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**Lupe Fa'alele: Releasing the Doves:  
Factors affecting the successful operation  
of Samoan Businesses in  
New Zealand.**

A thesis presented in fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology.  
Massey University, New Zealand.

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# DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my late grandmother Vaolele Vaoiva Tofilau who has passed before the completion of this study. You motivated me to keep going and cheered me on this journey from beyond. This is for you.

# ABSTRACT

This thesis explores levels of Samoan entrepreneurship in New Zealand. It identifies unique challenges and opportunities Samoan entrepreneurs face when establishing businesses in a migrant setting. There is a growing body of knowledge in New Zealand on ethnic businesses, in particular, what constitutes an ethnic business, what facilitates and impedes their success, and the contribution they make to the New Zealand economy. Samoan entrepreneurship, however, remains an academic terra nova. Little is understood about what Samoan entrepreneurship looks like; is there a typical Samoan business, for example; what sorts of challenges do they face when negotiating and navigating cultural and business challenges in the New Zealand business environment; and what does this all mean in terms of success in both the business and community contexts? This thesis considers a qualitative research approach to investigate the lived experiences of Samoan entrepreneurs in New Zealand. The research draws on the experiences of fifteen male and six female Samoan entrepreneurs. The participants interviewed for this study included entrepreneurs who were born and educated in Samoa, those born in Samoa and partly educated in both Samoa and New Zealand, and entrepreneurs born and educated in New Zealand. The research examines how entrepreneurs differ from one another in the way they operate their businesses and the manner in which they negotiate their obligations towards family, religion, community and business responsibilities. Earlier literature on ethnic entrepreneurship has emphasized the importance of ‘social embeddedness’ of entrepreneurs in their social and community networks as key factors in operating a successful business. This study however looks to build on and extend this concept to a mixed embeddedness focus that highlights the combination of cultural, institutional, structural elements of the business environment and relevant strategies that entrepreneurs use to create a successful business. The findings in the study emphasize that the mixed embedded approach produces more successes and a variety amongst Samoan entrepreneurs especially when they negotiate the requirements of both *fa’a-sāmoa* in conjunction with the institutional and the regulatory responsibilities of the New Zealand business environment. The implications of these findings would be valuable for other migrant operated businesses in New Zealand.

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Faafetai mo le tapua'iga.

God Bless you all.

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# Glossary of Samoan words

<i>aganu'u</i>	Sāmoan culture and traditions
<i>ali'i</i>	high chief or titular chief
<i>āiga</i>	the nuclear and extended family unit
<i>āiga potopoto</i>	extended kin group
<i>aitu</i>	spirit
<i>ālofa</i>	compassion, also payments for Congregational Church pastors
<i>amio fa'atamāli'i</i>	noble ways and behaviour
<i>ae taga'i</i>	to view or observe
<i>āoga a le faifeau</i>	pastor's school
<i>asiga malaga</i>	visitation to a travelling party
<i>aso fanau</i>	birthdays
<i>aualuma</i>	unmarried, widowed or separated women of a village
<i>aumaga</i>	untitled men who provide service to the village
<i>EFKS</i>	Ekalesia Faapotopotoga Kerisiano Samoa
<i>fa' aāloālo</i>	courtesy respect and politeness
<i>fa'afaletui</i>	special meetings called by executive <i>mātai</i> to discuss matters of great importance for the village
<i>fa'aipoipoga</i>	wedding
<i>fa'akomiti</i>	women committee activities
<i>fa'alupega</i>	expression and recognition of chief titles and genealogical origins
<i>fa'alavelave</i>	lifecycle events or cultural events that involve the exchange of goods
<i>fa'ali'i</i>	getting angry or annoyed
<i>fa' amavaega</i>	departing occasion
<i>fa' amātai</i>	mātai system
<i>fa'amanuiaga</i>	blessings
<i>fa'amaualuga</i>	boastful
<i>fa'asalaga</i>	penalty imposed by the village fonofono
<i>fa'a-sāmoa</i>	Samoan customs, traditions and its institutions
<i>fa' atamāli'i</i>	behaviour suitable for the aristocrats
<i>fa'aulaula</i>	teasing and pestering
<i>faifeau</i>	church minister

<i>fale</i>	Samoan house
<i>faletua ma tausi</i>	chief's wives
<i>faufautua</i>	advise and consult
<i>feagaiga</i>	covenant between a brother and sister. Used in religion to refer to the relationship between ministers and their congregations or the village and the church
<i>fia-palagi</i>	wanting to be western
<i>foa'i</i>	gifts for the pastor
<i>fono</i>	meeting
<i>fono a tina</i>	womens meetings
<i>fuaō</i>	gunnets
<i>galu</i>	wave or breakers
<i>ia seu</i>	to direct
<i>itūmalo</i>	district
<i>lotu</i>	church or religion
<i>lotonu'u</i>	serving ones village
<i>lupe fa'alele</i>	dove in reference to (Genesis 8:11).
<i>mafutaga a aiga</i>	family gathering for special events
<i>maliu</i>	funeral
<i>mālofie</i>	Association of tattooed men and women or the pe'a
<i>manu</i>	birds
<i>mātai</i>	chief or titled person
<i>Nafanua</i>	Samoan Goddess
<i>nu'u</i>	village or polity with its own precedence
<i>palagi</i>	a white person
<i>peleti</i>	money payments for Methodist pastors
<i>puiāiga</i>	a closely related family group
<i>saofa'i</i>	conferring of matai titles
<i>laoa</i>	term for the resident of the talking chief or tulafale
<i>lau susuga</i>	respectful addressing for many ali'i titles
<i>talanoaga</i>	conversation either formal and informal
<i>tapuaiga</i>	religion
<i>taulele'a</i>	untitled men who serve the village requirements
<i>tautua</i>	Services to family by untitled persons

<i>tausi-āiga</i>	continuous service for the family
<i>tausi-feagaiga</i>	serving the church pastor
<i>tausi-nuu</i>	committing and providing services to ones' village
<i>tulāfale</i>	talking chief or orator
<i>tusigaigoa</i>	village census, a fundraising mechanism used by villages and churches to raise funds for church projects
<i>uo uo foa</i>	friends at times and bleeding heads the next
<i>va-fa'aleaiga</i>	family connections
<i>va-feāloāloa' i</i>	mutual respect in all socio/political relationships

# CHAPTER ONE

## Introduction

*Meanwhile, Noah sent out the dove to see if the water had gone down, but since the water still covered all the land, the dove did not find a place to land. It flew back to the boat, and Noah reached out and took it in. He waited another seven days and sent out the dove again. It returned to him in the evening with a fresh olive leaf in its beak. Noah knew that the water had gone down. Then he waited another seven days and sent out the dove once more; this time it did not come back (Genesis 8: 8-12)<sup>1</sup>.*

### 1.1 Motivation for undertaking this research

This research was conceived from a multiple discussions I had with four Samoan colleagues that I attended University with in the late 1980's. During one of our recent discussions we spoke of various issues that we experienced at the time such as Samoan immigration status in a migrant environment, the nature of '*fa'a-sāmoa*' in the migrant setting and how these have been reshaped in New Zealand. We discussed the value of education as an advantage for starting businesses and the levels of career opportunity accessible to Samoan people in New Zealand. Our discussions included how issues of education and entrepreneurship influenced the experiences of different generations of New Zealand-born Samoans compared to early Samoan migrants. We witnessed at the time how New Zealand born Samoans struggled to speak the Samoan language and associate with the practice of *fa'a-sāmoa*<sup>2</sup>. This led many to associate more with us, Samoan immigrants within the University Samoan Students' Association, to strengthen and reconfirm their knowledge of *fa'a-sāmoa* and learn Samoan. Out of the discussions with my colleagues and my experiences at the time, I began to observe more closely how the *fa'a-sāmoa* influenced both Samoan immigrants and New Zealand-born Samoans in

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<sup>1</sup> Bible Good News Revised Edition

<sup>2</sup> Samoan institutions of family or *aiga*, religion or *lotu* and community or *nu'u*

terms of how we viewed education, our career opportunities, and business practices in the context of New Zealand.

As we were all born in Samoa we spoke Samoan fluently. All of us were *mātai* holders, and so we understood the practices and obligations of *fa'a-sāmoa*, a set of cultural practices based on our families, religion and villages, that enforced upon us collective responsibilities of traditional Samoan society. Together with our New Zealand education, our *fa'a-sāmoa* knowledge and cultural abilities should have given us a dual advantage when engaging in entrepreneurial activities in New Zealand. Nonetheless, such expectations need confirmation with time. The New Zealand-born Samoans, however, as we noticed had advantages with their education, proficiency in the English language and being born in New Zealand made them more accessible to career and business opportunities in New Zealand in comparison to our situation as Samoan-born migrants. Our backgrounds presented us with different opportunities where our different levels of education, career paths and community networks would determine our future careers and progression with entrepreneurship.

I recall one colleague talked about how his family valued education and viewed it as the way out of poverty. Migrating to New Zealand was for him the answer as he could improve his education, as well as higher incomes and better business opportunities. This is a common motivation for many Samoans and other Pacific Island people who view the success from achieving a good education or having a successful business with the expectation to reciprocate the support given by family, church and community (Spoonley, 2001). In this sense, the migrant and New Zealand born Samoans in New Zealand both acknowledge the expectations and the obligations of *fa'a-sāmoa* as consequences of their connectedness to family, religion and community; factors which may be visible in many Samoan businesses.

As an entrepreneur, I experienced and understood the conditions of taking on my family expectations. One expectation that I felt at the time, because I was educated, and especially because my main field of study was business, was that I should know how to run a business and be successful. I also felt the pressure of family expectations since I am a *mātai* and was operating a business. This increased their expectations that I provide

leadership, initiative and contribute more to *fa'alavelave*<sup>3</sup> and family wellbeing, whether I was wealthy or not. I understood these pressures, yet I decided that in order for my businesses to be successful I would have to manage these cultural requirements within the New Zealand context. This motivated me personally to look at the status of Samoan entrepreneurship in New Zealand and to evaluate what factors promote or constrain the development of Samoan businesses.

Levels of entrepreneurship amongst Samoans were low during the 80's and 90's (Macpherson, et al., 2000). The few Samoan entrepreneurs operating businesses in Auckland at the time were known in the community and motivated me. One such business owner operated a taxi company, managed a laundromat as well as a travel agency. I learned from his diverse business interests and from his ability to position his enterprises in services where he utilised the Samoan community niches, while at same time capitalising on opportunities the mainstream business environment offered. He diversified his business interests into commercial properties in later years. I learned from his risk-taking abilities and experiences in identifying opportunities, which provided a lens into which Samoan and other Pacific Island business development and management issues are particularly important in the migrant setting.

I also observed, from teaching business courses in one of the local universities in Auckland, that there were low numbers of Samoan students enrolled in business studies. I witnessed first-hand, the low rate of success and degree completion of Samoan students in business education. Statistics at the time (Statistics New Zealand, 2006) showed that overall tertiary participation and completion rates for the Bachelor of Business qualification for the Pacific student population were 4.5% compared to 11.2% of the total New Zealand population (Statistics New Zealand Census, 2006). In 2006, the Samoan students' completion rate in tertiary education was 5.7 %, rising to 8.0 % in 2013 (Statistics New Zealand, Census 2013). These statistics show that the increase from 2006 to 2013 was rather low as compared to the national completion rate in New Zealand, which went from 15.8% to 20.0% in the same years (Statistic New Zealand Census, 2013).

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<sup>3</sup> Lifecycle events that include birthdays, title conferment, funerals weddings and etc



Despite the picture of limited success, statistics showed that there is a correlation between higher education and entrepreneurship for the Pacific self-employed and employers. Statistics indicate that the proportion of Pacific people self employed and employers who attained a Bachelors degree increased from 7 % and 13 % compared to the general New Zealand population of 17 % and 21 % from 2001 to 2013 (Tuatagaloa & Huang, 2017; Statistics New Zealand, 2013). A general assumption for the Samoan entrepreneurial condition is that attaining higher education is a positive sign, relating higher education to better income and business opportunities. Earle (2009) claims that higher education leads to higher success rates in employment, income levels and labour productivity. Literature also points to the positive effect of tertiary education, leading to advantages of higher ranges of income and labour productivity in New Zealand (Earle, 2009, Callister & Didham, 2008). As to whether there is a correlation between low levels of business education and entrepreneurship in the Samoan community in New Zealand, it is hard to say.

Relative to employer and self-employment rates for the Samoan community, statistics point to low levels of Samoan business ownership in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2006, 2013). In 2006, 1.5 % Samoan adults were classified as employers, with 4.4 % of adults identified as self-employed without employees. These figures were compared to the Pacific Island rates of the same period were 1.6% employers and 4.3% self-employed that showed a minor variation in both rates. These figures were also compared with 7.4% of New Zealand people who were employers and 12.2% who were self-employed without employees, for the same period (Statistics New Zealand, 2006).

In 2013, Samoan employers recorded a slight decrease at 1.3% with those who were self-employers recorded at 4.5 %, a slight increase. The Pacific group showed a slight decrease from the 2006 figures of 1.6 % to 1.4 % for employers with a static figure of 4.3% for the self-employed. These figures were also compared to the national New Zealand rate for the same period was 6.6% for employers and 12.1 % for self-employers. The national figures reflected decreases that were similar to the both Samoan and the Pacific groups (Statistics New Zealand, 2006, 2013).

Samoan entrepreneurship still lags behind that of the general New Zealand population. The survival rates of Samoan businesses follow trends in the general New Zealand

business environment (Massey, 2011). They also follow a trend where many small businesses exit or cease to operate, for various reasons, before reaching their first 5 years of operation (Schaper & Vollery, 2004).

Upon reflecting on education figures and the status of Samoan businesses, it occurred to me that my colleagues and I were represented in these statistics. I wondered then whether the practices of our *fa'a-sāmoa*, or lack of education and other resources together with the influence of the institutional conditions of the New Zealand business environment have helped or inhibited our business development in the migrant Samoan community. I then considered my education and business experiences and whether there were other reasons that motivated myself and my colleagues to start a business. As an entrepreneur who speaks Samoan fluently, raised in both Samoa and New Zealand and with an understanding of the advantages and pitfalls of overcommitting to *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations when operating a business, I had intended to manage the influence of cultural obligations on my businesses. It requires me to I balanced my obligations to family, religion and community with those of business responsibilities, especially managing the institutional and structural elements of business that are mandatory requirements. At times, this balancing act was challenging.

Understanding and balancing these requirements would provide me with the skills and the confidence to access niche markets and opportunities in ways that lead to the operation of a successful business. In comparison to my colleagues and their New Zealand education, business experiences, *mātai* status and social capital, these values would also gave them advantages that allow them to strategise opportunities for business. Our cultural and educational backgrounds gave us insights as to how to respond to the challenges of the business environment and at the same time identify various factors that would contribute to the successful running of our own businesses. We represent different types of entrepreneurs, those with different resources, education, business experiences, *mātai* status and the motivation to start businesses. In light of this, my desire is to understand which factors may help or hinder a Samoan entrepreneur in developing his/her business.

## 1.2 Background to the study

In anticipation of undertaking this study, I started to explore in more depth my own position as an entrepreneur and those of my colleagues, particularly the factors that influenced our career choices, business journeys and whether we had been successful. It occurred to me that my colleagues and I represented distinct types of Samoan entrepreneurs. This included those born raised and educated in Samoa who migrated to New Zealand and operating business (1<sup>st</sup> generation entrepreneurs); those born and raised in Samoa who were partly educated in Samoa and completed education in New Zealand and operated businesses (1.5 generation) and the New Zealand-born and educated entrepreneurs (2<sup>nd</sup> generation). This prompted me to consider the Samoan entrepreneur's statuses in terms of gender, place of birth, age, number and type of employees, *mātai* status, years operating a business, the sectors where the business operates and their education in order to gauge motivation and the nature of their businesses. When looking at Samoan business owners, I would also need to be cognisant of the fact there are various configurations of people who identify as Samoan and that this might influence how they conceptualise business challenges and success. In essence, I would need to take into account levels of acculturation, business experience and the influence of social spaces within New Zealand.

This study uses the Biblical story of Noah<sup>4</sup> and the releasing of the dove or *lupe fa'alele*<sup>5</sup> as a metaphor to relate to different Samoan immigrants and hence entrepreneurs. The first release of the dove to check on the floods refers to the first wave of entrepreneurs who migrated to New Zealand in the 1960s and the 1970s in search of employment and secure financial support for their families and communities in the home country (Spoonley, 2001). These entrepreneurs represent those who were born in Samoa with minimum education and with limited experience of the New Zealand environment in terms of finding better employment opportunities (Faleolo, 2014). Metaphorically, this reminds us of the loyalty and the blind faith of earlier Samoan migrants who migrated to earn income and send remittances to support their families and communities at home, while also flying

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<sup>4</sup> Genesis 8, 8-12

<sup>5</sup> The releasing of the dove or *lupe fa'alele* in Samoan signifies the migration phases of Samoan migration to distant destinations.

high to build their lives, survive and advance into business opportunities in an unfamiliar environment.

The second release of the dove refers to the next wave of entrepreneurs who were born and were partly educated in Samoa, but also partially raised and completed their education in New Zealand (1.5 generation). They possess different social and class resources in terms of their abilities with Samoan and English language, *mātai* status, the utility of the *fa'a-sāmoa* and, importantly, core competencies and experiences of different business opportunities in New Zealand. Some of the entrepreneurs belonging to both of these two generations showed continuous loyalty and support for family and community responsibilities in different ways and in how these responsibilities influenced their businesses and their lives.

The third release of the dove represents those born and educated in New Zealand. They have been brought up in New Zealand with different social and class capital that allows them to adapt more freely to the employment and business opportunities open to them. This group has access to new opportunities through education and the use of technology, allowing them to develop global business opportunities and to further increase transnational nodes and connections with their migrant parents' home communities (Lee & Francis, 2009). They often have higher education, and may have been raised in a bi-cultural environment by parents who identified with both Samoan and European ways, with values that may not conform exactly to traditional Samoan values. This group would be very diverse, may, may not support *fa'a-sāmoa*, or may only embrace *fa'a-sāmoa* when its practices fit into their lives.

This reminds us that while some immigrants may feel no great loyalty to their country of origin and are like the third dove who never returned, they may continue to support their families and communities in ways that are influenced by Samoan cultural values. These immigrants may choose to offer this support in different ways and different degrees like searching for new career paths, and new forms of employment and entrepreneurship which allow them to contribute to *fa'alāvelave*<sup>6</sup> and support the wider extended family both in New Zealand and in Samoa. Such support and contributions remain as an

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<sup>6</sup> Life cycle events such as *saofa'i* or conferment of titles, weddings, funerals etc.

expectation for most Samoans. While entrepreneurs belonging to both of the former groups are still loyal and supportive of families and community responsibilities, some in the latter group of entrepreneurs have begun to question traditional Samoan values and how these relate to their lives in the migrant setting. They are in fact, becoming disconnected from their Island community or the Ark.

Given the aforementioned, this study looks to explore the importance and influence of *fa'a-sāmoa* in the management styles and business types operated by different Samoan entrepreneurs and to better understand how and why some adapt to or in fact disconnect with these values. Referring to my university colleagues, all of whom had operated successful businesses, they balanced their obligations to families, religion and the community, both in Samoa and in New Zealand, with the requirements of their careers and business interests. However, other Samoan entrepreneurs in New Zealand looked to be struggling and on the face of it seemed to have prioritised the socio-cultural, education and economic aspects, for example, differently from us. Thus while some entrepreneurs have continued to be attached to the cultural values of their migrant parents, others opted to minimise this commitment by embracing more western or NZ styled values and education, with still others trying to strike a balance between traditional cultural expectations and running a successful business in the New Zealand business environment. Having now outlined my motivation for embarking on this research and the initial thinking, which informed this study, I briefly define some key terms.

### **1.3 Key terms used**

In this study, the terms 'entrepreneur', 'business owners', 'self-employed', and 'business operators' are used interchangeably to refer to Samoan entrepreneurs. This is in line with how the concepts are used in New Zealand and in the entrepreneurship literature (Massey, 2011; Shaper & Volery, 2004). The term 'business' is used in this study to refer to a business entity or company within the New Zealand legal system (Statistics New Zealand, 2013 Census). The term 'entrepreneurship' refers to the management processes that are used by business owners, when converting opportunities into ideas and products (Massey, 2011; Shane & Vankataraman, 2000).

*Fa'a-sāmoa* is used in this study to refer to Samoan culture and the three institutions of the family, religion and community. References to these institutions reflect the way they are shaped in both Samoa and in the migrant environments. It is used in this thesis in the New Zealand contexts of how these three institutions have been changed by the Samoan migrants which in turn in a larger part for entrepreneurs its social capital becomes a motivating factor for businesses. This study examines *fa'a-sāmoa* not as an empediment but rather positively and motivating in the development of Samoan businesses.

This study uses three categories of Samoan entrepreneurs: the *1<sup>st</sup> generation entrepreneurs* who were born and educated in Samoa, migrated and set up businesses in New Zealand; *the 1.5-generation* of entrepreneurs who were born and partly educated in both Samoa and New Zealand; and *the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation* who were born and educated in New Zealand (Chen, 2015).

#### **1.4 Research aim and research questions**

The aim of this study is to explore factors that contribute or inhibit the successful development and management of Samoan owned businesses in New Zealand. To elaborate further this study looks to examine i) “the extent to which” Samoan entrepreneurs in New Zealand practice *fa'a-sāmoa* in the management of their businesses, and ii) how *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations influence their businesses. There are three research questions posed below that guide the study. These are:

1. What does a Samoan business look like in the New Zealand context for three categories: (a) businesses operated by Samoan born entrepreneurs who migrated to New Zealand; (b) businesses operated by those born in Samoa, but raised and educated in New Zealand, and (c) businesses operated by those born and educated in New Zealand?
2. What opportunities and challenges exist for Samoan entrepreneurs in the context of their practice of *fa'a-sāmoa* in New Zealand?
3. What factors contribute to business success for Samoan entrepreneurs in the New Zealand context?

## 1.5 Brief overview of the research design

This research favours qualitative methodology because the intention is to explore, describe the meaning of the actions, experiences and issues facing Samoan entrepreneurs. This methodology allows us to understand how Samoan entrepreneurs interact with the world around them, their community and the social structures that influence and affect their behaviours. In this sense, the qualitative approach allows us to understand deeper actions and the context where issues play out (Denzin & Lincoln, 2002). The intention is to gain a more nuanced understanding of the experiences of Samoan entrepreneurs and their business practices in the migrant setting, notwithstanding the fact New Zealand born and raised Samoans are not migrants, rather they are 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> generation Samoans. Employing this approach also allows the researcher and the participant's space to engage in a culturally respectful manner. It provides the opportunity to adhere to Samoan protocols of *fa'aaloalo*<sup>7</sup> and *vā-fe'aloaloa*<sup>8</sup> which are pertinent to building relationships in the Samoan culture (Anae, 2001, Va'a, 2001). Semi-structured interviews, due to their flexible nature will be used to capture the voices of participants (Gerbich, 1999) and provide insights to their lives as Samoa business owners.

## 1.6 Importance of the study: The gaps in the literature

Early entrepreneurship literature concentrates mainly on the characterization of ethnic businesses in international destinations and the challenges migrants faced. The focus tends to be on the importance of the social-embeddedness of entrepreneurs in their cultural and community networks with respect to the development of their businesses in host economies (Masurel, 2004 et al.). According to Light (2004), the social embeddedness argument relates to the connection between ethnic entrepreneurship and the use of ethnic resources such as cultural values, social networks, group solidarity and trust that support the development and survival of business.

Sociology, anthropology and economics have made substantial contributions to the theoretical underpinnings that define the phenomenon, emphasizing the advantage of ethnicity in the development of migrant businesses (Baumol, 2010). This suggests that

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<sup>7</sup> Respect

<sup>8</sup> Mutual respect in all socio/political relationships

the social embeddedness of the ethnic entrepreneurs in their social and kinship networks helped them in the process of establishing their businesses in the new country of settlement (Grannoveter, 1985; Light, 2004). However, reliance of entrepreneurs on the advantages of social embeddedness to create their businesses did not fully provide business successes especially when other environmental and market factors impose different influences on business development. The social embeddedness argument in this sense was seen as a counter to the disadvantages ethnic entrepreneurs faced in host countries when they set up businesses (Mears et al., 2015; Pecoud, 2010).

Labour-market disadvantage perspectives, on the other hand, point to the structuralist approach which refers to limited class resources (lack of education, limited financial resources, discrimination in the work place, little management experience) that forced migrants to develop their businesses (Zhou, 2007). The earlier literature focused mainly on the social embeddedness of ethnic entrepreneurs on the supply side and their ethnic resources as an advantage for their businesses (Light, 2004; Kontos, 2007). According to Rath (2003), these early views were not only one-sided, but they left out the structural, legal, and institutional factors that pose challenges for entrepreneurs (Volery, 2007). The shift away from descriptions of ethnic entrepreneurship that relied on cultural and social capital saw the phenomenon viewed in a context where new forms of entrepreneurship had expanded under different economic regimes (Pecould, 2010).

In this study, the supply side or the values and characteristics of ethnic entrepreneurs themselves are incorporated into the broader business context where ethnic entrepreneurship operate and locate. In taking this approach, this study expands the mixed embeddedness framework (Kloosterman & Rath, 2003). This framework takes into account ‘the characteristics of the supply of immigrant entrepreneurs, the shape of the opportunity structure, and the institutions mediating between aspiring entrepreneurs and concrete openings to start a business. This allows the analysis of immigrant entrepreneurship in different national contexts (Kloosterman and Rath, 2003). In using the mixed embeddedness framework, I review mediating factors that reflect the variations amongst Samoan entrepreneurs, especially where they operate businesses, the strategies they use, how they utilize *fa’a-sāmoa* values in the management of their business, and the



context in which they operate businesses. Background factors like *mātai*<sup>9</sup> status, education, age, experience, religious beliefs, place of birth, length of time in business, business skills and the type of business the entrepreneurs operate are reviewed for their influences in the management of these businesses.

In this thesis, I look to balance the contradictions and the ambivalences of *fa'a-sāmoa* and whether Samoan values, contribute, motivate and inhibit the development of Samoan businesses in the migrant environment. The mixed embeddedness model explains how the national institutions, legislation, financial markets, compliance structures and the mediating effects of the social welfare systems influence Samoan entrepreneurship. This conceptual framework is extended to include the development of new types of Samoan entrepreneurs who utilise *fa'a-sāmoa* values and their class capital (education, business and social networks, financial resources) when developing strategies to develop their businesses. This reflects the merging and consolidation by entrepreneurs of *fa'a-sāmoa*, modernisation and individualism as an expression of Samoan entrepreneurship in the migrant environment.

## 1.7 Structure of the thesis

**Chapter 1** introduces the motivation and the background to the study. The meanings of important terms are defined. The aim of the research, the research questions and methodology are stated.

**Chapter 2** provides a review of the ethnic entrepreneurship literature. Themes raised by this literature are considered critical in relation to Samoan entrepreneurship. The chapter discusses the history of entrepreneurship and contemporary trends contributing to the way entrepreneurship has been conceptualised. The nature of ethnic entrepreneurship from the cultural and structural perspectives are explored which lead to the themes of social embeddedness and the disadvantages perspective. Recent approaches that developed the social embeddedness phenomenon in relation to the influences of national economic contexts expands this to the mixed embeddedness framework. The concept of 'mixed

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<sup>9</sup> Title holder of families or aiga who hold titles bestowed by their families who are custodian of land and property of the family.

embeddedness' is explained in detail that place Samoan entrepreneurship in the context of the New Zealand business environment.

**Chapter 3** explores my personal experience as an entrepreneur. The chapter focuses on issues that had influenced me as a migrant the New Zealand business context. This reviews the roles and influences the family, religion, and community have changed in the migrant setting. The chapter also examines how issues in the international ethnic literature are compared to my experiences and of other Samoan entrepreneurs especially in terms of how *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations influenced business management.

**Chapter 4** explains the design of this research and the process of data collection and analysis. The rationale for taking a qualitative approach to doing the research is explained. The methodology is guided by the Samoan proverb: '*ia seu le manu ae taga'i i le galu*' or when trapping the bird, one must watch the breakers. It is used metaphorically in this study to reflect on the importance of taking care when carrying out research and in this case, 'the processes and objectives of this study'. The proverb requires that research plans, processes and outcomes must be properly assessed, evaluated and trustworthy in order to achieve credible results. Ethical considerations for carrying out the research are then explored. Emphasis is placed on being both outsider and insider. The insider position is important for adhering to the protocols of *fa'aāloālo* and *vafeāloāloa'i*, both of which acknowledge the important of relationships when undertaking interviews and indeed throughout the research process. The chapter concludes with the data analysis processes and the limitations of the research.

**Chapter 5** presents findings regarding the role and influence of the Samoan family on Samoan businesses in New Zealand. The findings demonstrate how participants are influenced in various ways by their families' requests for support. The chapter reviews patterns of business support for family that vary from one entrepreneur to another, with entrepreneurs finding different ways to accommodate family requests for support. While support for the family requests were strong amongst *mātai*, the older entrepreneurs and those born in Samoa, this support was mixed amongst the younger entrepreneurs and the New Zealand-born which may indicate their changing attitudes and values towards the family in the migrant context.

**Chapter 6** explores the influence of religion on Samoan businesses. This chapter looks at the different contributions and participation in religion and church that vary from one entrepreneur to another. Findings suggest that traditional religious beliefs and the social role of the church are favoured more by older Samoan's and older migrants and that this is in conflict with the beliefs held by younger migrants and New Zealand-born Samoans. Such differences appear to be due to different levels of religiosity and new faiths that are adopted in the migrant setting.

**Chapter 7** presents findings on the way the community influence business. The chapter explores different levels of support for business as well as the way the community expects support and how Samoan entrepreneurs accommodate such support and expectations. The nature and extent of entrepreneurs' support for their communities, which like family and religion vary amongst the participants, are based on the identities, values and expectations of the entrepreneurs according to both traditional and the New Zealand Samoan communities.

**Chapter 8** addresses the structures and processes of the New Zealand business environment and their influence on Samoan businesses. The chapter explains the challenges imposed by the regulatory environment, ways of marketing and financing the business. The data points to different ways entrepreneurs view business responsibilities relating to levels of experience, skills and resources as contributing factors that enable the entrepreneurs to manage cultural obligations and business responsibilities more efficiently.

**Chapter 9** discusses the findings of the study in relation to the three main research questions (Chapter 1).

**Chapter 10** provides the conclusion and recommendations for future research and policy as well as the implications for Samoan entrepreneurship.

# CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE

## REVIEW

### Introduction

This chapter examines the literature on ethnic entrepreneurship as a subset of entrepreneurship. The literature review focuses on the role of ethnicity, community networks and social capital in the economic integration and development of ethnic entrepreneurship in the migrant environment. These themes are compared to Samoan entrepreneurship to identify levels in which these influence Samoan businesses in New Zealand. Early literature on the phenomenon started in the USA that emphasised the social embeddedness of ethnic entrepreneurs in their ethnic resources and community networks that support setting up of these businesses (Waldinger et al., 1990; Light, & Gold, 2000). Scholarly work from Europe on the other hand points to the influence of institutional, structural and market disadvantages such as discrimination in the work place, lack of educational credentials, low capital resources and language barriers as factors that force new immigrants into self-employment (Kloosterman & Rath, 2001, 2003). Similarly, literature from Australia follow a similar stance that emphasise the disadvantage thesis to describe the path to entrepreneurship in the ethnic communities (Collins, 2003).

While this study stands outside the US, European and Australian strands of the literature, elements from the literature are important to this review. Samoan entrepreneurship do not fit precisely into the descriptions and characterisation of ethnic entrepreneurship the current literature refers. Comparatively, while some Samoan entrepreneurs are embedded in *fa'a-sāmoa* values, with their businesses geared towards the collective, others are motivated to be successful operators and are therefore influenced by the national, regional markets and the global context that also influence the New Zealand business environment. Like ethnic entrepreneurs who utilise their social capital in the development of their businesses some Samoan entrepreneurs also view *fa'a-sāmoa* as a motivational factor to develop businesses. This leads to applying and extending the mixed embeddedness

concept where the focus is on matching the obligations of *fa'a-sāmoa* and business opportunities with strategies mediating between the institutions and compliance responsibilities of the New Zealand business environment (Kloosterman & Rath, 2001).

This chapter has six sections. Section 1 introduces the history of entrepreneurship and the changing role of the entrepreneur in developing businesses. Section 2 explains the role ethnicity plays in the development of ethnic entrepreneurship. It considers the concept of social embeddedness as a tool to counter the disadvantages ethnic entrepreneurs encounter in the business environment. Section 3 explores the models that explain other themes than cultural attributes and social capital that entrepreneurs rely on for their businesses. An explanation of the interactive model provides a platform that reflects the lack of economic analysis of ethnic entrepreneurship. This suggests that ethnic group characteristics play a role when entrepreneurs interact with business opportunities in the development of their businesses. The shortcomings of this framework has led to the development of the mixed embeddedness concept or the way in which the entrepreneurs provide strategies that allow them to manage business opportunities when navigating the requirements of the institutional and compliance responsibilities of the business environment. Section 4 discusses the concept of mixed embeddedness and its influences in framing Samoan entrepreneurship. Section 5 addresses the gap of the study by extending the mixed embeddedness model to accommodate the utility of *fa'a-sāmoa* together with the institutional and structural responsibilities in the development of Samoan entrepreneurship. Section 6 concludes the chapter.

## **2.1 Defining entrepreneurship.**

The field of entrepreneurship involves the study of sources of opportunities, ‘the processes of discovery, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities and the individuals who discover, evaluate and exploit those opportunities’ (Shane, 2003, p. 4). This definition offers an expansive view of a multi-faceted phenomenon that is continuously changing (Gartner, 1990). Early literature on the topic began with the classical view of the entrepreneur and his/her functions in the production of goods and services that later expanded different explanations of the entrepreneurial process in different economic contexts. Early writers on entrepreneurship theory began in the work of economists like

Cantillon (1680-1734), Say (1767-1830), Schumpeter (1934) and Kirzner (1973) (in Casson, 2010, p.7). Firstly, Cantillon describes the entrepreneur as a risk taker. He points out that there are risks involved in business activities in different economic situations. Although Cantillon recognised the role of the entrepreneur in economic development, his interest was not in what the entrepreneur did but rather 'the processes and function of trading goods where risks occurred' (Casson, 2010). Say on the other hand supported the role of the entrepreneur in the entrepreneurial process claiming that he/she gathered factors of production that lead to the development and organisation of small businesses. Say argued that entrepreneurs are involved in generating new knowledge that would lead to new ways of production (in Bjerke & Råmø, 2011). Writers on theories of entrepreneurship focussed more on the management processes of businesses rather than the creation of new firms (Baumol, 2010). This relate more to the distinctions between the entrepreneurial and managerial functions where the manager manages the ongoing processes and activities of a business as efficiently as possible with the given resources and expected results. The entrepreneur by contrast is someone who undertakes, create or incorporate business entities from new or combining existing ones (Baumol, 2010).

These definitions have links to further definitions espoused by Schumpeter (1934) who referred to the entrepreneur as someone who was involved in creative destruction and the reconstructing consequences when a product is invented. While there are risks in the commercial activities of entrepreneurs according to Schumpeter, innovation, imagination and creativity constitutes the key contributions to entrepreneurship (Casson, 2010). For Schumpeter, opportunities have utility when there is a disequilibrium force involved in creating opportunities. In contemporary entrepreneurialism, this requires accessing new information to support innovations; a process that makes product development processes riskier (Shane, 2003).

Kirzner (1973) offers another definition pointing to the competitive behaviour of entrepreneurs that were not only market driven, but also involving low elements of unavoidable risks attached to the day-to-day activities. Kirzner (1997) argues that an entrepreneur does not have to be an inventor but rather a person who capitalises on these opportunities. The determination to seek opportunities and capitalise on them for profit were part of the processes that are also entrepreneurial. Unlike Schumpeter's definition, Kirzner's conceptualization of entrepreneurship involves the controlled risk that is

predictable in an entrepreneur's activities. While Kirzner's view of entrepreneurship points to medium risk situations, the Schumpeter notion provides an expansive definition applicable and relevant to different market conditions, capacities and types of entrepreneurial activities that are rare, risky and innovative (Shane & Vatkaraman, 2000).

In the classical approach, the entrepreneur is placed in a secondary role in the entrepreneurship process that was at the time not recognised in mainstream economics (Baumo, 2010; Shane, 2003). Bjerke and Råmòs (2011) argue that one of the reasons for the limited research in the area at the time was the lack of interest by economists in confirming and defining what entrepreneurship really constitutes. Grannovetter (1994) also notes that this lack of interest in entrepreneurship existed at the time 'because of the bias in the assumption that profitable activities automatically take place' (p. 453). Despite this limited attention to the development of entrepreneurship, interest in the phenomenon began in the latter half of the twentieth century, allowing it to expand into different topics in business management, which developed further theoretical perspectives and methodologies that allow for its analysis (Bjerke & Råmòs, 2011).

### **Entrepreneurship: the new contexts.**

The study of entrepreneurship grew as world economies expanded. These studies provided different contexts that explained business opportunities and wealth creation in different environments (Schaper & Volery, 2004). Economic concepts started to develop around entrepreneurship and its functions in economic development where the entrepreneur had been reinstated into the centre-stage of business development, a distant cry from his/her demotion under classical economic theories (Baumol, 2010). However, debates have continued to define what comprises an entrepreneur, with no consensus reached on defining these terms (Gartner, 1988). Many factors contribute to these debates. The literature pointed to conceptual framing and other contributions emanating from different disciplines such as sociology, economics, anthropology and psychology; all with different influences and contributions to entrepreneurship conceptualization (Light, 2004). A start point from these disciplines, emphasized explanations of society in different contexts and social structures that influence the human experiences. The sociological imagination according to Mills (1959) pointed to the distinctions of human

experiences and social structures of societies as tools which explain the changes and linkages of different milieux and the place of the individual in these.

Other literature also suggest that conceptualisations of entrepreneurship were not homogeneous and that any definition must relate to different contexts (Cunningham & Lischeron, 1991). Brockhaus (1982) in his review of the entrepreneur supported the association between entrepreneurship and innovation as firstly indicated in Schumpeter's writings (1934). Cunningham and Lisheron (1991) for example classified entrepreneurship into different schools of thought. The psychological school for one labelled entrepreneurs as those who adjust their behaviours according to their needs in the context of management and entrepreneurial processes they are exposed to (McClelland, 1961). This school stresses that, entrepreneurs are driven by the need to achieve, the need for power and the need for belonging (Bjerke & Rämös, 2011). The classical school on the other hand reflects on the behaviour of entrepreneurs who were innovative when citing new opportunities (Schumpeter, 1934). The intrapreneurship school examines new trends in the business environment and how entrepreneurs explore and define their leadership styles (Casson, 2010). Gartner (1990) stressed three factors that profiled entrepreneurs: the need for achievement, the propensity to take risks and possessing the confidence to act and sustain risky opportunities.

These approaches and contexts reflect the variations amongst entrepreneurs in relation to the motivations and inspirations that differentiate one entrepreneur from another. Schaper and Volery (2004, p. 9) allude to the idea that entrepreneurs 'do not operate in a vacuum, they respond to their environments'. In this sense, entrepreneurs do not just respond to changes in the environments in which they operate, but rather plan for business opportunities by managing environmental factors and developing existing networks that would help sustain business growth (Shane, 2003).

The literature also highlights the globalisation process and its influence in redefining ways that entrepreneurship influences development in different social-cultural, political and economic systems (Shane & Vankataraman, 2000). Sarason, Dean and Dillard (2006) support this line of thought by arguing that as social systems evolve over time, the entrepreneurial process becomes a continuous process that occurs at the nexus of society and the individual. In this sense, the entrepreneur plays a role in creating and developing



the entrepreneurial process that becomes a universal construct that allow organisations, large, small, private or public to operate and expand (Morris, 1998). Drucker (1985) described the entrepreneurial process as being involved in capturing the opportunities that are connected to the needs and wants of specific groups of people, or a market, while others like Mackenzie et al., (2007) argue that entrepreneurship also includes the development of the arts and science.

Other literature includes small businesses, new firms and self-employment (Storey, 1980; Shane, 2003). Another growing trend in the literature is devoted to the growth of female entrepreneurs, which contributes to the multidimensional aspects of the phenomenon (Kontos, 2007). Further literature has led to understanding the status of entrepreneurship by females, something perceived mostly as part of the ethnic entrepreneurship dominated by migrant male entrepreneurial activities (Light & Gold, 2000). The expansion of entrepreneurialism also acknowledge other types of entrepreneurship associated with collectives, communities, and young generations pursuing business in different markets. Prominent among these new paradigms are Electronic entrepreneurship, State entrepreneurship, Elder entrepreneurship, Youth entrepreneurship, Familial entrepreneurship and Community entrepreneurship, (de Bruin & Dupuis, 2003).

In this light reference to Maori entrepreneurialism for example stresses connecting with the community where business development and resources management are geared towards the collective economic well-being (Frederick and Henry, 2004). The aborigines in Australia as Foley (2008) claims also adapt their entrepreneurial efforts towards the benefit of families and communities. While this type of entrepreneurialism is based on the cultural imperatives of ethnic communities, their economic outcomes are viewed in the context of social networks, politics and religious activities that are in most parts interwoven and embedded in social relations (Polanyi, 1957). In this sense, new approaches to understanding entrepreneurship and the entrepreneur reflect interrelatedness in their functions process and objectives (Schaper & Vollery, 2004). Furthermore, while earlier literature on the phenomenon related to western views of wealth creation and economics, new concepts and approaches brought by globalisation have now influenced the phenomenon in different contexts.

These definitions now include references to management systems and the process that goes hand in hand with running and operating a business (Casson, 2010, de Bruin & Dupuis, 2003). This also supports what Miller and Collier (2010) allude to as a transformational view of entrepreneurship that includes other social values and economic considerations. The authors contend that people's values and those of the communities' inputs must be included when developing resources in the pursuit of economic outcomes. These outcomes must be achieved and benefit the community in different ways (ibid). This further supports what economist Baumol (2010) pointed out in that the Schumpeter definition of the entrepreneur did not just focus on the entrepreneur as an innovator, but included other environmental elements and systems that contributed to the creation of economic values and hence entrepreneurship. Schumpeter's later work for example explicitly recognises the increasing importance of collective entrepreneurship by claiming that the entrepreneurial function need not embody a physical person (Baumol, 2010). Other literature also points to every social environment having its own ways of filling the entrepreneurial function that may be, and often is, filled co-operatively' (Frederick & Henry, 2004).

This notion of co-operative action ushered in collective entrepreneurialism with the rational and individualistic perspectives of business. In this sense creative opportunism arose where the entrepreneur and entrepreneurship involves unbalancing the equilibrium when creating opportunities in different environments and contexts (Schumpeter, 1934). According to Baumol, although the entrepreneur's activities played an important part in explaining the behaviour of business firms and the growth of an economy, earlier explanations of entrepreneurship by Cantillon (1680-1734), Say (1767-1830) and Kirzner (1973) emphasised management's roles in existing business entities rather than newly established firms that contain risky investments (Baumol, 2010). It was only Schumpeter, who had succeeded in infusing the entrepreneur with life and in assigning to him/her an area of new activities (Baumol, 2010). For Baumol (2010), enterprising activity in the Schumpeter sense involves the actor(s), action or processes to capitalise on tangible and intangible opportunities that are transferrable into saleable products or services. In this sense, the new types of entrepreneurs, and in this case immigrant entrepreneurs, who introduce new products or services in the migrant settings can be labelled 'new men' or innovators in the Schumpeter sense, which further qualifies and expands entrepreneurship in different forms including entrepreneurship by women.

## **2.2 Conceptualising ethnic entrepreneurship**

The development of ethnic entrepreneurship begins with references to the importance of ethnicity within ethnic communities and the social capital developed through connections and patterns of interactions among ethnic people who share common backgrounds and experiences (Waldinger et al., 1990). This involves identifying with the strength of a culture and the ethnic resources that motivate ethnic entrepreneurs to start a business in a new environment. Light and Gold (2000) referred to an ethnic or immigrant economy as ethnic owned or ethnic controlled. Salinger et al., (1990) on the other hand pointed to ethnic groups and immigrants as those who shared a set of connections, common culture, backgrounds and regular patterns of interaction with others. Understanding the cultural values of groups according to Smith (2003) further acknowledges the nature and characteristics of ethnic groups, which not only contribute to developing entrepreneurship but also contributed to theoretical development of the phenomenon.

The study of ethnic entrepreneurship expanded in the 1970's as a result of classical economic theories that provided limited explanations of the processes of business and new types of entrepreneurship. Early literature on the topic began in the social sciences with references to the roles of cultural traditions and communal societies in dealing with human social issues (Wood, Davidson, & Fielden, 2012; Mills, 1959). The cultural theory for example suggested that ethnic entrepreneurs and immigrant groups possess cultural features such as belonging to a strong ethnic community, solidarity in social relationships and loyalty that help support ethnic entrepreneurship (Masurel et al., 2004). The literature also includes religious beliefs and practices, and their influences on social relations that are intertwined in social organisations, political systems and economic development. Weber (1903) alluded to the influences of religion on the social conditions of people, organisations, economic and political conditions of society. In its general form, religious connections support ethnic identity helping to firm up the group's set of values, cultural practices and economic behaviour (De Vos, 2006). Such behaviors, as Simmel (1950) pointed out, are prevalent amongst strangers who migrated to a new locations as minorities because of their race, ethnicity and religion.

