaoina ai fanau. O lou auai lenei suesuega e matua taua tele ma e le faamalosia lou auai.

Mafuaaga o le suesuega.

O lenei suesuega o se vaega o le faailoga o le Master of Education o loo ou aoga ai nei. O le vaega mulimuli lenei e fia faamaeaina mo le mauaina o lenei faailoga. O se avanoa taua foi ua mafai ai ona faia se sao mo lou atunuu ma ona tagata aemaise le tulaga tau aoaoga. O le faiaoga o le a feagai ma le vaaiga o le suesuega o Dr Linita Manu'atu o se faiaoga sinia I le vaega o aoaoga a le Univesite o loo ou aoga ai. O le a fesoasoani foi le susuga Gatoloai Tili Afamasaga ao faia lenei suesuega i Samoa.

Filifilia o a'u.

Ua filifilia lau susuga e ono avea ma se tasi e auai ona o le tulaga i lou tomai i le Gagana ma le Aganuu Samoa o loo aofia ai ma Fagogo. Atonu e tele se sao o lau susuga o loo fia faasoa mai e uiga i lenei mataupu taua aua le fesoasoani I le aoaoina o alo ma fanau a si o tatou atunuu.

Faapefea ona ou fesoasoani.

O le a tuuina atu lava le avanoa e te faasoa mai ai i se talanoaga pe a talafeagai ai ma lou finagalo. O le taua o lau faasoa i le fagogo ma sona aoga ia te oe aemaise foi i le aoaoina o alo ma fanau i lenei vaitau o le olaga. E faapefea ona avea le fagogo ma auala e aoao atu ai tamaiti i sou lava silafia?

O a ni o'u aafiaga pe a auai.

E leai ni aafiaga matuia pe a e auai. O le talanoaga e faia lea pe a e finagalo malie atoatoa i ai. Afai o le a i ai se faaletonu e tulai mai, i le taimi o faatalatalanoaga o le a tuuina atu le avanoa e te filifili ai pe faaaauina lou auai pe leai foi.

Faapefea pe a i ai ni aafiaga.

Afai o le a tulai mai se faafitauli ao faia le talanoaga, e mafai ona taofia loa. Soo se taimi foi e i ai se faafitauli o le a taumafai loa e foia.

Itu taua o le su'esu'ega.

O faamatalaga uma o le a auilili mo lo latou aoga ma le taua I le aoaoina o alo ma fanau. O matua uma ma faiaoga e naunau ia fiafia tamaiti I le aoaoina, ma e taua ai auala e aoaoina ai latou. O le fagogo o se tasi o auala e mafai ona aoaoina mai ai, ina ia fiafia tamaiti e faalogo ma taofi mea o loo aoaoina ai. O le taua lea e taua ai lou sao i lenei suesuega e ala i lau faasoa. E aoga foi nei faamatalaga ma lenei suesuega I le lumanai pe a fia suesueina atili lenei mataupu. E i ai le faamoemoe pe a talafeagai ai, o le a faaaogaina ni faamatalaga ma faaiuga mai lenei suesuega e faasoa atu pe a manaomia I le lumanai.

Puipuiga mo lou tagata.

O faamatalaga uma o le a e tuuina mai o le a malu puipuia ma faaaogaina na o lenei suesuega. E le mafai ona faia se talanoaga e aunoa ma le sainia o le tusi e faamaonia ai lou auai. Ao lei faia le talanoaga e i ai lava le avanoa e te faamutaina ai lou auai. O faamatalaga uma o le a puipuia mai le faailoaina ai o lou suafa. O nei faamatalaga uma na o oe ma le o loo faia le suesuega e mafai ona faaaogaina.

Avanoa e filifili ai.

Ua faailoa atu auala o fesootaiga pe afai o le a e taliaina lenei talosaga. Manatua e le faamalosi lou auai .

Fesootaiga pe a ou talia.

Afai o le a e taliaina e te auai ona faafesootai mai lea o numera telefoni 22990/25226 poo le imeli skolonecollins@yahoo.com I se taimi vave lava. O loo faapipii atu ma le tusi e te saini ai pe afai ua e taliaina e te auai.