These religious affiliations become connections that provide mutual assistance that also firm up trust and solidarity, which the group utilised for entrepreneurial activities that

further increase the social capital for the group (Fukuyama, 2001). Sociology and other social sciences further explored cultural perspectives in reference to organisations, social, economic, and political institutions in their environment (Collins, 1986). However, these institutions influenced the human variety especially their social worlds where they live and emigrating (Mills, 1959). Mills further claimed that the role of the social sciences is to explain further the biography and history of man within the larger social context and structures.

In this light, the expansion of the late twentieth century literature emphasised the importance of ethnicity as a marker for ethnic communities, which caused economists to view ethnic entrepreneurs as homogenous due to their reliance on cultural values and ethnic networks that support their businesses (Bates, 1997; Waldinger et al., 1990). However, Light and Gold (2000) claim that the profit maximisation objectives and explanations of classic economics discounted other social factors pertaining to ethnic groups and ethnic entrepreneurship in general. The many-sided construction of reality by Schumpeter (Baumol, 2010) had led to sociological, anthropological and economic views that explain issues in ethnic entrepreneurship from these scientific perspectives. Developments on theoretical approaches to entrepreneurship start to reflect on the contexts where ethnicity was the centre stage of ethnic entrepreneurship. This further challenged research objectives on ethnic entrepreneurship at the time, as Rath (2001) argued, that were mainly academic and governmental policy focussed. These research objectives focused on the understanding of the integration of ethnic groups in their host environment based mainly on the value of their social capital as the only advantage they relied on in the development of their businesses. However, these changed as the influx of qualitative research and case studies of minority groups in host economies inspired new research directions that challenge further the ethnicity argument as a value in economic production for ethnic entrepreneurs (Waldinger et al., 1990).

### **The roles of ethnic enclave**

The ethnic enclave, or set of business clusters, provides economic advantages to ethnic workers and the self-employed by co-ordinating business activities within close-knit networks where the exchange of services and ethnic goods take place (Zhou, 2007; Portes, 1987). The importance of ethnicity for ethnic entrepreneurship encompasses elements relating to the formation of businesses and self-employment in an ethnically controlled

economy. In this sense, the enclave thesis refers to the role of social capital in the community as an advantage for ethnic entrepreneurs when they have access to cheap labour and other business resources. Wilson and Portes (1980), in their work on the Cuban communities in Miami, USA, coined the ethnic enclave concept to describe the isolation of immigrants in different environments where they resorted to community networks within ethnic enclaves for business support. Other advantages of enclaves include their location within the vicinity of residential and commercial areas where immigrant populations were concentrated, enabling them to trade, hence reducing costs. Ethnic enclaves are sources of cultural traditions, ethnic loyalty and ethnic markets regularly used by entrepreneurs to connect with the ethnic community (Zhou, 2007; Kaplan, 1998).

Literature from the USA provides a strong focus on social capital and the strength of kinship connections within ethnic communities (Min & Bozorgmehr, 2003). It refers to an advantage for the main groups of foreign-born immigrants who entered self-employment and supported by close community network systems, more so than for native-born entrepreneurs (Borjas, 1990). These social networks, developed by virtue of their extended kinship ties, provide the social capital that connect immigrant groups within the enclaves where ethnic entrepreneurs start and operate their businesses (Light, 1984).

By taking advantage of ethnic enclaves, ethnic entrepreneurs could survive and rely on ethnic products and services that would not otherwise be available in mainstream markets (Waldinger, 1996; Sassen, 1991). Wong and Ng (2002) claim that the Chinese entrepreneurs in the USA and Canada participate mainly in ethnic markets that concentrate in supplying goods and services to ethnic communities and vice versa. Other studies of Chinese entrepreneurs in Los Angeles and Toronto, by Li (2007) and Lo (et al., 1999) reveal that some Chinese entrepreneurs who relied on ethnic community networks and community finances were normal businesses, which at certain growth phases expanded out to the wider community.

In Australia, using community and family labour including extended family members and children were common practices in ethnic businesses in Brisbane, with 80 percent of entrepreneurs surveyed showing this common trait (Lever-Tracy et al., 1991). Collins (2003) also noted this pattern in Sydney where ethnic entrepreneurs relied heavily on

financial and business support from kin members, as they were more trustworthy. Foley (2008) further alluded to the importance of family support in indigenous businesses in Australia where businesses were mechanisms for financial returns and resources that benefitted the community. Zhou (2007) stressed that while enclaves are useful since they improve the social status of ethnic entrepreneurs, they also provide links that foster interaction between other ethnic entrepreneurs within the same business environments. Successful entrepreneurs are then elevated as role models for inspiring entrepreneurs toward assimilation into the wider business society (Zhou & Myungduk, 2010; Portes & Bach, 1985).

While these examples stress the importance of social capital for ethnic entrepreneurship in the USA, Canada and Australia, another body of literature from Europe emphasises the disadvantage perspective. The disadvantage thesis that dominates the literature from European countries emerges from the enclave or clustering of businesses in one location due to the adverse market conditions for immigrants. It suggests that the entrepreneur's path to entrepreneurship begins from their status as lowly paid employees and in some cases their inability to gain satisfactory employment in the general market economy (Light, 1979, 2003). Disadvantages such as language, unrelated education, limited capital resources and minimal social networks force ethnic entrepreneurs to set up businesses that concentrate on niches within their ethnic communities. While those with social capital could start their own businesses by capitalising on their community networks and hence are able to raise funds and resources, others unable to do so become involved in the informal economy, as a type of survivalist entrepreneur (Light, 1979).

The disadvantage thesis emphasizes that it is only entrepreneurs with class resources like relevant education, capital and social networks that were successful in starting a business (Light, 2004; Light & Karageorgis, 1994). However, while social capital generated in ethnic enclaves may be relevant and beneficial for certain types of businesses, this may not hold true for others. Light (2004) pointed out that while social capital is crucial in the inception phase of a business, other resources would be required when the businesses grow. New products and services would require more processes to match the goals and opportunities the businesses face. Zhou (2007) claimed that the value of social capital can be expanded or reduced depending on the national and international context and how these are utilised by entrepreneurs.

The literature also reflects on inter-group differences and resources existing in different countries and economic regimes in which entrepreneurs must operate (Kloosterman and Rath, 2001). In this case relying on social capital and membership within the group and its resources was a one-dimensional argument, especially when opportunities were utilised by different ethnic groups and different generations of ethnic entrepreneurs (Masurel et al., 2004). Certain business opportunities could be developed within a specific ethnic community where some ethnic entrepreneurs rely on its social capital as an advantage and not others. The restaurants operated by Greeks and Italians started as niches, but they soon reached the mainstream markets in Germany, being helped mainly by tourism and globalised advertising. The Turkish food economy in Germany also expanded through advertising and the increase in consumer demand for exotic tastes, not only serving the local Turkish population but also the mainstream (Kontos, 2007). The advantages and disadvantages of social capital need more scrutiny as an argument, as it is only a by-product of the enclave since entrepreneurs are embedded in their social capital at different levels.

### **2.3 Embeddedness of ethnic entrepreneurs in their social networks: A counter to structural and institutional barriers of the business environment.**

One of the themes prominently promoted in the literature is the concept of social embeddedness. The concept is not new, however, its importance relates to the shift in knowledge framing in the area and how ethnic entrepreneurs conceptualise this to counter the disadvantages they faced when dealing with institutional and structural issues of the business environment (Spoonley & Mears, 2011; Pécoud, 2010). Social capital, which is an important resource for many ethnic entrepreneurs, firmed up relationships amongst individuals, communities, organisations, and societies (Bolino, Turnley & Bloodgood, 2002). There are benefits in belonging to ethnic enclaves where community networks and social relationships provide support and access to business opportunities (Light and Gold, 2000).

Polanyi (1957) argues that economic systems in different cultural societies are based on reciprocal systems that rely on the exchange and sharing of goods through kinship systems. These include personal values embedded in relations enforced through trust, familial connections within communities and religious affiliations. In business relationships, Grannoveter (1985) stresses that, economic activities are embedded in social relationships based on strong and weak ties intertwined at different levels of a relationship. Strong ties provide social support and economic resources at different growth phases of the business. In the start-up phase of a business, community networks provide cheap labour, clientele, suppliers and niche markets based on trust that promote reciprocal relationships that further provide advantages for ethnic entrepreneurs when operating businesses in unfamiliar and hostile environments (Waldinger et al., 1990).

Oliveira (2007) claims that the Indians in Portugal assessed and defined their entrepreneurial options within available family resources based on trusting relationships. Similarly, the Chinese and many Asian businesses in Los Angeles drew on their familial and co-ethnic labour in order to save costs and for many businesses they were sources of finance that helped sustain these enterprises (Wong & Ng, 2002). In their study of Moroccan and Turkish businesses in the Netherlands, el Bouk et al. (2013) found that ethnic entrepreneurs at different growth stages of their business relied mainly on family and the ethnic community for support and less so on other connections outside the ethnic community. These researchers posited that while some of these businesses were at the development stages, strong ties were vital for resources such as cheap labour, financial support and clientele that were not available in the mainstream market. Accessing this help at the inception phases of business growth helps reduce costs and risks.

Weak ties on the other hand occur at the growth phases of the business where professional networks outside the ethnic community provide information, suppliers, and producers in the mainstream markets (Grannoveter, 1995). At different levels of growth, social capital and social networks are utilised extensively for business purposes (Light et al, 1999). This supports the notion that ones' social embeddedness in certain cultural values may not guarantee success for a business because social, political and economic challenges differ in entrepreneurial contexts from one country to another and in many cases from one generation of entrepreneurs to another (Zhou, 2007; Kloosterman & Rath, 2003). el Bouk et al., (2013) also cited similar experiences of the younger generations of German-born Turkish entrepreneurs who do not rely on ethnic products and niches for their business



anymore. Although a number of studies pointed to social embeddedness as a useful tool that entrepreneurs use to manage the challenges of the structural and institutional responsibilities of the business environment, these factors must be balanced with the context and environmental settings within which these businesses exist (Pecoud, 2010; Mears et al., 2015).

### **Disadvantages of social embeddedness**

Reliance on the social embeddedness concept as a specific advantage for ethnic entrepreneurs does not allow for the influence of different contexts where entrepreneurs could match their social capital with business opportunities. The pitfalls of classical economic orthodoxy has given sociologists room to critique the assumptions made by economists about the dependence on cultural and social capital in describing ethnic businesses (Pécoud, 2010; Kloosterman & Rath, 2001). For Granoveter (1995) social networks in businesses are dynamic relationships that change all the time and as the business advances through different growth stages, transactional costs increase. In this sense, strong ties are hard to maintain due to the entrepreneur's intensive involvement with their communities, which in a way indicates the nature of ethnic entrepreneurship (Chaganti & Greene, 2002). Entrepreneurs must therefore respond to these changes both inside and outside the business and must utilise any available resources produced from these connections. Evidently, the embeddedness of ethnic entrepreneurs in social networks were common in entrepreneurial activities where these activities are continuously utilised for economic objectives (Shane and Vakataraman, 2000).

According to Zhou (2007), the second and third generations of Chinese born in the United States do not view positively, nor want to associate with, their parent's socio-cultural values when pursuing entrepreneurship. Some view these social and community connections as a disadvantage as they did not understand the language, nor raised with these community values. The younger Chinese generations identify themselves as US citizens as compared to their parent's who had different opportunities and paths to entrepreneurship. Pécoud (2010) likewise pointed out that the younger generations of Turkish entrepreneurs have taken on Turkish/German identities and have become more involved in the mainstream markets, taking on German business niches and market characteristics. Both Zhou (2007) and Pécoud (2010) point out that as the younger migrant generations become more educated and develop extensive networks amongst

locally born generations, there is a greater chance of them pursuing different paths to entrepreneurship. These entrepreneurs would likely break into different mainstream businesses, rather than specialised ethnic niches, as their migrant parents had relied on in the past.

The opportunities in developed countries where immigrants and their businesses exist has also affected the way social embeddedness issues are viewed, deviating from the advantages ethnicity and the social capital of entrepreneurs provide for starting a business (Pécoud, 2010). The focus on the new type of ethnic entrepreneur who possesses class capital, education, and who migrates from one country to another to negotiate the favourable business conditions they see as economically valuable to their businesses, brought new trends and definitions to the conceptualisation of the phenomenon (Kloosterman & Rath, 2003). Coupled with this trend are strategies entrepreneurs use to assess the viability of shifting their social capital and funding resources to overseas destinations when business processes that support their businesses in developed countries are not available.

The Chinese family entrepreneurs in Vancouver, Canada, for example have expanded ethnic businesses from their home countries to other international destinations and back, increasing further their experience in how they manage their social capital and financial resources in relation to business opportunities available to them. This increased transnational entrepreneurialism shows how ethnic entrepreneurs (Ley, 2003) strategically manage and expand their social capital and opportunities. Rath (2002) argues that although social embeddedness explained some advantages of ethnicity and social capital for ethnic entrepreneurship, more analysis is required for understanding ethnic entrepreneurship due to the economic, institutional and political processes that are at work in any economic system. Understanding these factors has contributed to the ways in which concepts such as ethnicity, social capital, ethnic enclaves and social embeddedness have supported understanding of the phenomenon. While these factors reflect a one sided explanation of ethnic entrepreneurship, they also contribute to the development of theoretical insights on the phenomenon (Volery, 2007).

## **2. 4 Towards a model of ethnic entrepreneurship: The interactive model**

The interactive model developed in the 1990's by Waldinger et al. (1990) attempts to explain the structure of ethnic entrepreneurship in a spatial location. This model suggests that there is no one characteristic that determines the success of ethnic entrepreneurs or ethnic groups. In essence, the model was developed to counterbalance the lack of economic explanations of ethnic entrepreneurship at the time. It suggests that group characteristics or ethnic resources of ethnic entrepreneurs were combined, with the opportunity structures or market conditions of a specific market economy to influence the way ethnic businesses operate. The nature of such businesses were reflected in the following ways:

Firstly, the opportunities must be available for the entrepreneurs to trade and exchange in a normal supply and demand relationship of which the entrepreneurs must be able to maintain. Secondly, ethnic entrepreneurs can and must utilise their social capital in their community networks to compensate for any disadvantages they face in an unfamiliar environment. To be successful ethnic entrepreneurs must have strategies to develop available opportunities that should match the opportunities with both their social and class capital in the host business environment (Volery, 2007).

While the model explains ethnic entrepreneurship in a specific economic location, other factors are also influence businesses in various ways (Collins, 2003). Collins noted that the model did not specify how the ethnic entrepreneur's strategies were comparable to those of non-ethnic entrepreneurs and whether the advantage of the groups' social capital was the only measure of success for the enterprises. Secondly, there was little emphasis on women and gender entrepreneurial issues as female entrepreneurs display different dispositions and circumstances for entrepreneurship. Thirdly, there was little emphasis and recognition given to the diversity of experiences and paths to businesses for a variety of ethnic entrepreneurs as not all rely on social capital for business. Fourthly, there was little attention given to the role and influence of the structural and state institutions on business development. Finally, the model was not inclusive of the influence of globalisation and the complex patterns of racialisation on the way these things shape the dynamics and characteristics of ethnic entrepreneurship (Collins, 2003 p.71).

Collins went on to explain that the experiences amongst ethnic entrepreneurs vary a great deal in Australia, where some migrants arrived with sufficient capital to start-up a business. Professional migrant entrepreneurs entered into professionally based businesses, while others with no resources took the 'traditional path from wage jobs to entrepreneurship (2003, p. 72). In terms of class and ethnic resources, Collins claimed that one of the reasons for high rates of entrepreneurship amongst ethnic communities in Australia was not the advantage of their social capital, but rather a response to blocked mobility resulting from racism and a misunderstanding of their cultural values in the mainstream business world (Collins, 2003). Light (2004) likewise alluded to the cases of Germany and Austria where migrant entrepreneurs found it difficult to start businesses because of the corporatist rules and regulations that prohibited unnaturalised migrants from starting a business until certain residential conditions were satisfied. These structural and restrictive conditions in Germany, as Pécoud (2010) pointed out, have changed. Relaxing administrative rules allowed Turkish businesses to compete with mainstream businesses for niche markets selling both local and ethnic products. Li (2007) also claimed that the increasing migration of prosperous Chinese entrepreneurs to Canada with surplus cash increased investments. This resulted in government agencies negotiating and reducing stifling regulations in order to attract and support ethnic businesses at different levels and from preferred sources.

While the embeddedness of some ethnic entrepreneurs in their social capital can provide positive outcomes in certain business environments, it is notable that it is a restraining factor for others. Evidently, this points more to the contexts where there are variations of ethnic community structures mixed up with opportunities and the structural process of local economies. The interactive model firstly contributes to the theoretical explanation of the phenomenon, which helps in a way to deconstruct and minimize the role of social capital as a sole advantage for ethnic entrepreneurship. Prominent in this model is the notion that the strategies developed by various ethnic groups are similar when seeking business opportunities in the marketplace.

This raises questions as to whether this framework could explain the growth of the phenomenon fully, especially when there is diversity amongst different migrant groups who are able to mobilise their social capital around the opportunities available in different

countries and regions for their businesses. Rath (2000) further queries as to how to explain entrepreneurship in community groups with no prior history of business. Oliveira (2003) on the other hand, claims that although some ethnic entrepreneurs were embedded in their community social capital, they still have a different pattern of economic integration and do not necessarily do business with their ethnic group in the host society. This also leads Light and Bhachu (1993) to claim that the interactive model fails to account for the influence of the regulatory, institutional and policy frameworks in the development of ethnic businesses. Furthermore, ethnic entrepreneurs do not have to develop any ethnic strategies and yet enter the market like any other mainstream entrepreneur (Oliveira, 2007). As a result, of these explanations of ethnic entrepreneurship processes, there has been the development of the mixed embeddedness concept which includes factors that exert more influence on business in the wider economic environment (Kloosterman & Rath, 2001).

#### **Mixed embeddedness model: Navigating the institutional structures of the business environment.**

The mixed embeddedness concept is a further development from the interactive model. This concept refers to how ethnic entrepreneurs equalise the unevenness in expectations of local and national government policies and institutions in the development of their businesses. It recognises the importance of structural, institutional and legal factors that match the supply of immigrants and their social capital when identifying business opportunities (Razin, 2002). The framework expands on the backdrop of the literature that stressed the ethnization aspects of ethnic entrepreneurship (Kloosterman & Rath, 2003). However recent literature (Zhou, 2007), pointed to biographical characteristics of entrepreneurs and the way these are mobilised by entrepreneurs to develop businesses in different contexts. The mixed embeddedness framework promotes both the characteristics of ethnic entrepreneurs and the complex interactions that occur between opportunities and the supply of the entrepreneurs themselves (Waldinger et al., 1990; Razin, 2002). In this sense, business opportunities that are acquired by ethnic groups need to be analysed at the national, regional and local levels which give businesses better options that allow them to survive (Kloosterman & Rath, 2001).

The mixed embeddedness model expands the interactive theory by accounting for both the ‘concrete embeddedness’ of ethnic entrepreneurs in their social capital and their

‘abstract embeddedness’ in the structural and institutional requirements of the business environment (Kloosterman and Rath, 2001 p, 190). This concept works on the premise that entrepreneurs must satisfy the demand and supply sides with opportunities that arise in a market all the time; entrepreneurs must utilize these opportunities before competitors and regulations block them. More important are the strategies that entrepreneurs develop which enable them to manage the structural and institutional responsibilities of the business (Kloosterman & Rath, 2003). Schaper and Volery (2003), pointed to the success of Indian and Chinese entrepreneurs in Silicon Valley in the United States that involved adopting specific strategies that suit their businesses in the local market that cater for jurisdictional conditions. In their study of Ethiopian and Bolivian entrepreneurs in Metropolitan Washington, Price and Chacko (2009) alluded to the idea that the settlement and ready involvement of entrepreneurs to work within the institutional framework, as well as understanding the structural and accounting requirements of the metropolitan and state jurisdictions supported their integration. Furthermore, the metropolitan authorities provided management and legal strategies that promoted the entrepreneur’s businesses.

A study of the Balmoral precinct in Auckland amongst migrants with businesses from China, South Korea, South Africa, India, and the United Kingdom, reported that there were mixed business outcomes amongst them. Part of these different outcomes were a result of the entrepreneur’s unfamiliarity with the structural and institutional requirements of the Auckland City business environment (Mears et al., 2015). The study found that the Chinese and South Korean businesses relied more on ethnic resources due to the types of businesses and the market niches their businesses relied on, compared to the South Africans, British and Indian entrepreneurs who relied more on class resources. This research noted that among these groups of entrepreneurs they have different experiences and views of the New Zealand business environment.

The report noted that an element of distrust of regional and government support exists amongst the ethnic entrepreneurs. This is the result of unfamiliarity and misunderstanding of the administrative support that businesses could access from funders and local support institutions. Another study of ethnic entrepreneurship in New Zealand (North & Trlin, 2004) referred to the difficulty of understanding rules, taxation advice, communication, language problems, and for some, attaining financial resources when conducting business. These factors posed obstacles to businesses even with the neo-liberal

immigration rules that allowed easy access of qualified business migrants to the country, migrants coming with the hope of helping themselves to relevant business opportunities. Despite the good intentions of these rules specifically designed to boost business outcomes for migrant entrepreneurs and the local economy, on arrival they received little support from government and relevant institutions. Many of these businesses faced disadvantages of the local business conditions as they were exposed to the perils of the marketplace and an unfamiliar business environment (Spoonley & Mears, 2011).

### **Mixed embeddedness and ethnic entrepreneurship in New Zealand**

The contribution of ethnic entrepreneurship to the New Zealand economy is important, yet minimal support and investments has been given for this section at regional and national levels (Massey, 2011). It is evident that participation and success in ethnic entrepreneurship and self-employment varies amongst ethnic entrepreneurs, with a higher participation rate in some groups than others, which are due to factors such as accessibility to finance, types of management, experience of the owners, marketing skills and understanding regulatory responsibilities that either inhibit, or promote the ventures (Ho & Bedford, 2006). The status of entrepreneurship amongst migrant groups including Samoan, Pacific and Maori entrepreneurship presents a picture of growth and of development with the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor report (GEM) defining New Zealand as one of the most entrepreneurial countries in the world, with entrepreneurs representing 13.9% of the 2.4 million adult population (Frederick & Henry, 2004). Further statistics identified the contribution that self-employment and business ownership makes to the New Zealand economy, being 382,000 or 22% of total employment (Goodchild, Sanderson and Leung-Wai, 2003).

While the nature of Maori entrepreneurship reflects regional and national policy strategies, Maori entrepreneurship<sup>10</sup> and ethnic businesses were politicised at both the central and regional levels despite the government recognising their importance to the economy (Frederick & Henry, 2004; Massey, 2011). Mataira, (2000) claimed that Maori entrepreneurship was influenced by the New Zealand business environment with a

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<sup>10</sup> While Maori entrepreneurship (as it is labelled indigenous entrepreneurship) is different from this study, it is used here for comparison on issues affecting ethnic entrepreneurship.

historically based legislative process and by the nature of *iwi*<sup>11</sup> and *hapu*<sup>12</sup> businesses. Maori businesses are both collective and individualistic when it comes to being entrepreneurial; notably, Maori entrepreneurs put more value into the development of their businesses in relation to the benefits these create for families (de Bruin & Mataira, 2003). Garth Harmsworth (2006) further noted that there are difficulties when Maori entrepreneurs try to balance socio-cultural aspirations and business obligations and even more so where Maori business models have purposefully addressed both cultural and economic values in the western sense (Gooder, 2016). Despite these factors, Maori businesses are affected by factors such as income, age of the entrepreneurs, family stages and motivation, all being important factors in the development of a business (Frederick and Henry (2004).

In terms of business management issues, Cave (2007) argued that barriers to Maori tourist businesses were echoed through Pacific island groups in New Zealand. The disadvantages these businesses faced were due to operational and structural issues such as lack of finance, social and business networks, formal educational requirements, racism and discrimination. As similar to the position of international ethnic entrepreneurs mentioned in the literature, the paths New Zealand ethnic entrepreneurs adopted, differed from one immigrant group to another (North and Trlin, 2004). Overall, entrepreneurs rely on different opportunities, adapt their strategies for business management, and utilize their social capital when navigating regulatory regimes and the demands of the business environment (Mears et al., 2015).

### **Samoan entrepreneurship in New Zealand**

The literature on Samoan entrepreneurship pointed to its importance on the New Zealand economic landscape (Mulitalo-Lauta, Menon & Tofilau, 2005) and also the challenges these and other Pacific entrepreneurs face in their economic and social incorporation into the migrant environment (Gooder, 2016). Statistics New Zealand over time has recorded lower proportions of entrepreneurship amongst Samoan and Pacific business groups compared to New Zealand businesses (Statistics New Zealand, 2013; Ministry of Economic Development, 2011). While these statistics differed amongst the entrepreneurs

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<sup>11</sup> A tribe or social, economic and political unit in Maori society

<sup>12</sup> An extended family unit determined by genealogical descent



from different Pacific Island groups, these are brought on by the changing nature of employment, that are influenced by levels of education, technological trends and labour market regulations that are relevant to the growth prospects of Pacific entrepreneurship in general (Tuatagaloa, 2017).

The overall figures for Pacific entrepreneurship according to the Census data in 2006 shows that 4.3% of Pacific peoples were in self-employment without employees and 1.6 % were employers (Statistics New Zealand, 2006, 2013). The figures for the Samoan population are similar, with those who were self-employed without employees at 4.4%, and an additional 1.5% being employers, for the same period. This compares with the New Zealand European population, which is at much higher levels, showing 12.0% for the self-employed and 7.4% for employers for the same period.

In 2008, Statistics New Zealand (2008) reported that 2% of employed Samoan adults were employers, a minor increase (.5%) since the 2006 census. During this same period, 4% of Samoan adults were self-employed without employees, a modest 0.4% decrease compared to the previous census. This also compares with a 0.4% decrease of Pacific entrepreneurship as a whole from the 2006 census (Statistics New Zealand, 2008). The overall New Zealand employment statistics for the same period are 7% employers and 12 % self-employed without employees. The smaller proportion of Samoans owning their own businesses and the lower self-employment rates are not surprising given the deteriorating economy that made many small businesses vulnerable to failure at the time. The statistics from the 2013 census as indicated Table 1 reflected changes in the rate of employers and self-employment.

Table 1

<b>Status in Employment</b>						
Samoan and Pacific Peoples ethnic groups, and New Zealand population aged 15 years and over.						
2006 and 2013 Censuses						
	Samoan		Pacific Peoples		NZ Population	
	2006	2013	2006	2013	2006	2013
Status in employment	Percentage					
Paid employee	93	93.2	93	93.2	78.4	79.4
Employer	1.5	1.3	1.6	1.4	7.4	6.6
Self-employed and without employees	4.4	4.5	4.3	4.3	12.2	12.1
Unpaid family worker	1.2	0.9	1.2	1	2.1	1.9

Source: Statistics New Zealand

Table 1 shows that as compared to the general New Zealand Population, the Samoan community and Pacific Peoples display low levels of business ownership and self-employment. (Statistics New Zealand, 2013).

Factors such as the casualization of the workforce, advances in technology and the changing labour market conditions may have contributed to the reduction in employment and hence entrepreneurship with more flexible employment arrangements for the Samoan and Pacific population in general (Macpherson & Macpherson, 2009). These factors may increase the pressure for Samoans to start a business and be self-employed given the need to earn a living compared to the New Zealand population as a whole. This may be backed by statistics which indicate that Samoan people, compared to other Pacific Island communities, are more likely to operate their own businesses in the future (Tuatagaloa, 2017; NZ Statistics, 2013). An Auckland Council report for example noted that Samoan people make up the largest number of self-employed<sup>13</sup> and employers<sup>14</sup> amongst the Pacific community in Auckland (Tuatagaloa, 2017). Statistics also showed that, over 53% of Samoan self-employed and employers were born overseas with the majority

<sup>13</sup> A self-employed person is an entrepreneur who operates his/her own economic enterprise or engages independently in a profession or trade or a partnership and hires no employees (Statistics New Zealand 2013 Census)

<sup>14</sup> An employer is defined as a self-employed person who hires one or more employees (Statistics New Zealand 2013 Census)

residing in the Auckland area (Penelope & Huang, 2017). The same study revealed that most Samoan entrepreneurship are opportunity entrepreneurs who seek and new opportunities and venture more into new markets with unique products and services (Shane, 2003). de Vries (2007) similarly pointed to Pacific entrepreneurs as opportunity entrepreneurs, particularly those who have started businesses from prior career experiences who evaluate and capture opportunities in similar industries where they have prior experiences. This reflects common characteristics in New Zealand entrepreneurship (Frederick & Henry, 2004). This said, Samoan businesses like other businesses in New Zealand operate in niches that suit their experiences and operate within the structural and regulatory environment to ensure their success.

Licensing requirements of regional councils for example allow businesses to operate within their boundaries, legal requirements and commercial responsibilities required of each business. Specific licenses for each business, determine the legality of a business, giving it legitimacy to operate and compete with other businesses in the same industry. While different licensing requirements of different regional councils provide protection for the public, bylaws<sup>15</sup> they pass acts as checkpoints and exclude unsafe operators who may pose a danger to the trading community. On the other hand, while regulations and bylaws requirements benefit businesses they are in many circumstances seen as constraining through heavy costs and compliance requirements that are place on businesses. Samoan operated businesses are equally responsible for managing these requirements and their success depends on them for the specific industries within which their businesses operate. Although the nature and types of Samoan businesses differ from mainstream businesses in their financial, cultural and human resources, legal responsibilities and compliance requirements are mandatory challenges that they must manage.

While entrepreneurship in general is about profit making and individual advancements, some of the literature point to Samoan entrepreneurship as gearing mainly towards the

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<sup>15</sup> For example, for the Auckland Council in Auckland, the Liquor Control in Public Places Bylaw (2004) controls the consumption, possession of alcohol in public places and any abuse resulting in disorderly behaviour. The Signage Bylaw (2015) requires signage and advertisements not to create clutter, disrupt street access, disrupt the physical appearance of buildings and not endanger the public safety. The Food Safety Bylaw (2016) requires businesses to register with the council, following foods safety requirements where they must display safety food certification and must undergo regulatory staff training.

collective and family needs, which are in many cases inhibiting (Gooder, 2016). A study, by Yong et al. (2014) claimed that responsibilities relating to taxation obligations and compliance for many Samoan and Pacific entrepreneurs in New Zealand were influenced mainly by their collective responsibilities to family and community. When compared to small-medium enterprises (SMEs) operated by Europeans, Asians, and Maori, Pacific entrepreneurs prioritize their financial commitment to their families and community needs at the expense of their business viability and personal financial security.

While this may be the case for Samoan and some Pacific businesses, the collective aspects of the community reflects an advantage entrepreneurs utilise when developing business in the migrant environment. The loyalty to family networks and the community social capital are positive contributions that are for most develop a civil society at large (Mulitalo-Lauta, Menon & Tofilau, 2005). The advantage of such collectivism according to Sirotli (2001) can promote, strengthen community and eventually contribute to the development of entrepreneurship in different ways. However, reliance on the argument of social capital and the collective nature of Samoan society to explain a path to entrepreneurship disguises trends occurring in Samoan entrepreneurship in New Zealand (Mulitalo-Lauta, Menon & Tofilau, 2005). Macpherson and Macpherson (2009) argue that Samoans living in migrant settings live in both western and traditional Samoan worlds, and this influences the way they view collective obligations and business responsibilities that often create tensions. In this sense, the practices of *fa'a-sāmoa* in New Zealand have changed with new identities been developed by migrant Samoans. These conflicting practices of *fa'a-sāmoa* in many ways constrain traditional cultural expectations in the migrant settings as people grapple with new social, economic and political realities especially as some migrants try to consolidate with others strengthening *fa'a-sāmoa*, as a motivational force for businesses (Maiava, 2001). After all the migration of Samoans to New Zealand in the 1960s and 1970s was motivated by economic factors through employment or enterprises (Shankman, 1976, Macpherson & Macpherson, 2009).

Furthermore the practices of the Samoan family, religion and community in the New Zealand context reflect how the New Zealand-born generations and recent migrants have changed and challenged these institutions, especially with so many who have been exposed to different world views and social spaces over long periods of time. The

challenges these paradigms have brought also influence Samoan entrepreneurs and their businesses as they continue to assess the relevance of *fa'a-sāmoa* in their lives and businesses.

Explaining Samoan entrepreneurship in New Zealand includes reviewing models dealing with issues of ethnic entrepreneurship internationally. This study expands the interactive model to the mixed embeddedness concept in an attempt to combine the competing influences of social capital, the opportunity structures and the strategies taken by ethnic entrepreneurs. The application of the mixed embeddedness model depends on economic environments and the nature of opportunities that vary from region to region and from one country to another. For this reason, Kloosterman and Rath (2003) argue that one of the reasons for favouring the social capital model in the USA literature was that the USA has a strong economy and is more open, with business development having a strong emphasis on group resources. Furthermore, Price and Chacko (2009, p.329) pointed out that in the USA 'as there are no centralised immigrant integration policies, the development of entrepreneurship by immigrants can be greatly influenced by the opportunities or constraints imposed by local government within metropolitan areas'.

This raises the importance of the supply side of ethnic resources, together with the ability to coordinate the opportunities with the rules and institutional elements of the market that ethnic entrepreneurs are able to negotiate for their businesses. Comparatively, the European economies have strong governments with many regulations and rules that disadvantage ethnic businesses and entrepreneurs at different levels. This has resulted in references to the disadvantage thesis to explain the reason for ethnic entrepreneurs starting their own businesses in specific European countries. While the ethnic characteristics of the ethnic communities and social capital arguments provide narrow explanations of ethnic entrepreneurship, variations amongst entrepreneurs in different regions and countries exist due to contexts, environments and business opportunities that entrepreneurs must manage. For these reasons, using the mixed embeddedness model to explain the trends in the phenomenon has become an innovative framework that views patterns and variations amongst ethnic entrepreneurs in different places, business environments and countries. The mixed embeddedness concept may also expand to include the transnational entrepreneurs who have redeveloped ties in their home countries (Beckers & Kloosterman, 2014).

## 2.5 Gaps in the literature

After reviewing the literature, I found a gap where I believe this study would contribute to the study of ethnic entrepreneurship. This thesis explores the degree to which *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations are incorporated into the way Samoan entrepreneurs manage their businesses in the migrant setting. To do this I explored the international literature on ethnic entrepreneurship to find out whether the issues raised are the same or similar for Samoan entrepreneurs and what strategies Samoan entrepreneurs develop when matching the opportunities against the institutional and structural requirements of the New Zealand business environment. This study extends the mixed embeddedness framework to take into account 'the economic aspects and social capital the *fa'a-sāmoa* provides and how these shape of the opportunity structure, and the institutions mediating between aspiring entrepreneurs and concrete openings to start a business in in the New Zealand business environment (Kloosterman and Rath, 2003).

Extending this framework in this study could uncover mediating factors that reflect the variations amongst Samoan entrepreneurs. This study examines how Samoan entrepreneurs operate different types of businesses and therefore develop different strategies that take into account the utility and relevance of *fa'a-sāmoa* in the business context. Biographical factors like gender, birthplace, age, *mātai* status, business experience and levels of education of the entrepreneurs are examined as how these influence the management of businesses. This study hopes to contribute to the development new knowledge in Samoan entrepreneurship by examining the following questions:

1. What does a Samoan business look like in the New Zealand context for three categories: (a) businesses operated by Samoan born entrepreneurs who migrated to New Zealand; (b) businesses operated by those born in Samoa, but raised and educated in New Zealand, and (c) businesses operated by those born and educated in New Zealand?
2. What opportunities and challenges exist for Samoan entrepreneurs in the context of their practice of *fa'a-sāmoa* in New Zealand?

3. What factors contribute to business success for Samoan entrepreneurs in the New Zealand context?

## 2.6 Conclusion

Using the mixed embeddedness concept in this study provides a model that explains Samoan entrepreneurship in New Zealand. It further reduces the categorisation of entrepreneurship or types of entrepreneurs based on ethnicity and their social embeddedness in certain cultural values for business development. It is evident that ethnic entrepreneurs sometimes use the social embeddedness argument as a strategy to navigate the challenges of the business environments in migrant settings. The mixed embeddedness concept, on the other hand, is a further development of the phenomenon that allow the entrepreneurs to counter disadvantages such as unemployment, restructuring and discrimination in developed countries where they operate businesses. Globalisation provides a further context in which a group's differences contribute to entrepreneurship in different locations, regimes and countries that promotes the integration argument for ethnic groups and entrepreneurs. Samoan entrepreneurs operating businesses in New Zealand are no different as they are equally influenced by local, national and global contexts that challenge the collectivism and individualism dichotomy in entrepreneurialism.

The following chapter outlines my journey as an entrepreneur in New Zealand. It provides an example of the context where the practices of *fa'a-sāmoa* and the responsibilities of the business environment had influenced and motivated entrepreneurs like me to operate business. Themes raised in the international literature on the experience of ethnic entrepreneurs are compared to both my experience and that of other Samoan entrepreneurs. Consideration is given to whether our experiences of *fa'a-sāmoa* and business issues are similar or different, as well as what may cause variations amongst Samoan entrepreneurs.

# CHAPTER THREE : REFLECTION

## OF AN ETHNIC ENTREPRENEUR :

### MY JOURNEY

#### Introduction

When I finished my review of the literature on ethnic entrepreneurship, I had mixed feelings about the issues that had been raised and their relevance to my experience as an entrepreneur. Some of what I had read coincided with some of my own experiences as an entrepreneur in New Zealand, but some of the findings did not. To understand my unease, I started to think about my own journey and to identify those personal, cultural and business experiences that the literature accounted for as well as those on which it was largely silent. Then I had to establish whether those issues on which the literature was silent were personal to me and other migrant Samoan entrepreneurs or whether they were the consequences of a specific cultural environment that was somehow different from those which had generated most of the literature I had read. I had reservations in telling my journey's story, yet I felt it relevant to reflect on the cultural nuances and my experience of the economic realities that intricately motivating, and in some instances conflicted for me as a migrant and an entrepreneur.

This chapter outlines my life experience and journey from Samoa to New Zealand as a student. The chapter has six sections. Section 1 describes my early life in Samoa that was influenced by family, religion and the village. Section 2 explains the New Zealand environment and the conditions in where Samoan migrants redefine the *fa'a-sāmoa* institutions of family, religion and community. Section 3 reviews the role of my New Zealand education and work experiences in influencing my career and business opportunities in the migrant setting. Section 4 explains the conditions and opportunities that enabled me to enter entrepreneurship in New Zealand. Section 5 provides a discussion that compares my experience to other Samoan entrepreneurs on how *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations, and the New Zealand business environment, influences their businesses. Our experiences are compared to those of the ethnic entrepreneurs' described in the international literature. Section 6 concludes the chapter.



My journey began with my grandmother's advice as I departed for New Zealand, "*M....! ia e toāga i le lotu, filigā i le āoga, ālofa mai I lou āiga, ma su'e mai so tatou āi*"<sup>16</sup> (M.... make sure you attend church, strive to get a good education, love and serve your family and bring home the bacon!).

### 3.1 The beginning of my journey

My journey from Samoa to the outside world began as a student, leaving Samoa on a New Zealand Government-sponsored educational program in 1976. Up until my departure, all of my life had been in the village and family. At the airport my family stood there lamenting the emotions a *fa'a-māvaega* or parting ways usually brings. Some were sad, others were happy to see the tail end of me, yet for me it was *deja vu* feeling. Their lamentations moved me, *le tama fa'alologa* or the naughty boy my mother said; *ia fa'amānuia le Atua iā oe ma to'aga i le lotu* or may God bless you and attend church, my grandmother whispered; *su'e lau fa'aloia* or become a lawyer from an uncle, and *su'e mai se tā āi* or bring home the bacon from my father who was a bit liquored then to hide his sadness. These comments reflected the emotions and the range of expectations of Samoan families when a son or daughter migrated overseas with the hope of achieving success that enhances the reputation of their *āiga*<sup>17</sup> and *nu'u*<sup>18</sup>.

My walk on the tarmac to the waiting flight was longer than expected and I felt as if I was moonwalking. Unsure whether to hurry, look back, cry or celebrate, it was for me a moment of mixed emotions. I wanted to get out of there fast as everyone was crying. From childhood and in Samoan culture, one learned that to cry and show emotions in front of people was a sign of either weakness or *fa'ali'i*<sup>19</sup>, although in this case it was neither. But these emotions affected me somehow and I wanted to get going; I knew that once I got on that plane I would be free of the cultural baggage of the *fa'a-sāmoa*<sup>20</sup> that I was well embedded in.

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<sup>16</sup>Colloquial term meaning success or bring the goods home

<sup>17</sup> Samoan family that include the extended and nuclear family

<sup>18</sup> A village

<sup>19</sup> A state of disobedience

<sup>20</sup> Samoan customs, traditions and the institutions of family, religion and village

The future I was heading into was a distant void, an empty space where everything was blurred. I was at the peril of whatever fate dealt to me. I remembered the advice and counsel of village elders or parents ‘*ia talosia ia, ia manuia*’ or may the blessings be upon you, stressing the importance of God’s agency in one’s life and fate. In *fa’a-sāmoa*, it reflects the idea that, one’s future is always in the hands of the divine agencies, and had to be accepted. While I saw a spiritual connection in this advisory, it occurred to me that this was at odds with the idea that ones’ opportunities come through deliberate personal agency. This advice had influenced my journey then and still reminds me that blessings, whatever their nature, require patience, reverence to God and acknowledging their utility.

### **Collective giving**

When one departed on a journey, families would contribute gifts and food for a *fa’amāvāega*<sup>21</sup>. Equally important, when visiting families and visitors arrived, there would be *asigā mālaga*<sup>22</sup> with exchanges of food and feasting to show familial and cultural connectedness. My green trousers, likely worn by an American marine sergeant on his pub-crawls, matched the white slip-on shoes that Mick Jagger could have worn in his 1970 London gigs was sent by an uncle in American Samoa. That was his gift and contribution for my journey. He knew how best to dress me, one size fits all. That was his contribution as part of the collective responsibility and reciprocity in *fa’a-sāmoa*.

On the plane, a middle-aged *pālāgi* female, two rows from my seat commented sarcastically on my white shoes and my oversized green trousers that were dragging loosely on the floor on every single step I took. It was a light-hearted joke at my expense as the village boy. It did not mean anything to me then, but years later, even my uncle joked about how the trousers looked on me like Charlie Chaplin in the movie ‘The Kid’. I understood the sarcasm, but I could not reply because firstly, she was a female and females are highly respected in Samoan culture. Secondly, we were always taught at Sunday school that, ‘if one slaps you on one cheek, offer the other’ (Luke 6:29). I learned, years later, that one must have bearing and confidence in dealing with people, understanding nuances and sarcasm that would come with learning and further experience.

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<sup>21</sup> Departing feasts

<sup>22</sup> Visitations when relatives and guests arrive before and after journeys.

## Education in Samoa.

We learn values of *fa'aāloālo*<sup>23</sup> or respect, *va-fealaloa'i*<sup>24</sup>, and *ālofa*<sup>25</sup> through our upbringing in family, the church and the village. For most Samoan youths of my generation and generations before us, these values were learned from the *ā'oga a le faifaeau*<sup>26</sup>. It was where we first learned how to write and spell. This works in conjunction with primary, intermediate and high school where Christian values are taught right from an early age. The government school system, a western-based institution was synonymous with mainstream education, modernity and globalisation while *a'oga a le faifeau* provided biblical training and the moral fibre that guided everyone's life in the village. It was there that one first learned to write and had been taught biblical affirmations such as '*o le mata'u i le Atua o le āmataga lea ole poto*'<sup>27</sup> and '*O le tama poto e fiafia ai le tamā a'o le tama vālea e fa'anoanoa ai le tinā*'<sup>28</sup>. Every student rote learned and recited biblical verses that often confirmed virtuosity and wisdom are part of God's plan. Questioning their relevance and application means challenging the pastor's teachings; no one dared deviate from this assumed path to salvation. The pastor himself is given the greatest respect in *fa'a-sāmoa* as the *feagaiga*<sup>29</sup>, which is an equal to that of a high chief that helps secure family and village support (Meleisea, 1987). The pastor's school was also the prep school from which one would advance to other governmental educational institutions.

For this reason, school teachers in their position of authority similar that of the pastor, carry tremendous respect in Samoan society. The harsh disciplinary measures they mete out in order that students achieve a good education were acceptable and mostly supported by parents and communities as these are seen as beneficial for their growth. Biblical teachings also support disciplinary measures that are ingrained in a system as the following verse claims; '*if you don't punish your children you don't love them. If you do love them you will correct them*'<sup>30</sup> which in many occasions justify physical discipline.

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<sup>23</sup> Respect and courtesy

<sup>24</sup> Respect in all social and political relationships

<sup>25</sup> Compassion or love

<sup>26</sup> Pastors' school

<sup>27</sup> The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: Psalm 111:10

<sup>28</sup> A wise son brings joy to his father, but a foolish son brings grief to his mother: Proverbs 10:1

<sup>29</sup> The church minister whose role is based on a sacred covenant between a brother and sister. Used in religion to refer to the relationship between ministers and their congregations or the village and the church.

<sup>30</sup> Proverbs 13:24, Holy Bible, Good News Revised Edition

These disciplinary processes are part of the scheme of things in a community that is both motivating, enforceable and influence the collective at all levels (Boudieu, 1983).

Although my upbringing in the village rotated around *fa'a-sāmoa*, it was not exclusively traditional living. My family operated a couple of small businesses where I learned the fundamentals of capitalist economics. These business activities were organised within the community context with the aims of being profitable and serving our family's obligation to the village. They included a cattle farm, taro, cocoa and banana plantations and a corner store. As a typical village store, it was the focal point for trading where all sorts of products were sold such as copra, taro and a few western goods that the village community required from time to time.

All family households managed these business entities on a yearly basis, which gave them the opportunity to add value and grow the ventures they were responsible for. This rotational basis proved very successful as it acted as a quality control mechanism where each household was accountable for the viability of each venture. This reflects the levels of trust amongst the family members in the commercial setting based on the notion that the resources belonged and benefitted the family as a collective. The women and their households operated the corner shop, as it was less laborious, while the males worked on the plantations and on hard laboured entities like the cattle farm. Conflicts arose over time on mismanagement issues, but familial relationships based on *fa'aāloālo*, *alofa* and *vā-feāloāloa'i* prevailed.

The shop was located right in the middle of the village, and was the main point of social contact for village activities. My life revolved around the shop chores and pricing goods. This taught me accountability, efficiency and learning of the pitfalls of how small ventures can grow and expand in the community settings. The shop benefitted from village trade through supplying and having ready products such as boxed tinned fish and the corned beef for *fa'alavelave*<sup>31</sup> like funerals, church events and village *fono*<sup>32</sup> *fa'asalaga*<sup>33</sup>. Families or their members penalised by the village authorities for their

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<sup>31</sup> Lifecycle or cultural events

<sup>32</sup> Village authority composed of title holders only

<sup>33</sup> Penalties meted out by village authority on village members or families who disobeyed village rules.

indiscretions provided a steady trade when these penalties were meted out as they all purchased these goods from the shop.

The role of the matai in the family and village setting was also important. Appointed as the guardian and authority through a *saofai*<sup>34</sup> he or she plays a spokesperson role on behalf of the family in village *fono*, representing them with dignity and respect (Macpherson & Macpherson 2009). An uncle who was the family *mātai*, and a school principal at the time, was in charge of the family cattle farm. He utilised his position as a leader well. He had at his disposal, a cheap labour force of young and old from the family, and sometimes the village youth. He increased production by accessing more land from other village landowners in exchange for cattle per land acreage leased.

Cattle are very expensive and sought after for *fa'alavelave*. As well as being a good source of capital, they also increased a family's reputation in the village. Owning cattle meant having sufficient land for grazing or being able to negotiate to use other village land when more was needed to keep cattle numbers at a safe level. When more land was required, a bartering arrangement that involved the exchange of cattle for access to land would be negotiated with other landowners. These deals were done through the *vā-feāloāloa*'<sup>35</sup> and *va-fa'ale-āiga*<sup>36</sup> which reflected reciprocal relations and familial relationships that underpinned village networks. Managing these semi-commercial relationships promote social relationships in the community. These arrangements reduced costs of leased land, as other landowners would receive cattle in exchange for the land; secondly, it reduced the sabotage of property and animals by vindictive villagers.

The proceeds from any cattle sold was divided amongst all *pui-āiga*<sup>37</sup> as a portion of their stake in the family ventures, no matter how small the amount. From these operations I learned about the effective utilisation of the resources and the *va-feāloāloa*'i of our families leaders and other village members. This success was not for the benefit of the family only. There was an expectation that those families who did well in business would lead the way in contributing to church and village activities. It was a duty and obligation

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<sup>34</sup> Bestowment of titles

<sup>35</sup> Mutual respect in all socio/political relationships

<sup>36</sup> Familial relationship

<sup>37</sup> Nuclear family and part of the extended family

of families to serve the church's requirements and the more they contributed the better it was for a family's and the village's reputation. Committing to these obligations had merit, after all the family, church and the village were institutions that intricately connected everyone. They were institutions that a Samoan was born into and would still be there when he or she died. The adage: *aua le tufa'amauga I totonu ole nu'u* or one should not be too boisterous in affairs of the village guided the co-operation of families in village affairs. This would bring good stead and respect for one's family within the village. Our family *mātai* lead by example when they uttered such advice, as they knew well that by contributing to the church and community this was one way of increasing the social capital and economic returns for the business. It also reflected the gerontocratic nature of *fa'a-sāmoa* where the elders and *mātai* authorise such authority (Macpherson and Macpherson, 2009).

Our small family ventures were monopolies at the time. There were no competition until later years as other villagers started setting up similar businesses. The family *mātai* led by example in serving the village authority and protocols which strengthened village management. I gained a lot of experience from these ventures, including leadership and a knowledge of commerce in a family and community setting. The village history and its structures dictated each families' position and rank and was the order of things as translated *o fa'avae ole nu'u na āmata mai ai*<sup>38</sup> (Bourdieu, 1983). These village structures and *fa'a-mātai* exist within village boundaries, which at the time strengthen families that serve it (Huffer & So'o 2000). Although family and villages settings have undergone many changes, their influence remain, albeit in different circumstances and especially in the migrant context.

## 3.2 Life in New Zealand

### A conflict of cultures

The New Zealand in which I arrived was both exciting and challenging. In the 1960s and the 1970s, Pacific Island immigrant labour was of great value in the growing, but labour-starved New Zealand economy (Macpherson et al., 2000). The urban migration of Maori

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<sup>38</sup> The foundations of the village that included its founding families and precedences

from rural areas to cities could not provide for the growing labour requirements of New Zealand industries. When Maori migrated into the urban centres, they faced discrimination, and took time to adapt to a European way of life and to urban living. This slowed productivity in industries causing the New Zealand government to review readily available labour so urgently required for the rapidly expanding economy (Spoonley, 2001). Such labour was available both cheaply and conveniently in the Pacific Island countries, namely the Cook Islands, Samoa, Fiji and Tonga. The Cook Islands and Samoa were obvious sources of this labour, accessible due to New Zealand's past administrative roles with both countries.

Although relations between New Zealand and Samoa had chequered past, new relations at this point, based on mutual economic benefits for both countries, allowed for an easy flow of this cheap labour to support the New Zealand economy. It also allowed the migrants to find employment and create opportunities to support their families back home and in New Zealand. These two goals secured a working relationship during these early years of migration; the floodgates soon opened sending Pacific Island immigrants to the main industrial centres of Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. Despite the positive relationship between New Zealand and the Pacific countries, the attitudes were mixed towards Samoan and other Pacific Islanders, especially when the New Zealand economy slowed due to the international economic downturn of the 1970's. The aphorism '*e uo uo foa*'<sup>39</sup> reflected relationships between Samoa and New Zealand that could be smooth at times and fractious at others. In New Zealand, the immigrants who arrived on banana boats in the 1960's and 1970's were labelled 'f.o.b' or fresh off the boat; a label denoting their raw character, unfamiliarity with New Zealand culture, struggles with the English language and overall their marginalisation (Anae, 2001). While the 'f.o.b' label may have been a joke, it was belittling, at best, and a negative label Samoans or any Pacific immigrants had to endure. Migration was restricted as new immigration policies were introduced to control the flow of immigrants in the 80's and the 90's (Lee & Francis, 2009).

The migrants', who had been welcomed in droves under favourable immigrant policies, found their fortunes changed when their cheap labour was not required any more. The

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<sup>39</sup> A Samoan aphorism that defined an unpredictable type of friendship as: best of friends at one time and a bleeding head at another

contraction in international economic markets in the 1970s slowed the growth of the New Zealand economy forcing many factories to close. The labour from the Samoans and other Pacific Island immigrants was not required as jobs were diminishing. With little enforcement of overstaying immigrants, many immigrants over-stayed their New Zealand residential permits. This resulted in a crackdown by immigration officials on these communities by forcibly entering homes in early morning hours to remove the over stayers. It created panic and anger within these communities as there were no warnings and hence the epithet, 'dawn raids' (Ross, 1992 also in Anae, 2001 p. 108). While this marked changes in the New Zealand political and economic environment, it also led to a refinement of immigration requirements relating to Samoan and Pacific communities. However, the chain migration of Samoan families had already begun and had allowed the Samoan community to engage and contribute more to a civil community in New Zealand, strengthened even more by its institutions of *fa'a-sāmoa* (Mulitalo-Lauta, Menon & Tofilau, 2005). It also supported a vision for the New Zealand-born and other migrant Samoan generations for better opportunities, opportunities their immigrant parents had strived for and did not get. None envisaged the changes that had occurred, but rather were a result of the circumstances of the time.

### **The family in the migrant Environment**

The home to which I arrived in New Zealand was a unit where my uncle, his wife and their son lived. It was to be my home for the next five years. It took time for me to settle in the new environment. Memories of village and family life lingered on that were revived regularly by the sight of other Samoan migrants in the suburb where we lived. It was comforting to see other Samoans in church and the shopping centres where they congregated and shopped. While most Samoan migrants were adapting to the New Zealand environment, they remained committed to their *fa'a-sāmoa* that required them to keep their responsibilities to their homeland alive. 'Island time'<sup>40</sup> made no sense anymore unless one was lazy or misunderstood the reasons for being sent to New Zealand by their families, namely to find jobs and remit money to support their families in Samoa. Time was of the essence to the lives of the Samoan migrants as the pressures of work, money and family obligations became the dictators of their existence.

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<sup>40</sup> The notion of Island peoples having no concept of time in the western sense of the word.



Challenges for Samoan families became apparent with the conflicts within the migrant environment; the new realities and social spaces in the migrant environment created changes to the migrant's life away from home (Macpherson & Macpherson, 2009). What did not change were the expectations from 'home' on migrant family members in the community, expectations to continue the support that was their purpose for migrating. This resulted in family members in New Zealand working hard and sending money to Samoa for *fa'alavelave*<sup>41</sup> and other life cycle events in the community (Macpherson & Macpherson, 2009). Serving family was an expensive obligation, but a necessity at best, with the individual's existence and efforts directed towards the collective wellbeing. The duties to family resonated with the values of *tautua*<sup>42</sup>, *tausi-āiga*<sup>43</sup>, *fa'aāloālo*<sup>44</sup> *va-feāloāloa'i*<sup>45</sup> and *alofa*<sup>46</sup> that were crucial in the maintenance of *fa'a-sāmoa*<sup>47</sup>. It was the role and purpose of the *lupe fa'alele*<sup>48</sup> to help in kind.

When my grandmother whispered, '*ālofa mai i lou āiga*'<sup>49</sup> she reminded me of my responsibility or *tautua* to the family be it through financial support, achieving higher education or being resourceful in any support for the family. This reinforced the centrality of the *āiga* in a Samoan's life. While the roles of the *āiga* had changed in the migrant setting, its core values remain and reinforced in certain ways that reflect its place in a Samoan's life.

### **The church in the migrant environment**

In the migrant community, the churches provide social support and a sense of belongingness, much like my village in Samoa. The church was the place friends and community members gained a migrant experience. In New Zealand, there were the same types of traditional Samoan churches as the migrants had belonged to in Samoa, with the churches and pastors following the same kinds of religious practices. These practices reaffirmed for migrants a place of belonging where they practiced their culture and that

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<sup>41</sup> Cultural and community events such as fundraising, funerals, weddings and etc

<sup>42</sup> Unstinting Service

<sup>43</sup> Serving family

<sup>44</sup> Courtesy, respect, and politeness

<sup>45</sup> Mutual respect in all socio/political relationships

<sup>46</sup> Love

<sup>47</sup> Samoan culture and customs

<sup>48</sup> Term used here in this research to describe the Samoan migrants (see Chapter One)

<sup>49</sup> Serving family

had the feel of home (Macpherson & Macpherson, 2009; Va'a, 2001). It was the case that the earliest migrants to New Zealand, provided advice and knowledge about New Zealand society and networks that assisted new immigrants.

My New Zealand family was heavily involved in the church. It served as a platform for meeting their cultural and community needs. The church doubled as the village community where they practised their *fa'a-mātai*<sup>50</sup>, serving family and community through *fa'alavelave*, the youth groups, their *fa'akomiti*<sup>51</sup>, *fono a tinā*<sup>52</sup>, and many of the functions and activities of a village in Samoa (Fa'alau, 2011; Va'a, 2001). The church leaders also provided for the pastoral needs of the new arrivals, as well as existing members and those of the New Zealand born generations who had not experienced church life in a village. The financial commitments to different church activities were weekly obligations that all working members were expected to meet. Contributions for church buildings and other activities would involve everybody on a regular basis. The names and the amounts of money each member contributed were announced in the Sunday services in front of the congregation. This acted as shaming someone for not contributing more or regularly and an incentive for group action and kept the *fa'a-sāmoa* going. One's reputation would be defamed when his/her contributions remained low or when one failed to contribute as expected.

I also made the weekly contributions that were supposed to be discretionary in nature, yet there was an expectation for larger amounts, which was at times a struggle to achieve. These collections were announced in front of the congregations, which fuelled competitive tithing amongst congregation members, especially *mātai* and their families who seemed to be outbidding each other. I viewed this exercise as a way of pestering the congregants to increase the amount they contributed. I disliked the competitive nature of announcing these contributions because I saw it as discrediting the genuine attempt of others to tithe according to their abilities and effort. I questioned its merits although such competitive tithing reflected a view of Samoan religiosity as divine blessings. While these ritualistic practices were the norm for those born in Samoa and who understood their merits, I realised that some of the New Zealand born generation did not understand, nor

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<sup>50</sup> Committee work and administration

<sup>51</sup> Women's committees

<sup>52</sup> Elderly women's meetings

were interested in such competitive tithing; for them, like me, it was starting to be a thorn in their side.

In my view, the protestant ethic that explained wealth creation as a ‘calling’, being a divine reward for hard work was a respected doctrine (Weber, 1903). However, this was used by ministers who preached sharply focussed sermons, using biblical verses to remind the congregants that, the ‘more you give the more you receive’<sup>53</sup> in order to motivate those hooked on such divine blessings. Yet squandering one’s resources and wealth in competitive tithing in order to maintain one’s reputation in the church and community led to my decision that the Samoan traditional church and such practices were not for me. I concluded that my participation in the church services on Sundays was primarily a way to connect with my family. The church, as I saw it, was just like a village, a social adjunct of the *fa’a-sāmoa* in which I was embedded at a young age. I saw different roles for the church in my life in New Zealand, as I grew to identify its benefits and their relevance for me.

I saw that the church minister’s roles have been empowered by the *feagaiga* principle that awarded them power and authority in their congregations, which in many cases led to abuses of power. Like the positions of ministers in traditional Samoan churches, ministers of any religion in the migrant community are also given this authority. The *feagaiga*, allowed them to control and make demands of congregants and manage church affairs, in many cases by themselves, leading to the mismanagement of church resources (Va’a, 2001). In essence, the congregations and churches who supported this *feagaiga* were committed to such practices since, in the migrant setting; it *was* their village and their family. I attended church out of respect and love for my family and their belief in any blessings that might come from the agencies of God. I did not want to miss any blessings in case they are delivered through the collective and kinship solidarity, which Samoan religious participation depends as part of the *fa’a-sāmoa*. As the community expanded over time, evangelical religions (in contrast to traditional Samoan denominations) started to exert more influence over the younger and New Zealand generations, as well as for those wanting to discard traditional Samoan church practices.

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<sup>53</sup> Luke 6: 38: Good News Bible (Revised Edition)

As I reflected on the importance of religion in the Samoan community, I remembered my grandmother's advice; *M ... ia e to'aga i le lotu* or be committed to church. However, for me it was time for change. I was happy to attend a church where I felt connected to God rather than experiencing the bible bashing I heard regularly when I attended a traditional Samoan church. I was also happy to exercise the idea that tithing comes from the heart as the biblical verse claims: *'If you are eager to give, God will accept your gift on the basis of what you have to give, not on what you haven't'*<sup>54</sup>, rather than coerced to contribute. I was longing to be free from the shackles of the *fa'a-sāmoa* and especially the way religion was practiced, which I saw as financially inhibiting to families and morally conflicted. On this basis, I saw the ongoing community engagement with the *fa'a-samo*a in the migrant environment as the remnants of village life that I had left behind. I wondered how those migrants who came before me, as well as the New Zealand born Samoans, dealt with these conflicts. Although my grandmother's advice of attending church often lingered on in my consciousness, Samoan religiosity had lost its relevance for me, especially where these practices conflicted with the new social spaces, new values and the emergence of evangelical denominations in New Zealand's more egalitarian society.

### **Identity crisis and the New Zealand born generations**

By the 1990s, the Samoan population had increased. New Zealand-born Samoans were striving for their own identity. This involved being prominent in educational employment and sports achievements as their being born and educated in New Zealand had given them better opportunities than were available to their migrant parents (Lee & Francis, 2009). While these advantages enabled some to maintain their family and church obligations, these things led others to question their commitment to and the validity of these institutions in their lives. Along the way, some New Zealand-born Samoans and comedians made fun of their parents' culture and of our community's dilemmas and challenges. I detested that *fa'aulaula*<sup>55</sup> or making fun of their immigrant parents' accents, names, language, customs, their churches and other institutions that Samoans identified with. While I saw this as an expression of confidence in their place in the migrant setting, it also reflected the new social spaces that influenced their identities (Anae, 2001). As I

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<sup>54</sup>2 Corinthians 8:12: Good News Bible (Revised Edition)

<sup>55</sup> Teasing and pestering

reflected on these issues, I realised then, that like them, I too was longing for my space to strive in the migrant setting.

At home, I grew up with cousins, nieces and nephews who were born in New Zealand. We all connected in family get-togethers or *mafutaga a aiga*<sup>56</sup> as well as attending church. They were my blood relatives and yet it seemed as if we were strangers in our own company. I noticed the silent divisions and conflicts that were brought on by their struggle to speak Samoan and in trying to understand *fa'a-sāmoa*; something, which they found difficult to do in most cases. I also sensed the duality in the way we related to one another and especially in the use of the pronouns 'outou or you, lātou or them, mātou or we and tātou or us which in the abstract signalled distinctive divisions in our relationships. The *matou* and *tatou* indicated inclusiveness and acceptance while *latou* and *outou* referred to exclusiveness and differences.

Amongst these classifications came the references to relationships that were governed by the *va-feāloloa'i* and *fa'aālolo*. These values promote good relationships, which require that people understand their responsibilities and show respect for each other. While these principles united us, the *fa'a-sāmoa* that we knew reflected the generational differences amongst the migrants. For some of the New Zealand born generations, it meant that these values were no longer relevant to their lives nor shared by every Samoan in the same manner. It was a confusing *vā* or relationship based on our different experiences of *fa'a-sāmoa* and our places in it.

I lamented the New Zealand-born's disconnection with *fa'a-sāmoa*, and thought I understood their confusion, especially their parents' persistence in maintaining the practices of *fa'a-sāmoa*. Yet for their parents *fa'a-sāmoa* supported and connected them in their lives in the migrant community as they pursued new opportunities for their future, the future for which they once migrated. Others may see this as a conflict, yet I found strength in my fluency in the Samoan language and my understanding of *fa'a-sāmoa*. I found this knowledge an advantage when combined with a western education, allowing me to be successful in both worlds. This thought strengthened my resolve to pursue further education and seek opportunities both inside and outside the Samoan community.

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<sup>56</sup> Close knit family gatherings

As I reflected on my grandmother's words, '*su'e mai so tatou āi*'<sup>57</sup> and hence the idiom 'bring home the bacon', it dawned on me that achieving business or educational success in a place like New Zealand would only be possible through pursuing higher education and exploring opportunities outside the influence of family and the community.

### **3.3 Education**

#### **My New Zealand education**

Education was the purpose of my migration to New Zealand. The uncle I stayed with in New Zealand had a good education in Samoa and his previous employment in one of the government departments there gave him the taste of success and achievement. Our regular conversations related to a list of things a good education would achieve. He understood my aspirations because he could have taken advantage of educational opportunities in New Zealand, but he was committed instead to meeting his family obligations. I spent three years at high school in New Zealand to familiarise myself with the education system and environment which was to become the scene of my further studies. The curriculum and subjects at the school I attended were similar to those I previously experienced in Samoa, making the transition to New Zealand education manageable. The regular reviews and pep talks at home with my family over school reports were a normal occurrence over the three years, acting as a way to monitor my achievement. Doing well at school was important to my family; they saw my becoming well educated as an investment on one hand and as a flag bearer for the family's reputation on the other. They expected that since I had made it this far, taking advantage of the opportunities the New Zealand education system offered was very important to pursue. This support motivated me to advance further to higher education, taking a one-year break after high school to work and prepare for University studies.

#### **University education**

In 1983, I completed a Bachelor of Arts degree in Anthropology at the local university. My family celebrated this milestone. Such a success would in many ways enhanced

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<sup>57</sup>In search for success

family pride especially when their children were successful. However, one could also imagine their disappointment when their children failed and hence the importance of attaining any degree (Anae, 2001). The collective ownership of a Samoan student's success or failure at university was inescapable, something that would reflect on families and communities.

### **3.4 Identifying entrepreneurship**

During my university study I worked in an uncle's law firm in Auckland city. He had attended Oxford University, completing a BCL (Bachelor of Civil Law). This motivated me to follow a career in law. I enrolled at Law School in 1984 to fulfil what my family had been so determined for me to be, a lawyer. However, I discontinued law studies after one year and completed a masters' degree in anthropology instead. This fitted well with a business that I was then starting. The Master of Arts degree gave me confidence to explore other areas, including entrepreneurship. It was the freedom and the ability to develop my own opportunities and to make my own decisions that appealed to me. I did not intend starting my own business when I completed my University studies. I thought my university education would set me up with a career, but I was unable to get the kind of job that I wanted or one that would allow me to control my own time and earning capacity. Over the years, I had developed sports skills and experience in coaching in the martial arts and boxing, which I had continued to practice while studying at university. The practical experience and certified in the martial arts of Tae Kwon Do and boxing created opportunities for me in personal training and sports coaching.

I gained further business experience when I worked as a clerk and debt collector at my uncle's law firm in the city where one of my roles was to collect outstanding debts from Samoan and Pacific Island clients. In this role, I experienced the conflict between the practices of *fa'a-sāmoa* and business that were lumped together with management responsibilities. The values of *fa'aaloalo*, *ālofa*, *vā-feāloaloai* and *tausi-āiga* that form the basis of reciprocal relationships were routinely invoked by Pacific Island clients when they sought consultation on legal matters. This often resulted in unpaid legal services that were written off in order to maintain these collective relationships. Such practices drained the business of the cash flow it required for its survival, let alone growth. I saw, in this

situation, that one of the main challenges to developing a successful business that depended on Samoan clientele was that expectations and conventions of business and culture were constantly in conflict. I found this experience unacceptable, and decided not to pursue any business opportunities in the Samoan community from that point on. Based on this experience, I sought out opportunities that were relevant to my skills and university education in relevant industries in the mainstream market. My background in the martial arts and sports coaching opened up business opportunities where I managed security and training requirements for corporate clients in the hotel and entertainment industry. This role eventually laid the foundation for developing a corporate network of clients that helped establish my businesses in the security, personal training and sports training industries.

Developing a successful business depends on many factors. The availability of a market for the services or products the entrepreneur intends to sell provides a platform from which to start. Equally, important are the entrepreneur's human and financial resources required to capitalise on opportunities. *X Limited* (a pseudonym used to label my first company and protect ex-staff and ex-clients) was registered in 1985 as a limited liability entity, with two shareholders who had the resources and the skills required.

While a prominent client base, that I had built up over the years enabled my business to start, deregulation of the economy by the Labour Government of 1984 created many opportunities for small companies in different industries. The security industry was one of those industries affected by the deregulation process, creating opportunities for small operators to capture markets left vacant by bigger organisations. All security companies were licenced under the provisions set out in the Security Guards and the Private Investigators Act 1974. *X limited* took advantage of this situation. Applying and abiding by these legal processes enabled the company to pass the mandatory and administrative requirements that gave the company a bona fide existence, allowing further expansion into a fully-fledged twenty-four-hour security service. The company further diversified into other areas catering for the corporate market around booming industries and real estate developments at the time. The expanded services included twenty-four-hour alarm monitoring systems for local councils, corporate cash carrying services, noise control and industrial patrol services. Alarm technicians, administration and patrol staff were specially recruited and trained for those specific roles.



### **Resources and funding businesses**

While I personally provided collateral and finance for the operation, government funding was sought to support growth at different stages of the business. Family members also invested in the business for three reasons. Firstly, it was an opportunity to invest in my business as they saw it growing; secondly, they supported it because it provided employment for family members who were unemployed; and thirdly, it provided sponsorship and work permits for other family members to be able to migrate from Samoa for employment and residence. These financial arrangements laid a good foundation of support upon which the business grew and expanded.

One of the advantages I had at the time was the availability of family and Samoan community labour. While this labour conveniently served part-time contract hours for city clients, it also turned out to be the most profitable services in terms of time, charged out hours and cash flows. In servicing these contracts, family members and their networks from the community were the most preferred employees because of the factor of trust. Promotions to management positions were expected of family as the business grew. Conflict arose at times when their expectations of these roles which had yet to be matched with the relevant skills necessary for each specific position. However, where specific qualifications for specific management roles and technical skills were not available, specialised training and ongoing staff development were designed to meet these needs that were necessary for licensing and insurance requirements. This also allowed for the selection of professional employees and those with technical skills to be employed, especially where I was not able to employ from family or the Samoan community qualified employees for these roles. This method diminished issues of nepotism and the culture of favouring family.

### **Identifying gaps for entrepreneurship**

The share market crash of 1987 sent shockwaves throughout businesses worldwide. The New Zealand economy was no different, with the crash affecting the viability and survival of small businesses. The share market crash was unforeseen, and had a profound effect on my business. Many clients both small and medium suffered cash flow problems, with most unable to continue trading. Corporate clients that signed up for medium and fixed contract terms were minimised, as clients took cost saving initiatives. As these contracts

were reduced, new clients were sought to replace the lost income that the business relied on. Discount prices for new services and products were offered, with staff reduction in specific service areas, in order to manage costs.

Additionally, the failure of the New Zealand team in the America's Cup competition in 1987 had a tremendous effect on 'hyped up' property prices and investments which caused many of *X Limited's* business clients to fail. Their demise created a domino effect that affected *X Limited's* cash flow and long term planning. The aftermath of the market downturn required a sell-off of some of the company's core services and assets to reduce business liability. This was successful, allowing the company to survive, reverting to its core personnel services for the hotels and entertainment venues in the central city. Larger competitors started to move in, offering competitive prices for these services. This made the industry very uneconomical, with the company finding it increasingly difficult to continue providing full security services. The exit plan was to sell different divisions of the business in 1992 to sub-contractors with technical expertise, those who were able to serve existing clients. This plan worked well, as it allowed X Limited to either cease trading, or pursue further business niches as it saw fit.

When *X Limited* was sold, I took on employment in a finance, insurance and investment corporation in Auckland between 1993 and 1996. This career opened new opportunities that required new skills in investments, insurance and finance. It gave me financial support that allowed me to undertake further study and complete an MBA degree in 1996. This degree opened up consulting opportunities in different organisations until 1999 when I started a teaching position for business courses at a local university. I worked in this role for nine years, until 2007, when I decided to pursue further business interests.

A new company, *Y Limited* (a pseudonym used to label my second company and protect ex-staff and ex-clients), was set up in 2006 to continue with the vision of the *X Limited* company that was started some sixteen years earlier. This new company was a result of planning with a vision to use my experience in sports and education that I had been continuously engaged in, on a more expansive scale. As sole director, I set up Y limited with the same skill set I acquired from the sports of Amateur Boxing and Tae Kwon Do that I used to start *X Limited*, but on this occasion based on a vision to expand into educational programmes for "at risk kids", corporate fitness and health, vocational

education and training, and sports coaching. As Amateur Boxing and Tae Kwon Do are Olympic sports, they both have established markets at the grassroots and community level. The training processes from these sporting codes were used to legitimize the training systems of the company. The New Zealand governing bodies of both these sporting codes provide licences and coaching certificates with training processes that all qualified trainers of training facilities must comply.

The decision to continue with these sporting regimes as core services for the new business was based on three reasons. Firstly, they were established and specialised sports training systems with which I have extensive experience. Secondly, there were established niche markets at the grassroots level that enabled the Y business to target sports training and personal development at the amateur and professional levels. Thirdly, 'sticking to the knitting' means pursuing a business based on proven and workable systems.

Understanding the opportunity structure of the New Zealand market, having the social capital and developing strategies for opportunities were vital factors for a business, even at the inception level. I decided earlier that my business would not operate in the Samoan community, as there were no Samoan hotels, nor a Samoan business enclave that could provide the social capital for my business. Furthermore, understanding the institutional, structural and compliance issues also presented responsibilities and challenges that I would have to manage. As an entrepreneur, the drive to be successful, taking the risks and achieving financial success are what defined entrepreneurship for me.

### **3.5 Discussion**

The review of the literature highlighted a number of issues that were relevant to the study of Samoan entrepreneurship. Firstly, the literature referred to the ethnic entrepreneur as one from a minority group who needed special treatment and specific assistance. This position in a way provides an advantage where the entrepreneur is supported by a network of ethnics who interact with other co-ethnics who share a common heritage and cultural background (Waldinger et al, 1990). Furthermore, ethnic entrepreneurs who are embedded in their social capital and community networks provide further advantages for their businesses. The current literature has undermined the ethnicity argument and group

characterisation by pointing to the contexts where the entrepreneurs relied on the opportunities and the environment in developing their businesses (Pecoud, 2010; Kloosterman & Rath, 2003). This involves expanding beyond the nature of the social embeddedness of the entrepreneurs in their community network by viewing the societal, national and institutional contexts in which entrepreneurs operate their businesses. This raises the question of whether the characterisation and themes relating to the ethnic entrepreneur in the international literature are relevant to the conditions in which Samoan entrepreneurs operate their businesses in New Zealand.

As a Samoan entrepreneur, some of the issues raised in the international literature did not coincide with some of what I had experienced and observed when managing a business connected with the Samoan community. My negative experience of *fa'a-sāmoa* in relation to operating a business had caused me to seek opportunities in the mainstream business environment. Similarly, other Samoan entrepreneurs and generations of New Zealand born Samoan entrepreneurs may find some of these issues relevant to their businesses. Firstly, my business experience and those of my ex-university colleagues showed that there was diversity in the types of businesses we operated based on our skills and experiences. We all managed *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations differently in relation to business management, as we were all *mātai*. We were all different in the way we motivated ourselves, especially with our different levels of education and the paths we took pursuing entrepreneurship. This was in contrast to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> generations of Samoan entrepreneurs (in this study) who possessed different skills, operated different types of businesses, levels of education who pursued entrepreneurship. So, in common with the earlier ethnic entrepreneurs cited in the literature, some of these Samoan entrepreneurs relied on their cultural capital, familial values, ethnic loyalties and niche markets to start their businesses (Waldinger et al., 1990). However, the deployment of cultural values and the utility of *fa'a-sāmoa* in business differed from one enterprise to another. Some Samoan entrepreneurs either promoted, balanced or distanced themselves from *fa'a-sāmoa* in the management of their businesses. While *fa'a-sāmoa* in traditional Samoa provided the socio-cultural and economic resources through the family, religion and village community that businesses relied on, this may not be the case for Samoan businesses in the migrant settings. In New Zealand, *fa'a-sāmoa* does not carry the same economic value for Samoan entrepreneurs, as the consequences of non-participation and non-adherence are not visible nor obligatory. Such various push and pull factors account

for differing levels of intensity and engagement of entrepreneurs with the requirements of *fa'a-sāmoa* in their businesses.

As my ex-university colleagues' professional experiences showed (see Chapter 1), they were not struggling entrepreneurs who were looking for a business foothold in New Zealand. They differed in many ways from a number of Samoan entrepreneurs (in this study) who have not had the benefit of a higher education or the experience of working in family businesses, issues that would influence and contribute to the success of their operations in New Zealand. The experience and educational opportunities of my colleagues gave them an advantage, as they were able to use their knowledge of the New Zealand business environment, their education and professional networks to develop their operations. Moreover, they did this with the ongoing support of family and in some instances with their social or business networks. My colleague's knowledge and education highlighted an advantage of understanding the institutional frameworks, structural processes and the rules of the New Zealand business environment as these can either inhibit or promote a business.

Secondly, I chose to pursue entrepreneurship based on my specialised sporting knowledge and training experiences which started as hobby and eventually expanded into a business. This motivated me to be successful in the western-style business world that was also different from what I had experienced in my family businesses in both New Zealand and Samoa. My skills, my ability to speak and negotiate business in English, and the confidence of 'breaking out' to operate in the mainstream market led me to a different path to entrepreneurship, especially in markets where my business did not rely on the Samoan community. This made entering entrepreneurship easier, despite having other well-paid career options available to me. This made me different from other Samoan entrepreneurs whose backgrounds resembled those of the classic ethnic entrepreneur referred to in the literature, whose social, cultural, language and occupational skills were important in establishing their businesses in ethnic markets (Grannoveter, 1985; Waldinger et. al., 1990).

Thirdly, as part of the strategic positioning of my business, I decided early, in the inception and planning phases, that I would not be engaging in or operating any service or products that depended on the Samoan community. As there were no Samoan type

businesses in the market in which my business was to operate, nor a Samoan enclave, the decision to break out into the mainstream market was to associate and network more with different types of businesses, further diversifying into other industries. It was a business decision based on opportunities, my experiences with certain types of services and it involved a network of well-established businesses. In this instance, I employed licensed and specifically qualified and trained personnel suitable for my business requirements, therefore reducing reliance on family and the Samoan community for employees. This also made me different from other Samoan entrepreneurs, who resembled the classic ethnic entrepreneur, who had little choice but to rely on the Samoan community or ethnic clientele for their businesses. While there were advantages and disadvantages in different strategies that business owners employ, having a vision and an education is related to the entrepreneur's inclination toward entrepreneurialism.

Fourthly, this choice freed me from the necessity of meeting any *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations in order to maintain my reputation, something I would particularly need to win the respect and support of customers and clients *if* my business was reliant on the Samoan community. This makes me different from some other Samoan entrepreneurs who better resembled the classical ethnic entrepreneur, and who had no choice but to meet all of the customary obligations in order to maintain a social reputation that would enable them to attract Samoan clients.

Fifthly, the demographic transition from a mostly overseas-born Samoan population to an increasingly New Zealand-born generation of entrepreneurs has certain implications. It will likely mean that in the near future, a number of factors like fluency in English, knowledge of the institutional and structural processes of the specific industry operated in and the education that had served me well in business will be more readily part of the experience of the younger generations raised and born in New Zealand. Because of these changes, the social, economic and political advantages that had promoted and forced some of the ethnic entrepreneurs to enter into business within their community may diminish, or even cease to exist within a few years (Pecoud, 2010).

Furthermore, the nature of education in New Zealand brings many young Samoans into contact with the increasingly diverse and heterogeneous population of wider New Zealand. Their personal social networks are very different, in many cases, from those of

their parents and the earlier migrant community. As their opportunities increase, they are able to reach out, interact with all sorts of people, and develop different types of social networks, which may in turn facilitate their desire and ability to engage in entrepreneurship. On the plus side, their reach would not only be confined to their generation and co-ethnics for their clientele, but also would be able to capitalise and utilise their educational achievement, social capital and knowledge of the New Zealand institutional and structural requirements to develop and expand into different businesses and industries. In addition, their connections to their parents' homeland and networks would allow them to venture into transnational networks in both their homelands and internationally based nodes, seeking business opportunities (Lee & Francis, 2009; Macpherson et al, 2001). Predictably, the current landscape in New Zealand shows that there are increasing opportunities for the Samoan community to participate in businesses (Statistics New Zealand, 2011). There are government-funded trusts<sup>58</sup> and government ministries<sup>59</sup>, which are now providing free training, vocational education, professional development programmes and mentoring for aspiring Samoan business people to increase entrepreneurial activities. This help has also opened up more opportunities with new transnational entrepreneurs exposed to the digital age and computer literacy that further enhance their international business opportunities (Lee & Francis, 2009; Li, 2007).

Finally, as a Samoan entrepreneur operating a business in New Zealand, my story pointed to a number of issues, which highlight the diversity amongst Samoan entrepreneurs and their types of businesses. This diversity involves the growing differences between the New Zealand-born and overseas born Samoans, in terms of the types and levels of business they operate. Many issues that emanate from the nature of New Zealand's heterogeneous society contribute to the diversity where the embeddedness of some of the entrepreneurs in *fa'a-sāmoa* may be an advantage or a disadvantage for their business. These observations about the diversity of New Zealand Samoan entrepreneurs has been important in framing the core questions of this research (Chapter 1).

My grandmother's words "*M!, ia e to'agai le lotu, filigāi le a'oga, ālofa mai i lou aiga, ma su'emoi so tatou ai*" or M.... attend church, persevere with your education, love your

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<sup>58</sup>Pacific Business Trust

<sup>59</sup>Ministry of Pacific Peoples

family and bring home the bacon! reflect the important role that family, religion and community played in my life. However, these words may have lost their relevance for me and for other Samoan entrepreneurs in terms of the management of our businesses. In New Zealand different Samoan entrepreneurs, especially those who were born and raised in Samoa and migrated to New Zealand; those born, partly educated in Samoa and educated in New Zealand; and those born and raised in New Zealand, could interpret my grandmother's words in different ways. This study examines the variety of Samoan entrepreneurship in the migrant setting and how the variations may be explained in the way entrepreneurs operate their businesses.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

In this study, I intend to use the mixed embeddedness concept to provide an understanding of issues relating to Samoa entrepreneurship in the migrant setting. Themes from the international literature on ethnic entrepreneurship are reviewed to provide the contexts in which ethnic entrepreneurs operate their businesses and in comparison to whether these are different or similar to Samoan entrepreneurship. The role of *fa'a-sāmoa* is explored in the context of institutional and structural factors in the business environment in relation to Samoan entrepreneurship in New Zealand. Samoan entrepreneurship represents a case study on its own in which the mixed embeddedness concept would lead to including *fa'a-sāmoa* and the institutional, structural requirements of the New Zealand business environment when developing strategies for businesses. This would identify the relevance of social capital for Samoan entrepreneurship as well as the relevance to the themes raised in the literature for ethnic entrepreneurs.



# CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

## Introduction

This chapter introduces the methodological approach of the study. It explains the research framework and methods used in collecting data. A qualitative research approach is used in this study. Widely used in anthropology, sociology, history, geography and other social sciences disciplines, qualitative methods explore depth of research topics and context of the studies undertaken (Denzin & Lincoln, 2002). The advantages of using this approach include capturing the experiences and meanings of people's practices in their social, economic and political environments (Davidson & Tolich, 2002). Using this approach helps understand Samoan entrepreneurship and how entrepreneurs utilise *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations in relation to their business responsibilities. It is assumed that not all Samoan entrepreneurs view their practice and participation in *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations in the same way as some are more embedded than others, which in turn influences the way they manage business needs.

This chapter has six sections. Section 1 introduces the Samoan proverb '*ia seu le manu ae taga'i i le galu*', or when trapping the bird, mind the breakers' (Schultz, 1965), as the guiding principle for this study. Section 2 describes the ethical processes of carrying out the fieldwork. Section 3 discusses the data collection process which includes the consultation process with participants and study stakeholders, the pilot study, and the recruitment of participants. Section 4 provides a thematic analysis of data and the themes from semi-structured interviews. Section 5 discusses the limitations of the study. Section 6 concludes the chapter. The following research questions provide the basis for this study.

1. What are the common variations in the structure of Samoan businesses in New Zealand, particularly the differences in businesses between entrepreneurs (a) born and raised in Samoa and migrated to New Zealand, (b) born in Samoa but raised and educated in New Zealand, and (c) born and raised in New Zealand.
2. What opportunities and challenges does *fa'a-sāmoa* present for Samoan entrepreneurs in NZ?
3. What are the important factors contributing to business success for Samoan entrepreneurs in NZ?

#### **4.1 The Guiding principle of the research: ‘*Ia seu le manu ae taga’i i le galu*’**

The proverb ‘*ia seu le manu ae taga’i i le galu*’ shapes the methodological approach for this study. In *fa’a-sāmoa*, the proverb is a form of advice, especially in deliberation with those carrying out an important task or in matters of great importance. Its usage relates to strategies, planning, applying proper methods, developing an awareness and been informed of the outcomes. The proverb allows for open consultation where different perspectives would help minimise challenges and issues that may beset a task. From the outset, I realised that for Samoan entrepreneurs the connections between the nature of *fa’a-sāmoa* and its relevance to business management were key issues that this study was exploring. Understanding cultural protocols of *fa’a-sāmoa* compared to the institutional and structural requirements of the New Zealand business environment led me to question how entrepreneurs with different experiences manage these responsibilities in developing a successful business. This in turn led me to consider an approach that allows me to collect information from different participants with similar or common experiences of both *fa’a-sāmoa* and business in the migrant setting. The proverb also points to the benefits of expanding and involving a wider range of ideas and deliberations from different disciplines, in addition to *fa’a-sāmoa*, such as other social sciences and different business paradigms, all of which add value to this research. Using this proverb and defining it in the different contexts of this study also legitimise the production of knowledge from both Samoan and Western that could otherwise be controversial or open to scrutiny by other researchers (O’leary, 2010)

The proverb is broken down in the following paragraphs to provide meanings that are not only practical, but also culturally meaningful for a Samoan. This would also be helpful and relevant for other researchers familiar with Samoan protocols, when deliberating on a cultural research issue.

Firstly ‘*Ia seu*’ literally means to steer or direct. It is used metaphorically in this study to direct, incorporate, extend, expand and evaluate. This requires acknowledging all

possibilities and issues relating to Samoan protocols like *fa'aāloālo*<sup>60</sup> and *va-feāloāloa'i*<sup>61</sup>. These values that are prevalent within *fa'a-sāmoa* may be combined with western research paradigms to select the best methods for advancing this study. '*Le manu*' refers here to an object to be directed, and in this case the *fuaō* (a type of seagull), the preferred bird, because it was known as a delicacy and bait for fishing. In this research, *le manu* refers to the research goals or the study topic (factors that affect Samoan entrepreneurship in the New Zealand). It is used here to include the role of *fa'a-sāmoa*, western episteme and the institutional requirements of the New Zealand business environment that serve the expectations of this research. The words *ae tagai'i* means to evaluate. Literally, these are a reference to the fact that one must see, understand, respect and pay attention to protocols and ethical considerations. Caution and professionalism are expected because in *fa'a-sāmoa* these actions are encapsulated in reciprocal relationships guided by *fa'aāloālo*, *ālofa* and *vā-fealoaloa'i*. For this research, *ae taga'i* can also mean to view with respect, adapt and negotiate with the community and stakeholders who are relevant to this study and whose knowledge is translated into research outcomes. '*le Galu*' refers to the wave. The wave for this study refers to cultural protocols, the institutions and institutional guidelines, community opinions and relationships that are connected by the *fa'aāloālo* and *va-feāloāloa'i*. The *galu* reflects community dynamics, their ideologies, ethical behaviour, the responsibilities, socio-cultural, political and public opinions, intellectual property, and in this study, an awareness of the responsibilities towards the communities and stakeholders involved in this study.

As well as guiding the approach to this research, this proverb guides the way I carried out my field research that involves consulting with members of the Samoan community, business participants and institutions. In practice, the proverb guided the consultation process, the administrative responsibilities with stakeholders, and my involvement with community elders who advised me on the *fa'a-sāmoa* protocols of *fa'aāloālo* and *va-feāloāloa'i*. This also means, even more so as a *mātai*, that I have to address people respectfully in the appropriate language to indicate my understanding of Samoan protocols. It was clear that using the qualitative approach in this respect was essential.

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<sup>60</sup> Courtesy respect and politeness

<sup>61</sup> Mutual respect in all socio/political relationships

One of the benefits of the use of qualitative analysis occurs when ‘researchers are interested in the meanings that people have constructed and how they make sense of their world and their experiences of the world’ (Merriam, 2009). It allows the observation of practices, narratives and descriptive accounts of research settings to be understood. This approach veers away from a positivist methodology, adopting instead an interpretative style of sociology (Parkinson and Drisdane, 2011; cited in Guest, Namey & Mtichell, 2013). The interpretive perspective used in qualitative methods has the potential to reveal multiple realities instead of arriving at one truth (Parkinson and Drislane, 2011). In this sense an in-depth understanding, the use of multiple validities rather than a single validity, and a commitment to dialogue are sought in any interpretive study (Guest, Namey & Mitchell, 2013).

While this may apply to the study of culture, and in this sense *fa’a-sāmoa*, some realities and cultural meanings may not be fully explored with a specific research method. The use of the qualitative method alone would also lead to the question of whether a sociological approach is sufficient to understand the complex issues of research in *fa’a-sāmoa* and the Samoan community. This suggests that there are disparities between the practices of sociological research and interpersonal relationships, which are central in Samoan research contexts. In this sense researchers whose research knowledge and methods derive mainly from Eurocentric perspectives have different values, beliefs and lived in experiences and that in some cases methods such as observations and interviewing that provide different explanations of Samoan culture.