Ripoti o le Suesuega

E mafai ona tuuina atu faamatalaga o lenei suesuega pe afai o le a maea le faatalanoaga ina ia toe silasila i ai ao lei faaaogaina i le ripoti mulimuli ane. E le mafai lava ona faaaogaina se faamatalaga e te le finagalo e tuuina i totonu o le suesuega.

Fesootaiga

Soo se faafitauli e tataua ona fesootai le o loo vaaia lenei suesuega.

Faiaoga: Dr Linita Manu'atu
921-9999 ext 7345
linita.manuatu@aut.ac.nz

Mo nisi Faamatalaga e fia malamalama atili ai e uiga I lenei suesuega faafesootai ane le:
Executive Secretary, AUTEK, Madeline Banda, madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz , 921 9999 ext 8044.

Mo nisi faamatalaga I le suesuega.

Su'eala Kolone-Collins

Master of Education student

021-2347243

Email skolonecollins@yahoo.com

Faiaoga:

Dr Linita Manu'atu

921-9999 ext 7345

Email linita.manuatu@aut.ac.nz

Mo Samoa.

Gatoloai Tilianamua Afamasaga

21428 ext 181

t.afamasaga@nus.edu.ws

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Consent Form



Project title: O le Fagogo: A qualitative study of the pedagogical significance of fagogo or Samoan stories at night for the education of Samoan children.

Project Supervisor: Dr Linita Manu'atu

Researcher: Su'eala Kolone-Collins

- I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated December 2007.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- I understand that identity of my fellow participants and our discussions in the focus group is confidential to the group and I agree to keep this information confidential.
- I understand that notes will be taken during the focus group and that it will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.
- If I withdraw, I understand that while it may not be possible to destroy all records of the focus group discussion of which I was part, the relevant information about myself including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will not be used.
- I agree to take part in this research.
- I wish to receive a copy of the report from the research (please tick one): Yes No

Participant's signature:

.....
.....

Participant's name:

.....
.....

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....
.....

Date: *Approved by Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee. Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.*

Valaau ia auai i suesuega



Autu o le suesuega: O le Fagogo: A qualitative study of Samoan stories in the night tales for cultural pedagogies.

Faiaoga: *Dr Linita Manu'atu*

Tamaitiiti aoga: *Su'eala Kolone-Collins*

- Ua ou malamalama uma I Faamatalaga faataatau I leni suesuega pei ona taua I le pepa o faamatalaga.
- Sa maua le avanoa e fesili ai ma ua maea foi ona taliina.
- O faatalanoaga uma faavaega o le a puipuia mai lea I le faailoa faalauaitetele o faamatalaga a tagata taitoatasi.
- Ua ou iloa foi o le a pueina ma tusitusia ni faamatalaga I le taimi o faatalanoaga.
- Ua ou malamalama foi e mafai lava ona ou faamutaina lou auai ma aveesea mai ni Faamatalaga sa ou tuuina atu I leni suesuega ao lei maea le suesuega e aunoa ma se afaina.
- Afai o le a ou le toe auai I leni suesuega ao lei maea, o le a faaleaogaina loa au Faamatalaga uma na pueina ma tusitusia.
- Ua ou malie atoatoa ou te auai I leni suesuega, ma ua ou malamalama foi o le a faaaogaina faamatalaga ma faaiuga o leni suesuega e faailoa faalauaitetele ma faaaogaina e nisi latou te manaomia I le lumanai.
- A tusa ai ma fuafuaga uma ou te fia umia se kopi o ripoti mai nei suesuega.
Ioe Leai

Saini a le auai:

Igoa o le auai:

Telefoni a le auai:

Aso: ***Approved by Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee AUTEK Reference number 07/229***

Tatau ona umia e le sui auai se kopi.

(C)

Indicative Questions for Talanoaga.

These questions are just to guide the talanoaga.

Topic: *O le Fagogo. A qualitative study of pedagogical significances of fagogo or Samoan stories at night for the education of Samoan children*

For all participants I will be asking these questions:

1. Can you tell us about your experiences of the Fagogo in your childhood?
2. Who told Fagogo and how was it done?
3. How did you or the children who were with you reacted when fagogo were told?
4. How significant was Fagogo to your childhood and why?
5. Tell us how you would use Fagogo as a way of teaching children in the classroom.
6. How important would the ideas from telling Fagogo be in the classroom, why would you say so?
7. Do you agree that fagogo is significant as a cultural pedagogy for Samoan children, explain why.