A Samoan researcher, for example, who uses a similar method as a European would also likely reach a different conclusion. Most Pacific cultural knowledge and concepts involve spirituality and collectivist values. This said research amongst Samoan and Pacific communities are based on the principles of co-operation and reciprocity, where the safety of the information and protecting the integrity of the collective are important considerations for researchers. In Samoa, for example, the *talanoaga* refers to conversations and verbal exchanges that occur at different levels with different people, formality and importance. These are formal conversations acknowledge the importance of the issues discussed, the relationships and the socio, political contexts in which these take place.

Pacific epistemology however refers to *talanoa*, meaning a general talk and just having a conversation (Vaiolleti, 2006). Credit is due to the use of *talanoa* as a methodology for doing Pacific research in the migrant settings. However the use of *talanoa* may be viewed as institutionalising and generally depicting all Pacific research as the same, yet it obscures and demystify specific cultural contexts for Pacific communities that are in most cases vary or specific to each Pacific nation despite their similarities.

*Talanoaga* for example in Samoa is both formal and informal in nature. Parties to a *talanoaga* are invited or request involvement, introduced and directed to a discussion. Issues are discussed in private or openly and at the same time are aware of the formal nature of the relationships of those involved. In a village or collective setting, this involves acknowledging the bases of village authority, inciting the village precedence and all the formalities involved in a village *fono*<sup>62</sup>. Where a formal *talanoaga* takes place, it serves the purpose of expressing social issues in a cultural context, which helps promote the exchange of information and knowledge. In this sense, cultural protocols provide the formal processes that ensure making the topic of the conversation more important and exclusive. It is this dual basis of the *talanoaga* in which this study is based.

This research fuses two models of research. One on the sociological tradition and another based in the Samoan worldview. The sociological discipline provides the framework to study human social relationships and institutions that add to the development of human societies. Sociological studies require specific questions for data collection that attempts to provide answers for the research objectives (Nisbet, 1993). The Samoan approach to knowledge, on the other hand, involves understanding reciprocal relationships and cultural protocols that are in most cases verbally communicated. The combination of these two research approaches allowed me to move between these epistemological conventions and adopt both insider and outsider approaches to the research processes and the data analysis and interpretation. My knowledge of *fa'a-sāmoa* provides me with an understanding of both cultural nuances and business issues that allow me to evaluate issues from both an insider and outsider position. As a Sāmoan-born person, raised and educated in both Samoa and New Zealand, I was able to view study issues from both a

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<sup>62</sup> Formal meeting of village leaders usually called on special occasions. Precedence are recited and both high chiefs and talking chiefs are present with the *aumaga* providing the *tautua* or services where and when required during the meeting.

Sāmoan and western research perspective. From this experience, I was able to conceptualise and relate to *fa'a-sāmoa* issues and business contexts, and understand the value this study would add to general knowledge about Samoan entrepreneurship. These skills were useful as they guided how I treated the participants, and their information, in terms of the ethical requirements for this research. The proverb '*ia seu le manu ae tagai i le galu*' forms the methodological approach of the study. It is effective in explaining and incorporating different cultural perspectives and disciplines pertinent to the themes of this research.

### **From an insider view**

The proverb '*ia seu le manu ae tagai i le galu*' is integral to maintaining relationships between myself, the participants and all stakeholders involved in this research. The proverb stresses that research relating to social interaction with Samoans, participants and other parties involved are underpinned by the notions of *fa'aāloālo* and *vā-feāloāloa'i*. Adherence to these principles will win respect and uphold one's integrity amongst one's peers, while on the other hand displaying ignorant behaviour will be met with displeasure and references to *leai se fa'aāloālo* or disrespectful behaviour. These principles are not taught, but are learned from experiences early in life, from ones upbringing in the family and the community (Mulitalo et. al., 2005).

From an insider perspective, the researcher with a knowledge of the researched community has influence on the information and who, also may utilise such knowledge according to their research objectives. Researchers therefore are in a privileged position when constructing and carrying out qualitative research or any research whereby, neutrality in dissecting and analysing the data is of utmost important (Newman & Benz, 1998). While outsider researchers' closeness to the participant's lives and their world provides an advantage that outsider researchers do not have. They are also given the responsibility of a proper examination of the research issues that must be reported with integrity and in a professional manner (Tang, 2007). In a similar vein, Kanuha (2002) points out that because of the comfortable and familiar relationships the researchers sometime develop with participants; it places more responsibilities on the researcher to treat the information and data in a professional manner.

This is also relevant in Samoan and Pacific research methodologies which value the importance of relationships between the researched and researchers. While there are no specific set methodologies for Pacific research that would achieve one specific result, developing a balance in the context of knowledge construction through *talanoaga*<sup>63</sup> is the preferable way and one that would better achieve an understanding of research issues (Vaiotele, 2006). This being the case, subtle differences also exist between Samoan and Pacific cultures, especially where lived-in realities and subtle differences exist in communities like those of Tongans, Maori, Fijians and others (Macpherson and Macpherson, 2011).

Despite this, Vaiotele claimed that Pacific researchers, when embarking on knowledge creation amongst participants from their own communities, must follow western research methods for their specific projects. Doing so would allow them to adopt a balance in research methods that also acts as a check point for those who become too comfortable with knowledge of their own cultures, especially when loyalty, reciprocal relations, cultural obligations through religion, family and communities are required to be balanced with the research outcomes (Vaiotele, 2006). In this sense the *talanoaga*<sup>64</sup>, is a way that provides the opportunities for those involved in the research process to probe, challenge, clarify and realign the objectives of a topic that is discussed. An invitation to be involved in a *talanoaga* also promotes inclusiveness that, from a collective perspective increases approval and promotes a wider awareness of the important issues.

This recognition also gives rise to *vā-feāloāloa'i* between those who are involved in the consultation process which goes a long way in developing good relationships that are useful for future deliberation. This notion underpins the methodological approach I use for this study. Not one Samoan can know or grasp fully all of Samoan 'culture'. What we know of Samoan culture and language reflects where, when, and by whom we were raised as well as those with whom we have interacted with in life. I was well aware of the limitations of my knowledge in cultural matters and social relationships, which drove me to engage more with elders, the *mātai*, and those knowledgeable about *fa'a-sāmoa*.

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<sup>63</sup> A conversation, which in Samoan means both an informal and formal meeting to discuss important issues

<sup>64</sup> Talanoa and Talanoaga are used interchangeably in this research to mean a conversation both formal and informal. Yet their applications differ in context from one Pacific culture to another. Talanoaga in Samoa are used in this study as formal meetings where proper consultation, essence, processes of addressing participants and *fa'a-sāmoa* protocols applied.

Continuous engagement with cultural elders went a long way in supporting this study, especially where understanding different aspects of culture was required for different aspects of the study. As a *mātai*, I was also able to engage with Samoan elders in cultural deliberations, in oratory, gauging their respect and trust when sharing cultural matters relating to this research and *fa'a-sāmoa* in general.

To augment my understanding of those areas of Samoan culture in which I felt the greatest need, I enlisted the help of the elders and *mātai* from the *Mālofie* Association<sup>65</sup> based in South Auckland. As a group, members learned oratory and the language used in social deliberation in formal situations where culture was practiced. The advice and counsel of elders underpins the way I related to both Samoan participants throughout the research, and the ways in which I interpreted their commentary. I was aware of many of the expectations around protocols and communication the Samoan participants would bring and of the cultural values expected to this research. These issues were however, discussed and refined on many occasions with the *Mālofie* elders in a series of *talanoāga*. In some cases, discussions with the older members, who were in effect my cultural advisors, confirmed my understandings of specific cultural and oratory, and in others, they extended and refined my knowledge of other issues of *fa'a-sāmoa*. The advice I received from these advisors reinforced and expanded my knowledge of issues of *fa'a-sāmoa* in situations where there was community involvement, the central ones being the principles of *fa'aaloalo* and *vā-fealoalo'i*.

In essence, *fa'aaloalo* and *vā-fealoalo'i* equally applied to participants and all stakeholders from outside the Samoan community who were involved in this research in different capacities. These values shaped the language used in the introductions and the formalities involved in conversations held with different participants. Introducing and conversing with a *mātai* for example involves formally addressing one's *mātai* title and understanding the nuances of formal and informal exchanges occurring during the conversation. Talking to all participants, for instance requires formal language. Any exchanges on sensitive issues need to be expressed in an unbiased manner.

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<sup>65</sup> An organisation of Samoans elders and *mātai*, both men and women, who have received the traditional *pe'a* (tattoo for men) and *malu* (tattoo for females) who gather for the practices of Samoan culture and traditions.



The notion of *fa'aaloalo* also relates to reciprocation of the *ālofa* shown, in this instance in their willingness to assist which may be reciprocated in ways relevant to the occasions and the manner in which they were given. The adage '*ave le fa'aaloalo i lē e tatau i ai le fa'aaloalo*'<sup>66</sup> dictates that respect must be given to whom and wherever it is due. This refers to the idea that one must be aware of the respect accorded in different relationships between *mātai* and the authority existing in a gerontocracy; authority that must be acknowledged. These protocols guided the approach I took throughout the project in addressing and communicating with people at every level of this study.

### **An outsider view**

In this section, I use the outsider view to refer to another approach that also shaped this project. My experiences as a Samoan entrepreneur in New Zealand, and as a social science student carrying out this project within a university setting, imposes other forms of constraint in the way I approached the design, collection of data and interpretation of information. The sociological strand relates to questions about certain facts that researchers would be interested in knowing. This also reflects how we go about knowing and acknowledging specific things that relate to our topic of study and how judgements are made about what counts as legitimate knowledge and about those things or knowledge we discover about others (Davidson & Tolich, 2003). The outsider approach also means that I had to take a western and a rational approach when viewing ideas about dealing with people and research outcomes. Taking this position required me to set aside my experiences regarding the ways the family, church and community had influenced the management and performance of the businesses I had owned. I needed to be entirely open to participants' accounts of their experience in business situations. It also required me to be professional in handling sensitive topics relating to the participant's stories, their successes and failures, always being mindful of the ethical issues involved throughout this study.

The institutional strand required me to apply and meet the university's ethical requirements of research that involves human subjects. This meant that I was required to provide information about the project's goals, procedures and governance, and to seek

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<sup>66</sup> Give respect to whom it is due. Used mainly in the abstract as a reminder to respect and acknowledge high chiefs, those in authority and political hierarchies when present in occasions.

informed consent to participate in the project on certain defined terms with potential participants (see Appendix D). I was well aware of the importance of these processes and the need for these to be communicated clearly to the participants in a manner that they understand. This approach requires me to acknowledge a range of factors, which shape a variety of participants' insights into how family, religion, community and the regulatory environment influenced the management of their businesses. While it would have been relatively simple to approach people whom I know, and with whom I share similar social and business backgrounds, this would have produced a profile of how one subset of entrepreneurs are influenced by these cultural variables, which would likely produce a distorted view of the range of styles of business management within the Samoan population. Such an approach could have suggested a degree of homogeneity that is not actually present nor represent Samoan entrepreneurs and entrepreneurialism.

To help ensure a broad sample, this required the selection of men and women entrepreneurs, especially those who are embedded at different levels of *fa'a-sāmoa*. This include entrepreneurs born, raised and educated in both Samoa and New Zealand; those with different levels of education and religious commitment; those with different kinds of business experience, as well as entrepreneurs who operate different types of businesses in the New Zealand business environment. A male *mātai* for example, with limited formal education, operating a one-person lawn mowing service or a taxi business may seem to have little in common with an untitled female Samoan, born and educated in New Zealand and operating a legal practice. Furthermore, comparing study issues for both New Zealand Samoan entrepreneurs and Samoan entrepreneurs who operate businesses in Samoa<sup>67</sup> also required that their stories provide a comparative view of issues of how business operate and survive in both the migrant and village settings. However, only by including a wide variety of characteristics within the sample could the research establish how much or little they have in common and the extent to which culture influences their business activities. Equally important is the inclusion of entrepreneurs with a range of backgrounds so the project could establish how their embeddedness in *fa'a-sāmoa* shaped their business practices.

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<sup>67</sup> Three case studies are used (refer chapter 7) to reflect the experiences of Samoan entrepreneurs in the Samoa settings

In combining insider and outsider approaches in this study, I looked for an approach that would yield good data given freely and openly by participants who wanted to participate and which would answer the question of how family, religion, community and the business environment influenced the practices of Samoan enterprises. My own business experience of the institutional, structural, and legal responsibilities of the New Zealand business environment provided me with some insight as to how an outsider perspective may provide other explanations of the effects of such factors on businesses. In adopting these two approaches, I was guided by the proverb - '*ia seu le manu ae taga'i i le galu*' - and the references to protocols it provides to ensure that all of the requirements for this undertaking are put in place before the study starts. A successful outcome, in gathering food or knowledge, requires that as many of the obstacles as can be foreseen and anticipated are to be taken into account. It also follows that good and fair research methods would incorporate and integrate the insider and outside perspectives to balance different views (Lett, 1990).

### **Use of language**

This approach extends to the use of the Samoan language in research interactions during the interviews. While some participants preferred to use Samoan because they could express themselves more freely, others preferred to use either English, or a mixture of English and Samoan. I made the initial approaches in formal Samoan for all the participants, which both validated my position as an insider by showing respect to all the participants (Hayfield & Huxley, 2014). In this sense, my knowledge of colloquial and formal Samoan enabled me to clarify the participants' responses to my initial overtures in formal Samoan.

I invited participants to use the language of their choice, both for clarification of research issues and because it simply made more sense for the purposes of robust research to get the best possible accounts of their experiences, something that is more likely when given the freedom to express themselves in the language they are most comfortable with. This was not, after all, a test of cultural and linguistic competence, but rather observing the *fa'aaloalo* and *vā-fe'aloalo'í* that *fa'a-sāmoa* dictates for all social interaction irrespective of the status of those involved. In most of these exchanges, a mixture of English and Samoan was used as we became comfortable in discussing the issues.

Interaction with participants, however, is about more than language. The researcher must balance the requirements of the study with respect to the needs and status of the participants. This started with a formal call in Samoan for a *talanoaga* with prospective participants. The use of the *talanoaga* in this research was formal. *Talanoaga* means *talanoa* or just a normal talk and *aga* to mean facing towards people others who are enjoined in those conversing. *Aga* is also translated as a way of doing things in which case it procures formal attention to the importance of the topics discussed. *Talanoaga* in most cases, are formally announced through various ways, where topics discussed develop anticipation and relevance amongst those participating. A *talanoaga* in action acknowledge precedents of structures, levels and status of those attending.

Vaiioleti noted (2006, p. 22), that when carrying out research in the Pacific community, participants could ‘behave differently depending on the status, age, gender and cultural rank of the researcher’ which could affect the results of the research. This point is relevant for this research also, where I dealt with different Samoan participants including those who were *mātai*, female, and those older than I was. The *talanoaga* with *mātai* participants for example involved my acknowledging their *mātai* status and title precedence<sup>68</sup> to show respect and the importance of the relationships. The *mātai* is entitled to respect and a degree of deference from a person without a title, even when the latter may be better educated, well-off or in prominent official capacity (Macpherson and Macpherson, 2009; Meleisea, 1987). The importance of *mātai* titles also varies and the holder of a higher or more significant title is entitled to deference from the holder of a less significant one, even when the latter is better educated. For other untitled participants, greetings like *lau susuga*<sup>69</sup> provided a respectful platform on which warm and professional relationships could be developed. The values of *fa’aāloālo* and *vā-feāloāloa’i* recognise and acknowledge the status, ages and gender of those involved in any given interaction (Macpherson and Macpherson, 2009; Va’a, 2001).

Gender relations are another significant dimension in Samoan society where there are certain forms of address and language that are not possible in mixed gatherings. This is further complicated by the fact that relationships between men and women of different

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<sup>68</sup> Expression and recognition of chiefly titles and their genealogical origins

<sup>69</sup> A respectful form of address for *ali’i* or high chiefs

ages, and ranks are acknowledged in the various forms of address and language (Mulitalo et al., 2005). Thus, there are certain areas in which men simply cannot probe. Communication between men and women take place with very carefully chosen language. Respect shown through the choice of language must be exercised in all interactions to maintain working relationships and to have females share information with a male researcher, something essential to the research project. If these expectations, embodied in the ideas of *fa'aāloālo* and *vā-feāloāloa'i*, are not met, people may feel that they have been denied appropriate respect and simply end a discussion. Failure to acknowledge these conventions in the early stages of an interaction may lead people to avoid further participation in the project. People who are not given the respect may also make it clear that one who cannot understand the basics of Samoan social etiquette and protocol could not understand the nuances and the abstract meanings of the deliberations.

## **4.2 Ethical approval process**

Ethics refer to rules that guide the behavior of researchers in what is acceptable within a specific profession (O'Leary, 2010). This research received ethical approval from the Massey University Humans Ethics Committee as part of the conditions of carrying out research in ethnic communities. As well ensuring that integrity and ethical behavior are carried out in research in communities that are different from mainstream societies such research must also not doing harm to those been researched (Cresswell, 2012).

While ethical approval is mandatory in most research carried out in New Zealand universities and other research institutions, such requirements are important in terms of managing institutional risks and reputation (Allen, 2008). Even more important are the safeguarding of the rights of participants in a given study (O'Leary, 2010). In this sense, Massey University requires doctoral research to have ethics approval. This assures that the information is used for the purposes for which it was collected. It is also primarily about no harm to the people and communities being researched. When conducting fieldwork in cultural communities, for example, open and honest behavior are expected of the researchers (Scheyvens, Nowak, & Scheyvens, 2003).

This research required information from Samoan entrepreneurs of different statuses, ages, and genders. Ethics approval was required for this study, including the filing of a Massey University 'Humans Ethics Approval Application' (Appendix C). This is especially important where the research involves the safety and security of participants and their private information. Requirements of a professional code of ethics include the issue of informed consent from the participants that based on their understanding of the purposes of the research and its outcomes. This requires that participants are not forced, nor coerced, into agreeing to participate in the research and that they are competent in their intellectual capacity to participate. It also includes safeguarding the participants from emotional, physical and psychological harm because of unplanned consequences emanating from the research. Furthermore, the researchers must protect the identity of the participants whereby they safeguard the data and information collected (O'Leary, 2010). On the other hand, researchers must declare any conflicts of interest in using the information since they are in a position of trust (Scheyvens, Nowak, & Scheyvens, 2003). Additionally, as the consent process is ongoing, there is a need for continuous deliberation and liaising with participants at different stages of the research (Stewart-Withers, 2014).

As this study adopted the above protocols as guidance for managing cultural issues when contacting participants, I was also mindful of the expectations of different stakeholders, especially in situations where this study was engaged with the notions of 'studying down' (studying those much less privileged) and also 'studying up' (those more privileged) (Scheyvens, Nowak, & Scheyvens, 2003, p.140). This involves producing safe research processes and procedures where both researchers and the researched are not put in harm's way. All participants signed Information Sheets and the Participant consent forms (Appendix B & G) about the objectives of the study. Great effort was made to ensure that the respondents did not feel coerced into participating in the research. The participants were informed of their rights including the right to discontinue the interview at any time and the right to refuse to answer any particular question. As a result, all the participants decided to participate and continue with the research interviews, with all agreeing to their interviews recorded.

Although the interview schedule (Appendix F) was in English, there were times when some participants clarified themes and study issues in Samoan. English was the preferred language for communication for all the participants to convey their stories. As a fluent

Samoan speaker, I was able to translate the documents with advice from my supervisors to clarify any sensitive materials relating to Samoan protocols especially in relation to the security of the information and assuring participants of the confidentiality of their information. Furthermore, all interview schedules and copies of data material were presented to both my supervisors for review. Back-up copies of these interviews were stored in an external hard drive locked up at an office at Massey University where I worked. Soft copies of these were also kept by me with others sent to my university colleagues for back up should they be misplaced or lost.

### **4.3 Research Process**

#### **Qualitative approach**

Qualitative research can involve the use of a variety of empirical techniques-like those of the case study, personal experience, life story, interviews, observation, and visual texts (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Furthermore, qualitative research contains descriptions of situations where people interact, the events in which they partake, their attitudes, their behaviour, their experiences are documented and analysed for research (Patton, 1990). Equally relevant are the use of these methods for developing in depth understanding of the contexts and issues about certain communities being studied (Denzin & Lincoln, 2002). The uniqueness of each participant or other lived experiences reflect fundamental meanings amongst their stories, which the researcher can learn through discovering themes that are revealed as these analysis are reviewed over (O'Leary, 2010).

The goals for this research required me to clarify the issues relating to how the Samoan family, church, community and the New Zealand business environment influenced Samoan businesses. In this sense, I was seeking out those entrepreneurs with experiences of these social Samoan institutions and were willing to participate as well as to have a representation of different entrepreneurs and whether these issues are the same amongst them (Creswell, 2012; O'Leary, 2010). A common qualitative research method, face-to-face interviews are used in this research with carefully chosen Samoan entrepreneurs. This approach was favoured as it can provide more useful information about the entrepreneurs than a survey of a larger number of randomly chosen business operators (Maxwell, 2005). Using this approach would further clarify issues about the beliefs and

practices of a specific community been studied and in this case Samoan entrepreneurs (Davidson & Tolich, 1999).

Research carried out in the Samoan community pointed to the importance of community values and reciprocal relationships. In Samoan culture, the use of *fa'afaletui* or the weaving together of knowledge alludes to the importance of exchanging cultural knowledge and advice in important matters (Fa'alau, 2011). These, are formal matters that involved advisors with spiritual and cultural expertise in specific situations that affect management issues of a polity. In essence, it requires that issues are discussed in private and respectfully (Mulitalo, Menon & Tofilau, 2005). In terms of research, these are relevant for formal discussions and data gathering where the issues can be expanded (Tamasese, 2008). The use of the *talanoaga* concept also relates to cultural protocols that govern relationships in Samoan society. These must be initiated in a friendly way, professional and be culturally sensitive. Relative to these are guidelines promoted by the Health Research Council (2005) that promote ethical behaviour in research outputs in Pacific communities.

The qualitative approach also fits well with the notion of *fa'aāloālo* and *vā-feāloāloa'i*, that allow personal relations to be judged on different levels. In this sense, although I had been an entrepreneur for many years, I had to set aside my personal opinions and accept that other entrepreneurs' experiences might differ from my own. This research provides for me more learning that helps me understand factors that produce the variations amongst the entrepreneurs. This decision reflects a disciplinary preference for speaking in depth with a smaller number of participants to identify some parameters in an exploratory study of Samoan culture and business issues. It also fits well with Samoan cultural preference for revealing information only to those with whom one has established a personal relationship. The adage '*ia seu le manu ae taga'i i le galu*' is used here to engage those with knowledge of these relationships and how *fa'aāloālo* and *vā-feāloāloa'i* are reflected in those relationships. This allowed me to balance both Samoan cultural perspectives and obligations with the institutional processes relating to this study. This provided further boundaries and strategies that allowed me to conduct research according to the objectives of this study.



### **The consultation process**

The first contacts made with all of the entrepreneurs were organised by phone. These conversations were followed-up by emails that proved to be the most convenient in contacting participants. The first meetings were simply an opportunity to make contact. Further appointments were then organised to discuss research objectives. The research issues were discussed with five of the entrepreneurs during our first meeting because we knew each other well. In this situation, the research issues became the points of conversation, where there was a mixture of formal and informal exchanges, yet acknowledging the *fa'aaloalo* and *vā-fe'aloaloa'i* values. I formally introduced other participants, whom I was not familiar in Samoan, which helped break the ice and further develop trust.

### **Pilot study**

The purpose of the pilot study was to help refine and further develop the research questions and methods of the study. I used it to test whether the questions I had earlier designed would yield the answers and relevant information the study was seeking. This information allowed me to clarify the study themes and where these were not achieved, the questions were re-designed to meet the study objectives. Question 7, in Section 3 (Appendix F) was changed from an open ended to a closed question in order to clarify the numbers and types of employees each business employed. Question 16 of the same section was also changed in order to receive an expansive answer.

In developing the study questions, I set out to investigate success factors for Samoan entrepreneurship and the type of businesses they operate. To achieve these goals it was important to identify the different characteristics of the entrepreneurs such as their gender, place of birth, age, *mātai* status and education levels. These characteristics are in the interview schedule (Appendix F). The schedule contained the four main areas of the study, focusing on specific themes and the variables. The questionnaire first introduces the study in terms of the confidentiality of the participant's information, the purpose of the study, and the rationale behind it, as well as the language to be used in conducting the study and agreements as to the recording and security of the information.

The Second Section (Appendix F) involves the participants' demographic characteristics and family history and factors relating to starting a business. This section includes

questions about gender, age, place of birth, where they grew up, levels of formal education, their cultural status, and their business history. Understanding these factors may help to understand the entrepreneurs' relationship to *fa'a-sāmoa* and their approach to business. The Third Section covers the participants' business profiles and aims to find out how social-cultural and structural factors of the New Zealand business environment affect Samoan businesses. The participants' stories were important because they reflect their experiences with the social, political and businesses factors and how they respond to these elements over time. The Fourth Section outlines personal social networks that contain questions relating to the influence of family, religion and community on the business. These important issues help to explain the influence of Samoan institutions on the entrepreneurs, in particular on their businesses, and the viability of their enterprises. These are also important as they relate to and are comparable with the themes in the literature. The Fifth Section includes a set of questions relating to the participant's expectations of the community in relation to Samoan entrepreneurs in general. It examines how different values impact on understanding the role entrepreneurship plays in the community.

In addition, the pilot helps to provide direction about whether the study is connected to the proposed theoretical framework and whether the methodology used is relevant (O'Leary, 2010). The process also involved the preparation and translation of forms required by the Ethics Committee as well as becoming familiar with the mechanics of the audio recording of the conversations. Great care was given to the trialing, review, and refinement processes to reduce the risk of errors and to gain confidence in the interviewing process. I also realized the importance of the administrative processes by double-checking and reviewing the Information Sheet (Appendix B) that clarifies the purpose of the research, the Study Consent Forms (Appendix G) required approval from participants, and the Interview Questionnaire Form (Appendix F).

Three participants were interviewed for the pilot study. I had attended university with two of them, while the third participant and I share membership in a sports club. These participants were professional males who operated businesses and lived in the Auckland area. I contacted these participants in person and organised individual meetings, with each one, that took place in their respective offices. All three participants were *mātai*, whom I addressed formally in accordance with Samoan protocols. It was important to

acknowledge these formalities to show respect as expected for Samoans in such a situation. It was also as an expression of appreciation for making themselves available as well as to emphasize the importance of my research topic.

The pilot interviews were very positive. It produced large amounts of data. Some of the information collected was outside the realm of the study, but much of it provided meanings that were useful in further expanding and clarifying study issues. My familiarity with the participants created a friendly environment that was in a way positive and helpful in attaining information. However, I learned from the pilot study that although I prepared the questions in a sequence that I would have liked the data collection to be organised, the results however did not fit my expectations. Being in a *talanoaga* required me to be more patient and adhere to cultural protocols even when this meant ignoring my planned interview sequence. However, in later interviews, I realized that it was rewarding to probe, it made participants more relaxed, and in the end, more information came from this type of interview. This exercise improved the way I asked the questions for certain issues. It allowed me to polish the form and sequence of interview questions and improve my interviewing and recording techniques. I found that some questions were repetitive in some sections, especially for some of the themes relating to family, religion and community.

### **Recruitment of participants**

The research objectives required particular types of participants. The participants were grouped into three categories (Table 2): (a) those born and partially educated in Samoa and migrated to New Zealand (1<sup>st</sup> generation); (b) those born in Samoa but raised and educated in New Zealand (between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> -1.5- migrant generation); and (c) those born in and educated in New Zealand (2<sup>nd</sup> generation) (also see Chapter 1). I needed to explore these three groups because they likely reflected different degrees of embeddedness in *fa'a-sāmoa*, as well as different levels of business experience. Twenty-one participants were selected for the study. It was hoped that within the above three categories of entrepreneurs, the number of entrepreneurs recruited would cover businesses in different industries and to have a sample that included a variety of businesses and management styles amongst the entrepreneurs.

**Table 2: Characteristics of the participants.**

Gender	Birth Place	Generation Status	Age	Average Number of Employees by Age-group	Matai Status	Average Years in Business	Economic Sector Participation	Education	Church Involvement	Community Involvement
Males 15 (71%)	Samoaan Born 17 (81%)	1 <sup>st</sup> Generation 11 (52%)	30-40yrs 7 (33%)	30-40yrs 65 (9 average employees)	11 (52%) matai	30-40yrs 44 (6yrs)	Service 20 (95%)	University 8 (38%)	Not involve 1 (5%)	Not Involved 8 (38%)
Females 6 (29%)	NZ Born 3 (14%)	1.5 Generation 7 (33%)	41-50 yrs 5(23%)	41-50yrs 97 (19.4 average employees)	10 (48%) Not matai	41-50yrs 13 (6yrs)	Manufacture 1 (5%)	Technical 6 (29%)	Involved 20 (95%)	Involved 10 (48%)
	Fiji 1 (5%)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Generation 3(14%)	51-70yrs 9 (43%)	51-70yrs 96 (11 average)		51-70yrs 180 (20yrs)		School 7 (33%)		Sometime Involve 3 (14%)

The majority of the participants were from my networks of business friends, their associates, and from family within the Auckland Samoan community. I consulted business associates at the start of the participant selection process to identify the relevant participants, especially those born and partly educated in Samoa, and those born and who fitted the different types of entrepreneurs and businesses required for the data collection. Additional referrals from participants' business networks of colleagues were also available in case the selected participants were not available at any stage of the data collection. This was very useful, as this saved time and minimised the cost of looking for new participants. Using this snowballing technique (Scheyvens & Storey, 2003) allowed me to choose from a variety of participants to contact and confirm their participation.

### **Semi-structured interviews**

Face to face interviews were carried out with all of the participants. I started with a defined plan of questions based on study themes. However as the interviews progressed a flexible structure developed which allowed a flowing conversation with the participants. I adopted this style as I progressed in order that a full and expansive set of data would emerge that would give more options for data analysis (O'Leary, 2010). During the interviews, formal

greetings in Samoan expressed cultural protocols that applied when dealing with participants of different status. This involves cases where participants are *mātai* and/or women and where respectful addresses and greetings are expected. All 21 interviews were conducted in both Samoan and English, which was relevant for all participants who were fluent in both languages.

Interviewing is a data collection technique for obtaining information that is difficult to collect by observation (Patton, 1990). This study used a semi-structured interview method for data collection. A questionnaire was used to guide the interviews and although the process starts with a defined question schedule (Appendix F), it expands to take on the form of a one on one conversation with the participants (O’Leary, 2010). This allows freer conversations with the participants on the main points of the study and can help to clarify sensitive cultural and business issues for participants (Merriam, 1988). While this allows the researcher to focus on the interview content and interviewees’ responses, the method also allows for probing and can encourage the participants to share more of their understandings, beliefs and their experiences (Guest, Namey & Mitchell, 2013). In this way, the experiences of the participants are discussed in a trusting manner, which can further clarify the study questions and research issues. Another advantage of semi-structured interviews is that they would likely yield more information than would be the case with a simple set of fully structured questions (Maxwell, 2005).

Seventeen of the interviews took place at the participants’ place of work and four carried out at the participant’s residence. Interviews held at the place of business occurred at convenient times suggested by the participants with interviews took place at the participants’ residences were organised for after work hours. Despite the different locations, Samoan protocols of *fa’aaloalo* and the *vā-fe’aloalo’i* were maintained at all times during the interviews and contact with the entrepreneurs. While some interviews took longer especially the first three that lasted for 2 hours each as I was trying to familiarise myself with the interview schedules and the level of information required for the themes. Other interviews were shortened to hour long as I started to develop an effective way of interviewing and attaining the required information. This also allowed for a free-flowing interviewing.

## **4.4 Data analysis**

The themes that emerged from the interviews are fundamental to the study analysis. Translating the data involves the process of organizing the raw data from the interviews, and then coding these into themes from which conclusions are drawn. Dealing with these themes are also helpful in answering the research questions (Chapter 1) that would lead to more insights and understanding of the conceptual framework of (mixed embeddedness) used in this research. Research questions (Appendix F), for example, provide a benchmark and give directions towards which the researcher audits the research process to achieve results (O’Leary, 2010).

### **Transcripts and transcribing**

I sought approval for recording the interviews from each participants. These interviews were all recorded using a digital recorder. I transcribed and translated all the interviews straight after their completion. These transcripts were handed to my supervisors for review. Copies of these interviews, both in hard and soft copies, were stored in a locked office at Massey University (Albany) where I was working. Where some issues were not clear on the transcripts, I referred back to discussions and notes I made during the interviews to confirm the main points and themes. This process was repeated which allowed me to understand the themes from each participant’s story, a process that became very handy in the data analysis phase. Numbers were used to identify each participant’s transcripts (Appendix D), instead of using their names, to safeguard privacy.

### **Thematic analysis**

As an inductive method, thematic analysis begins with organizing and viewing the data files. Braun and Clarke (2006) argued that for social research, the data interpretation must be relevant and consistent with the study framework. By repeatedly reviewing the texts and the interviews one would pick up meanings and ideas that are developed into categories for data analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Rice and Ezzy (1999) also alluded to the idea that the researcher is required to read and reread the transcripts extensively to identify themes in the data. Similarly, O’Leary (2010) noted that this process begins right from the start of the data collection, analysis and completed with writing the conclusions. A step by step analysis on the other hand is suggested by Glaser (1992) claiming an open

and selective system of coding where the researcher puts themes into categories that must be revised and clarified for final analysis.

In this study, I used the four tier coding system put forward by Braun and Clarke (2006) where the researcher first becomes familiar with the data; secondly develops codes for themes; thirdly engages in identifying, naming, labelling and relabeling themes and then finally writes up the findings. While thematic analysis leans more towards theory development from data coding, an inductive process, using the above system is relevant in this study as I went into it with existing study questions (see the introduction to this chapter). Secondly, this study uses the existing framework, namely mixed embeddedness, as proposed by Kloosterman and Rath (2001) and therefore specific themes were sought to analyse study aims. While the process proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) may be sound straight forward, O’Leary claimed that in qualitative research, the researcher must still find interconnections, develop themes and build theories’ (2010, p, 263).

During my first round of analyzing of the data, I read the manuscripts generally to familiarize myself with the participant’s stories. The more I went into this process the more the themes became clearer. By doing this, I found that that some of the data were overlapping which was good for expanding meanings and the analysis of the study issues. This was also important in order to gauge multiple meanings in the texts and how these could be expanded into emerging themes either for the current or future study. The process involves paying attention to patterns relating to main issues that were sometimes scattered in other sections of the interviews. Notes and reviews from my discussions with the participants after the interviews were also very helpful as these clarified the themes of each interview. The assessment of these themes allowed me to develop a typology of the variety and types of Samoan entrepreneurship.

#### **4.5 Limitations and weaknesses**

Limitations exist in any type of social research and in all methods of data collection. This research has its own particular limitations. There were only 21 participants selected for this study. Fifteen were men and six were females with different characteristics that range from both New Zealand and Samoan birthplaces, different levels of education, varying

generations and with a variety of different business experiences. The participants were only interviewed once which yielded sufficient data and information for theme analysis. There were no follow up interviews although there was access to the the participants for clarification and confirmation of any of the issues. There were time lapses between interviews and analysis of study results in which some of the participants circumstances and experiences may have changed. The variations amongst the participants were essential to provide a better examination of themes, it was however hard to know the extent to which this group constitutes a reasonable representation of the variety of Samoan entrepreneurs. The variety of characteristics amongst the respondents allow for comparative analysis of research issues surrounding other ethnic entrepreneurs in New Zealand. Nevertheless, the study could have allowed for more female entrepreneurs especially those those Samoan born and educated in Samoa, who migrated to New Zealand in their adult lives operating businesses (1<sup>st</sup> generation entrepreneurs), those born and raised in Samoa who were educated in both Samoa and New Zealand (1.5 generation) and the New Zealand born-educated entrepreneurs (2<sup>nd</sup> generation). As all of the entrepreneurs were chosen from the Auckland region, the sample used cannot be construed as representative of all Samoan entrepreneurs from across New Zealand that would have allowed for a wider comparative analysis of business conditions that represent Samoan entrepreneurship as a whole. The participants were selected from both my network of entrepreneur friends and from the wider Samoan community and therefore may not represent as wide a range of professional backgrounds that would support themes analysis. Furthermore, the management experiences of entrepreneurs and the different opportunities existing in other regional areas would expand the scope of the study. The differences in experiences of entrepreneurs from other regional areas would be relevant to future studies in terms of the influence on the younger generations of New Zealand born Samoan and of new migrant entrepreneurs.

## **4.6 Summary**

This chapter set out the research process of the study. The Samoan proverb '*ia seu le manu ae taga'i i le galu*', guided the methodological approach. The use of an insiders and outsiders perspectives emphasised the importance of balancing institutional requirements and Samoan protocols when carrying out research in the Samoan community that reflect



traditional research cannons and Samoan worldviews. Using the qualitative approach and semi-structured interviews and relating these to the literature helped in exploring the research questions of this study. The following four chapters will explore and analyse the data from the 21 participants on the issues relating to family, religion, community and the business environment.

# CHAPTER FIVE: FAMILY

## Introduction

This chapter discusses the influence of the family in the management of Samoan businesses in New Zealand. The role of the family in the migrant community has changed compared to that of the family in traditional Samoan society. These changes may have been the result of diverse lifestyles, new identities and worldviews prevalent in the migrant environment. For Samoan entrepreneurs, the migrant context provides the economic, political and social realities that allow them to deconstruct traditional Samoan values that further shape their views of the family, particularly when pressured with business responsibilities. The entrepreneurs were born, raised in different places and their views of family reflect the ways in which their different social worlds influence their lives and businesses. This chapter demonstrates how changes to the traditional structures of the Samoan family are influenced by the social spaces, demographic, population transformations, and business opportunities that entrepreneurs have to manage.

This chapter has five sections. Section 1 provides an overview of the nature of the family for ethnic entrepreneurs and its role in the development of their businesses. It examines the changing nature of the family in both Samoan society and the New Zealand migrant environment and how Samoan entrepreneurs manage these changes in the course of running their businesses. Section 2 explores the family, its role in business and the reasons why entrepreneurs employ family members. The chapter looks at why some entrepreneurs choose not to employ relatives and the extent to which business owners do choose to employ family in certain circumstances. Section 3 explores alternatives entrepreneurs use in supporting kin and family, other than employment. Section 4 provides a discussion of how the family has been transformed in the migrant setting and how these influence Samoan entrepreneurship. Section 5 concludes the chapter.

## 5.1 The Family and ethnic entrepreneurship

In this chapter, the concept of family as defined in the literature on ethnic entrepreneurship is compared with what family or *aiga*<sup>70</sup> means in Samoan society. International literature on ethnic entrepreneurship points to the significance of family as a social and economic resource that support ethnic businesses (Sorenson, 2011). According to Light and Rosenstein (1975), ethnic businesses benefit from family support through the cheap, loyal and easily recruited labour of kin. Some of the early research noted the role of the family in different immigrant communities as an important economic unit amongst immigrant groups. Within the community, social ties connect people and their networks in both a formal and informal manner to facilitate information, opportunities and other resources that support ethnic businesses (Ellis, 2011). It is also through community and family ties that provide a high level of trust that promote business opportunities (Evers & Knight, 2008).

The family in most cases is a source of financial resources and employees for ethnic businesses (Light & Bonacich, 1991). In her work on Indian entrepreneurs in Portugal, Oliveira (2007) claimed that entrepreneurial options available for this group were supported from the resources made available within the family. The Chinese in Chicago also drew on their familial and co-ethnic labour as a resource to initiate, finance and sustain entrepreneurial enterprises (Song, 1997; Waldinger et al., 1990). This was comparable to the Italians in London who operated restaurant and catering businesses that frequently sourced employees from pools of relatives (Boissevain, 1984). According to Iyer and Shapiro (1999), Italian businesses in Australia also rely on the family to provide convenient and low cost sources of support, especially labour (Collins, 2010, 2003). The same was found in the labour-intensive businesses of Korean immigrants in Los Angeles that rely heavily on unpaid family labour (Min, 1989). According to Boissevain (1984), it was the lure, and the willingness to operate independently and become their own boss that led Asian and Mediterranean business owners in the United Kingdom to work long hours and to engage family labour in the process. The family, which was associated mainly with economic support for immigrants' businesses in the international literature,

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<sup>70</sup> The family unit or kinship.

was typically a unit containing spouses, children, and other extended family members' (Lever-Tracy, et al. 1991).

The importance of family networks according to the literature is associated with the early development phase of ethnic businesses when other sources of cheap, loyal, easily recruited labour and capital are simply not available to the businesses (Light and Rossenstein, 1995). It reflects the fact that the use of family labour is cheaper and more compliant than non-family labour. Alternatively, it might have reflected some combination of both of these. As a backdrop to the material presented in this chapter, and to allow some comparisons to the role of the family outlined in the international literature, it is useful to explore some key features of the traditional Samoan family and the way its roles are changing in the migrant and influences on the business community.

### **The family in Sāmoan society**

As one of the main institutions that make up *fa'a-sāmoa*<sup>71</sup>, the family or *āiga* has been widely explored in sociological and anthropological accounts as one of the pillars of Samoan society (Macpherson and Macpherson, 2009). The *āiga* according to Meleiseā (1987) is made up of the nuclear and extended family and comprises all the descendants of a common ancestor or ancestress which included members who are blood related, through marriage, adoption and other connections. The centrality of the *āiga* in the community was vitally important in all aspects of an individual's life as it conferred rights and obligations on individuals including the right to physical, moral, financial support, and the prestige of association with a strong group (Macpherson and Macpherson, 2009). The whole *āiga* comprises a number of groupings called *pui-āiga* or core family groups, who serve a family's chief, provide and manage the family resources and perform roles for the family.

The *āiga* is the cornerstone of Samoan society and exerted influence in every Samoan's life. It provides the economic, social, religious and cultural contexts in which one's full existence is realised. One is born and one dies as a member of the kin group. The enduring social and personal significance of family is encapsulated in the adage; *O lou āiga lava e te tua iai*, or that in all of life's trials and tribulations, one's support system is the family.

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<sup>71</sup> Samoan customs, traditions and its institutions of *āiga*, *lotu* and *nu'u*

The relationship between individuals and their *āiga* in Samoan society is a reciprocal and lifelong arrangement. The individual serves the family and in return receives its blessings, protection and support. Although service to family may mean different things to different people, the belief is that blessings are bestowed on those who serve it without reservation. One's attachment to the *āiga* is ingrained in Samoan worldviews and is reflected in the social organisation of Samoan society (Macpherson and Macpherson, 2009).

From childhood, a Samoan is reminded regularly that his or her connections and obligations to the family are lifelong commitments. Family membership revolves around the values of *tausi-āiga*<sup>72</sup>; *tautua*<sup>73</sup>; *fa'aāloālo*<sup>74</sup>; *ālofa*<sup>75</sup>; *aganu'u*<sup>76</sup>, and *amio fa'atamāli'i*<sup>77</sup>. Members raised on these values are reminded of their importance in various ways and at different periods of their upbringing. The family rewards its members for their services, which in most cases awards them with positions of authority or *mātai* titles that give them respect and support in recognition of their service to the family<sup>78</sup>. While service to the family was once defined through *tautua* or physical labour, other means of supporting and enhancing the family's standing have become acceptable. This may now be through achieving a better education and attaining well-paid employment, becoming a top sports person or a politician or entering into commercial ventures all of which can provide prestige and other resources that support and enhance the family (Macpherson and Macpherson, 2000, Va'a, 2001).

Unsurprisingly, Samoans believe that, when a person achieves success in his or her career, whether in business, sports or education, it is the family's support and blessings that made the achievements possible. In this sense supporting family in social, economic and political occasions are forms of cultural investments that reflect a person's acknowledgement of its *fa'amanuiaga*<sup>79</sup>. Conversely, a person's failure to contribute to families' needs and to acknowledge its role in his or her success, may lead to a withdrawal

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<sup>72</sup> Serving family

<sup>73</sup> Service

<sup>74</sup> Respect

<sup>75</sup> Love

<sup>76</sup> Sāmoan culture and customs

<sup>77</sup> Aristocratic behaviour

<sup>78</sup> The entitlement to family titles are now awarded to women in certain circumstances. Service to family through financial support and in cases where there were no male descendants of specific titles to continue.

<sup>79</sup> Blessings

of a family's support and as a result, as some Samoans believe, doom one's efforts to failure.

### **The family and business in Samoan society.**

Traditionally, the economic significance of family derives from the fact that the benefits it provides its members are many and range from spiritual to the physical resources that its members rely on for their security. The most significant of these is the access to land rights where 'one gains these rights through as many as four grandparents and these sets of land rights allow people to choose to live in villages in which their family is well-led and where there is ample land to provide for their livelihood' (Macpherson and Macpherson, 2009 p,74). Such arrangements allow families to live together in clusters of households within the villages with which their family lands and chiefly titles are associated. While members routinely provide labour for each other for domestic tasks, agricultural and social activities, these relationships also expand to economic activities that support the mixed cash-subsistence economy that is common in villages (Macpherson and Macpherson, 2009). Families also share food, tools and other resources, which are part of the reciprocal arrangements that continually support community relationships.

As Samoans have moved into commerce, the model of family cooperation has extended into businesses of all sizes and types. Common amongst small businesses in Samoa are trade stores, workshops and fishing boats. These businesses usually start and operate in village settings where they draw on family labour, capital, land and other family resources. The profits from these ventures are distributed amongst family members or invested in other business projects (Macpherson & Macpherson, 2009). The intra-family cooperation may involve direct contributions of unpaid or under-priced labour in business and indirect contributions of services such as childcare provided by grandparents or close-knit relations to enable parents to invest more time in the business.

Macpherson and Macpherson (2009) stated that medium-sized businesses, such as taxi companies, may involve clusters of kin who own cars and routinely hire family to drive these cars to ensure that they are on the road as much as is possible and to increase the rate of return on their capital. Even some vertically integrated medium size businesses employ kin in all areas of the business. A commercial fishing company for instance uses

family members to catch, transport fish and run their fish cool store. Another example of this type of family involvement is found in medium-sized accommodation businesses such as the popular beach *fale* operations. These increasingly popular operations may use family land, and labour for both on and off-site operations including food gathering, preparation and serving, ground and building maintenance, entertainment and laundry.

Even larger commercially operated businesses in Samoa, owned by well-known families, routinely use family members as labour. Some of the most successful and profitable businesses<sup>80</sup> in Samoa have extended the family business model and now involve multiple businesses operated by siblings in different sectors of the economy, using family labour where possible. Expansion plans by one of these family owned hotel operators<sup>81</sup> to other parts of the Pacific, with a United States based international Hotel group, presents an example of the growth and value of family resources and support, for local start-up businesses. These large businesses acknowledge the importance of family, share business intelligence, extend low-cost finance from one family business to another and agree not to compete with one another in the same sector of the economy.

The attractions of using kin are that they are likely to be loyal, that they accept family discipline and are less likely to steal from the business because they derive various tangible benefits, such as wages and loans, and less tangible ones, such as socio-political status from association with a successful family business. Despite the connection to family and their expectations, business owners do have choices in terms of the employment of kin. While family members play different roles in business, in traditional Samoan community, these roles are specified around business responsibilities in New Zealand. The following section reflects on the different circumstances and the influences family imposes on businesses in the migrant setting.

## **5.2 The Samoan family in the migrant environment**

In New Zealand, the *aiga* or family has undergone many changes compared to its roles in traditional Samoa society. The migration process of the 60's and 70's, that shifted family

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<sup>80</sup> Some of the most successful businesses in Samoa who dominate trade are family businesses like Chan Mow, Aggie Greys and the Westerlunds.

<sup>81</sup> Aggie Greys hotel business is a family owned business that has expanded its business bases in Samoa and other Pacific Island locations with financial backing from a US-based Hotel Consortium.

members to New Zealand, saw the migrants bringing with them their village kin, social network affiliations and religion. Their migration was motivated by the creation of financial returns from their wage labour in New Zealand to support families and communities back home (Spoonley et al., 2004). The support of family in their original community changed when the first generation of migrants settled and started having their own families with children born in New Zealand. Such events lead to more changes in the structure and role of family as activities were increasingly directed to developing infrastructure required to support and sustain the Samoan community in New Zealand (Spoonley, 2001). As the Samoan community matures demographically, families and their New Zealand born generations have developed significant human and capital resources. Younger generations of family members with education and career prospects control both the cultural and capital resources in the migrant setting. They are less likely to rely on family authority and privilege that rewards one's position through genealogy and chiefly authority, unlike their kin in the home country (Macpherson & Macpherson, 2009). For the New Zealand born and younger migrant generations, who have been raised in the migrant environment, their definition of and association with the *āiga* and its traditional form, has changed. Their connections with their migrant parent's cultures and familial values have been reduced in different ways, with many unwilling to continue with financial contributions to the home country as their parents once did (Bedford, 2000).

The emergence of new identities in the migrant setting for the New Zealand born and recent migrant Samoans has been influenced by the socialisation process, education, intermarriage and their abilities to speak English; in some circumstances utilising their cultural competencies for their career advancements, and for some, for business opportunities (Macpherson, 2011). While the development of these new identities changed the dynamics of the Samoan community in New Zealand, their connections with their parents' homeland are still visible through their *āiga* relationships and responsibilities, although in many circumstance this connection is now by choice. For many Samoans in the migrant setting, service for family is achieved in different ways, like *fa'alavelave* that either encourages or minimizes their participation in *fa'a-sāmoa*. It is through these experiences that the New Zealand born are filtering elements of Samoan culture to form new distinctive identities in the migrant context (Macpherson, 1996). The new social, economic and political realities developing in the migrant setting has also



influenced other sections of the Samoan community, including entrepreneurship. The following section reflects on these challenges.

### **The family and business in the migrant Samoan community**

One of the key tasks for this section is to examine the extent to which the model of family outlined in the previous sections, is found in Samoan businesses in New Zealand. The remainder of this section presents the findings on these issues and, in particular, the extent to which Samoan entrepreneurs chose to employ, or not employ or sometimes employ family members in their businesses. The data suggest that business owners employ family in different ways, which reflects the fact that these businesses differ from one another in terms of services they provide, and the resources required to operate the business. While some business owners employ kin out of a sense of obligation and commitment to family, others do so in accordance with the requirements of their businesses.

Twenty-one Samoan entrepreneurs with different characteristics were selected for the study (Appendix D). The participants differ from each other in terms of their religious affiliation, *mātai* status, gender, place of birth, age, education, number of staff employed, duration of their business and the economic sector in which their business operate. Each participant was asked the following question: *Do you employ any relatives in your business?* This was done to ascertain their employment practices and their attitudes towards family labour. From the data, the patterns of family involvement in the entrepreneurs' businesses would lead to a discussion on employment of family members.

Of the 21 participants, 53% employed family, 14% indicated that they sometimes employed family and 33% did not. These figures indicate the different levels at which family labor is utilized in family businesses. In the following sections, the review of the data seeks to identify different reasons why some businesses employed relatives, why others did not, and why some respondents would only employ kin under certain conditions. Each section revealed varied family involvement from business to business.

### **Businesses that employ family members**

One of the key findings in this study is that Samoan entrepreneurs employ family in their operations for a variety of different reasons. These reasons involve both social and economic considerations, further indicating how Samoan businesses differ from one another in terms of their services, products, resources and niche markets. The value of

employing family relates to several benefits for the businesses. Firstly, kin labour is assumed cheap; secondly, there is an assumption of available management experience amongst kin that could be utilised to benefit the business; and thirdly, for most businesses employing family members, there is a sense that it serves as part of their cultural obligations. The question - *Do you employ any relatives in your business?* - asked the participants to specify their employment practices and attitudes towards kin employment. The differences also point to the entrepreneurs' use of family labour as indicated by the range of their backgrounds especially those with *mātai* status, gender, place of birth, ages, levels and types of education, numbers of staff employed, time in business and types of business operated. The following section examines how the various characteristics relate to the use of family labour.

Samoan entrepreneurs in New Zealand are very diverse in nature in terms of their demographic and biographic backgrounds. This diversity is evident, in terms of not only their gender, birthplace, age, number of employees, *mātai* status and education but also in the way in which cultural obligations play out for these entrepreneurs in practice. Table 3 below presents the profiles of the entrepreneurs who employ family members.

**Table 3. Characteristics of Samoan entrepreneurs who employed family members**

Characteristic		Percentage	Number
Gender	Male	73	8
	Female	27	3
	Total	100	11
Birthplace	Samoa	90	10
	New Zealand	10	1
	Total	100	11
Generation	1st Generation	36	4
	1.5 Generation	55	6
	2nd Generation	9	1
	Total	100	11
Age	30-40 years	36	4
	41-70 years	64	7
	Total	100	11
Matai Status	No	45	5
	Yes	55	6
	Total	100	11
Educational Level	University	27	3
	Technical	27	3
	School	46	5
	Total	100	11

Fifty two percent (11) of the entrepreneurs had businesses that employed relatives. All entrepreneurs are aged 30 years or more which may indicate that most were obligated to family requirements. Twenty seven percent (3) are females and 73% (8) are males. Half of the female entrepreneurs in the study employ kin and the other half represented those who did not employ family. While this may be slightly lower than that of male entrepreneurs, the female entrepreneur's participation in business and employment of kin may reflect the increasing entrepreneurship rates of Samoan females in the migrant community. This may also suggest that female entrepreneurs offer support to family through business. The data may also suggest that the females' increased levels of education and their changing economic circumstances through business opportunities have increased their status that further progress their ability to venture into mainstream businesses. For the eight male participants, on the other hand, employment of kin may

reflect their obligations and *tautua* for family, expectations that come with their leadership roles.

Ninety one percent (10) of the entrepreneurs who employed family were born in Samoa. This group contained 60% (6) who are of the 1.5-generation, 40% (4) of the 1<sup>st</sup> generation and 9% (1) of the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation born in New Zealand. This high level of support for kin employment may also reflect the importance and centrality of the family in the *fa'a-sāmoa* and the responsibility Samoans owe to its functioning. The higher number of Samoan-born participants operating businesses are a result of their having been opportunist entrepreneurs who may have chosen self-employment to match the business opportunities and their experiences from previous occupations in both Samoa and New Zealand. The different business experiences and type of businesses reflect new opportunities and niche markets that exist in both the Samoan community and the mainstream business environment. In some circumstances, employing kin was both a recognition and an expression of commitment to family that entrepreneurs are expected to continuously keep. The New Zealand born participant viewed the employment of family as normal business practice that coincides with business opportunities and the value it adds to his business. Thirty six percent (4) of the entrepreneurs are between 30 and 40 years of age with 64% (7) over 41 years. This group when compared to no-hirers and selective hirers of kin tends to be older and committed to family.

Seventy three percent (8) of the businesses employed kin full time, while thirty percent (3) employed them on a part time basis. Of the eight businesses with fulltime employees, seven had been employers over ten years, while one had been at it for seven years. Those who employed family fulltime had 107 employees between them compared to 61 employees for those who employed kin on a part time basis. This indicates that some of these businesses are established and diversified in nature, with resources giving them the ability to employ family. Of the part-time employers, one was an accountant who had been in business for 13 years and three had been operating their businesses under ten years. These jobs provided training for family members for specific career paths with an eye to future expansion of the business on completion of their qualifications. The other two-part time employers were contractors who relied heavily on available contracts, which in a way explained the casual levels at which they employed kin.

Fifty five percent (6) of entrepreneurs in this group are *mātai*, which may reflect their sense of obligation and service to family. Five had operated businesses for over 10 years and one for six years. These businesses employed fifteen family members amongst them, which may indicate the level of commitment to meeting family obligations and use of available resources. This group had varied business experience as reflected in the length of time in operation with eight entrepreneurs operating a business for over ten years, including two that had over 30 years in operation. The longer these businesses have been in operation the more likely that they diversify into other related business interests, further allowing them to employ kin.

Ninety one percent (10) of the businesses were in the service industry with 9% (1) in the manufacturing sector. The different businesses included restaurant operations (1), a hair salon (1), a security company (1), a funeral home (1), an accountancy (1), quantity surveying (1), church building (1), a dairy (1), a business consultancy (1) and education (1). The manufacturing business (1) possessed a different set of assets, financial resources and skills, which determined the success, and failure of the entity. This was a family business passed down from previous owners with specific skills in technical and machinery operation, and with the current owner expanding the operation. The variety of business types amongst the entrepreneurs is significant as they reflect the prior skills and experiences of the owners as well as the level of resources committed to their development that for some had resulted in different sizes and levels of success.

The qualifications vary amongst this group with 27% (3) having university qualifications, 27% (3) with technical qualifications and 46% (5) with high school education. The variation in education may indicate different skills and experiences in specific businesses for participants who employed kin. While formal education may not be a requirement for starting a business, industry skills and prior employment experience would help identify opportunities that are turned into viable operations.

### **The backgrounds of entrepreneurs.**

The above summarises the characteristics of the business, with particular attention being paid to those who employ kin, it does not however explain why they do this. In the following section, employers' reasons for hiring kin are explored to establish whether socio-cultural or economic factors influence their employment decisions. One of the

common reasons for employing family members was the financial benefits relating to cheaper and, in some cases unpaid, family labour (Oliveira, 2007). This indirect form of funding supported businesses that were just starting up with little available capital. For some businesses, family members may accept lower rates of pay, and may also accept deferred payment, payment in kind, refuse holiday pay and other conditions, having the net effect of reducing expenses for the business. The literature, however, really points only to the economic aspects of this labour as a commodity (Sorenson, 2011).

For Samoan entrepreneurs, the use and exchange of labour is based on both serving family obligations and commercial purposes. In this respect, employing kin can expand the social value for entrepreneurs through improved relationships within the community. This adds value to the social capital that helps expand business outcomes at different stages of the operations. The data pointed to some of the following factors that influence the employment of family members.

### **Cheap labour**

One of the common assumptions highlighted in the literature referred to family labour as being cheap, something that ethnic businesses rely on for setting up their businesses (Sorensen, 2011, Waldinger al et., 1990). However, in this study, only 5%, one of the entrepreneurs viewed family labour as cheap, something he calls upon when he needs it. One of the reasons he relies on this labour is that he does not have to pay fulltime salaries and other costs that would be involved when employing non-family members. These costs include taxes and PAYE<sup>82</sup>, which in some instances are withheld from employees to be paid to the IRD. Spouses, wives or partners also provide supporting roles through the administration and managing of some of the responsibilities of the business, which further reduces costs. The following participant points to the advantage that works for his business:

*Yes, I employ family [cousins and close relatives] because they are the cheapest. The work come and go [contract work]. Many of my workers come from my family so in the books, I have thirty to forty workers and they are mainly casual workers. I want to earn more... but I pay more taxes [and other compliance costs]. My partner also supports me with administrative duties.*

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<sup>82</sup> Pay as you earn

[Participant 1]

For the 95% (10) of the entrepreneurs, family labour is viewed in both economic and social terms. The social capital that families and their members produce to support their businesses is viewed as considerations that are part of normal business management issues. The utility of these family relationships also strengthens internal relationships based on trust, solidarity and reciprocal values that unite members and which lead to competitive strategies for the business (Casson, 2010; Sanders & Nee, 2002).

### **Relevant skills**

Where familial values and personal relationships are the dominant factors in employing family in the business, all other things being equal, the specific skills of family members are important in adding value to the operation as these participants claimed:

*My partner and brother-in law all help out with technical and logistics stuff like designing the website, managing the accounts and organising computer as they are good [having experience] at those roles. This being a family business from the start allows that type of management but mostly it saved a lot of money and the convenience of it [adding value].*

[Participant 19]

*We all have these responsibilities relating to our business structure, I put those managers [who are also relatives] there because they can all fall in the line of authority and we have to adhere to our specific responsibilities.... D is the accounts manager, T is the general manager, J is the customer manager, I...is the market, and advertising manager...we put all those specific roles there because the product for our business is profitability and success.*

[Participant 7]

While the use of labour from family members provides specific skills that benefit the business, such cost savings are seen as payment in kind by some entrepreneurs for being family. As well transferring such benefits to the business, there is also the net effect of

shifting expenses and other business liabilities away from the business. This entrepreneur alludes to this issue:

*I have good family support [including business]. My sister is employed as the receptionist [ here in the business]. My husband is the financial advisor [informal role] and he will remind me at times.... ‘you are spending too much money’.*

[ Participant 10]

### **Reciprocal value of *fa’a-samoa* and business**

The data also identify issues connected with obligations of *fa’a-sāmoa*, where kinship acts as a motive to support others in the extended family by employing them. There is, as discussed above, an obligation on the part of *mātai* to lead and represent the family in community events where possible. This may explain, in part, the fact that 55% (6) out of 11 of those who employed kin are *mātai*. However, that may not be their sole motive. In the Samoan community, a *mātai* who operates a business and provides employment for kin may enhance his leadership role within both the extended and immediate family. These are investments and business advantages that can increase an entrepreneur’s reputation and social capital in the community and family. For the *mātai*, exercising this duty would allow him to demonstrate leadership and responsibilities to kin that would always be a balancing act when discharging *fa’a-sāmoa* obligations and business requirements. The following participants reflect on these issues:

*Making money and improving the quality of life, not just yourself but also your family, and your extended family, especially as a business operator and a mātai is very important. I think the critical factor here is involving [employment] the extended family members also and knowing the obligations both on your father’s and mother’s side, and on your grandparents’ sides. Because at the end of the day ‘o lea e fai mai Sāmoa o le tagata e tausi-āiga, e manuia toe mauōloa’ [fa’a-sāmoa dictates that one who serves their family will be blessed and enriched]*

[Participant 4]

*Yes, about five members of my family are employed here [in my businesses]. Big part is the fānau [family] approach, if I work in a normal job, the only benefit will*



*be for me, and I will get a good salary. However, the idea of how it can benefit other members of the family is by owning a business. It is a good mechanism of not fulfilling [only] my own interests but also extending the benefits to other family members and the community at large. Family obligations do not operate on a balance sheet: it goes beyond that, and that sharpens your skills so you know where the line is drawn between the family and village obligations and where the business must not be affected.*

[Participant 5]

*For me, I look after [employ] my family first. So, whatever business I have I give money and support. That was also my focus when I became a mātai (chief), my strength [in serving] is my family, not just the workforce to carry out tasks.*

[Participant 11]

### **Investing in family member's career opportunities**

Some of the businesses were established to provide training and career opportunities for family members while others serve as financial investments. The following participants have been planning for the next generation and grooming family members to view the business as part of their inheritance.

*The business employs my husband and his brothers who are the main shareholders in the business. He has also employed one of my nephews. Our business is about giving choices and leaving a legacy for the family.*

[Participant 2]

*Our four boys [sons] work with us and are paid the same as our staff. We don't have favouritism [nepotism]: they have to qualify just like anyone else. My husband's nephews are employed here with qualifications. We are in discussions now with our sons for succession [taking over the ownership]. Twenty-one years in business is a long time (we are ready for retirement).*

[Participant 8]

### **Family can be trusted**

There are additional beliefs that family could be trusted to place the best interests of the business first and that employing family, would allow members to work together, but independently. This trust means that any advice and organisational skills offered by kin are used to ensure that decisions about business issues are safe and entrusted amongst members where the business is well managed. The following participants quoted:

*My wife is part of the staff. They have different roles, my wife is the accountant, my two cousins are the office managers and the other serves and liaises with our clients. But it is so important to get the right people around you. My biggest critic is my wife.*

[Participant 7]

*My sister looks after the whole business. She knows the business well and it is very important for me when I am overseas... [I relied] on my sister and her organisational skills (to manage the business on my behalf).*

[Participant 6]

The above section presented reasons for the employment of kin. The section below represents another alternative for entrepreneurs when it comes to the employment of kin.

### **Reasons for not employing family members**

Not all participants employ relatives. Thirty eight percent (8) of the entrepreneurs did not employ relatives. Some have done so in the past, but no longer engage relatives because of experiences they endured when with dealing with kin. Others did not employ kin as a matter of principle. Contrary to the popular view in the literature that being family would lead to favorable employment of family members in the business (Light, 2001), the findings in this study suggest this not the case for some businesses. There is a range of reasons for not employing kin in some of the participant's businesses. This being that some are newly established businesses and self-employed with a limited capacity to employ; some entrepreneurs distrust kin as employees and see irrelevant skills amongst family members. In some instances, employing kin without the business having the ability to afford it creates negative attitudes about using relatives and leads to tensions between

cultural practices and expectations of business management. Table 4 presents the profile of participants who did not employ relatives in their businesses.

**Table 4. Characteristics of Samoan entrepreneurs who do not employ family members**

Characteristic		Percentage	Number
Gender	Male	63	5
	Female	37	3
	Total	100	8
Birthplace	Samoa	63	5
	New Zealand	25	2
	Fiji	12	1
	Total	100	8
Generation	1st Generation	12	1
	1.5 Generation	63	5
	2nd Generation	25	2
	Total	100	8
Age	30-40 years	37	3
	41-70 years	63	5
	Total	100	8
Matai Status	No	50	4
	Yes	50	4
	Total	100	8
Educational Level	University	37.5	3
	Technical	25	2
	School	37.5	3
	Total	100	8

There are eight entrepreneurs in this category with 63% (5) males and 37% (3) females. The majority of participants in this group were overseas-born with 63 % (5) born in Samoa, 12% (1) in Fiji and 12 % (1) in New Zealand. This may indicate their different values and view of cultural obligations when managing both business and family issues. Thirty seven percent (3) of the entrepreneurs are aged between 30 and 40 years with 63% (5) over 41 years. The entrepreneur's ages may reflect their experiences through the amount of time they have been in business. For some their businesses emanated from having previously established careers. Four (50%) of the participants were *mātai* and the other four (50%) did not hold matai titles. All the businesses in this category are in the

professional services including a real estate agency (1), restaurant (1), cafe (1), personal selling (1), draftsman (1), landscaping (1), travel agency (1), and hotel (1). The data points to a range of participants with different experiences.

The qualifications and education levels of the participants varied. Thirty eight percent (3) of the entrepreneurs have tertiary qualifications, 25% (2) have technical training and 38% (3) have a secondary school education. Fifty percent (4) of the entrepreneurs are self-employed with no employees, one had two employees, one employed nine, one employed 11 and another one employed 32 people. In relation to those who employ kin the levels of education for this group is proportionally comparable which may indicate the advantages of having some form of education that helps in identifying specific opportunities in their own field of business. This raises the question of what underpins the decision to avoid employing kin from a culture that places great importance on its obligations to kin and which highly values familial relationships. The following themes suggest why these entrepreneurs did not employ kin.

### **Specialised skill requirements**

The majority of participants in this category are self-employed which may help explain why they did not require additional employees. Three of these businesses operate in specialised services that are based on their skills and niche markets, as they claim:

*This is my first business, and it is all hands on. I do not really involve anyone else [family] in this business. This for me is different from other things [business] I was involved in. For a business like this I'm catering for the European market and nobody [in the family] really knows [the business] ...it takes a lot of my time [preparing and organising]*

[Participant 9]

*My business is a very scientific type of business. I operate this business whenever the time allows me ...I have just done the business plan and I revised the whole business myself.*

[Participant 15]

*I have been in the property market the last six years and before that was in the accountancy business. Right now, I am running my property investments in Australia in conjunction with my Australian agents. Now, in a full time job as well. I am running these by myself and no employees [needed].*

[Participant 16]

### **Family labor seen as uneconomical for business**

On top of providing a specialized service, one participant saw other means to replace family labor in order to save costs. He contracts out all the services required for his business as he indicated:

*No, [do not employ family anymore]. Now I contract the whole thing [business] out. We get briefs from clients and those become concepts and then designs for clients, which become contracts for them.*

[Participant 13]

### **Seeking independence from the family**

It is also noticeable that as entrepreneurs' personal values changed, some shifted away from supporting their relatives in business. One participant did not want to involve family and wanted to be independent and develop her own interests away from family influences on her business:

*No, thank goodness [did not employ relatives]. I wanted to do something [run the business] for myself and wanted to be my own boss, call my own shots and wanted to express my passion [of developing a business]*

[Participant 16]

### **Lack of commitment**

Some entrepreneurs reported reluctance on the part of kin to invest the same effort in employment in the business. This lack of motivation may stem from the fact that those employed felt that they are unlikely to be dismissed from family businesses because of their kinship connections. Other participants quoted related accounts of family members

who assume that, because they are family, their employment is automatically given. Other entrepreneurs view family as lazy, showing no respect for hard work and a having poor work ethic.

*No, I do not employ any family anymore, but have [employed] my nephews and nieces in the past. Nobody has the same determination to do things. I work around the clock for nothing. They do not have the ability to put in the hard yards and that is what business is about.*

[Participant 18]

*I do not encourage family members to work here [any more] because I have been there before and they are [were] not much disciplined in business roles. In the past, I had businesses where my sisters and brothers were managing them and there was mismanagement...may be they were more relaxed because I was family.*

[Participant 11]

### **Drawn-out experiences of dealing with *fa'a-sāmoa***

Some of those who did not employ kin stopped doing so because of their experiences in employing relatives. They no longer felt that there were benefits from employing relatives because of the pitfalls of cultural expectations imposed on businesses. In one case below, there was ambivalence tempered by the participant's past experience of conflicts that had occurred at his business, where one had to balance the expectations of *fa'a-sāmoa* with the requirements of business. He spoke about his frustration caused by the inconvenience of family members missing work, taking time out for family *fa'alavelave* and the consequent unreliability that had disrupted his operations. This participant noted, quite pragmatically.

*No [we do not employ family] anymore, over the years we slowly stopped employing them. We find it very difficult [to deal with family], family is all right but when we have *fa'alavelave* we all tend to be off work at the same time. It is also good that family will look at it [favourable situation] but it [employing them] has its own pros and cons.*

[Participant 21]

Another participant stated that he has been helping out family for a long time, however, negative sentiments toward employing family were the direct result of such drawn out experiences of culture and how it taxed business operations:

*No, [don't employ anymore] ...You are on your own in business. The Samoan way of thinking is that when you have a business, you have money. It's funny when your business is doing well, all your family wanted to know you and get something [money/work] from you but when you are struggling the [business] they would run away.*

[Participant 14]

The following section reviews another group of participants, who were not currently employing kin, but were not opposed in principle to their employment. At the time of the research, these businesses were employing staff but not kin for one reason or another. The data however, suggests that these participants balance their business responsibilities with those of cultural obligations in the migrant environment.

### **Entrepreneurs who employ family occasionally**

This group did not oppose employing family in principle. It included some participants who had employed family in the past and who, at some stage of their operations decided that family employment was not required for their businesses. These businesses employed relatives occasionally and the reasons for doing so varied from one business to another. Some felt no cultural compulsion to employ relatives or utilised family labour when it was thought to be beneficial to the business. These participants would only consider employment of kin where they felt that employing family could contribute to the expansion and viability of the business.

**Table 5. Characteristics of Samoan entrepreneurs who employ family members selectively**

Characteristic		Percentage	Number
Gender	Male	100	2
	Female	0	0
	Total	100	2
Birthplace	Samoa	100	2
	New Zealand	0	0
	Fiji	0	0
	Total	100	2
Generation	1st Generation	0	0
	1.5 Generation	100	2
	2nd Generation	0	0
	Total	100	2
Age	30-40 years	50	1
	41-70 years	50	1
	Total	100	2
Matai Status	No	100	2
	Yes		0
	Total	100	2
Educational Level	University	100	2
	Technical		0
	School		0
	Total	100	2

There were two male entrepreneurs in this group. Both were of the 1.5 generation who were born and partly educated in Samoa and New Zealand, which suggests that they have experienced the expectations of *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations and business practices in New Zealand. This may have some influences on the way they made decisions relating to family employment. Both were over 40 years old, which may indicate their freedom to choose to involve themselves with family within the New Zealand context. There are no *mātai* in this group, which may suggest that not being *mātai* leads to less exposure to *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations. This would free them and their businesses from any cultural commitment. Both these businesses are in the service industry with one operating a sports



academy and the other a restaurant/nightclub. Both have university education, which suggests that they balance business and cultural commitment equally. The following themes indicate the rationale behind the entrepreneur's position of why they sometimes employ kin.

### **Specific experiences and skills**

One of the participants explained that he was not employing relatives at the time, but that he would employ them if they had specific skills that would add value to his business. He was employing in-laws (who were not Samoans) because they had relevant skills and they provided relevant advice for the business. He stated that:

*My in-laws provided technical roles and invest time with other business needs. My brother-in-law did the computer system... My Samoan family did not have any of those skills and I could not be bothered ... although I employ them in different roles that suit their skills and when I need them.*

[Participant 19]

### **Only employ kin if work is available**

Another entrepreneur pointed out that he only employs kin when work is available. This points to financial considerations where the business may not be in a position to afford hiring others.

*I did employ family members but only on limited [occasions]. I employed my niece to prepare food [sometime].*

[Participant 20]

While all the participants reflect on their choice of involving kin in their businesses, some choose to serve family through other means rather than employing family members. This support will make sure that they serve family one way or the other, further reflecting the overriding importance of family in a Samoan worldview and lifestyle (Meleisea & Schoeffel, 1998). The following section explore different reasons, that are invoked by entrepreneurs, when balancing family support and the expectations of businesses.

### 5.3 Alternative solutions to supporting family apart from employment.

While the Samoan family may be a support base for businesses, some entrepreneurs do not rely on this help. Many are well established and well resourced without it. This allows such businesses, in certain circumstances, to provide support for family and its members through means other than employment. The degree of support for family, however, varies from one entrepreneur to another and from business-to-business. In the *fa'a-sāmoa*, the entrepreneur may fashion his or her giving to the family through the principles of '*o lou aiga lava e te tua iai*' or it is your family that supports you in times of need. This encapsulate the principles of *alofa i lou aiga* or serving your family, *fa'aāloālo* or respect, *va-feāloāloa'i* or mutual respect in all socio/political relationships, *tautua* or unstinting service to the family. This requires that service to the family is reciprocated in many ways and forms, like the conferment of a *mātai* title on someone who has a good education, operates a profitable business and has continuously provided financial support for the family throughout his/her life.

The question: *How does your family influence your business practice?* - establishes how different levels and patterns of family demands have an influence on the management of Samoan businesses. Where a business relies on family resources, the expectations are that, at some stage, some form of reward, for members, would be forthcoming when it becomes profitable. However, where such expectations are not met, for one reason or another, obligations towards family are supported in different ways, other than through financial support or employment. The data demonstrates the different circumstances where entrepreneurs chose to meet these obligations to family. In Table 6 below all participants were involved in serving family in different ways yet only about one-fourth provided support through business related means.

**Table 6: Ways entrepreneurs support family other than employment**

Reflections	Levels of Support
Support for family through <i>fa'alavelave</i> , (saofa'i or bestowment of titles, tusigā-igoa or church fundraising, weddings, funerals, etc)	21 (100%)
Support for family through business resources, business networks and business knowledge.	5 (24%)

The question - '*Are you involved in family activities?*' - reflects how entrepreneurs offer support for family through their businesses. This support may expand and extend according to the expectations of the family as a unit. The continuous support for family in the migrant community is promoted through the *mafutaga-a-āiga*<sup>83</sup> or family gatherings and *fa'alavelave*, which becomes the focal point of contact for close knit and extended family members. The *mafutaga a-āiga* meetings are usually organised by the *mātai* and elders who, in all cases represent the extended family in community events that are viewed as part of their cultural responsibilities, as the following participant claimed:

*Very much [very involved in family events] so in āiga [family]. It ground me.*

*We have mafutaga [family gatherings] monthly and it is like running a business.*

*So all the money we raised from monthly meetings is put aside for fa'alavelave [life cycle events]*

[Participant 2]

As well as gathering and re-establishing familial ties, these get-together(s) become a strategic point for the organisation and dispersal of required resources from members. Common in these meetings are collections of finances and necessary resources that support *fa'alavelave*. These *fa'alavelave* range from the bestowment of titles, weddings, funerals, birthday parties and other family events when support for these are requested by

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<sup>83</sup> Family gatherings

both New Zealand based families and those in Samoa. The regular occurrence of these *fa'alavelave* allows more family gatherings to take place, which bring distant and close relatives together. This produces efficiencies when families, kin groups and entrepreneurs bring their resources together to provide support for both the home family unit and the migrant family when required. Financial and other resources contributed by members are distributed at one time to serve family needs, which in many cases oblige members to give support when requested. In many ways *fa'alavelave* becomes a vehicle that can access resources, which further enhance the economic stability and reputation of the family in the public eye in both the home and migrant communities.

The data indicates that 100% (21) of the entrepreneurs supported family, in different degrees, with respect to contributing to *fa'alavelave* as part of their obligations. The announcement of such co-ordinated efforts produce contributions to events such as *maliu*<sup>84</sup>, *fa'aipoipoga*<sup>85</sup>, *saofa'i*<sup>86</sup>, *tusigagoa*<sup>87</sup> aso *fanau*<sup>88</sup> and others which are negotiated within the families or family branches, and who in turn decide the levels of commitment to these events. While support for *fa'alavelave* varies from one entrepreneur to another, participating in these events reflect a duty for the close knit family that further secures a reciprocal relationship within *fa'a-sāmoa* as noted by some of these participants;

*My family don't leave me alone when it comes to fa'alavelave. When they want money they ring; fundraising for village and church things they ring; when they want to borrow, they ring. My family will always get things[money] from me, ... If I have them[resources] I give, but if I don't have any money, I don't give. But, I know their importance in fa'a-sāmoa [it's a responsibility].*

[Participant 19]

*Yes, a lot of my involvement [is] with funerals, and the usual fa'alavelave. I only involve myself when something happens then I contribute.*

[Participant 12]

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<sup>84</sup> Funerals

<sup>85</sup> Weddings

<sup>86</sup> Ceremony for bestowal of chiefly titles

<sup>87</sup> Church fundraisings

<sup>88</sup> Birth day celebrations

**Channelling business resources and advice to support family other than employment.**

In some cases, tensions arises between the need to satisfy both *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations and business requirements and therefore the call to contribute other resources other than employment. On top of supporting *fa'alavelave*, 24% (5) of the entrepreneurs provide extra support for families by different means as a sense of belonging, a sense of meeting their responsibilities and being in a position to provide such support, as the following participant stated:

*In times of fa'alavelave, I am active for those because it is our culture to help and contribute other resources required.*

[Participant 10]

Some entrepreneurs offer this support through business advice and professional services. Family members with relevant business experience are expected to give advice to their kin, which in most occasions it is expected that such service be given freely out of a sense of responsibility for being part of a family. The following participant points to this sentiment:

*One of my sisters came to me...she wanted to borrow [money] to pay for the arrears for one of her two properties ... [but I said to her save one house and sell the other] You, have the answer. Why do you put yourself in this situation when it is an easy solution? She did sell and now she is happy.*

[Participant 7]

Another reason for seeking this business support from family is the sense of trust that family issues and conflicts would not become public discussions as the following entrepreneur notes:

*Family obligations do not operate on a balance sheet. It goes beyond that and that sharpens your skills. Therefore, you know where the line is drawn between the family obligations and where the business must not be affected... It makes you think smarter because you have more people to look after and more obligations, but you need to be firm enough to say, 'don't do this .... we do a little of this' and*

*it sharpens the business skills more [by managing and advising on unnecessary cultural requirements that interfere with businesses].*

[Participant 5]

The rationale behind family seeking advice from entrepreneurs may lie in the assumption that Samoan entrepreneurs and their businesses are successful and possess knowledge that can provide answers for their problems, as some of the following participants claim:

*My whole family are relying on the business and me. Because I am the only one with a qualification from university, they rely on me [for advice on this and that]. When mum wants something from the business, she asks because she knows I have been successful, and I must do what they [need].*

[Participant 5]

*The number of relatives requiring business advice is unbelievable [more need]. Some of them only think that business is only about making money. It is not all that. It is about how you utilise and understand the processes of business [money and resources]*

[Participant 2]

There are different solutions negotiated by entrepreneurs when dealing with support for family. This support varies from one entrepreneur to another depending on the circumstances, available business resources, and the motivational factors that influence the management of their businesses.

## **5.4 Discussion**

This chapter demonstrates that the nature, role and characteristics of the *āiga* in the New Zealand Samoan community are somewhat different from those in traditional Samoan society. In the migrant environment, the Samoan family has changed. While assumptions about these changes of the family can be traced to many features of the migrant settings, this study does not provide definitive proof of why the family has changed. It is now a compact entity containing the services and support of the collective *āiga* where possible.

This is different from the nature of the *āiga* in traditional Samoa where the many *pui-aiga* make up the village collective that in turn provides the support in all cultural events. Firstly, the changes have been the consequence of social, political and economic trends of an urban and industrial environment and secondly these changes are a result of the deliberate effort by migrant parents and their New Zealand born children to redefine themselves within the confines of the utilitarian society (Macpherson & Macpherson, 2009, Spoonley, 2004).

The international literature pointed to the family as the nuclear unit that plays a necessary role for ethnic businesses. The family unit is confined to the ethnic economy and enclaves for purely economic purposes (Waldinger et al., 1990). The disadvantage thesis that points to increased levels of self-employment amongst ethnic entrepreneurs, in most cases, makes them turn to the family unit and labour, community niches and financial resources to start a business (Light, 2004). This raises the question of whether the role of the family for ethnic entrepreneurs as depicted in the international literature is comparable or similar to the role of the family for Samoan entrepreneurs in New Zealand.

The data from this study shows some strong links of the Samoan family and its influences on Samoan entrepreneurship that produces different results. The role of the family is very central and strong in traditional Samoan culture. It is through the membership of the *āiga* that everyone performs their collective responsibilities of belonging, serving and respecting familial connections as required by *fa'a sāmōa*. The Samoan family is the cornerstone of most Samoans' lives and the individual serves not just his or her close-knit family, but also the extended family to which he or she belongs. The *āiga* directs behavior through the socialization processes where members learn cultural values within the institutions of family, religion and community that make up *fa'a-samoa*. Respect for others through the values of *vā-feāloāloa'i*, *fa'aāloālo*, *tausi-aiga* and *alofa* begin with the family. These values are reinforced throughout community relationships and social networks. When these cultural values breakdown, the role of the family would possibly diminish

The continuing migration of the Samoans to international destinations has reshaped not just the family, but also the Samoan culture, with differing effects. The *āiga* solidarity that had once defined ones' belongingness to *fa'a-sāmōa* in traditional Samoan society

has changed with time and migration to New Zealand. The changes to the roles of the *āiga* have been influenced by the changing values of a capitalist and egalitarian New Zealand society, where there are now generations of Samoans who have developed and redefined new identities (Macpherson & Macpherson, 2009).

Fourteen percent (3) of entrepreneurs in this study were New Zealand born entrepreneurs of second generation. They have reconceptualised the family in ways that allow them to balance the western notion of the nuclear family with that of the *āiga* in the migrant environment. This involves reducing and balancing their migrant parent's cultural values in terms of family expectations and those of business responsibilities. It is evident that the New Zealand born generation of entrepreneurs are young and have achieved a higher education that equip them well for engagement in professional careers and entrepreneurship. This group is progressively developing leadership skills learned from educational institutions associated with business opportunities in the migrant setting. Their willingness to advance these skills are seen as advantages that would free them from over commitment and in most cases manage *āiga* obligations that they see as of little value to their lives and businesses.

One element of the family relevant to businesses is the use of family labour. The data showed that the use and value of family labour varies amongst the participants. Most entrepreneurs did not see themselves as cultural or community agents who provided support for all community requirements. However, there were, in most cases, the expectation of discharging obligations towards family as part of the process of reciprocal responsibility. In this instance, 54% of those who employed family are *mātai*, which indicated the importance of their roles as leaders and the expectations on them of family to serve, provide and to lead in community representations. Ninety one percent (10) of the entrepreneurs who were born in Samoa and 9% (1) of those born in New Zealand employed family. The high number of entrepreneurs born in Samoa who supported family suggested their social embeddedness in family values connected to obligations of *fa'a-sāmoa*. While the New Zealand born entrepreneurs prioritised employment of family for economic and business reasons, this stance underlines in some ways their changing values and the priorities in how they invest in their businesses and in their lives. Although two of these entrepreneurs are *mātai* who balance their obligations of *fa'a-sāmoa* with those



of their business responsibilities, they would be obliged to employ family more as a duty than just for economic reasons.

Another important trend the data pointed to was the increased contribution that entrepreneurial females (30% of whom were also Samoan-born) made to the employment of kin, as well as to various forms of support given to family. This suggests an increase in the levels of class capital like education, financial resources, and social networks from which women create their opportunities when operating a successful business. Such means allow them to contribute equally or even more than their male counterparts to family activities and to strengthening their voices in the collective decision-making process; a process that was once a male prerogative in Samoan society. This may reflect the fact that women have now increased their status, with many becoming *mātai* (although there are none in this study), with higher educational achievements, more business skills and more class resources at their disposal. This affords them social mobility and the ability to influence decisions in important family issues.

The data also demonstrated that a number of participants were selective when exercising their choices in the employment of kin in their businesses. Although these choices were seen to benefit the business in many ways, a range of experiences with family, both positive and negative, shaped their attitudes at given times. The reluctance to engage family labour for some participants highlighted the fact that they made rational business decisions rather than cultural expectations. The majority of these participants (50%) were self-employed which indicated that these enterprises were micromanaged and effectively operated to balance cultural obligations with business needs.

Another finding from the data showed that, for most participants, the reciprocal value of family resources provided support for them and their businesses. Even with new opportunities and wealth achieved by businesses outside of the family, the family was nonetheless served through contributions to *fa'alavelave*. Commitments to *fa'alavelave* allowed family members who operated businesses to connect and commit to family welfare and to offer support on specific occasions when called for. All the 21 participants positively supported the family, but in different contexts and capacities. While, some participants were committed to family obligations through offering financial support and other contributions, others showed their loyalty by providing advice in business matters.

Finally, the role of the *āiga* in the migrant setting will continue to change as it becomes more of a transnational kin corporation that operates at the international level, moving underemployed and unemployed kin between job markets to maximise opportunities for gainful employment and thereby “increase the rate of return for investing in kin” (Macpherson, 1992, p.126-130). In essence, this study shows that the changing role of the *āiga* in the migrant setting has influenced Samoan businesses and the support they offer at different levels. This support for family and business will likely continue to change as New Zealand born and new migrant generations deconstruct their values to suit their businesses amidst new social spaces and global trends in the migrant setting.

## 5.5 Conclusion

This chapter suggests that the transformation of the *āiga* in the migrant setting was highly likely given the exposure of Samoan migrants and their children to the worldviews and lifestyles common in New Zealand. The challenges presented by family obligations and business responsibilities created economic considerations that entrepreneurs have to endure and manage. Despite these challenges, and some changes, the *āiga* remains the umbilical cord that connects the Samoan individual, in varying degrees to his or her kin group. The Samoan adage ‘*e sui faiga ae tumau fa’avae*’ or foundations remain although practices differ, attests to the fact that although the foundations of *fa’a-sāmoa* and in this case, the family remain, their relevance to the Samoan entrepreneur’s businesses and circumstances depend on forms and practices which are shaped and reshaped in the migrant community. This chapter has argued that the support for family from Samoan entrepreneurs varies from one entrepreneur to another. This support is encapsulated through the entrepreneur’s different biographies, identities and their generational circumstances. The following chapter explore whether similar or different factors that influence the *āiga* apply to another institution of *fa’a-sāmoa*, the religion or *lotu* in the migrant community.

# CHAPTER SIX: RELIGION

## Introduction

This chapter focuses on the influence of religion on Samoan entrepreneurs and their businesses in New Zealand. Trends indicate that religion has undergone many changes in the migrant community. These changes have challenged traditional Samoan religious commitments as many of the young migrant and the New Zealand born generation have readily embraced new faiths. The influences of new charismatic faiths have challenged the religious values of the migrant parent's religious values that are based on a combination of cultural and religious traditions. It is assumed in this study that these values have influenced different sectors of the Samoan community in New Zealand, including those operating businesses. This chapter explores how changes in the religious practices of Samoans in New Zealand influence Samoan entrepreneurship.

The chapter has five sections. Section 1 explains the nature and place of religion in Samoan society. It will assess the role and influences religion plays in the community and business. Section 2 explores the changes that had shaped religion in New Zealand where the freedom to choose between different faiths have, in many cases, begun to diminish traditional religiosity in the Samoan community. These changes, which have also influenced the identities of migrant Samoans, are articulated through the social, political and economic realities of New Zealand society. Section 3 examines the nature of religion and business in the migrant environment. The section demonstrates the rationale behind the entrepreneur's levels of support for religion and the effect this have on their business practices. Three types of entrepreneurs are selected for data collection, especially entrepreneurs who support religion, those who do not support religious demands, and entrepreneurs who choose to support religion selectively. Section 4 discusses the issues and makes some observations regarding the influence of religion on Samoan entrepreneurship. Section 5 concludes the chapter.

## 6.1 Religion in Samoan society

Religion is one of the main institutions in *fa'a-sāmoa*. Like the family, religion adds the spiritual dimension and support to the existence of a Samoan individual. As religion connects the individual and the community to their god, its centrality in *fa'a-sāmoa*<sup>89</sup> is unquestionably an integral feature of Samoan culture. The connectedness of family and pre-Christian religion was confirmed by formal references to religion as *tapuaiga*<sup>90</sup>, where family possessed their own spiritual guidance or *aitu* who were sacred to families. These mediating relationships persisted as part of Samoan spirituality until the arrival of Christianity that challenged Samoan spiritual beliefs (Meleisea, 1987).

One of the most astounding effects of Christianity was the decentralising of the political authority of the *mātai*. Before Christianity the *mātai* were divided between *ali'i*<sup>91</sup> and *tulāfale*<sup>92</sup> who played important and different roles in villages or families. The *ali'i* linked their genealogies to Taga-loa-a-lagi<sup>93</sup> and were sacred (Sualii-Sauni et al., 2009). The *tulāfale* on the other hand did not emerge from sacred ancestry, but rather possessed a secular status and carried out administrative roles on behalf of the sacred *ali'i* (Meleisea, 1987). These roles were redefined over a short period. The sacredness of the *ali'i* that it once existed in Samoan society was reduced. This, according to Meleisea (1987), created a vacuum in the power structure of Samoan society. Although Christianity did not completely diminish the prestige of important titles and their place in villages and society, would-be successors to such titles sought ways to maintain their rank in new ways that did not exist then, by engaging in commerce, taking up positions in the church and seeking high government positions.