Samoan Translation:

1. E mafai ona e saunoa i le taimi sa e soifua ane ai ma faalogologo i Fagogo a tuaa?
2. O ai e masani ona faia fagogo ae sa faapefea ona faatinoina, e pei o uiga sa faaalua, leo ma nisi auala.
3. O a ni lagona e o'o ia te oe poo tamaiti foi i lena taimi ao faia fagogo?
4. E mafai ona e faamatala atili se taua o le fagogo i lou olaga ao tamaititi.
5. E faamata e faapefea ona e faaaogaina le fagogo e fai ma auala e aoao ai tamaiti i le potu aoga?
6. O le a sou lagona, e tatau ona faaaogaina auala o loo faia ai fagogo e aoao atu ai tamaiti, aisea?
7. O le fagogo e taua e faasino mai ai ni auala e aoao ai tamaiti ia fiafia e faalogologo ma taofi, e sao pe sese. Faamatala mai mafuaaga o lau tali.

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Glossary

The glossary gives definitions and meanings that are used in the thesis for Samoan words and/or phrases.

Note: The glossary follows the Samoan alphabetical order: a,e,i,o,u,f,g,l,m,n,p,s,t,v.

aganu'u	traditions and customs of Samoa
alofa	love/compassion
agamalū	showing humble behaviour
agalelei	showing kindness
agaga	soul
aia'iga	refers to agreements on something
atamai	wisdom
aiga	family
alagāupu	proverbs
āga	how one behaves
aue!	Word to retaliate with teller during fagogo
aiga potopoto	extended family
itumalō	districts
itulā	hour
oloa	material wealth
olaga	life
olomatua	refers to an old woman
fa'aSamoa	the Samoan way of life
fa'aneionapo	modernizing Samoan way of life
fa'amatala	to tell or narrate
filemu	being silent
fa'atoesega	to apologize or an apology
fa'aleleiga	to come to good terms with someone
fa'aaloalo	have respect or respectful behaviour
fa'amaise	to sympathize
fa'amafanafana	give words of comfort
feosiosia'i	having the will to bring relatives/families together
fetausia'i	when relatives care for each other economically
fa'avae	foundation
fa'afailelega	the nurturing and nourishing
fa'ataunu	to get something done
fa'ata'eta'ealuga	doing something with little or no effort to succeed
fale	Samoan open house
fatuga	songs created from stories/legends
fa'atuatuaga	having faith in someone or something
fiafia	being happy, excited

fa'asinomaga	your place in the aiga/nuu or society
fa'amātua	to do with parents as in parental love
fa'amanuiaga	a blessing given by someone esp an elder
fanau	the children
fanua	refers to the land and its contents
fai-fāgogo	the story tellers
fāgogo	the story (s) of the night
gagana	Samoan language
gafa	genealogies
leo	the voices
loto	the soul
lima	hands
logofa'atutuila	when someone lend ears to listen without disturbance.
muamua	to come first
mamae	regarding something as very precious
matagofie	with beauty and elegance
matai	Samoan chief
metotia	the skills and ways of doing something
meaalofa	the gifts
matua tausī	refers to the old men and women
mātega	refers to the guessing games by Samoans in the past
mafaukau	thinking about something
mafutaga	the getting together of families
mālie	when the soul experience satisfaction and joy
nu'u	refers to the village
paepae	the front part of the Samoan fale laid with pebbles
pese	the songs
po	refers to the night
poto	being smart and intelligent
siva	the Samoan dance
tala	the stories/legends/myths
tima'i	giving words of advice or guidance
tapua'i	when someone prays and waits patiently for success
talanoa	refers to the conversations and dialogues
tofi	what you really believe is your role in life
tusi Paia	the Holy Bible
tu	refers to the actions and behaviour
taliga	the ears
tagi	refers to the chanting part or singing in fagogo

tofāmanino	refers to the views of the Samoan elders that are seen to be well thought out, clear and full of wisdom
tupua	refers to riddles and guessing games used by the elders
utuvagana	the Samoan vocabulary
va-fealoa'i	the respect observed between people
va-tapuia	the sacred space that must be known and observed.