To understand how religious affiliation might influence Samoan business practices in both Samoa and New Zealand, it is necessary to understand the significance of religion in contemporary Samoan society. This then can serve as a backdrop for understanding

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<sup>89</sup> Samoan cultural traditions

<sup>90</sup> *Tapuaiga* defined as religion in old Samoa where it was referred to what was sacred spirit pertaining to each family hence *tapu* (sacred) *aiga* (family).

<sup>91</sup> Titular or sacred chiefs

<sup>92</sup> Executive chiefs or talking chiefs who speak on behalf of the titular chiefs.

<sup>93</sup> A godly persona in Polynesian folklore.

religion in the New Zealand Samoan community. This section begins with a brief history and description of religion in Samoan society.

The arrival of Christianity in Samoa in the early nineteenth century had a great impact on society. Its influence was enormously important as it solidified the foundations on which the Samoan nation is founded. The nation's motto '*E fa'avae i le Atua Samoa* (Samoa is founded on God) attests to the place of religion in Samoan society. The immense commitment of modern Samoans to church activities is reflected in statistics on religious participation and the place it plays in the people's daily lives (Table 7). The three mainstream religions, the Methodist Church, the London Missionary Society<sup>94</sup> and the Roman Catholic Church arrived in Samoa in 1828, 1830 and 1845, respectively, and established their Christian centres and missions (Macpherson & Macpherson, 2011) in different regions. Although these religions were the first to be established, other religions arrived later. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints arrived in 1888, the Seventh Day Adventist in 1897, and other smaller evangelical churches such as the Assembly of God became established in the later part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Other faiths comprise a small part of the population and their diversity exposing Samoa to the expression and worship of new faiths (Macpherson & Macpherson, 2011).

The 2001 Samoan Census reported 100% religious participation in Samoa. Subsequent Censuses in 2006, 2011 and 2016 showed the distribution across denominations had changed that pointed to a decline in the membership of the main traditional denominations. Statistical evidence shows increased numbers and membership in smaller and newly formed denominations, occurring at the expense of the main established denominations in Samoa. The category of 'Other' represents small groups including the Congregational Church of Jesus, Nazarene, non-denominational Protestant, Baptist, Full Gospel, Voice of Christ, and Worship Centre (Macpherson & Macpherson, 2011).

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<sup>94</sup> This is currently called the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa or *Ekalesia Faalapotopotoga Kerisiano o Samoa*

**Table 7: Church membership in Samoa, 2001 to 2016**

<i>Denomination</i>	2001	2006	2011	2016
Congregational Christian Church Of Samoa	35.0%	33.8%	31.8%	29.0%
Roman Catholic Church	19.7%	19.6%	19.4%	18.8%
Latter-day-Saints	12.5%	13.3%	15.1%	16.9%
Methodist Church of Samoa	15.0%	14.3%	13.7%	12.4%
Assemblies of God	6.6%	6.9%	8.0%	6.8%
Seventh-day Adventist Church	3.5%	3.5%	3.9%	4.4%
Other	7.7%	8.6%	8.1%	11.7%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Sources: Samoa State Department 2016 Census

The arrival of the missionaries in Samoa during the 19<sup>th</sup> century exposed Samoan society to a new form of religion which it embraced and eventually changed the course of its history. A pre-contact polytheistic indigenous religion was replaced by a monotheistic western-styled religion. The new belief system affected many Samoan beliefs and traditions that were based on local spiritual deities connected with districts, villages and individual families (Turner, 1884). These localised spiritual systems controlled and held all authority and were central to the working of pre-contact Samoan society. Christianity's influence was so rapid that by 1846 a Samoan theological institution<sup>95</sup> was educating missionaries and sending them to different parts of Melanesia. This also resulted in the majority of the Samoan population being converted. Over a relatively short time the introduced religion had a notable influence on Samoan culture, replacing traditional deities as the new source of spiritual authority in families and the community (Meleisea, 1987).

However, in most parts of society the newfound interest in Christian teachings did not banish the pre-Christian spiritual agencies. They remained in the background and are often mentioned in village oral histories, oratory and even regularly referenced in pastor's sermons, reflecting the continuing connection between pre-contact culture and the new religions. References to different deities point to the veneration, which they enjoy in

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<sup>95</sup> Malua Theological College

families, villages and the districts to which they belong. A case in point is the respect for the mytho-historical personage of *Nāfanua*<sup>96</sup>, the warrior goddess, who is still revered nationally for her feats in war to free her people from oppression (Meleisea, 1987).

Christianity had a levelling effect on the chiefly hierarchies that defined and maintained the *fa'a-sāmoa*<sup>97</sup>. The divide between the authorities of the *ali'i pa'ā*<sup>98</sup> and *tulāfale*<sup>99</sup> changed from giving power to a few great chiefs or the *alii*, and redefining chiefly power as recognised as secular authority. Meleiseā (1987, p14) asserted that, Christianity was very influential in decentralising the political authority further by 'weakening the beliefs which gave legitimacy to the power of its highest chiefs'. The sacredness of the *ali'i paia*, that characteristically contained elements of *pa'ā* or sacredness and *mana* or divine power, was transferred to the missionaries and their Christian God.

The missionaries also acquired the supernatural power formerly embodied in relationships between brothers and sisters and their descendants and known as the *feagaiga*<sup>100</sup> (Va'a, 2001, Meleisea, 1987). Customarily, this consecrated the relationship between the brother and sister, whereby the brother succeeded to family chiefly titles while the sister was accorded consultative rights in family matters. The sister exercised an overriding veto on the use of family resources and could, if ignored, apply a curse that could result in misfortune and death for those to which it was directed (Tuimāleali'ifano, 1997).

In essence, the elements of *feagaiga* were progressively transferred to the relationship between the church minister and the village, in which the village served as the brother and the pastor as the sister with mutually defined rights and obligations over the other. Mālietoa Vainu'upo<sup>101</sup> set this process in motion when he addressed the missionaries as *susuga*<sup>102</sup> and made them the quasi-sisters of each village, by bestowing on them the

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<sup>96</sup> A warrior goddess revered in Samoan history.

<sup>97</sup> Samoan cultures and customs

<sup>98</sup> Titular chiefs

<sup>99</sup> Executive chiefs who speak on behalf of the titular chiefs

<sup>100</sup> A covenant between a brother and sister that signified the relationship between the Church and its Ministers (sister) and the Congregation or the village (brother)

<sup>101</sup> Samoan high chief during the arrival of Christianity

<sup>102</sup> Addressing someone respectfully, but it is more than this. The *susuga* gives chiefly status, and puts the pastor on an equal footing with the chiefs.

ceremonial address of *fa'a-feagaiga*<sup>103</sup> (Meleisea, 1987). This began the new cultural order that incorporated the western religious model into the *fa'a-sāmoa*. In this sense, the church, according to Meleiseā, not only levelled the distinctions of authority by blunting some of the institutions on which *fa'a-sāmoa* was based, but also changed the authority of the *mātai* that made possible the promotion of the new religion within the context of the *feagāiga*, which Samoans accepted (1987).

Symbolically, the placing of church buildings in the centre of villages indicated that organised Christian religion was increasingly shaping the economic, social, religious and cultural contexts in which an individual's full existence was achieved. One was born and died as a member of an organised church, usually one of the main congregations (Macpherson & Macpherson, 2011). Evidently most villages still held on to the one church policy whereby followers of new religions had to 'walk' and travel to find worship in nearby villages or elsewhere rather than introducing new forms of religions in villages. Conflicts had occurred in the past where new religions, especially new evangelical denominations, were competing with established churches in villages. In most instances, these conflicts resulted in the banishment by the village *fono* of families and individuals who challenged village authority on religious issues.

In the villages, daily activities begin and conclude with prayers. The religious activities during the week included hymn practices by the church choir, the youth groups organising bible studies, and with the women committee's roles revolving around decorating, cleaning and planning the upkeep of the church buildings to make sure they are presentable for Sunday services. The children are taught in *āoga a le faifeāu* or pastors' school and attend daily sessions for religious instruction that are, in most cases, compulsory in villages. Such was the commitment to religion that village members, old and young, congregate at their village churches for as many as two Sunday services, and pray daily for spiritual guidance.

Evening curfews that allow families time for devotions before evening meals are imposed by village authorities. Villagers adhere to these and disobedience would result in

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<sup>103</sup> Formally the church pastor



*fa'asalaga*<sup>104</sup> or disciplining by village authorities. Although village authority remain independent of the church, the pastor's role is vital in village affairs and especially in solving any serious conflicts that might arise. Since the pastors serve at the pleasure of the village council, their position is seen as re-enforcing village political structure and chiefly authority (Va'a, 2001; Meleisea, 1987).

As long as pastors serve their villages in the ways which are expected of them, they are well looked after by the villages. In cases where pastors challenge the authority of the village leadership, they often found their services to be dispensed with. Conversely, as long as chiefs supported the church and the pastor, their authority is effectively enhanced and rarely contested. This symbiotic relationship, in which political and religious authority are tightly held by chiefs and the pastors, contribute to the smooth running of village affairs and hence keeping within the principles of the *feagaiga*<sup>105</sup> (Macpherson & Macpherson, 2011; Va'a, 2001)

### **Commitment to religion in Samoa**

The continuing influences of the churches in Samoa are reflected in the significant amounts of cash, energy and time, which Samoans commit and contribute to the church, as individuals, members of families and of villages. The *Sāmoa National Human Development Report*, 'notes that the close relationship between Samoan values and strong religious convictions is evident in regular societal financial contributions amounting to the largest of household expenditures at SAT 1m per week' (So'o, Va'a, Lafotanoa, 2006, cited in Macpherson and Macpherson, 2011, p, 304-337).

Contributions to the churches in Samoa vary in nature, purpose, and are, for most Samoans, permanent responsibilities that every family commits to at different levels. Firstly, these took the form of regular monetary contributions given as *foa'i*<sup>106</sup> or *ālofa* to the village pastor. In most cases, the contributions included gifts of food, land for the pastor's agricultural usage, labor for manual work as required by the pastor, vehicles and other costs of maintenance for the pastor and his family (Macpherson & Macpherson,

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<sup>104</sup> Penalties meted out by the village councils for breaking polity rules.

<sup>105</sup> Covenant between a brother and sister. Used in Christianity to refer to the covenant between the minister and the congregation.

<sup>106</sup> This gifting is known by different terms in different denominations: the *ālofa* in the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa and the *peleti* in the Methodist Church and the *sefulua'i* in the Mormon Church

2011). Secondly, for the additional spiritual and secular services that pastors provide during the week and throughout the year, people in the village congregations provide cash, food and other things in kind, although they are not expected to contribute yet they still do. Monetary contributions are collected throughout different parts of the year by village organisations such as women's committees and youth groups for national church development programmes. In addition, normal labour and cash are collected for occasional church projects such as building and rebuilding projects not just in the village, but also at the central church level (Macpherson & Macpherson, 2011).

Kerslake (2004) claimed that in most cases, church contributions in Samoa were the first claim on family income with other expenses such as school fees, food, electricity and other household expenses coming second in importance. These contributions are sanctioned by a widespread belief, rooted in biblical assurances and beliefs that are widely quoted in daily discourse, that one will find wellbeing and prosperity through membership and active participation in the church. From the pulpits and sermons, ministers usually deliver their messages of continuous giving. They quote positive biblical messages to empower congregational members to contribute as in the following verse: *... and God is able to give you more than you need, so that you will always have all you need for yourselves and more than enough for every good cause* (Corinthians 9: 8).

Such assurances did not just support and enhance motivation amongst the congregants, but also informed people of their responsibilities to the church. The giving of monetary contributions or tithing underpin a widespread expectation that it is one's duty to give to the church to fund its normal functions. With this commitment to church giving and respect for church, similar levels of respect for state authorities are expected in traditional Samoan society since they formalise roles through obedience. The following passage reflects how biblical teachings reaffirm the collective steadfastness in the 'giving' in fear of challenging God's authority and the leaders for whom there is a belief that such authority had been bestowed: *Everyone must obey the state authorities, because no authority exists without God's permission and the existing authority have been put there by God. Whoever opposes the existing authority opposes what God has ordered; and anyone who does so will bring judgement to himself* (Romans 13:1).

This respect of authority dictates that monetary contributions given to state leaders and heads of churches in Samoa that must not be questioned, as it would be seen as a challenge to these authorities. However, cash contributions, labour, and goods given to the church, are often invested elsewhere by the pastors and church authorities which in many cases, constrain the growth and development of the village economy (Macpherson & Macpherson, 2011). Such extensive commitment to religion was and still is an integral part of *fa'a-sāmoa* and, for the majority of Samoans in the village, the reality of life.

### **Religion and business in Samoan society**

The increasing influences of religion in Samoan society had an effect on almost all areas of social organisation and people's lives. This includes seeking support from migrant entrepreneur members of families and villagers, who live overseas and whose financial support are requested for village projects. The effect of these requests also extended to influence economic organisation and the management of businesses in both the migrant and the village in Samoa. The churches' impact on business takes two forms: for one, it constrains the amount of capital, which business people could commit to investments and reinvestment in their businesses, and for another, it influences the daily budgetary and financial decisions of businesses. For some of the village entrepreneurs, this financial commitment is seen as taxing the business of resources that it would otherwise needs for growth. The following participant points to this issue

*The influences of the church [in Samoa] on the business is tremendous [costly]. My family [business] are big contributors to the church and it is an expectation that the village have on us [family and business]. It is the respect of church that affect [influence] my behaviour [giving] towards it [church] and sometimes slows my [is costly to] business.*

[Participant 19]

In comparison to Samoan business people in the villages in Samoa, they are also, in most cases, Christians and believe that their success in business is the consequence of their service to God and the church. They wish and are expected to show their gratitude in their generosity to the church. Indeed their public generosity may be seen to contribute to the success of their businesses, especially when this giving may lead existing and potential customers to support their businesses. However, this commitment may constrain the value

of their investments when diverted to the church. The negative influence of the church on business also stems from the fact that business operators are expected to contribute more than other members of their congregations, reflecting their commitment to the church; other business operators and members of the community may frown upon them when such expectations are not met as the following village entrepreneur<sup>107</sup> claims:

*My business usually does well here [in the village]. I see other stores down the road struggled but they tried to put on a brave face that they are profitable. For me I think it is all blessings from God and I just do my own business, do my usual church thing [contributions] and don't worry about their backstabbing and blah blah blah. The more they do of that backstabbing the more they lose customers ... I just laugh [at them].*

[Personal correspondence, 2014]

Entrepreneurs might for instance, be expected to hire members of their congregation ahead of other candidates when recruiting labour, or to create employment specifically for members of their congregations. They may also be expected to extend credit to individual church members and to provide services to church projects at no cost. They may be required to provide goods and services at, or below, cost to members of the congregation as an expression of their Christian-based service and, specifically, their willingness to do for others what they would like others to do for them. Business owners are also be expected to commit time and resources to the church and its activities, which they might otherwise invest in their businesses as one participant claims:

*When there are church activities [fundraising], women's groups would grease you up so they get money. So you get hit [asked for donations] with both your father's and your mother's side [villages] when it comes to all that fundraising. When you agree to prices for goods for the village, you get there thinking it is the final price of the goods. However, you get there the village welcome you and will also ask for discounted prices of the goods. So you have to be a bit strong*

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<sup>107</sup> A conversation with a Samoan village entrepreneur was carried out to compare ways Samoan village entrepreneurs and those in the migrant view pressures they face in relation to religious giving.

*[business like] and say to them this is a business we will look at what we can do. They are not rational [fair] at all.*

Participant 6

The business owner's perceived expertise for instance, may lead to them being appointed to leadership positions in the church and to mentoring members of the congregation who are entering business. The extent of such situations vary from one business to another, but few Samoan business owners will deny all requests from the church, or from members of the congregation; they fear losing the support of others, or of being criticised within the church in ways which may jeopardise their reputation in the village. Many Samoan business people accepted that while support for the church might come at a cost to their businesses, it was a necessary condition of doing business in Samoa, and one, which is also borne by most other Samoan-run businesses.

## **6.2 Religion in the migrant Samoan community.**

If the commitment of migrant entrepreneur Samoans to their churches took similar forms to those in Samoa, this could also have some impact on the way they operate their businesses. Migration has exposed Samoans to an increasing number of new worldviews and lifestyles that have changed the basis of the social organisation of overseas Samoan communities. Since the migration to New Zealand that commenced in the early 1950s, the church has had, and continues to play, an important role for Samoans and their communities (Macpherson & Macpherson, 2011). While these changes may not all relate to religion, the changing landscape in religious values may be brought about by new identities and social spaces available in New Zealand society which all contribute to lifestyles and business values, as the following participant notes:

*Yes it's our upbringing and especially with education as well and also our religious backgrounds. We push [educate and accept] here [in the business] Christian values that is accepted to everybody including Muslims and other religions. They all accept that they are common values [in our business]. That is from our strong upbringing in religion [in Samoa].*

[Participant 8]

Statistics on Samoan religious participation in New Zealand show reduced levels of attendance as recorded by the censuses of 2006, 2011 and 2013 (Statistics New Zealand 2013, 2011, 2006). In 2006 census (Statistics NZ 2006), 84.7% total of Samoans in New Zealand were affiliated to a religion compared with the 2013 figure of 83.4%. Seventy six percent of those born in New Zealand were likely to affiliate with one religion compared with 95.2% of those born overseas who belonged to one religion. These figures point to a decrease in religious commitment for the young New Zealand born and migrant population. While this figure is high for Samoan religious commitment when compared with 61% for the whole New Zealand population, there is a significant difference when compared to the 98% of Samoans who claimed church affiliation in Samoa. The statistics indicate that the commitment to religion of Samoans in New Zealand was less intense than that of their kin in Samoa. Table 8 presents aggregated figures for the traditional congregations that present a picture that is consistent with a continuous reduction in numbers in most religions (Statistics New Zealand 2013, 2008, 2006). Different reasons contribute to these variations as the statistics indicated<sup>108</sup>.

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<sup>108</sup> For example in 2013 statistics there was 11.4 % of other Christian groups not further define for the Samoan group. An 'object to answering the questions' option on religion affected the calculation of percentage of responses. Furthermore, religious affiliation included all people who stated each religious affiliation whether as their only religious affiliation or as one of several where a person reported more than one religion, they were counted in each applicable group. Individual figures may not add up to totals and values for the same data may vary in text, tables and graphs. The accuracy of percentages may be affected by this rounding, particularly for ethnic groups like the Samoan group with small populations (Statistics New Zealand 2013)

**Table 8 Church Affiliation in New Zealand Samoan Community**

Denominations	2006	2011	2013
Roman Catholic Church	28 %	22.8 %	22.8 %
Presbyterian, Congregational, Reformed.	22.0 %	17.1 %	17.1 %
Christian religion not further defined			11.4 %
No Religion	11.0 %	14.2 %	14.2 %
Others	20.0 %	11.4 %	3.8 %
Objected to answering			
Total	81 %	65.5 %	69.3 %

Sources: Statistics New Zealand (2006), (2011), (2013).

In New Zealand, the mainstream Samoan religions of the Congregational Christian, Methodist and Roman Catholic churches were organised by the early migrants in much the same way as they were in Samoa, seeking to worship in ways and in a language, which they were familiar with in their home country (Macpherson and Macpherson, 2011). These congregations are affiliated and relied on the Samoan parent churches from where ordained ministers are requested and sent to carry out the same roles and processes for newly established churches in New Zealand. These congregations follow the traditional system of paying pastors by regular offerings called *alofa*<sup>109</sup> and *peleti*, where members of the congregations contribute to the salaries in various amounts augmented through indirect gifting (Taule'ale'ausumai, 2001). This, in most cases, meant that parishioners became involved in the same competitive tithing and expanded contributions for other church activities especially in the case of those with regular and larger pay packets. These tithing practices mirror those of the homeland churches (Macpherson and Macpherson, 2011; Kerslake, 2004).

<sup>109</sup> These are money gifts or payments for pastors, the Congregational Christian Church calls it *ālofa* while the Methodist *peleti*

There are however, some differences in these mainstream churches. Whereas homeland congregations are village-based congregations, in the migrant community, churches are founded by families and kin members, who live close to each other and within close-knit communities in city areas. Secondly, compared to leadership in homeland congregations that are usually dependent on one being a *mātai* and on family standing, migrant congregations are led by those who are senior in the community, with a regular job that can help finance church activities (Taule'ale'ausumai, 2001). Va'a (2001) noted, in his study of migrant Samoans in Canterbury-Bankstown, Australia, that untitled people with their new found wealth through their job opportunities have challenged and demanded equal rights with *mātai* in the allocation of church leadership and community roles. He claims that most church ministers are agreeable to an equal treatment of *mātai* and untitled people when selecting leaders for church positions in order to reduce conflicts and adhere to the economic powerbases being developed in the congregations.

It was obvious to an observer that traditional denominations retained a strong following among early and more recent immigrants who value traditional theological and organisational forms and who are comfortable with the discipline imposed on the members. This respect for traditional affiliations is reflected in the adage '*e sui faiga ae tumau fa'avae*', or while procedures may change, the foundations remain (Macpherson, 2010). This involves not only a preservation of indigenous Christianity but, as Taule'ale'ausumai (2001) claimed, was also about the expression of national, and ethnic identity that serves the traditional power and role of a traditional church minister based on the *feagaiga*<sup>110</sup>. The importance of the *feagaiga* principle in *fa'a-sāmoa* lies in the fact that it gives power to the church minister, who is viewed as sacred chief (Meleisea, 1987). In some cases, this can produce conflicts with unfavourable outcomes.

Recent splits in some traditional churches in the migrant setting reflect this power of the *faifeau*<sup>111</sup> on one hand and splinter groups who are usually led by traditional leaders who disagreed with the *faifeau* over resource management and money allocation. In some cases, these conflicts are a result of the greed and authoritative behaviour of pastors when dealing with church issues. As some of the churches accumulated expensive church

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<sup>110</sup> Covenant between a brother and sister. Used in religion to refer to the relationship between ministers and their congregations or the village and the church.

<sup>111</sup> Church minister or pastor.



buildings and cash resources, more infighting would result in congregations breaking up. Despite the varying degrees of disagreement amongst independent congregations, they continued to follow traditional church practices where culture and family are intricately intermingled. However, migration also exposed Samoans to new forms of worship through different denominations that offered different styles of worship, with fewer financial and emotional demands than those of the traditional churches.

An issue in point was the remuneration of the ministers by their congregations. While traditionally based congregations supported their pastor's salaries through contributions from the congregational members, New Zealand churches such as the Pacific Island Presbyterian Church and the Methodist churches paid their clergy from church head offices. While this practice relieved congregants of the financial pressures, it differed from the traditional churches where people were driven to tithe with the view that those who do not contribute would be punished by God accordingly (Taule'ale'ausumai, 2001)..

Traditional churches and their values are increasingly challenged in expatriate communities as new views on religious organisation, and the acceptance of other faiths, grow in their appeal to the New Zealand born and younger migrants (Lineham, 2013). In some cases, this has to do with the traditional form of religious worship and new faiths. As Tiatia (1998:15) claimed of the Samoan traditional churches, 'the church itself was the issue with the youth as they find the services monotonous and reflective of the traditional ways of the homeland'. Some New Zealand born Samoans, for instance, who are raised in the egalitarian New Zealand society objected to the autocratic exercise of power by pastors within these traditional churches. Others, like women pastors who were brought up with a less gendered view of society, found the highly gendered division of labour within these churches as sexist and unacceptable (Taule'ale'ausumai, 2001). This has led to an increased number of women seeking participation in the ministry and especially with more involvement in community transformation (Lineham, 2013).

Furthermore, with more Samoan women achieving higher education and having successful careers, they too sought rights to hold office at higher levels of church ministries. While New Zealand churches - the Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist and Anglican - allowed the ordination of women as ministers as part of the ministry obligations, traditional churches refrained from such practices (Taule'ale'ausumai, 2001).

Although these changes are accelerating opportunities for women, the barriers of traditionalism, so common in Samoan traditional churches, remain problematic for women (Taule'ale'ausumai, 2001).

Other changes occurred when Samoan denominations tried to break away from their New Zealand denominational head offices, which was not a result a conflict of ideology, but rather a desire around serving the needs of the growing Pacific Island communities. The break away by the Pacific Island Presbyterian Church to serve the Pacific Island community in Auckland is one example. From the Pacific Island Presbyterian Church, another group broke away to form the EFKS<sup>112</sup> to promote a traditional Samoan church that was based on a traditional religious model and values. But this trend did not stop there, as even amongst the individual EFKS churches, there were further breakaways as tensions over practices and traditional authority for leadership persisted (Taule'ale'ausumai, 2001).

Additionally there was confusion amongst some newly established churches in terms of aligning to the New Zealand-based conferences that were associated with mother-churches in Samoa; for example, the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa and the Methodist Church. One of the reasons for a reluctance to join traditional home churches was related to unnecessary responsibilities involving monetary demands on congregations to regularly provide and contribute funds, like churches in Samoa have to endure (Macpherson and Macpherson, 2011). Evidently, while some of the earlier established congregations in New Zealand remained committed and aligned with mother-churches in Samoa, others chose to become independent in order to minimise the reach of the traditional church organisations in Samoa. These are done to avoid financial demands on migrant churches and congregants, which affect their financial resources. The following church elder talked about this issue within his organisation;

*At first we were part and aligned to the main Congregational Christian Church in Samoa. It soon became clear that they were demanding the ownership of the church building and everything to be under their leadership. Then we joined another conference in American Samoa and the same thing happened ... they*

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<sup>112</sup> *Ekalesia Faapotopotoga Kerisiano Samoa* also known as Congregational Christian Church of Samoa.

*were interested in ownership of our church buildings which our congregation and its members had worked hard over the years to pay. They wanted things [management and resources] under their total authority. We walked away from that and now we are independent and everyone in the congregation is happy... we don't have to be undermined by these traditional church authorities anymore.*

(Church Participant, 2011)

However, those remaining in traditional churches criticised those pursuing new evangelical churches as avoiding cultural responsibilities and church tithing. Others, especially those born in New Zealand, saw this as a transition of their lives in New Zealand. Priorities attached to church activities and the commitment of resources and time appeared to be diverging in Samoa and New Zealand (Macpherson & Macpherson, 2011). New forms of fellowship created new options about where and how people could worship and the level of commitment required of them. Attitudes to traditional churches, and new patterns of commitment to religion, began to change among migrants and their children, especially as many of the religious choices, which were not available in Samoa, became available to them in New Zealand. Evangelical churches and new faiths have attracted many migrants and their New Zealand-born children who were raised and educated in a more secular New Zealand society (Lineham, 2013). The renewal of faith, which varied amongst the migrant community, was also associated with a search for identity for the New Zealand born as well for the new migrants who began to express their independence and individual spiritual needs in different ways. This search illustrates the conflict of values between different generations, as their circumstances change (Taule'ale'ausumai, 2001)

It is assumed in this study that factors such as gender, birthplace, age, *mātai* status, educational achievement, and economic freedom are factors associated with the entrepreneurs' choices of supporting and associating with any specific religion. Based on the changing nature and types of religion in New Zealand, the following sections explore ways in which entrepreneurs factor in different levels of support for religion in their businesses and how these affect their businesses.

### **6.3 Religion and business in the migrant Samoan community**

Religious practices changed progressively over the years for many Samoans in New Zealand since the migration periods of the 1950s and 1960s. For many of these earlier migrants, these changes were a response to the social spaces and the multicultural settings to which all Samoans in New Zealand were adjusting and exposed. These changes also helped to shape different identities for the New Zealand born and recent Samoans migrants that affect religious, social, political and economic life. The variety of religions and types of worship found in New Zealand have had an impact in different ways on Samoan entrepreneurs and their businesses. Despite the different preferences for styles of worship and commitment to churches, Samoans in New Zealand tend to remain actively committed to some form of religion. Although it seems that the commitment to traditionally styled churches has been the choice for some migrants with strong affiliations to *fa'a-sāmoa*, this was not the case for some of the New Zealand born and new migrants who have drifted more into evangelical churches (Lineham, 2013).

With religious freedom in New Zealand, roles in the ecclesiastical settings have increasingly allowed equal participation for women. Different denominations like the Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptists churches have, since the 1960s, no longer confined women to traditional positions of minister's and deacon's wives, but rather have ordained them into the ministries (Taule'ale'ausumai, 2001). As well as providing equal participation in ministry functions, these changes have also created role reversals amongst Samoan women that have expanded to other spheres and opportunities in the migrant setting, including professional careers and entrepreneurship. Such changes have led to challenges of cultural protocols relating to Samoan female roles that were historically structured around community welfare in the Samoa community and are now changing in the migrant setting (Dunlop-Fairburn, 1999).

It is not surprising that women's educational achievements and their increased political and business participation in New Zealand have helped break down cultural barriers that were inhibiting their professional advancement in traditional Samoa society. These freedoms allow women to contribute equally, or even more than their male counterparts, to decisions and the working of *fa'a-sāmoa* in the migrant settings. Furthermore the

freedom to make choices in their professional lives allow women to challenge their migrant parent's religious values and culture, giving them the choice of whether or not to contribute and commit resources to religion. The following entrepreneurs commented on the changing roles and contribution of social capital and entrepreneurship by female entrepreneurs:

*Women are the backbone of our community [whether it is New Zealand or Samoa]. Men just sit on their backside and talk crap [rubbish]. My team [management] are full of women who are very skilful and committed managers [to business]*  
[Participant 18...Male Participant]

*Samoan culture is an inhibiting factor with business [this cultural thing is male based and too much [too restrictive] to get [hear and appreciate] the women's voice [in management issues] but in New Zealand now we make our own business decisions]*

[Participant 16 ... Female Participant]

*I add a bit of personal touch [social and cultural experience] here [in the business]. I would like to explain the food that I am serving no matter the nature of it. It is important for me to do [clarify management issues] that. There are a lot of cultures and especially our Samoan culture that men are seen to be more dominant. I balance that because I bring my mother's dominance and I set everybody right. For me it is important to communicate and having an understanding of culture [like our fa'a-samoa] is important [to get things done]. I always have to give a reason why things are done.*

[Participant 17-Female Participant]

There are also other priorities that appear to be developing for entrepreneurs in the migrant community when committing business support to church activities. There is reduced support for traditional Samoan churches which may be a result of conflicts between evangelical concepts and traditional Samoan churches (Taule'ale'ausumai, 2001). For entrepreneurs they see this conflict relating to demands for resources and financial contributions by traditional churches that are in most cases burdensome. These

tensions may have forced entrepreneurs to reduce and redefine their commitment and support for religion and *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations.

### **Entrepreneurs who support religion**

Business support for religion in the migrant setting varies from one business to another, with many contributing factors. Due to insufficient data on religion and entrepreneurship for the migrant Samoan population in New Zealand, it is possible to claim that support for religion by entrepreneurs varies from one entrepreneur to another, and that this support follows social trends that have influenced and challenged *fa'a-sāmoa* institutions in the migrant setting. Factors such as the business experience of the entrepreneurs, their educational achievement, *mātai* status, place of birth, age and gender may influence the declining and differing levels of support for religion. Because religion is an institution intricately linked to *fa'a-sāmoa*, its influence is relevant to Samoan peoples' lives and in this sense entrepreneurship. This raises the important issue of how the characteristics of entrepreneurs' relate to their support of religion.

One of the key tasks for this section is to examine the extent of a Samoan entrepreneur's support of religion and the influence of religion on their business practices. The question: *how does your church involvement influence your business practice?* sought to establish different levels of involvement in religion and to what extent this impacts on the business practices of three groups of entrepreneurs. The three groups are (1) those entrepreneurs who are highly committed and support church activities, (2) those who do not support church activities, and (3) those who are committed to the church on a selective basis. The diversity within the sample reflects a number of trends in the way in which participants commit resources to religion. Table 9 below shows the distribution for each of the entrepreneur's background characteristics for those who support religion. Patterns in these distributions may provide insight into how differing characteristics relate to varying degrees of motivation and commitment to religion and to decisions with respect to using business resources to support religious practices.

**Table 9. Samoan entrepreneurs who support religion**

Characteristic		Percentage	Number
Gender	Male	77	10
	Female	23	3
	Total	100	13
Birthplace	Samoa	92	12
	New Zealand	8	1
	Total	100	13
Generation	1st Generation	54	7
	1.5 Generation	38	5
	2nd Generation	8	1
	Total	100	13
Age	30-40 years	23	3
	41-70 years	77	10
	Total	100	13
Matai Status	No	38	5
	Yes	62	8
	Total	100	13
Educational Level	University	38	5
	Technical	15	2
	School	46	6
	Total	100	13

Sixty two percent (13) of the entrepreneurs supported religion. Seventy seven percent (10) of the participants of this group were men and 23% (3) were women. The number of female entrepreneurs who support religion may indicate their changing roles in the migrant setting, where their influences in financial affairs are acknowledged in their families, communities, and churches. Twelve (92%) participants were born in Samoa, with one (8%) born in New Zealand. This may indicate the connectedness of the majority of these entrepreneurs to cultural and traditional religious values. The ages ranged from 34 to 70 years. Three (23%) are 30 to 40 years; three (23%) are 41 to 50 years, with seven (54%) over 50 years of age. This range of ages amongst the entrepreneurs reflect levels of acculturation in *fa'a-sāmoa*. The levels of cultural and religious commitment are the highest for those over 50 years old.

The data points to the variety of faiths attended by the entrepreneurs; they belong largely to the traditional churches with three (23%) Catholics, two (15 %) Presbyterian, two (15%)

EFKS or Congregational, three (23%) Methodist, one (8 %) Pentecostal, one (8%) Multi-cultural, and one (8%) Seven-Day Adventist. The commitment to the main Christian religions may reflect the traditional church following of the entrepreneurs' migrant parents and the cultural religious requirements that may not always be followed by the younger migrant generations, but still may have some influence on their support of religion. Although there is a spread amongst these traditional religious bases, choices for new faiths amongst the New Zealand born and younger generations in the migrant settings are evident.

There are eight (62%) *mātai* in this group with the minimum age being forty years. These characteristics may suggest an extensive association and commitment to religion as leaders and representatives of families; hence, it is logical to expect such people to support religion. In traditional-based Samoan churches, being a *mātai* carries more weight and prestige when leadership issues are contested. There is a wide spread in educational qualifications for this group: five (39%) participants with university qualifications (4 - 31% - males and 1 - 8% - female), two (15%) with technical training and six (46%) with high school level qualifications (4 or 31% males and 2 or 15% females). This varied education may indicate levels of experience that allow them to make decisions and transform their own opportunities with an awareness of religious freedom in the migrant setting. While the characteristics of the participants who were committed to religion differ from one another, they did not explain levels of commitment of business resources to church activities. Membership and commitment to a religion or church for some of the participants was also associated with family and community. Such association and connection may also work both ways for businesses. The following section considers some of the responses from entrepreneurs who supported religion.

### **Church as a source of community and business networks**

The church benefits by having its activities supported by the community. Commitment to religion for some entrepreneurs fulfils their spirituality and traditional family obligations. For some entrepreneurs, the added bonus of developing networks in the church provides, promotes and supports business, as the following participants noted:

*Yes, we go to the local Catholic Church just down the road. Yes, because my kids go to the church school as well and my family who have been active at the church*



*for the last 30 years. We support it through newsletters and I get a little bit of business from it. Therefore, I must say that any business I get from that covers the cost of advertising and it is good to involve with church as part of our community support.*

[Participant 10]

*Yes, we participate heavily in church activities, but now our children are carrying on. They are taking on their part...our son is a chairman of the pastor council. However, we also believe that the more we give the more we get. We believe in that principle of reciprocity.*

[Participant 8]

### **Integral part of culture**

Some entrepreneurs are committed to a religion because it is embodied in the *fa'a-sāmoa*. The institutions of *aiga*, *lotu* and *nuu* (family, religion and community) are pillars that bind and influence the lives of Samoans in different contexts with direct and indirect outcomes. The following participants discussed how religion relates to their situation:

*Two important things to a Samoan are culture and church...they go together and sometimes the church is too much for people's lives. Even when I came to New Zealand, the church is the forefront of everything and culture second. So for me the church affected me because of my father was a devout churchman, it was the backbone of my life and it did control our lives. These were guidelines that influenced and affected my family and business life: [for example] do not misguide or rip off people; you must help people regardless of whether you were paid or not, you just help them out, your reward would come later.*

[Participant 11]

*Culture and church are good and it depends on the individual, how strong they are not to fall into that trap because I have gone through the whole thing with the family and our church. I always think if we have better access to resources, so we [should] do more than everyone else...we do anyway but we don't do it stupid. When we do donations for family [church donations] ... when they do \$50, I do \$100, as some of them do not earn much. Quite often, they play the*

*culture thing... However, there are some things you do because you have to, you do not argue, my parents passed away and they influenced my life in the giving thing [to church] and I am not sure if my kids will carry on. In addition, one of the faifeau (church minister) was saying in one service...yeah what we are giving here (tithing) is only a small portion of what you (God) has given us and now we are giving it back for your work. Then he said something 'what we got is not ours' and what you have given us we have just given you a little portion. Then all of a sudden, I see that giving to the church is part of it. In addition, we are not going to take it with us. We are given the responsibilities in business to do the best we can.*

[Participant 21]

*I am very involved. Church is a daily part of our living and it comes with a lot of obligations and blessings as well. I have many testimonies about blessings...and God is a key part of the Samoan culture we adopt it as part of our business as well.*

[Participant 5]

### **Managing of religious expectations and the church**

Religion for some of the participants is seen as normal, having accepted it as part of their lives. They are committed to it, finding ways of managing and balancing the responsibilities of business and church:

*In terms of tithing for the church I do ... but only If I can afford it [when business could afford it].*

[Participant 19]

*I am involved in church big time but I manage these well. I show fa'aāloālo, respect and humbleness, but I manage these responsibilities well I don't go overboard [overspending and overcommitting to church otherwise the business suffer]*

[Participant 6]

### **Commitment to religion related to blessings**

Those who are heavily committed to religion stated that their commitment stemmed from their spiritual upbringing and the belief in the numinous or receiving spiritual blessings. They view their Christian fellowships as more important than the financial benefits they offer, as the following participants pointed out:

*I am very involved [in church]. Church is a daily part of our living and it comes with a lot of obligations and blessings as well... I have many testimonies about blessings...and God is a key part of the Samoan culture. We adopt it [religion] as part of our business as well.*

[Participant 14]

*From a moral principle standing, yes it's a [church] huge part of what we practiced as Christians but I don't like for my church to think that I am a ....[business] and that they are expected to automatically use my services. No, they are not obligated to use me [service], they are entitled to go out and use others [businesses]. However, you when you deal with everyone [including businesses] from all occupations, it is a blessing referred to gains socially and economically].*

[Participant 7]

### **Economic benefits, which stem from social networking within religion**

People choose to attend other church denominations to obtain what works for them and their businesses. This suggests more choices and the possibilities of life in an egalitarian society such as New Zealand where people choose different churches that suit their lives, businesses and circumstances, as the following participants noted:

*I am in a palagi [European] church now, where I feel in control. They give me receipts that I make claims on but some Samoan churches, they don't do that. If I know that I give 1dollar to church and get back 33 cents<sup>113</sup> then I will be happy to support the church.*

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<sup>113</sup> Reference receipts given for church donations used for income tax returns.

[Participant 14]

*I attend the local [Palagi] Presbyterian Church where I live. We do not do fa'alavelave as the Samoan churches did. I like the effective management of church resources there. We tithe and all costs and management fees are done through that. There is no mismanagement or rip offs by people there, which I really hated in some traditional based Samoan churches.*

[Participant 19]

### **Different choices about religion in the migrant environment**

The trends in the migrant environment have produced contemporary types of fellowship and religious organisations that provide choices of worship for migrants, which for some have served and suited their spiritual needs. These changes further promote the notion of individualism over collectivism that are not common in traditional Samoan religions, as the following participants claim of these trends:

*O a'u ma la'u sikaili, ou te lotu Mamona nei, Asofitu, Metokisi, PIC. [one day I attend the Mormon church, the next, Seventh Day Adventist, Methodist, PIC...] It is just the way now in New Zealand [there are so many options]. E tasi lava le Silisili Ese e tapuai i ai [there is only one God people worship]*

[Participant 4]

*There are many types of churches in New Zealand now and it's almost full of churches and ministers [this is different from Samoa where we have only one church in our village]. I go to church whenever I need to as they [choice of a different churches] are all the same now [he goes to his original church now and then]*

[Participant 12]

### **Seeking new forms of worship**

There is intergenerational support for religion. However, it is common with some of the New Zealand-born generations, who were raised according to their parent's cultural values, to maintain some form of religious ties. Not all entrepreneurs disregard their

religious upbringing, but rather seek other means of worship. Some of the entrepreneurs born in migrant settings, for example, do not understand Samoan culture and the nature of traditional churches and therefore seek out new forms of worship that suit their lives. The following participant represents this sentiment:

*The next generations [ New Zealand born] have a totally new way of thinking they don't want to go to Samoan churches because they don't understand it [Samoan religiosity], so we are going to find the new different generation coming through[that have choices of religion that suit them]. I am probably the last of that generation [who support the traditional church]*

[Participant 21]

The variety of reasons for entrepreneurs' support of religion in the migrant environment are based on both their loyalty to traditional religious identities and their commitment to certain core values that are both family and culturally oriented. All of the participants, except one, in this category were born in Samoa, which indicates that their commitment to religion is part of the obligation and expectations associated with *fa'a-sāmoa*. Support for religious activities is high for this group, citing the reciprocal and economic nature associated with blessings for businesses. Another group of Samoan entrepreneurs, for one reason or another, did not support religion. The following section focuses on this group and the extent of their deliberate effort to restrain their support of religion in the migrant environment.

### **Entrepreneurs who do not support religion**

There are five entrepreneurs in this category, all with different backgrounds. Their unwillingness to support religious demands may reflect for some the freedoms of New Zealand's egalitarian society. These freedoms allow them to challenge traditional religious protocols that they see as irrelevant in their lives. For some entrepreneurs, religious tensions are ideological in nature, which they find in conflict with their business values. It is not surprising that new religious trends have been adopted, reflecting the desire for new forms of worship and evangelical leadership, often found in newer charismatic churches. In this sense, the collective religious identities that had been developed around family and the community have been challenged by not committing to

religious activities. Table 10 below presents the profile of the entrepreneurs who do not support religion.

**Table 10. Samoan entrepreneurs who do not support religion**

Characteristic		Percentage	Number
Gender	Male	40	2
	Female	60	3
	Total	100	5
Birthplace	Samoa	80	4
	New Zealand	20	1
	Total	100	5
Generation	1st Generation	20	1
	1.5 Generation	80	4
	2nd Generation	0	0
	Total	100	5
Age	30-40 years	60	3
	41-70 years	40	2
	Total	100	5
Matai Status	No	100	5
	Yes	0	0
	Total	100	5
Educational Level	University	40	2
	Technical	60	3
	School	0	0
	Total	100	13

Twenty four percent (5) of all entrepreneurs are represented in this group with 60 % (3) being female and 40% (2) being male. The similar number of females in this category compared to the previous one may be associated with decision making relating to business priorities, rather than religious and cultural influences. Four (80%) participants were Samoan-born and one New Zealand-born. There is low commitment from the four 1.5 generation entrepreneurs that included the three female entrepreneurs. This non-committal toward religion may reflect different experiences of the entrepreneurs in the migrant environment. This group is younger than the previous group who supported religion. This may indicate a lesser commitment and relevance of religion and the community in their lives in the migrant setting.

The ages of the participants range from 35 to 70 years. Sixty percent (3) are under 40 years old, with 40% (2) over 41 years, all representing different religious commitment and cultural values.

There are no matai in this group, which may generally indicate a greater freedom to choose not be involved with any religious responsibilities. This group had high levels of tertiary education with three (60%) with technical qualifications and two (40%) with University degrees, factors which also relate to managing efficiencies with business resources. The following themes show aspects of religion and the way these entrepreneur's are disconnected from supporting religion with their businesses.

### **Independence of religious influences**

For some entrepreneurs, their backgrounds and upbringing have reinforced their beliefs and the freedom to choose what role the church plays in their lives and New Zealand businesses. Non-participation in church may be seen as a renunciation of *fa'a-sāmoa* or the realisation that religion may not satisfy their spiritual needs or have relevance in their lives as the following participant claimed:

*No ... [I don't attend church] ... I know who the man [God] is. I have an idea of what the Bible says...we all have different orientations. God did not ask you to go church as long as you know who he is, and respect who he is. You can pray at your own home. My father never believed in it [the church].*

[Participant 16]

### **Conflict and cultural expectation**

Experiences with the church and its cultural requirements, and specifically the pressures for more and larger contributions, stopped others from participating in church activities. Such experiences reflected not just conflicts of culture, but also the pervasive influence of the church in people's lives and businesses, as this participant notes:

*At church, it is even worse because you will be shamed in front of the whole congregation if you give very little [tithing]. No, I am not involved at any church*

*activities at all. Because of the ula ah! (mockery) ... they mock each other<sup>114</sup> to death almost and it is so shameful.*

[Participant 20]

### **Other means of spirituality**

Other forms of spirituality and means of spiritual fulfilment were sought in the migrant setting, replacing the traditional religious practices, as indicated by the following participant:

*No I'm not involved in church activities... but I meditate often ... I'm into the spiritual health [using other alternatives].*

[Participant17]

### **Dominant religious values**

For one participant non-participation in religion is normal. Traditional religious values are usually relevant to the older generations, yet they could withdraw their support for religion when it is no longer valuable to their businesses or lives, as the following entrepreneur attested:

*I do not attend church ....not like some of my cousins who do the choir thing [committed to choir and regularly attending church]. I am a Catholic and my faith has been breathed in to us [siblings and family]. Therefore, it was a bit too much.*

[Participant 2]

### **Dislike for the manipulative nature of the church**

Another participant did not support religion because it is seen as manipulative. Churches are now perceived by some to be about making money and having veered away from their traditional roles of providing divine inspirations for its members. There was rejection of traditional interpretations of the religious ethos that was seen as part of *fa'a-sāmoa* practices:

*No, I am not involved in church at all. You are brainwashed with Samoans [and their churches]... Samoan culture is always about giving, but now it is about*

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<sup>114</sup> Reference to the pestering and backstabbing



*competing ... it makes people poor...they give away too much [contributions to the church] because of pride. Those [churches] are good institutions and now [becoming] money-orientated.*

[Participant 9]

Although the number of people in this group is small, it is obvious that these participants value their independence and do not follow any organised Christian religion. Each of the participants have given different reasons for their isolation from religious involvement. Their generally higher level of western education may indicate that their association with any religion has been evaluated in terms of the advantages and disadvantages it brought to their businesses and lives. The demands on resources to serve *fa'a-sāmoa* and traditional religions have caused many to stop participating, or change churches and shift to denominations that they see as less taxing on resources that are otherwise required for their businesses. This whole issue can be seen broadly as being related to a conflict between collective and individual norms, where this group of entrepreneurs tends to favour the individual and hence are more likely to isolate themselves from any religious commitment.

### **Entrepreneurs who selectively support church**

Another group support religion selectively compared to the participants mentioned above. This group sometimes have based their support on their experiences of church politics. These participants prioritise and manage their business resources by not overcommitting to church activities.

**Table 11. Samoan entrepreneurs who support religion selectively**

Characteristic		Percentage	Number
Gender	Male	100	3
	Female	0	0
	Total	100	3
Birthplace	Fiji	33	1
	New Zealand	67	2
	Total	100	3
Generation	1st Generation	33	1
	1.5 Generation	80	0
	2nd Generation	67	2
	Total	100	3
Age	30-40 years	33	1
	41-70 years	67	2
	Total	100	3
Matai Status	No	33	1
	Yes	67	2
	Total	100	3
Educational Level	University	33	1
	Technical	33	1
	School	33	1
	Total	100	3

There are three entrepreneurs over 37 years in this category. All are males with two (67%) being *mātai* and one (33%) with no title. None of the entrepreneurs in this group was born in Samoa, which may help to explain their non-participation in religion; two (67%) participants were born in New Zealand with one (34%) born in Fiji. Education qualifications varied for this group with one participant having school level education, one with a university degree and another with technical training, which may explain their experience in managing cultural and religious priorities that can affect their businesses.

### **Negative experiences of religious demands**

For this group, the negative experiences of religious demands and their influence on their businesses may have caused them to assess their involvement with religion. One entrepreneur previously participated and supported a church, but decided to participate only when he sees fit because of his negative experiences with church politics. He

understood where the line was drawn with the church and its role in the obligations between family and church. He dislikes what he sees when the church leaders manipulate people and mismanage resources. He prioritises family commitments rather than religious responsibilities, as he claims:

*O mea-fa'aleloku [those church activities] and that [other, ia e fuafua lelei ma fai fa'alelei mea a le kou āiga [your family obligations needed to be properly planned as those are your responsibilities]. I don't go nor involve in church much. I believe in God but not those people [references to the church leaders] and the mis-management they do [with church resources].*

[Participant 18]

### **Business benefits of associating with church**

Another participant supported the church partly because his business benefits from church clients. He reasons that work commitments and financial considerations limit his attendance and commitment to church activities;

*I have very little involvement in church because of my work. However, before these projects started in Samoa I was attending church everyday [every Sunday]. It was usually my time to talk to elders at church and discussing what needs to be done [for the projects].*

[Participant 1]

### **Prioritising business resources**

Selective religious commitment of resources comes as no surprise for one entrepreneur, as security of the immediate family were more important than committing to any church related activities. The following entrepreneur, who balances commitment to church activities and family requests, claimed:

*I am not a full churchgoer and I believe in God and the devil. My father does all that [church activities] ... have to keep the missus [wife] happy ... her arguing [all the time] why I give so much [money for church and fa'alavelave].*

[Participant 1]

It is evident from some entrepreneurs that they were selective in the way they offered support for religion. Two of the participants in this group were born in New Zealand and one in Fiji. This may help explain the relative lack of empathy and commitment to traditional religion and culture compared to that shown by the first group. Two of the New Zealand-born were married to white New Zealanders, something which may also help explain their reluctance to support religion. This non-participation may also reflect the priorities they have for the security of their businesses, taking precedence over religion.

## 6.4 Discussion

This chapter identified two general trends in the religious behavior of Samoan entrepreneurs in the New Zealand Samoan community. Firstly, views on religion and its role in both culture and entrepreneurship are diverging. Religion is one of the main institutions of the *fa'a-sāmoa*. Together with family and the community, it provides the intricate support for culture and social relationships secured by the *feagaiga*. For traditional churches based in Samoa, their authority is centred around the family and villages that are controlled by *mātai* and elders. Their control of resources, like that of land, through village *fono* gives them the authority to dictate the political, social and economic aspects of life relative to the requirements of religion in the community. Based on the principle of *feagaiga*<sup>115</sup> the place of religion or church in Samoan society demonstrates the respect that existed in the relationships between the village and the church.

Accordingly, the church and its representative, the *faiifeau*<sup>116</sup>, are given certain privileges, kindnesses, services and obligations by a village. The *faiifeau* in effect has been transformed as the sacred chief with all the respect awarded to a titular chief. In return, he must attend and perform pastoral duties for the village. His position is not only impartial, in the sense that he is not to be directly involved in village, district or national politics, but must be concerned with caring for the spiritual welfare of the village (Va'a,

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<sup>115</sup> A covenant between a brother and sister or descendants of brother and a sister. This also refers to the relationship between the church and the village or the church minister and his congregation.

<sup>116</sup> Church minister

2001; Meleisea, 1987). This *feagaiga* covenant that formed the basis of respect and honours for the church and its ministers has been in place since the arrival of Christianity in Samoa. The purpose of this arrangement is to provide a balance in all affairs of the village, with all the parties involved in the *feagaiga* carrying out their roles and obligations. Those who are *mātai*, for example, must understand and keep these roles based on *vā-feāloāloa'i, alofa, and tausi-feagaiga*<sup>117</sup>.

Secondly, the number of different religions available in New Zealand has brought about changes in the types of worship in the Samoan community. These prompt different levels of support from entrepreneurs. New social spaces in the migrant environment have not only redefined Samoan identities, but also the actions of Samoan migrants and entrepreneurs have deliberately accelerated these changes to fit the context of New Zealand society. The *feagaiga* principle that had secured religion's place in Samoan society has changed in the migrant environment. Its effectiveness for many migrants, New Zealand born generations and entrepreneurs in general no longer has the respect it once had (Va'a, 2001). It is clear that the egalitarian nature of New Zealand society and the changing attitudes of Samoan communities towards new evangelical religions has conflicted with traditional religious practices that are upheld by some sections of the population and rejected by others.

One of the questions raised in this research was, whether gender, birthplace, age, *mātai* status, and the level of education of the entrepreneurs contribute to the variations in commitment to religion, and if so, how did these factors affect the way(s) and levels business owners support religion? The data points to different values and levels of support for religion from the three groups of entrepreneurs: those who committed business support to religion, those who did not and those who selectively supported religion. This division reflects the varying degrees of participation by entrepreneurs in religion and its influences on their businesses.

The data shows that 62% of the *mātai* entrepreneurs support religious activities while those who are not *mātai* do not support. The higher support for religion amongst *mātai* is consistent with leadership integral to *fa'asāmoa* obligations. However, this does not

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<sup>117</sup> Serving and honoring the covenants

necessarily mean that *mātai* entrepreneurs in the migrant environment have the freedom to choose any religious denomination to participate in, or that such a decision would have led to withholding support for the church. The data shows that 10% (2) of *mātai* entrepreneurs who support religion managed and balanced these responsibilities selectively, so that any over-commitment of business resources to religious obligations do not beset their operations.

Religious commitment differed amongst those entrepreneurs born in Samoa and other places, those born in Samoa and raised in New Zealand, and those born in New Zealand. The differences are relatively modest, but consistent with a secularising influence of the migrant environment. Ninety-two percent of those who ‘support religion’ were born in Samoa. This is compared to 80% of those that ‘do not support religion’, with none in the category of ‘selectively supporting religion’. These differences suggest that while the importance of religion remains strong among those with cultural attachments to Samoa, the effects of the social spaces, new identities and freedoms in the secular New Zealand society contribute to the variety of this support.

The data also points to education as having an influence on entrepreneurs when evaluating their support for religion. There was a spread of educational qualifications amongst the different entrepreneurs. Sixty two percent (13) of the entrepreneurs ‘who supported religion’ had a good spread of qualifications among them. Five (39%) had a university qualification, two (15 %) had a technical qualification and there were six (46%) with school education. Although the number of entrepreneurs in the category of those ‘who did not support religion’ was small (five entrepreneurs), they had the highest level of tertiary achievements; 100% had either a university or technical qualification. The three (14%) who ‘selectively supported religion’, had a more mixed educational background, with one with a university degree, one with a technical qualification and one with just school qualifications. Although these samples show different levels of support amongst the entrepreneurs, education seems to be relevant to rational decision making about disbursement, as well as the social networks for businesses that develop an awareness of the impact of financial support for religion and for its likely benefit or setback for a business.

Gender also appears to play a role in committing business support for religion. Thirteen (62%) of all the entrepreneurs support religion, with 10 (77%) being males and 3 (23%) being females. Five or 24% entrepreneurs do not support religion with two males and three females. Those who 'support religion selectively' 3 (14 %) are all males. It is not surprising that the higher number of males supporting religion relates to their roles of supporting the obligations of *fa'a-sāmoa*. The support of religion from female entrepreneurs split 50-50 between those who support and those who do not support religion. The variations amongst female entrepreneurs may reflect ways in which entrepreneurs manage business resources on one hand, while on the other there is the experiences of traditional religion and *fa'a-sāmoa* that suppress the economic and political influence of women. Attitudes toward religion vary, with three of the entrepreneurs under 60 years not supporting religion, while two over 70 years and one under 40 years supporting religion. All female entrepreneurs were married to New Zealanders who are not Samoans and therefore reflect differing values and relevance regarding religion in their businesses. This in essence may also reflect greater gender equality, identifying or redefining ethnicity belongingness of entrepreneurs to certain status or certain migrant groups the migrants feel at ease in. Identification in groups like those born in New Zealand or the educated or the non-religious may also create access to business and professional opportunities for women in New Zealand. On the other hand, this may also mean that the support for religion from female entrepreneurs will diminish over time as they chose not to participate in these activities. The data indicated that those who did not support religion were more independent, and operated their businesses in isolation from the Samoan community networks. Over all, the majority of the support for religion came from those over 60 year old (33%) compared to all the other entrepreneurs, reflecting further religious support connected to cultural values of *fa'a-sāmoa*. This further indicates the variety of support, the experiences and strategies entrepreneurs employ when supporting religion in secular New Zealand secular.

## 6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has considered the changing nature of religion in the migrant Samoan community not just from within, but also from outside. Increased time and exposure to New Zealand's more secular and varied society seems to have weakened, but by no means

destroyed, traditional practices of *fa'a-sāmoa* with respect to religion. Gender, birthplace, age, *mātai* status and education among others seem to be related to these changes. For Samoan entrepreneurs, serving *fa'a-sāmoa* and different types of worship in the migrant environment, whether it is Evangelical or a traditional Samoan religion, has to be balanced with the way they live and manage their businesses. The *feagaiga* principle that strengthens religion in Samoan society does not carry the same force in terms of obligations and loyalty for many of the Samoans and entrepreneurs in the migrant community. Its relevance for many Samoans and entrepreneurs alike has changed; there are many who are less likely to follow and respect its practices. The egalitarian nature of New Zealand society has increasingly allowed many migrant Samoans and entrepreneurs to choose between types of worship that are best applicable to their lives and businesses, allowing them to manage the inconveniences of *fa'a-sāmoa*. The following chapter examines another institution of *fa'a-sāmoa*, the community that is undergoing change in the migrant setting. The chapter will explore whether these challenges are similar or not to those that influence religion.



# CHAPTER SEVEN: COMMUNITY

## Introduction

The preceding two chapters have explored how entrepreneurs managed their personal and business relationships with their families and churches. This chapter explores the other institution of *fa'a-samoa*<sup>118</sup>, the community, and its influence on Samoan businesses. In Samoa, some business people live in their village communities where they operate businesses and the support they give the community is visible. The level and nature of this support may have an effect on the viability of their businesses. In some cases, village people conduct their businesses outside their communities, and therefore the businesses do not rely on the community for survival. Yet these same villagers, who also reside in villages, are expected to contribute to its affairs and upkeep. In New Zealand, there are no set boundaries in terms of what migrants define as a village community, as the business people may live within or outside the communities where their businesses are located. New social spaces in the migrant environment have presented Samoan entrepreneurs with opportunities that allow them to define their relationships with their communities in ways quite different to those found in Samoa.

This chapter consists of five sections. Section 1 examines the significance of the community in traditional Samoan society. It explains the influence of the community and cultural environment on the way entrepreneurs operate their businesses within the confines of the village settings. Section 2 outlines ways the community and businesses connect in the migrant environment where Samoan culture is reshaped. It reviews ways in which entrepreneurs are influenced by the community expectations that are continually imposed on their operations. Section 3 analyses the entrepreneur's responses on three levels reflecting the different degrees to which they commit support for community initiatives, namely: entrepreneurs who commit business resources to support community activities; those who deliberately exclude themselves from supporting community; and those who selectively support community requests. Their responses are explored to find out whether characteristics such as gender, place of birth, age, *mātai* status, and education

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<sup>118</sup> Samoan customs and traditions

influence the management of their businesses. Section 4 provides a discussion on the context in which the support for community varies amongst the entrepreneurs. Section 5 concludes the chapter.

## **7.1 The community in Samoan society**

In Samoan society, almost all social action takes place within one of three sets of social relationships: the family, the church, and the village or community. The terms village and community are used interchangeably in this study to reflect the trends occurring in both the traditional Samoan village and the Samoan community in New Zealand. While in Samoan society membership in family, religion and village overlap to some extent, they are also discrete and help define all areas of a Samoan life and existence. Individuals who wish to live in Samoa must understand their place and relationship within each of three broad institutions. This involves identifying the social roles within each of these spheres that people are expected to play at various points in their lives and then carrying out these roles in ways that meet the expectations of those who judge these roles. For the purposes of this chapter, community or *nu'u* refers to a set of relationships that exist as a social grouping, where members recognise a common or shared identity. Neither family nor church fully encompass community relationships.

In Samoa, people are typically identified by and with others as members of a village. People also identify themselves with the village that they call their home. In the village community, one identifies with others who are connected to him or her through a web of kinship ties that connect families together. Village communities are important entities in traditional Samoan society because one's association with a village is derived from and shaped by its historical geopolitical structures. People who claim membership of a village are the heirs of founding ancestors; they are bound to honour the historical legacy of the village (Macpherson and Macpherson, 2009, Va'a, 2001). When all village members meet, their obligations and duties reflect the different roles that each person or group plays as part of the collective. All of this points to the strength of kinship ties that unite every member, making it a united and strong social and political entity. In return, individuals and families derive benefits, be they social, political or economic, from their association with a strong and respected village.

However, where members are dispersed overseas their home villages may either strengthen or weaken. (Macpherson & Macpherson, 2009). Villages are strengthened when their migrant members continually contribute through remittances to village projects that improve its development and at the same time raise the social profiles of families whose members provide such support (Macpherson & Spoonley, 2004). Villages are weakened, on the other hand, when members migrate to overseas destinations, depleting it of the manpower that provides the *tautua* for its daily activities. In this sense, unity in both the home in Samoa and the migrant community in New Zealand depends on the strength of its leadership and the membership that helps provide fundraising activities that support its upkeep. These activities, that are usually financially oriented, take place in the migrant setting (Macpherson and Macpherson, 2009; Va'a, 2001).

The traditional village, led by the *mātai*, undertakes projects on behalf of the families that make up the village. These projects are beyond the capacity of individual families and are for the benefit of all in the village. Such projects include building roads to the village plantations, school buildings, agricultural and farmland clearance, and preserving and conserving sea resources. All those who claim membership in villages are required to take part in community projects, in varying capacities. While the nature of the service will vary from one individual to another within one's family and village, there is an expectation that service rendered would result in some possible recognition and rewards including chiefly titles (Huffer & Soo, 2000). Those who participate also enjoy the prestige that comes as a result of successful community projects. Successful projects have both economic and social benefits for the village and wider social benefits that further enhance a village's reputation with neighbouring villages within the district (Macpherson and Macpherson, 2009). Although the village structures seem to represent an egalitarian system where members are treated fairly, group roles and functions within each village are divided according to their designations and the roles they play<sup>119</sup>.

The basis of this separation depends on the nature of *fa'a-sāmoa* itself, being based on subsistence agriculture where ownership of land is controlled by descent groups (Meleisea,

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<sup>119</sup> A traditional Samoan village consists of different grouping and the roles they play in it: for example, women's committee or Komiti a fafine with different roles: aualuma or unmarried females, taulelea or the untitled men who provide the services, *Mātai* who preside in village fono and leaders of families etc.

1987). In a gerontocracy like that of Samoa, the *matai* is the custodian of family land. He/she manages the political and economic activities of each family and represents them in village council meetings and affairs that dictate village interests (Va'ai, 1999). Divisions, for example, are seen in the functions of village women's committees who perform roles pertaining to village health. The untitled men, or *aumaga*, carry out the physical labour required by the village. In this sense, the needs of the collective always precede those of the individual or the individual families who occupy the land.

Village community structures and organisations vary in both form and practice. There are, for instance *aganu'u*<sup>120</sup>, practices and norms common to each village. Each village has its own political hierarchy embodied in its *fa'alupega*<sup>121</sup> that is always cited in village meetings (Huffer and So'o, 2000; Meleisea, 1992). Understanding and acknowledging one's village's *fa'alupega* commits one to serving the village and knowing his or her family's place in it. One's ability to function in a particular village setting depends on knowledge of specific elements of village organisation. Of great importance are the relationships between the founding families, the land territories of each *āiga*, the location of its *māota* or titular chief's house, its *laoa* or executive chief's house, its cooking houses, the fresh water springs, and the landscape and boundaries that divide land belonging to each *āiga*. This knowledge confirms and validates one's membership and explains a family's place in the village (Macpherson & Macpherson, 2009).

While a family's title in the village *fa'alupega* defines its status, the size of its landholdings is also an instrument that enhances its prestige. This elevated position imposes responsibilities on higher-ranking families to lead and maintain their place in village activities. Such a position obligates them to contribute more to village affairs, which are in most cases expected of them. Well-to-do families regularly maintain their status with contributions of land for church-buildings and capital for other community services. Less wealthy families on the other hand might also win respect and increase their standing by providing more labour and cash for village activities than was expected of them (Macpherson and Macpherson, 2009).

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<sup>120</sup>Culture, customs and traditions

<sup>121</sup>Set of honorific titles of ranking chiefs in a village that indicate their genealogical links

A family's prominence in the community depends on its members continuing financial contributions and support for community projects. There is an expectation that individuals would want to contribute to activities in the community that enhance their family's standing. The adage that, "*a ola mai lava le tagata i se āiga lelei, e fa'apena foi ona manuia lona olaga*" or, "one who is groomed in a prominent family would, in turn, reflect those values in his/her life which enhance the family standing in the village". However, history and custom does not guarantee that individuals will continue to support the community, or accept its influence on their activities, particularly when there is the increasing influence of new opportunities and outside factors that reflect ones increasing independence and economic circumstances.

Generally, the village community exerts pressure on its members to ensure that they continue to accept its demands. While some of this pressure comes from informal social control, where people's conduct and reputations are matters of public discussion, the village *fono* or village council carries the most power to discipline and fine members who disobey polity rules. In extreme cases, non-complying, members and families are banished from their village. Those who routinely contribute to the community are labelled *tausinu'u*<sup>122</sup> and are considered dependable whenever the village requires support. They willingly show respect to village authority that in the long run secures and maintains their families' social standing. Families benefit from association with powerful villages, and meet their obligations to village affairs in order to protect both their families and their village's reputation (Lilomaiaava-Doktor, 2009).

Village members who avoid village requests and responsibilities are labelled *fea'loa'lofa'i i mea e fai a le nu'u*<sup>123</sup>. Labels such as *fa'amau'aluga*<sup>124</sup>, *lē loto nu'u*<sup>125</sup> and other various negative attitudes describe disapproval of those who show no support to village causes. Individuals would not always be aware of the criticisms directed at them because these would often occur behind a person's back, as the aphorism says, '*e lē faia mai luma ni ou tala*'<sup>126</sup>. Although people respond to these criticisms in different ways, these act as control mechanisms that direct and channel support for village and family.

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<sup>122</sup>Showing village loyalty by serving its requirements

<sup>123</sup>Avoiding village requests and responsibilities

<sup>124</sup>Boastful

<sup>125</sup>Lacking village commitment

<sup>126</sup>People don't say things about you to your face, i.e., Backstabbing

These criticisms result, in some cases, with members being more likely to strive to regain their reputations by contributing more to village requests, and in others, by completely refraining from participating in collective responsibilities, choosing instead to live with the public criticism.

### **Business and the community in Samoan society**

Business people and entrepreneurs are also members of villages. As such, they are expected to contribute to both routine village activities and to special projects that the village undertakes. Failure to do so can tarnish their reputation. Furthermore, the widespread perception that because they operate businesses they are wealthy, leads the village to expect more of them in terms of financial and other resource contributions. This stems from the belief that the business people have taken advantage or benefited from the custom of villagers and the use of village resources such as land and labour to benefit their businesses. The expectations are also based on the assumption that these entrepreneurs recognise their debt and obligations to the village and would want to repay the debt by sharing their wealth. Many of the business people approached on these occasions feel obliged to support village requests because such deeds would not only improve their reputation in the village, but will also promote their businesses (Macpherson and Macpherson, 2009).

While participation in village activities is nominally optional, experience shows that villages can turn on business people who do not acknowledge and accept their obligations. Those individuals who sought to run businesses based on western values and discounted community responsibilities are looked upon as being *fiapālagi*<sup>127</sup>, or labelled as *fa'amaualuga* or boastful in the village. Such attitudes undoubtedly lead to pressure from family leaders to persuade their members or a businessperson to contribute to village affairs.

The costs of ignoring village expectations, however, are not just reputational and can have serious implications for those who fail to acknowledge village responsibilities. Where business people fail to respond to these pressures, the village may turn to actual sanctions, penalties, physical punishment and banishment from the village. On some occasions,

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<sup>127</sup> Aspiring to a white person's way of life.

these result in extensive conflicts between villages and families where families claim their rights to their membership through kinship in a village. The three cases below illustrate the ways in which conflicts occur where villages have reacted to what were challenges to their authority by business villagers.

### **Case 1:**

A *mātai* who spent his working life overseas returned and set up a successful enterprise in his village. The business was supported by village patronage and operated on land to which his *mātai* title belonged. An on-going dispute over violations of village protocols and land issues arose between his extended family and the village. Although his business was successful, through the support of the village and the district, trouble arose because he defied the village protocols. His boastfulness, haughty attitude and refusal to participate in village affairs, as well as his refusal to pay fines imposed by the village authority for his digressions lead to escalating conflicts that ended in his death (Huffer and So'o, 2000).

### **Case 2:**

An untitled man, who spent about ten years in New Zealand working in unskilled employment, saved his money and returned to his village to set up a taro and banana plantation. He became very successful in his businesses and reinvested the money in a bus company, which also became very successful. He contributed faithfully to the village and family obligations as expected of local village businesses and members of the *āiga*. His service raised the profile of the village and his family. His father's title was conferred on him as a reward for his work. As is typical on such occasions, a *saofa'i*<sup>128</sup> was held to formally recognise his new status by other chiefs of his village.

However, some members of his family who resided in New Zealand opposed the conferring of the title and returned to Samoa to lodge a petition with the Land and Titles Court. The business owner continued to carry out his duties for the church and village as a new *mātai* while the decision from the court was pending. When the court ruled against him and disqualified the man from taking his new title, it became clear he would be relegated to being *taule'ale'a* again, a shameful position to be in. Adding insult to injury,

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<sup>128</sup> Ceremony for conferring of titles

it was reported that some of the titleholders, who supported and were present at the *saofa* 'i, were also supporting the petition to disqualify the man's new *mātai* title.

The man changed his attitude straight afterwards and became less enthusiastic about his village obligations. He also reduced his contributions to village affairs. He refused to attend church activities and rejected village fines imposed over his refusal to participate in village affairs. He was finally banished, with his family, from the village. The village council then ordered destruction of his home, and ordered villagers not to use his buses for transport on the threat of severe punishment if this order was disobeyed. People stole from his plantation and boycotted his businesses. In the aftermath, the businessman sued the village for trespass on his family's land, damage to property, and sought compensation for loss of business earnings and conspiracy. Although the court ruled in favour of the businessman, the village council still banned him from the village (Meleisea, 1987).

The two scenarios above reflect the context where village authority and the rules that govern its affairs were expected to be obeyed by village members no matter what their status or levels of success. Conversely, business people who supported the village could enjoy its support in the form of patronage of their businesses as well as access to land and other village resources that provide economic benefits for themselves and their families. Despite the benefits and opportunities brought by new businesses in the village, things that contribute to the village economy, certain behaviour and obedience to village protocols are expected of everyone whether one operated a successful business or was simply a village member.

These two cases emphasise the relationship between the rights of the individual and the authority of the village. Meleisea (1987) alluded to the fact that the land resources awarded to families used for their livelihood were under the jurisdiction of the village *fono* and therefore village leaders could exercise their collective authority over the resources assigned to benefit those who were obligated and willing to support its authority. Individual rights, as commonly recognised beyond the village and overseas, matter less to village authorities. The village authority requires that their authority and the peaceful governance of its affairs are maintained and respected.



When both the business owners in the above cases accused their villages of trespassing on their family lands and violating their individual rights, they challenged the very source of security that allowed them to be prosperous, on one hand, and to be independent to operate their businesses freely, on the other, within the context of cultural authority (Meleisea, 1987). The two scenarios highlight the conflict between individualism and the collective authority, now seen as a continuing challenge to village authority. However, in cases where village authority is challenged, there would be consequences when village requests are ignored. In the following scenario similar relationships operated in the village environment, where the risks and the conflict between individualism and collectivism are minimised in order to improve business prospects.

### **Case 3**

The corner store operated by Galu is one of three shops in the village. Galu is a *mātai* and had worked in New Zealand for more than 30 years, saved his money and returned to look after his family. Galu's family had owned the first shop in the village before he migrated to New Zealand, so he was familiar with the village politics. A good portion of the village supports his store because he had specialized goods, which he knew sold well. When he started, people were able to obtain goods on credit. That practice resulted in thousands of dollars in unpaid debt. On one occasion, a family borrowed five thousand dollars' worth of food and corned beef packs to feed the village for a *fa'asalaga* (village-imposed fine) with promises that the money would be repaid as soon as possible. Most of it was recovered under a 'repayment arrangement' that was slow and taxing on cash flow.

This experience forced Galu to stop giving credit to anybody, including family members, except for the few professionals, including the village pastor, who held regular employment and had the regular income to pay. He reduced the range of products; he sells basic foodstuffs that the villagers regularly require because these items are profitable. He increased the prices of his goods and did not enter into a price war with the other village stores who were struggling. He also started issuing credit notices (from the court) to those who owed his shop money. It was the first time this type of debt collecting was enforced in the village. At first people hated the practice, but then realised that they would be dragged into court if they did not pay up. It was a positive result as most of the debt backlog was paid up. Galu regularly visited New Zealand, where all his kids live, and every time he travelled, he closed his shop and reopened it when he returned. Despite this,

he retains the same loyal clients. The shop expanded and became profitable and he remained effective in managing interrelationships in the village.

Galu is the highest contributor to church fundraising and the pastor's *ālofa*<sup>129</sup>. Being a *mātai*, he lives up to village expectations, and involves himself extensively in the village affairs and church. He sponsored sports gear for the village sports teams and helps out with village *fono* matters. This support is well-received and promoted good relationships with village leaders.

By comparison, Toma, a competing shop owner operates a similar shop two hundred metres away. He sells a range of goods to attract everyone. He has been struggling for some time and he reduced his prices to increase his market share, rather than as a strategic move to increase his sales and profitability. On two occasions when he went broke, he travelled to New Zealand to raise money from his relatives to purchase more stock for his shop. The majority of the villagers including some of Galu's relatives support Toma's business because his products are cheap and he extends credit, which ironically, is the cause of his financial troubles in a village shop.

Toma's cousin, Saia, operates another shop two kilometres away and he uses the same management system as Toma, and sells similar goods. Both business owners are not very supportive of village fundraising and at times acted boastfully which sometimes raised the ire of villagers. Their businesses barely survive, but they just go through the motions of keeping up with some of their village obligations and protecting their reputation (Personal communication with a village participant, 2016)

These scenarios illustrate the reciprocal nature of support for village businesses that support community initiatives. In the face of competition amongst businesses to be the preferred supplier of goods and services, owners go to extreme measures to ensure market share, even to the point of foregoing profits by underselling their goods. Galu would occasionally extend credit to the villagers to generate further business from the people who recognise their obligation to bring their business to his shop, but not to a point where he would spend time and resources chasing debt. Furthermore, Galu understood that the

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<sup>129</sup> Donations for the pastor

contributions to village's requests would not disadvantage his business, but viewed it as a long-term investment. He knows that his competitors would be making similar sorts of contributions, and that they would experience the same, or similar, costs in doing business in the village environment. However, doing business in the village, or with villagers, also carries a potential 'risk' of failure if social relationships are not managed properly. Business people in the villages recognise the risk, but must deal with it in ways that do not damage their long-term relationships with the community.

The cases of Toma and his cousin reflect their over-reliance on social networks within the village, even though the real motive of customers' coming to their shops was to obtain goods on favourable terms. Toma's father, like Galu, is also a *mātai* in the village. Toma uses his father's position as a matai to secure village support although he is not respected nor popular in the village. However, the villagers choose to deal with businesses based on the good reputation of owners who display the *vā -feālooāloa'i*<sup>130</sup> *alofa*<sup>131</sup> and *fa'aāloālo*<sup>132</sup> in all relationships within the village.

The reality remains for those who conduct business in a village that they are always under significant pressure to acknowledge and accept the cost of supporting their village communities. Such support must be built into their planning, and denying the reality of village demands may be costly for a small business. However, as the cases above illustrate, the risks posed to the businesses may be managed in ways that help retain the support of the village, while at the same time minimising the costs to the business.

In Galu's case, he has a very strong system of financial support from his children and from his own investments in New Zealand that he can call upon at any time. Additionally, his ability to utilise the law in collecting debts was a new experience for the villagers. Because those being served credit notices did not want to be shamed in front of the community, or to get into trouble with the law, they paid up when legal demands of debt were actioned, allowing Galu to manage his business effectively. Galu had set a precedent that other businesses now follow despite the possibility that those who use this practice may lose business as a result. Collecting debts, this way does not deny the

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<sup>130</sup> Mutual respect

<sup>131</sup> Love

<sup>132</sup> Courtesy or courteous behaviour

authority of the village council. In essence this points to the fact that combining *fa'a-sāmoa* and commercial astuteness works effectively in certain circumstances, especially when it reduces the villager's abilities to abuse the values of *ālofa*, *fa'aāloālo* and *vā-feāloāloa'i* given by the business owners to gain from their kindness.

All of this background raises the question of whether Samoan entrepreneurs, who have been raised in a traditional village environment, encounter these same pressures when establishing businesses abroad, where the social and legal conditions differ from those existing in the village environment. In the following sections, the experience of the migrant entrepreneurs' in New Zealand is examined with respect to the impact of the responsibilities and demands of their communities' on their businesses, and their responses to these pressures.

### **Support for the traditional community demands by migrant village members**

The demands of a traditional village community on their migrant kin and their businesses are likely to take two forms: occasional and regular. Firstly, village members in the migrant community are requested periodically, by their parent village to support various fundraising programs that would require the mobilisation of the village members' support and resources. While these occasions are irregular, they involve relatively large sums of money that require the support of the entire village community and their social networks of relatives from other villages. The most common form of assistance requested is money for community fundraising activities to build churches, schools and other facilities in home villages. Large sums of money for these purposes are generally raised through various means. *Tusigāigoa*<sup>133</sup> for example, where all close and distant relatives are invited to contribute, are commonly used and are the most profitable (Fa'alau, 2011; Va'a, 2001). All of the 21 participants in this study alluded to the importance and extent of this form of fundraising as one participant cited:

*Our village held a tusigāigoa to fundraise for the new church building in our village in Samoa. A total of \$120,000.00 was raised in one day and that almost paid off the whole project. The whole village community and their relatives came*

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<sup>133</sup>Fundraisings

*to support, and it was also amazing to see other people whom you never know are related to your village.*

[Participant 19]

Secondly, community groups, such as sports clubs and school communities, may look to Samoan entrepreneurs and their businesses to support their activities on the basis that these people are leaders of both their villages and the migrant community and thus are in a position to show this leadership in return for public recognition, as two of the participants note:

*We try and give to our community in the form of sponsorship ...we sponsor rugby for the young people. We advertise on Samoa Television and radio... this works for our business. Last year we sponsored the news from Samoa ... things that our community would like to watch.*

[Participant 8]

*Yes, I am very involved in community activities. I have three mātai titles and that brought a lot of obligations [to support and contribute] different activities.*

[Participant 5]

### **Expectations of the migrant community on entrepreneurs.**

In the migrant enclave, some things may change the influence that the community could assert over business operators. The first is that the migrant community is no longer a structured entity comprised only of Samoans who reside in the same village. The church in the migrant setting, for example, is one reference group that is now comprised of people from many villages who share Samoan norms and values, whom they work with and with whom fellowship and socialising is shared (Macpherson and Macpherson, 2009). In most circumstances, these relationships support the development of businesses. Secondly, Samoan entrepreneurs are a diverse group, who have had different experiences and levels of commitment to Samoan cultural practices and norms (Mulitalo-Lauta et al., 2005). Thirdly, their business competitors are no longer necessarily other Samoans, who face similar sorts of 'cultural' costs. The markets, where entrepreneurs operate businesses in the migrant community, include many ethnic groups, who have often brought quite different practices to their businesses and consequently have quite different cost

structures. Fourthly, costs and benefits have changed as compared to the village environment, where Samoan business people are not living in the middle of the village, but rather have a diverse client base with different expectations. The reputational costs and benefits of supporting, or not, the community might be less obvious. Finally, entrepreneurs may be able to secure business from other clients who expect to pay for a service and do not expect discounts, or receive favourable terms, because of their shared links to a common village community. They might be able to build businesses that do not depend entirely on Samoan clientele, and therefore do not need to consider the Samoan community's expectations in the conduct of their business.

This raises the question of how Samoan entrepreneurs in New Zealand respond to these challenges, and whether they respond to these demands in the same ways. While commitments to these fundraising activities may affect household finances, they may also affect the way they commit business resources to community initiatives. With fundraising activities taking up time and resources, commitment to community initiatives tax businesses of cash flows. This of course, in turn, affects the level of commitment of resources that entrepreneurs are willing to contribute to such community activities.

The following section considers the participants responses to community requests. Requests for assistance from the home village are supported in different ways by some entrepreneurs, with many viewing the importance of supporting social networks in the community as pertinent to the development of their businesses. However, business people with new freedoms and legal responsibilities realise that they are not operating businesses in villages anymore and that the consequences of their level of commitment for their social reputation are less significant. As a result, their responses to community requests could be set to a level that they choose, depending on how much the business relies on community support and niches. This raises the question of whether Samoan entrepreneurs' obligations to the migrant community have changed and in what ways are these changes comparable to the support given in a traditional village.

## 7.2 Business and the migrant Samoan community

### Community perceptions of entrepreneurs

In the migrant community, some things do not change for Samoan business people. The entrepreneurs were asked - *'how does your community involvement influence your business practice?* - in order to establish the factors involved when dealing with the community, on one hand, and on the other, to find the levels of commitment to these expectations. The responses about commitment to community vary amongst the entrepreneurs, being neutral, positive or negative. In the migrant community, Samoan entrepreneurs are assumed by other Samoans, to be rich, by virtue of owning a business. Such an assumption leads to high expectations that they should give and contribute generously to support community requests. Some of the participants below reflect on this issue:

*You know when a Samoan has a business, all Samoans automatically think he is a millionaire. But they don't look [understand] behind the scenes. There would be loans and borrowings, for example, a courier run may have a van, good paintings on the van and they think ... he is very rich, but a business man never sleeps and [always] worries, he sleeps at night and worries where the next dollar comes from... the paper work hasn't been done, the petrol, church, fa'alavelave Samoa and all that.*

[Participant 14]

*They [community] think we make a lot of money but they [community] forget that we take a lot of risks. I have my hands on a lot of things [ventures] because I want to earn more...but they must understand that we [business people] pay more taxes than a lot of them.*

[Participant 1]

*You know when a Samoan has a business; all Samoans automatically think you are rich. Some [in the community] would like to see Samoans have businesses because there are opportunities to profit from those people [businesses people].*

[Participant 6]

Secondly, there are misunderstanding about the role and functions of businesses in society. These lead to negative attitudes about the ethics of business operators, as these participants noted:

*Their [community] views [of businesses] are not very good. Any business person [Samoan] or any entrepreneurs they see, they thought they [entrepreneurs] are either crooks or in [engaged] making money out of someone else. This perception of entrepreneurs must change; it [entrepreneurship] is not the devil, it is actually in favour [benefit] of the community.*

[Participant 5]

*In the first instance, they [community] see money. My role is to educate them [about business]. A church minister was present in one of the seminars [for business] and he misunderstood what the whole business thing was about. He thought business is all about making money... it's about how you utilise it [resources].*

[Participant 2]

Nevertheless, the reputations of entrepreneurs can also be viewed positively in the community. The economic contribution and a high level of motivation can have a positive impact on the Samoan community in general. The following participants allude to these values:

*There will be some who will admire and be thankful with what we [entrepreneurs] are trying to achieve [in business]. If we can turn people into competitive contributors for the Auckland and the national economy by being positive and by imparting on them ... to be positive and proactive, getting educated, setting up businesses and contributing to the community...they will see with their own eyes [what business are about].*

[Participant 4]

*But I think the more successful the Samoan [businesses] are, they [community] appreciate them... it makes them feel that we [entrepreneurs] are achieving*



*[success] as a whole... if I see a Samoan doing well [in business] I'm very proud of that person.*

[Participant 9]

*I think they [community] are proud of them ... Every Samoan person that I have been involved with have been supportive of my business.*

[Participant 17]

The following comments point to mixed perceptions of business owners and how the community react to them. Some participants see these comments relative to their experiences, which are in some cases positive and in others negative. Experience with these sentiments may force them to give priority to the management of their businesses whereby they either reduce or withdraw participation and support for the community. One of the important beliefs amongst the entrepreneurs is that a good education and experience would allow one to identify rational thinking and a general understanding of business issues especially where this would allow them to manage conflicts between *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations and business responsibilities. The following participants note:

*It's a barrier for Samoans [operating successful businesses]. You have to have an education. Business is about doing deals and Samoans are the very first to start pointing and blaming someone else if the deals don't go right. But if you are educated and know what is going on, and what you agree to, ... that is business.*

[Participant 5]

*There are some Samoans who are very supportive [for business] and I don't mock *fa'a-sāmoa*, but I believe that if one is weak in education then that is their lot [the business will be affected due to misunderstanding of its roles].*

[Participant 12]

While a number of entrepreneurs pointed to a misunderstanding of what is involved in managing a business and its role in the community, others emphasised the need to be informed and to learn about the responsibilities of operating a business in the New Zealand context that is far more complicated, as the following participants claim:

*The business people must tell the truth about their businesses [what's involved and whether they are profitable or not]. Because the community and family are not going to help when you go down [business failing]. The Inland Revenue Department will ping [penalise] and [when you fail] you cannot have another business.*

[Participant 14]

*I think our people are jealous to support us (entrepreneurs), I say to the business people if you are to survive, don't look to the Samoan people. Like my cousin who runs a very successful company, he doesn't deal in the Samoan community but he is probably the most successful and only in the last few years his name just came up...because he just specialises...he has a multi-million dollar company and is very low key*

[Participant 18]

The above section outlines the different attitudes of the participants about the nature and role of entrepreneurship that reflects some misunderstandings and negative perceptions from the community. Some of these conflicts are directed at the entrepreneurs themselves, especially relating to their attitudes and practices when presenting themselves to the community. The data points to conflicts that arise when commercial values and community expectations conflict with business management, especially when entrepreneurs have to weigh up the risks of businesses and cultural expectations. The following section considers the range of responses to the requests for support for the community, from some of the businesses.

### **7.3 The extent of the entrepreneurs' involvement in the community**

This section explores the extent to which entrepreneurs support the community. The first part is concerned with the question of whether all entrepreneurs treat the requests from the community in the same way, as well as how this support can affect their businesses. It is obvious that this support varies from one participant to another for different reasons. This section looks at three types of participants: those who fully support community

projects (Table 12), those who totally avoid supporting community projects (Table 13), and those who support community requirements selectively (Table 14).

### **The entrepreneurs who support the community**

Entrepreneurs gave different reasons for supporting community projects. The participants who gave strong support to community activities comprised almost half of the sample (10 or 48%). The distributions vary across gender, place of birth, generation, age, *mātai* status, and education (Table 12). These characteristics illustrate the variations in the experiences and motivational factors that influence entrepreneur's decisions to support community.

**Table 12. Samoan entrepreneurs who support the community**

Characteristic		Percentage	Number
Gender	Male	80	8
	Female	20	2
	Total	100	10
Birthplace	Samoa	90	9
	New Zealand	10	1
	Total	100	10
Generation	1st Generation	30	3
	1.5 Generation	60	6
	2nd Generation	10	1
	Total	100	10
Age	30-40 years	20	2
	41-70 years	80	8
	Total	100	10
Matai Status	No	20	2
	Yes	80	8
	Total	100	10
Educational Level	University	40	4
	Technical	20	2
	School	40	4
	Total	100	10

There are ten participants in this group with eight males and two females. The two female entrepreneurs were born in Samoa and their support may relate to their upbringing and a view of the importance of cultural traditions and commitment to them. It is evident in the

data that different characteristics of the participants relate to their support for community. Nine of the participants were born in Samoa, which may reflect a strong association with cultural and community involvement. Three (30%) are 1<sup>st</sup> generation, 6 (60%) are from the 1.5 generation, and only one (10%) is from the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation. Eight (80%) of the entrepreneurs are over 41 years of age, which may indicate their cumulative experience in managing businesses, experience that leads to their substantial support for community requests.

Eight (80%) participants in this group are *mātai* and males. There are no female *mātai* in this group (although they are currently eligible for titles as part of their *tautua* and family approval). Having a substantial proportion of male *mātai*, as well as a relatively older age distribution, is consistent with the gerontocratic nature of traditional *fā'a-sāmoa*, where families confer titles to males to take on leadership roles that are traditionally vested in the elders and titleholders. These leadership roles bring with them obligations and responsibilities towards family and community, not only in Samoa, but also in the migrant community. There is a spread of education amongst this group that provided support for the community, with four (40%) university graduates, two (20%) with technical qualifications, and four (40%) with a high school background.

These characteristics summarise the backgrounds of the entrepreneurs who are committed to community causes, yet they do not really explain why they are committed to supporting the community. The following themes may help to understand why entrepreneurs offer support for the community.

### **Community networks support for businesses**

One of the common reasons for supporting community requests is the reciprocal value that entrepreneurs identify for businesses where the Samoan community is the main source of business:

*...your [participant's] involvement in the community helped your [participant's] business tremendously. With things [economy] that tough at the moment ... if I was not involved in the community I would have packed up [close the business] and gone long time.*

[Participant 3]

*It is so important ... because the community is such a big part of my business. It is important that you don't come across as arrogant, as you know it all or chauvinistic to the point where you are flouting your wealth ... but at the same time you have a responsibility to be accountable to your community...*

[Participant 7]

### **Obligation to *fa'a-sāmoa***

Other entrepreneurs are committed to this support as part of their obligations. It is obvious that the higher number of *mātai* (80%) in this group reflect not just their obligations to community, but also the pervasive competition, which is inherent in their nature as *mātai* and in their roles in the community (Freeman, 1983). Their duties to represent their families in community affairs dictate that such representation must match the trust their families give them, especially when bestowing on them titles that display their leadership and collective responsibilities. This support may also be spurred on by the fact that failure to support and represent families in community affairs would result in one's family being viewed unfavourably by others in the community. While these social obligations are costly, it is a necessary requirement of leadership as noted by some of the following *mātai* participants:

*Yeah, I have participated in village activities and, because I am a mātai I have to contribute, and these affect my [business] big time ... When the collections [money contributions] are taken, my business suffers [because of the pressure of requests] but you still try and help when you can.*

[Participant 14]

*My principle in business is I invest [contributing money] on people and the community, knowing that in time of need they will be there for me [to support]... 'The opportunities are yours today, tomorrow's opportunities are mine'. I have been helping these people [community] for years. That is also why I'm a matai, I serve the community.*

[Participant 11]

### **Balancing business responsibilities and community expectations**

Not all *mātai* give full support to the *fa'a-sāmoa*. Some business owners who support the community are aware of the pitfalls that businesses face when there is over commitment and mismanagement of cultural expectations. These participants understand that there are responsibilities and expectations that a business must manage while balancing any community expectations. As they noted:

*The business people must tell the truth about the conditions of their business because they (the family and community) are not going to help when you go down [business failing]. The IRD will ping [penalise] you with tax you and you cannot have another business [if you fail]. The Samoan people must know that a business has no family, but us we have culture...if the business survives, culture survives...if the culture come and abuses the business and yet not grown [doesn't contribute to its growth] then culture overrules the business [then it's not a good thing].*

[Participant 14]

*The more people [employees] you look after the more your obligations [business and culture], but you need to be firm enough to say don't do this [offering support for unnecessary [fa'alavelave] ... we do a little of that. These sharpen your business skills. You draw the lines between village obligations and where the business must not be affected.*

[Participant 5]

### **Embeddedness in community values**

Cultural responsibility is not just about tradition and community support. The presentation of these contributions are also important occasions for individuals to promote their status within their families, and in village politics (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 2000). The support for community comes mainly from participants born and raised in Samoa who are associated with the values of *fa'aaloalo*, *vā-fe'aloalo'i* and *lotonu'u*. The support for community may also indicate the sense of duty and investment in social networks that may benefit businesses, as the following participants discussed:

*It is good to know that you are from the Samoan community. Being Samoan, you always give. So directly, or indirectly, you give [community assistance] just like you always do in fa'alavelave.*

[Participant 10]

*The influence of the community on my business is very important, it is my business totally ... the fa'aaloalo thing, respect and humbleness is very important. There is a lot of fundraising [for the community events] ... Sometimes you tried to avoid it but you cannot: it is what we are [as Samoans].*

[Participant 6]

### **Benefits of supporting community**

Serving the community through business is also part of the social connection and developing community networks that can support business, as this participant claims:

*In terms of niche market, I can ... operate in the Samoan market...because I understand our people. I can relate to them in terms of their business problems dealing with tax and other areas where help is required. Even though our community are hard people to deal with ... they don't support, and listen to advice I believe it is still a big task to advise them of how to conduct their business*

[Participant 11]

### **Migrant community as a growing market for businesses**

Serving community through business is also associated with promoting services that add value to community growth in specialised areas. In turn, this can support businesses, as these participants claimed:

*In terms of niche market, I operate in the Samoan market...because I understand our people. I can relate to them in terms of their business problems dealing with tax and other areas where help is required. Even though our community are hard people to deal with ... they don't support [our businesses], and listen to advice, I believe it is still a big task to advise them of how to conduct their business*

[Participant 11]

*There are others who will admire and thankful with what we are trying to achieve [with business advisory]. But there is a jealous element which is common with Samoans. We can turn these people into competitive contributors ...and imparting on them the positive ... getting educated, setting up businesses and contributing to the community.*

[Participant 4]

### **Female entrepreneurs**

Two female entrepreneurs in this group support the community. The nature of this support may be connected to the expansive roles women play in business in the more egalitarian New Zealand social structure, where new economic and social conditions shape their business opportunities. Female entrepreneurs have also reflected on their abilities to expand their businesses, opening more opportunities for community initiatives as the following entrepreneurs claim:

*I have a Charity Trust that provides mini-scholarships for the kids. We go to Samoa and interview schools. It is now our tenth year of raising money for it ... we have 3 schools in Samoa that we provide scholarships for. We start them from primary school and if they were successful, we promote them to the next level and see how far they go.*

[Participant 10]

*We try the best we can [to support community] ... we try to give out to the community in the form of sponsorship ... we sponsor rugby for our young people. We try to help if we can*

[Participant 8]

Those who support the community are motivated by both economic and cultural reasons. Some entrepreneurs do not support the community while others offer this support through professional advice, mentoring and different types of sponsorship, as the next two sections will explain.



### Entrepreneurs who did not support community

While the section above considered the reasons for some participants' support for community, the following section considers another group who refrained from supporting community requirements. Table 13 below provides the background characteristics of the six participants who choose not to be involved, nor contribute, in any way to community requests.

**Table 13. Samoan entrepreneurs who did not support the community**

Characteristic		Percentage	Number
Gender	Male	50	3
	Female	50	3
	Total	100	6
Birthplace	Samoa	83	5
	New Zealand	17	1
	Total	100	6
Generation	1st Generation	17	1
	1.5 Generation	66	4
	2nd Generation	17	1
	Total	100	6
Age	30-40 years	67	4
	41-70 years	33	2
	Total	100	6
Matai Status	No	100	0
	Yes	0	0
	Total	100	0
Educational Level	University	33.33	2
	Technical	33.33	2
	School	33.33	2
	Total	100	6

There are six entrepreneurs in the group 3 (50%) males and three (50%) females. The issue is whether those who do not support tend to be from a different generation than those who support. One might expect those that support the community tend to be of the older generations because of their upbringing and their attachment to *fa'a-sāmoa*. The divide between male and female entrepreneurs in the group may represent differing cultural values and gender roles in discarding community responsibilities. Two of the three females in this group are self-employed and specialising in their professional area of expertise; one had established her business within two months of this interview.

Five of the six participants were born in Samoa, with one New Zealand born, which may indicate different values adopted in the migrant settings. There are four (67%) entrepreneurs under 40 years and two (33%) over 41 years of age. This may indicate their diminishing attachment to Samoan culture, which may indicate their veering away from serving Samoan culture through obligations to community and family. There are no *mātai* in this group, which indicates the entrepreneurs' detachment from traditional Samoan culture. Having no *mātai* title is consistent with fewer expectations from the community and family in terms of commitment to traditional Samoan cultural practices. The qualifications of the participants are equally split with two having University qualifications, two with technical training and two with high school education; a pattern which does not offer much in the way of explanation for their lack of support for the community.

The question - *how does your community involvement influence your business practice?* – was asked to examine reasons for this lack of support. Their responses are articulated through the range of the entrepreneur's experiences of *fa'a-sāmoa*, in both the traditional Samoan community and the migrant community.

### **Pressure of *fa'alavelave***

It is the expectation to contribute to *fa'alavelave* that usually stops entrepreneurs from supporting the community, especially in the case where serving *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations create expenditures that weigh heavily on business. There are no *mātai* in this group and hence these people experience less cultural pressure, or obligation, to contribute to community initiatives:

*You have a feeling of guilt and you always carry around this feeling of obligation to the Samoan thing [serving fa'a-sāmoa] and the village. Yeah, it [community requests for support] is diminishing now ... Your business will never grow as it [supporting community] will pull you down [due to costs involved].*

*My father was a chief in fa'alavelave, he will get the big portion of the income and also the alofa [gifts from fa'alavelave] ... by the time he gives this out to the rest of the family there is nothing left for ourselves [so have no interest in it]*

[Participant 20]

### **The negative practices of *fa'a-samoa***

Another participant alludes to the overall inhibiting effect of culture on the business, which firmed her decision not to be involved in community:

*So, culture is an inhibiting factor with business. So I do not, [deal with *fa'asāmoa*] with what I do [my business]. There is always requirements and requests but I do not get involved. It is not easy when *fa'a-sāmoa* is involved as it culture wont strengthen yourself in business. It will affect the business [cost wise]. It is just the way *fa'a-sāmoa* works*

[Participant 16]

### **Committing resources to the business rather than community**

Another participant refrains from participating in community because he is committing and re-investing all of his resources into his business. He views contributing to the community as something that does not benefit his business.

*They [community] have no idea that I budget everything here [at the business]. Everything [resources] that comes in has a place to go. The worst thing about it is they [community] were never there in the beginning [when the business started] to support you and, when you are successful, they want to know you*

[Participant 9]

### **Protecting a reputation**

Another participant is conscious of the possible negative effect on his business reputation in the Samoan community should his business fail, especially because of an over commitment to community expectations. This commitment to satisfy *fa'a-sāmoa* responsibilities adds pressure on resources, as the following participant claims:

*Culture is good when applied to business but business go bad (struggle) when you abuse it [overspending on *fa'a-sāmoa*]. For example, when you have an overdraft, you know when you are over the limit but you worry too much about your reputation and offer to give unnecessarily to [community activities] ... Rather,*

*would say, 'please my extended family, this A (the participant), I'm walking on my knees because of debts'.*

[Participant 1]

### **Breaking out to a niche market**

One participant does not operate in the Samoan community; her business is located away from it. The business relies and serves niche markets in the mainstream where her skills apply to her business networks, as she describes:

*No, I do not involve myself in the Samoan community. I have been networking with the Spanish, Latin Americans and Latin culture. [It is where I get my customers]*

[Participant 17]

### **Specialised services**

Another participant operates a specialized service business, which distanced her from participating in, or contributing to Samoan community initiatives:

*The Samoan community is not important [not a market for my business] as it is a very scientific business. I am not involved in community.*

[Participant 15]

These entrepreneurs deliberately operate their businesses away from the Samoan community, as they do not want to be involved with the community, nor do they anticipate that Samoan community networks will benefit their businesses. Three female entrepreneurs had married Europeans, which could explain different management approaches to business resources. It could also reflect the different advice the European spouse may provide, minimising any support for Samoan community initiatives.

### **Entrepreneurs who support the community selectively**

While some participants did not commit to community requests, another group reported that they provide support for community initiatives selectively. Five participants in this group (see Table 14) identify specific community events for their support. While this

support may indicate the normal experiences of the participants in dealing with community requests, these choices are also business related in the sense of evaluating their commercial interests against *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations. Most of the entrepreneurs manage their support for community efforts through the family, which indicates the centrality of the family in both the migrant and traditional Samoan communities.

**Table 14. Samoan entrepreneurs who selectively support the community**

Characteristic		Percentage	Number
Gender	Male	80	4
	Female	20	1
	Total	100	5
Birthplace	Samoa	60	3
	New Zealand	20	1
	Fiji	20	1
	Total	100	5
Generation	1st Generation	20	1
	1.5 Generation	60	3
	2nd Generation	20	1
	Total	100	5
Age	30-40 years	20	1
	41-70 years	30	4
	Total	100	5
Matai Status	No	60	3
	Yes	40	2
	Total	100	5
Educational Level	University	40	2
	Technical	40	2
	School	20	1
	Total	100	5

There are five entrepreneurs in this group with four (80%) being male and one (20%) female. There are two *mātai* and three untitled people. Three are Samoan-born, one born in Fiji, and another New Zealand born. The education levels vary like the previous groups of entrepreneurs with two participants with university degrees, two with technical qualifications, and one with a high school qualification. These characteristics vary amongst the entrepreneurs and do not provide a set pattern pointing to particular reasons for selectively supporting community.

### **Supporting community through *fa'alavelave***

Most of support for the community is channelled through family by way of *fa'alavelave*. Essentially this support is viewed in most cases as an investment in developing family and community relationships. The following reasons provided by entrepreneurs in this category show the rationale behind their levels of support for community:

*I only support the community through my family. I control [manage] that involvement because, the way I look at it [support], they [village] are only interested in you when there are things that needed to be done [fundraising etc].*  
[Participant 19]

*Not so much involvement in village. We focus mainly on the family. My sister is taking on the extended family roles because she and her husband have strong mātai titles.*  
[Participant 2]

*... we only involved ourselves when something [fa'alavelave] happens in Samoa, then we will contribute as a family to help out.*  
[Participant 12]

*I only support funerals. If any of the family dies, I'm the first one there [to support] because it is a priority. I am always involved in a lot of activities [fa'alavelave] but the first thing is family. O mea ga e faikele [all those community activities] and all that [fa'alavelave], e fuafua lelei [must be planned].*  
[Participant 18]

### **Prioritizing business**

The involvement in community, for one participant, was reduced to delegating responsibilities to family even though this support may be seen as an extra responsibility:

*I have very little to do with village activities because of my work and time constraints. My mum looks after all that and I look after the monetary side.*

[Participant 13]

The entrepreneurs in this group channelled their support of community through the family as the focal point for any community responsibilities. *Fa'alāvelāve* seems to be the common theme that everyone connects with when contributing to community. However, this level of giving varies from one participant to another due to their embeddedness in the community values. Most of the entrepreneurs in this group are highly educated with established business backgrounds, which may indicate sufficient levels of confidence to rationalise their decisions about supporting community without undue pressure. The experiences of entrepreneurs in this group, which is negative for most, determine the way they offer this support.

## 7.4 Discussion

The data suggests that there are different levels of commitment by the entrepreneurs, when dealing with the community requests in the migrant environment. The nature of the Samoan community in New Zealand is different from that of traditional Samoan society. The logical conclusions drawn in this chapter relate these changes to the nature of the migrant community, which are a result of the social processes, and the political, economic and cultural conditions of the liberal New Zealand environment. These processes create the variations in the experiences and choices of the entrepreneurs and the way they conduct their businesses. There is not one, but a range of responses to the demands of the community on the Samoan businesses. This suggests that not all Samoan entrepreneurs are socially embedded, nor necessarily support community responsibilities.

Patterns and variations of this support for community could be related to certain variables such as gender, age, place of birth, *mātai* status, and education. The variations in commitment to the community can also be traced to changes that had occurred in both traditional and the migrant Samoan societies, where Samoan entrepreneurs have adjusted to the realities of the migrant setting. The question raised in this chapter - *how does your community involvement influence your business practice?* - was intended to uncover patterns of commitment to community initiatives by different entrepreneurs. The results from the data provide accounts of why some of the entrepreneurs contributed and

supported community initiatives, why some did not and why others did so selectively. Ten or 48 % of the entrepreneurs support community initiatives. Six (28%) do not support, nor were involved in the community, and five (24%) support community initiatives selectively. However, this support differed in nature from one participant and business to another.

Firstly, being a Samoan male in traditional Samoan society carries responsibilities through the *tautua* or service for family and the community. It is from exercising the *tautua* that a sense of cultural obligations are molded into young males who are expected to serve the family first as well as the community (Macpherson & Macpherson, 2009). The *tautua* is a marker that identifies the roles and responsibilities imposed on Samoan males from a young age where most learn values of *fa'aaloalo* or respect, *vā-fealoaloai* or mutual respect, *ālofa* or compassion, *loto nu'u* or commitment to the community, and *ālofa i lou aiga* or serving family. *Tautua*, which was previously a male responsibility only in traditional Samoa, now reflects the division of labor central to each person or group's position in a village. The roles of the women committees for example, the functions of the wives of chiefs or *faletua*<sup>134</sup> *ma tausi*<sup>135</sup>, positions in church organizations, roles of *tulafale* or talking chiefs and the *ali'i* or high chiefs all reflect these divisions that further embody their roles in *fa'a-sāmoa*.

In the migrant community, *tautua* is provided in different ways by the young migrants and the New Zealand born generations. *Tautua*, which has been a male domain, has deviated from its traditional nature to accommodate the social and economic values that the family members could contribute. It is now offered inclusively for the family first, and then for the community. With no set village boundaries, like those existing in traditional Samoa, the *tautua* is rendered through different means in an ad hoc basis, either through higher education, politics, sports representation, a professional career or operating a business that serves family needs in different ways. Female entrepreneurs for example (6 or 29% for this study) are now proponents of the *tautua* in the migrant environment. Their achievements in higher education, political careers or operating

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<sup>134</sup> Wives of talking chiefs

<sup>135</sup> Wives of high chiefs



successful businesses entitle them to the rewards of *mātai* titles for their service and the respect they deserve for their support of community and family.

Secondly, the support for community by entrepreneurs who are *mātai* (10 or 80%) was strong due to their roles as leaders and representatives of families in community affairs. *Mātai* who were born in Samoa (7 or 33%) are more embedded in *fa'a-sāmoa* and hence the commitment to their roles of serving families and the community. The New Zealand and overseas born *mātai* (two New Zealand born and one Fiji born), however, were more reserved in their commitment to *fa'a-sāmoa*, which they generally manage so that any over-commitment of resources to cultural obligations does not beset their businesses. Nineteen percent (4) of the 1<sup>st</sup> generation *mātai* born in Samoa relied mainly on the social capital and community niches for their businesses, which produced different outcomes. These businesses were not successful with all being restructured and relocating different areas and providing different services. Another 29% (6) of *mātai* entrepreneurs were mixed embedded in both Samoan social capital and mainstream businesses opportunities, in terms of the management of their businesses. This group of entrepreneurs have successful businesses; they have more experience, and are more likely to have a tertiary education, all of which may give them the edge for success.

The *mātai* entrepreneurs born in New Zealand (2 or 10%) on the other hand were also mixed embedded in both their obligations to *fa'a-sāmoa* and the business environment. This group possessed higher levels of education with diverse management skills that increase their ability to choose and balance their support for the community.

Thirdly, the support from the female entrepreneurs (2 or 20%) for community were channeled through their families. Females, in most cases, were not *mātai* holders (although at present this has changed with many having been conferred titles for recognition) but they were seen as more reliable in contributing and remitting financial support to families, compared to males. This was the case in the early migration phases of the 1960's and 70's (Macpherson, 1996) and this still prevails, especially where female entrepreneurs are successful in businesses, educated and are creative in pursuing opportunities that serve their families first and then the community (Mulitalo-Lauta et al., 2005). The figures in Table 13 represent the majority of the participants, which indicate a high level of embeddedness in community values. All of the participants in this category

were over 30 years of age, which reflects higher levels of responsibilities and commitment to *fa'a-sāmoa* and community.

However, the data for the categories of those 'who did not support community' and who 'selectively support community' shows the ways that different generations of entrepreneurs engage with the community. Some entrepreneurs have responded negatively to the requirements of *fa'a-sāmoa*, particularly when their business interests are challenged, while others supported community through ways that do not drain resources from their businesses.

The variations of support for the community amongst the participants indicated that there are elements of 'individualism' and 'collectivism', especially where the management responsibilities of business are weighted against the obligations of *fa'a-sāmoa*. As noted in the earlier part of the chapter, within the set boundaries of a traditional Samoan village lie its economy and the community expectations that put pressure on the entrepreneurs to contribute to village affairs, more so for entrepreneurs than for ordinary village members. Such expectations create conflicts between business owners and villagers in a traditional setting. The collective requirements imposed and expected of the entrepreneurs in the village environment made it impossible for them to accumulate wealth in the western sense of commercialism. While commitment to *fa'a-sāmoa* works well within the village settings in Samoa, where the village *fono*, *fa'a-mātai*, *aualuma*, *aumaga* and all village structures are held by set principles of *fa'aāloalo*, *ālofa* and *vā-feāloāloa'i*, this may not work as well for Samoan entrepreneurs in the migrant setting.

Some of the practices occurring in village activities in Samoa are not practiced in the migrant environment. The resources on which economic life depend are owned by families and individuals through their jobs, education, labour and the opportunities that occur through the development of businesses and other income earning activities. These provide independence with the ability of migrants to accumulate wealth giving the migrant families more control in how their own resources are utilised and managed. The collective values about *fa'asāmoa* that have influenced the migrant communities have, in some cases, been counter-balanced against the individual's priorities in their own lives. In most cases, the reluctance of some Samoan entrepreneurs to continually serve the requirements of community is a deliberate effort by them and their children to redefine

themselves in the context of their migrant environment where social spaces have been developed (Macpherson & Macpherson, 2009). Given this boundary-less village structure in the migrant community, the churches are now becoming the equivalent of a Samoan village, where similar *fa'a-mātai* and *fa'a-sāmoa* are practiced (Va'a, 2001).

In New Zealand, the Samoan community is well established. The New Zealand-born generations who are familiar with the New Zealand environment and its economic and social contexts have begun to question the relevance of *fa'a-sāmoa* in their lives (Macpherson and Macpherson 2009). Their situation was different to those of early migrants who arrived during the early migration phases of the 60's and the 70's, and who were absorbed directly into local community networks and churches that supported their adaptation into the migrant environments. The New Zealand born generations, however, have accumulated experience through education and better employment opportunities, which allow for their economic upward mobility. As the social values of the New Zealand born generations change, their views about the relevance and requirements of *fa'a-sāmoa* in their lives also changes.

As Macpherson (1996) points out, the Samoan population is not homogeneous because there are Samoan sub-populations characterised by, different attitudes to, and experiences of, Samoan culture. The conflicts between the collective and the individual in the New Zealand Samoan community have started to create new identities that migrants would easily adopt and identify with and will continue to do so as succeeding New Zealand born generations come of age. A close observation of minority groups in migrant environments, such as that of the Samoan group, shows that individual members can reflect critically on their own culture and its importance to them. Individuals within the same group arrive at quite different assessments of their culture's utility whereby, while some decide to cling to it, others abandon it and still others try to cling to some parts and abandon others (Spoonley, 2001).

The data suggests that variations in priorities of commitment to the community exist amongst the participants. Yet, while some entrepreneurs born in different places are socially attached to *fa'a-sāmoa*, others do not share this attachment and therefore are less likely to support the community through their businesses. The motivation for giving this support is for some articulated in the ways in which they exploit opportunities, but also

allows them to either discontinue or continue their support of cultural obligations. The question asked in this chapter - *how does your community involvement influence your business practice?* - reflects whether all participants view their responsibilities and responses towards the Samoan community in the same way. The data points to a range of factors that define what 'community' means for entrepreneurs and how these factors influence the way they give support.

In terms of female entrepreneurs in the New Zealand Samoan community, for instance, they have achieved better education and have attained corporate and political positions. This allows them to participate more in decision-making roles and positions of influence within their families and the community. The egalitarian nature of the New Zealand community, the legal recognition of female rights, and the existence of social welfare provisions have allowed some to leave unsatisfactory relationships and to live independently, and as sole parents some have transformed their influence in migrant society' (Macpherson et al., 2001).

Such changes, however, have been slow to occur in the traditionally based village in Samoa where the collective roles and expectations of females are based in women's committees with normal activities directed towards improving family ties, status and identity (Fairburn-Dunlop, 2000). Although these activities are offered at co-operative levels to support village welfare, it is evident that they are still visible in the traditional village structures, which indicates that, historically, health was the role of women, while men dealt with the economic requirements of the family and community (Fairburn-Dunlop, 2000). However, some changes within village structures and responsibilities have occurred with improvement in educational achievements and business opportunities.

The chiefly system and its structures existing in the village community in Samoa is not as influential in the migrant community. This has meant that the traditional power structures within families and the community are opened up to challenges from untitled members. Va'a (2001), in his study of Samoan migrants in Australia, claimed that there was a constant struggle for power between the *mātai* and *taulele'a*, and between individuals and family groups. These tensions are a result of the new financial capabilities of the *taulele'a* and the young working members who are staking their own claim to leadership positions in the community and church organisations (Va'a, 2001).

Included here is the role of the *tautua*<sup>136</sup> that relates to individuals' collective attachment to the family and village and their supporting rights that they have no intention of exercising. Meleisea (1987) claimed that emigrants supported and disputed claims to titles in Samoa for either themselves or close family members because they saw this as an insurance policy that would allow them access to village authority when they decide to return. Another mechanism for this support were remittances to support families in Samoa. Macpherson pointed out that the money remitted to families becomes private property, which not only increases family wealth but also enhances its social standing in the village. Having access to this capital allows families to settle their debts and to keep family honor intact within the village. This also improves family and village relationships and furthers the standing of the family in the village (Macpherson, 2009).

In his study of Samoan migrants in Australia, Va'a (2001) pointed out that the church has now replaced the village as the location where all of the socio-economic and political activities occur for migrants. The church has gained popularity as the place where young people and their friends spend their social lives, make and revitalize traditional Samoan music, and where they connect with their culture. In this respect, the church acting as a village has expanded the practice of *fa'a-samoa* by adopting village structures or expanding the already existing ones of the home villages of migrants. With this, the rigid authority role and the gerontocracy system that had existed in the typical Samoan village are modified to cater for new expectations and ways of living in an egalitarian based migrant community (Macpherson & Macpherson, 2009).

The practice of *fa'a-sāmoa* is still important for many migrants at different stages in their lives. As Va'a (2001) points out even the economically well-to-do migrant Samoans who do not need to practice *fa'a-sāmoa*, and do not rely on it for their survival, still support its practice. In this sense, the benefits of the *fa'a-sāmoa* and its practice are viewed from an economic perspective. One of the participants alluded to support for the community:

*If you look right through all the well-known people [Samoans] they come back to get mātai titles. Even our half-castes are going back to [practice of culture].*

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<sup>136</sup>Services

*Fa'a-sāmoa is becoming so strong; the practice worldwide is becoming aggressive and expanding. No matter how well educated you are, how rich you are, you will always go back to your identity ... who you are? It might be different ways of doing it but it [culture] is binding us because of the fa'amātai [matai system] and fa'a-sāmoa...E sui faiga ae tumau fa'avae [different ways of doing things but foundations remain].*

[Participant 4]

In Samoa, conducting businesses in the village is welcome within the boundaries of the village, as long as they do not challenge village authorities. As in the cases of returning entrepreneurs discussed above, the challenging authority of the village are usually met with dire consequences for those who do not support its requests, whereas better fortunes await those who accommodate these challenges. This does not mean that every business would be confined to failure in the village economy, but rather it is a matter of operating within the expectations and confines of cultural logic to reduce unnecessary expectations. In the migrant community, however, different means are sought by entrepreneurs to connect and reconnect to their communities no matter how minimal these efforts are. Life cycle events like *fa'alavelave* and other village fundraising activities have become the means in which Samoan entrepreneurs have redeemed themselves when seeking favour with village authorities and in the migrant communities, but not to the detriment of their business operations.

## **7.5 Conclusion**

This chapter identified issues relating to the nature of the Samoan community and its role as either a motivator or constraint for Samoan entrepreneurs and their businesses in New Zealand. The changes that had influenced the other institutions of *fa'a-sāmoa* - the family and religion – are similar to those changes that had also undermined the community as a form of a village structure in the migrant setting. However, challenges to these traditional institutions were not just from inside the migrant sites, but rather through the conscious efforts of the migrants themselves to utilize the best that the outside environment brought to their lives and businesses. The influence of global trends, social spaces in New Zealand and national institutional forces bring changes in the Samoan migrant community which

impact on entrepreneurs and their businesses in one form or another. The practice of *fa'alavelave* is one example that act as platform for reducing tensions for the entrepreneurs and their businesses with the community where they participate in community activities to satisfy their obligations to families. Where *fa'alavelave* obligations increase tensions, entrepreneurs themselves have choices to either engage or opt out of meeting these while maintaining social relationships that would be vital to their businesses. The following chapter will explore the influence of the New Zealand business environment on Samoan entrepreneurs and their businesses. It will consider how entrepreneurs manage these challenges, especially where demands of *fa'a-sāmoa* conflict with their business responsibilities.

# CHAPTER EIGHT: THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

## Introduction

The preceding three chapters have explored the influence of family, religion and community in the operation of Samoan businesses. This chapter presents the New Zealand business environment as another dimension that poses challenges for Samoan entrepreneurs and their businesses. The chapter will explore how the levels of embeddedness of entrepreneurs in *fa'a-sāmoa* influence the management of their businesses. It will explain the entrepreneur's management strategies where they utilise *fa'a-sāmoa* values when navigating the institutional, legal, and structural responsibilities of the business environment.

The chapter has five sections. Section 1 describes the New Zealand business environment and the influence of the legal and institutional context. Section 2 explores operational issues of marketing and financing for businesses and how entrepreneurs manage these responsibilities while managing the obligations of *fa'a-sāmoa*. Section 3 reviews how entrepreneurs co-ordinate the utility of *fa'a-sāmoa* for their businesses. This will lead to section four that discusses the relevance of the social embeddedness of the entrepreneurs in their *fa'a-sāmoa* and how they strategize for possible opportunities while at the same time evaluating the institutional requirements of the business environment. Section 5 concludes the chapter.

## 8.1 The business environment

The business environment exposes businesses to the requirements of both the internal and external environments in which they operate. One of the main questions posed earlier for this study - *what factors contribute to business success for Samoan entrepreneurs in the New Zealand context* - attempts to uncover management factors that are detrimental for Samoan businesses in the migrant setting. The migrant environment presents challenges for these businesses in terms of the skills, resources, cultural obligations and the management experiences of owners.



Managing legal requirements for business are different at different levels and for the types of organisation, be they incorporated societies, sole traders, a corporation or a Small to Medium enterprise. Compliance requirements are important for any business in order for them to continue in operation. Different legislation and regulations<sup>137</sup>, for example, provide compliance procedures that are mandatory for all businesses irrespective of their legal forms and types (Table 15 below). These matters include taxation requirements, industrial relations and equal employment opportunities that most businesses cannot avoid. Entrepreneurs and their business entities are accountable for the compliance and legal requirements of their businesses as non-compliance would result in unnecessary costs for the business (Kirkley, 2011). In this sense, the legal form of a business entity determines its growth and future sustainability (Massey, 2011).

Management factors such as marketing, financing, personnel, production and other functions of management are equally important. The advancement in technology and human resource management may also provide challenges for owners, all of which must be managed (Massey, 2011). Considering the size of the business requires different management styles and available resources. Different types of business structures must be matched with the skills and experiences of the entrepreneurs (Massey, 2011). All 21 (100%) businesses in this study are limited liability<sup>138</sup> entities. The choice of a business type relates to the entrepreneurs' knowledge of the opportunities, markets, implications and future sustainability of their entities. This involves the entrepreneurs' choice of the services and products that it sells, the level of management skills the entrepreneur has and the length of time the business has been in operation. In this chapter, it is considered important to review the characteristics of Samoan entrepreneurs in terms of their gender, birthplace, age, *mātai* status, educational qualifications and business experience to demonstrate whether these characteristics influence, among other things, the way they co-

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<sup>137</sup> Legislation involves Acts passed by Parliament, which authorise other persons or bodies to make laws known as delegated legislation (Gerbic & Lawrence, 2006). Many of these laws relating to commercial activities are intertwined creating responsibilities and liabilities for business organisations and entrepreneurs. The Employment Relations Act (2000) for example required business owners to promote good employment relations with unions and employees through good faith in all aspects of their employment. Other legislation pertaining to employment issues for all businesses includes the Minimum Wage Act (1983), Health and Safety in Employment Act (1992), the Holidays Act (2003) and the Privacy Act (1993); all are specialised legislation that represents the interests of parties and employees to employment contracts (Lamm & Tipples, 2011).

<sup>138</sup> Limited Liability Company: the ownership structure of a company is in the hands of shareholders who receive shares. Under the Companies Act 1993, a limited liability company is governed by directors. Shareholders can't be held liable for any liabilities of the company (Kirkley, 2011)

ordinate cultural, legal and management requirements in the operation of their businesses. The next section examines the responsibilities that Samoan entrepreneurs face in the New Zealand business environment and the extent to which they respond to managing these issues for their specific businesses.

### **The business environment and Samoan businesses**

Two propositions underlie the study objectives. Firstly, Samoan entrepreneurial activities are shaped by legal and business environmental factors relative to cultural factors and secondly, entrepreneurs respond differently through their different business experiences when executing their *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations while managing their businesses. Samoan businesses must deal with two potentially contradictory business pressures: normal commercial realities and the expectations on them of *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations. Not all Samoan entrepreneurs handle these contradictory pressures in the same way. It is fair to suggest that all 21-business owners are well aware of their commercial responsibilities and the compliance requirements that their businesses must comply with. Ninety five percent (20) of the businesses operate in the service industry, and this means that they are exposed to high levels of compliance and regulatory requirements (Table 15). All twenty businesses employed one or more employees both on a part-time and full-time basis. Entrepreneurs are well aware of specific legal requirements pertaining to their operations that are mandatory, as some point out:

*You know when you take on [employ] staff, all the HR [Human resources issues and employment responsibilities involved] come into it [management decisions]. This is a good hard business...running the hotel. It requires a lot of different skills and different labour requirements to run this type of operation.*

[Participant 21]

*Keeping and looking after our workforce and making them motivated. Staying on top and keeping your workforce licensed [under specific legal responsibilities relating to staff] which is your biggest asset.*

[Participant 1]

*You must understand these legal requirements, which for any business in New Zealand is influenced by (many liabilities). For my business, employment issues*

*[ under the Employment Relations Act 2000] are very important to understand and cover as these may cost. Luckily, I put all my trainers on contract so they are personally responsible for their own safety.*

[Participant 19]

### **Complying with Central Government and Council bylaws**

While some entrepreneurs may not have to deal with or be aware of their responsibilities under specific legislation in the everyday management of their businesses, most operate under the jurisdictions of council bylaws. Legislation and bylaws provide safety requirements for products and services for public consumption, which lead to more responsibilities and compliance for owners. Confusion, however, may arise over the relevant licenses and requirements for specific products and services. This raises the question of how Samoan entrepreneurs, amongst other management responsibilities, navigate the regulatory environment and the responsibilities that it creates for their businesses. Table 15 below shows a number of pieces of legislation that are mandatory for most businesses, while some other specific businesses require approval under some of the council bylaws. This also shows that different businesses have to serve different responsibilities and costs to satisfy compliance requirements for their businesses.

**Table 15: The influences of Central Government Legislation and Council Bylaws on businesses**

Legislation	Number of Respondent Businesses subject to various Central Government Legislation
The Employment Relations Act (2000)	21
Minimum Wage Act(1983),	21
Holidays Act (2003)	21
Health and Safety in Employment Act (1992),	21
Privacy Act (1993)	21

Auckland Council Bylaws	Number of Respondent Businesses subject to various Central Government Legislation
Food Safety Bylaw (2016)	3
Auckland City Signage Bylaw 2015	21
Liquor Control In Public Places Bylaw (2004)	3

All 21 of the businesses come under the jurisdiction of the listed Acts of Parliament both directly and indirectly. Most businesses are subjected to specific requirements of the Auckland Council bylaws depending on the nature and type of business operated. Three of the businesses, for example, require licenses under The Liquor Control in Public Places (2004) Bylaw<sup>139</sup>. Twentyone of the businesses, on the other hand, are required under the Auckland City Signage Bylaw (2015)<sup>140</sup> to register their signage. Three of the restaurant businesses operate under the Food Safety Bylaw (2016)<sup>141</sup>. Compliance with legislation and bylaws create various costs, putting pressure on businesses that may be unfamiliar with such a high level of oversight. Despite the underlying importance of abiding with Council rules and bylaws, these responsibilities make no allowance for the cultural preferences and obligations of Samoan entrepreneurs especially where entrepreneurs sometimes rely on their social networks and community resources to support their

<sup>139</sup> The Liquor Control in Public Places (2004) Bylaw provides rules for controlling the consumption and possession of alcohol in public places and with abuse resulting in disorderly behaviour.

<sup>140</sup> Auckland City Signage Bylaw (2015) requires that signage does not create clutter, disrupt street access, disrupt the physical appearance of buildings and not endanger the public safety.

<sup>141</sup> Businesses in the food industry need to be registered with the Council Foods Safety requirements where Safety Food Certification must be displayed and continuous staff training must be carried out.

businesses. While adhering to council bylaws would not reduce compliance costs, operational licenses and permits required in the operations are important to the survival of the business (Massey, 2011). The ability of a business to attain licenses indicates the continuity and viability of a venture (Casson, 2010). Some of the following entrepreneurs point to their experiences with bylaws and the costs these may impose on their businesses, as well as how they manage them:

*For my businesses, the ever presence of the council coming [to check for compliance] especially when I was operating [the business] in a residential area. One of the problems was making sure that clients were not too intoxicated too much and everything was above board. Every month I would buy wines for the neighbour and talk with them about any noise problems coming from my operations.*

[Participant 20]

*In here [New Zealand] there are a lot of regulations and bylaws you [as a business] have to adhere. I have experienced in some of our building projects many consequences when we had it wrong [so we learned from these experiences].*

[Participant 3]

### **Seeking professional advice**

One of the main responsibilities for business owners is to balance the benefits and costs of professional services and management support that would benefit the business. For most businesses, some management and legal skills may be lacking and therefore the need to seek outside advice from professional advisors. However, the costs involved would tend to encourage most owners to carry these activities out themselves, thus depriving the business of vital advice that would in some circumstance detrimental to long-term business success. Other entrepreneurs like those of lawyers and accountants, are able to carry out these roles themselves as they are familiar with the rules. For some businesses who lack these skills, there is the pressing issue of seeking relevant and specific advice from professionals, like business advisors, financial advisors, lawyers and accountants upon which their businesses may rely for survival. The data indicates that the main services commonly used by 100% of the entrepreneurs are accountants and lawyers as some of the participants described:

*I have help from my [accountant] when I started up, my GST, provisional tax ... those specific skills for IRD ... things you have to learn [when you start] and when you go to the bank for your overdraft, you need those financial reports.*

[Participant 3]

*All my contracts I pick from my consultants [advisors]...We have accountant friends [who helped]. Therefore, for my investments I get advice from my lawyers and bankers. Those three are the main ones I deal with [for business] when I really need them.*

[Participant 13]

Other entrepreneurs with considerable business experience take care of such in-house, which are usually sought at certain stage of business growth. Nineteen percent (4) of these businesses are well established and provide this advice in-house, as one of the participants describes:

*We do have about 20-40 consultants [accountants, lawyers and other advisors] we use [utilise their services] for each project when needed. This cut down our costs and administration requirements.*

[Participant 4]

### **Using specialized experiences**

Some of the businesses are well established, with owners who are knowledgeable about compliance issues and their importance for business. Having such knowledge and experience reduces costs, where the time that would be spent seeking such advice is better spent on managing the operation. Such knowledge of processes and administrative responsibilities provides guidance for management issues. One entrepreneur alludes to these requirements for her business:

*My business comes under the New Zealand Qualifications Authority compliance in terms of education requirements. Recruitment of the wrong person, mainly human resources, in this case we go through the processes [of employment] so we*

*do not get ourselves in trouble [with the laws... Employment Relations Act and others]. We have to follow those rules and policies [these are necessary for us].*

[Participant 8]

Most entrepreneurs seem to be aware that compliance in some areas, like taxation, are mandatory. Most of the challenges for the business owner are in keeping up with such requirements. If these requirements are not managed effectively, there would be an increase in costs, as the following participants allude to:

*New Zealand is a country very tight with legislations and legal issues. A lot of Pacific Islanders and Samoans are in trouble with IRD in terms of compliance. I am not happy with the increase in GST and there are so many penalties imposed on tax arrears.*

[Participant 11]

*The challenge for me was keeping up paying taxes [understood the business obligations]. Because the IRD will bang [penalise] you if these are not done.*

[Participant 20]

All of the entrepreneurs in this study are aware of the legal requirements for their businesses. Different businesses engage specific advisors, like lawyers and accountants, for compliance issues at different growth stages of their business, helping them to concentrate on pressing management issues. Mandatory requirements may produce tensions, which would prevent some entrepreneurs from satisfying business responsibilities while at the same time being pressured to serve the obligations of *fa'a-sāmoa*. The next section examines operational issues for Samoan businesses when balancing marketing and financial issues with those of cultural obligations.

## **8.2 Marketing and financial strategies for Samoan businesses**

Compliance with legal responsibilities are not the only management issues entrepreneurs have to deal with. Owners must also identify opportunities and provide strategies that capture a niche in their specified markets. The role of marketing programs allow business

owners to evaluate and manage any pitfalls arising from their marketing systems. For many small businesses, owners manage marketing responsibilities due to costs and in most cases lack of foresight with respect to marketing requirements. While many small businesses view investment in marketing as a luxury item and a cost they cannot afford, it is an important commitment that can often determine the success of a business. Samoan businesses, like other businesses, require exposure for their businesses to gain market share; for some, however, investments in marketing are constrained by cultural obligations and in most cases available resources.

All 21 businesses differ in the way they market their products and services. The experiences and goals of the owners reflected in their marketing styles and the business types, which vary from one business to another. Available resources and budgetary planning determine what the businesses can afford to invest in marketing. For Samoan businesses, marketing factors include issues relating to niches within the Samoan community and for those in the mainstream markets. While some businesses claim to have invested more in marketing, others use other ways to capture market share. The influence of *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations on some businesses and their owners may affect the allocation of resources and the value marketing has for some of the businesses. For example, the data points to the variety of marketing methods the participants use which include local newspapers, the internet, websites, television, radio, signage, billboards and word of mouth. The variety of methods show owner's preferences for specific marketing tools that suit his/her business. Eleven percent of the businesses advertised through their local newspapers and industry specific publications, as the following entrepreneurs claim:

*We advertised two times [regularly] through the restaurant publications. A lot of the growth of the business internationally is because of who I am and my reputation... I do not really believe in advertising. I do not know if it is good or bad but I believe in the word of mouth.*

[Participant 9]

*I advertise in the newspaper once a month. I understand the benefits of advertisement [for my business and the clients I am after]*

[Participant 20]



*I put advertisements in the newspapers like the Samoan observer, the yellow pages, and the Tongan business community newspapers because we got our systems [management] right.*

[Participant 7]

Another 11% of the participants use Samoan television and radio networks to advertise their business for a wider audience of customers. This wider marketing style also appealed to the targeted markets and customers for the type of services that the entrepreneurs are trying to attract.

*Marketing is very important. For our business the majority of our student are from [Samoan community] so we advertise on Samoan television and the Samoa radio and it works well [financially] for us.*

[Participant 8]

*I had a lot of television advertisement [Samoan television]. My advertisement were all over the place. These [advertisements] were expensive but I have to do it and be selective where and when to play them. Those advertisements were a hit when they come out. They were good for exposure and I sponsored rugby to push [my products]. I would have one job [sale] and that would pay for the tv advertisement.*

[Participant 6]

### **Internet, websites and face book**

Sixty-two percent of the participants use websites and other online services like Facebook to market their businesses. These businesses are well established and their choice of marketing reflects the investment and economic returns they expect to achieve, especially with most using electronic tools to market their products and services. As some of these participants claim, their businesses rely on the use of these forms of marketing for expansion to both the local and international markets:

*I advertise mainly on the internet, four years ago only one percent of our business come from the net, now closer to seventy percent of our business come from the internet. It is huge now compared to what it was [when using other forms of*

*marketing]. Other traditional forms of advertising have dropped away. We still have the tour operators, the wholesalers and travel agents but the web [company website] by far is the best.*

[Participant 21]

*Yes, I advertise on our website and in specific industries magazines. We are intermediaries [intermediaries], between the clients so the communication for us needs to be clear. From the outside looking in, talking to suppliers is very important.*

[Participant 2]

### **Word of mouth as a good marketing tool**

Thirty-eight percent of the businesses used word of mouth as an advertising tool. For these participants developing trust and maintaining a good personal reputation with the clients is important, as well as being economic. These participants feel that they are closer to their clients and are confident in satisfying their needs as they arise. For some of these businesses, word of mouth is a cheaper method of advertising, while for others it is about serving niches, especially when the main client bases are from their business and community networks. The following participants note:

*I never advertise [in radio, internet etc.]. It is fast to get the story about your business in the community through the word of mouth. It is good [advertising] for my business. It is [about] how good your business and how you come across [trusting with product and services]. We get clients [businesses] from the suppliers too [if have a good reputation]. There is really no marketing.*

[Participant 14]

*In marketing there are hassles [expenses] as you have to spend money on it but for me I believe that the word of mouth is better to create [reach out] a market. Therefore, you have to start it [the business] first so when people go around and they see it's up and running they will support it. So long as you have a good service and looking after people... they will come back [repeat business] the word of mouth in marketing is huge and powerful.*

[Participant 12]

*In the beginning I used [advertised] in the newspapers and the media but in the last five to eight years, it is mainly the word of mouth and that is the uniqueness of fa'a-sāmoa, the word [about your business] goes around. However, deep underneath, it is the trust and reputation [of the owner].*

[Participant 11]

### **Mixture of marketing tools**

Businesses use different marketing preferences and strategies that work for their businesses. The mixture of advertising tools includes newspapers, the internet and other available electronic means. Sixty two percent of the entrepreneurs use a mix of these marketing tools. For some of the established businesses, investing resources in this type of marketing is a priority in order to grow and to capture market share, as mentioned by the following participants:

*We have our own media, newspaper and stuff [other marketing tools]. I do not pay for advertisement...I use my own [marketing tools], so there is minimum use of advertisement.*

[Participant 5]

*I advertise in the local newspapers, face book, website and word of mouth*

[Participant 17]

*At the moment we are slowly getting into the media, face book, twitter and its serving our different clientele coming through. We always get new clients every week [by using these].*

[Participant 10]

The above section outlines the different ways businesses use marketing. The marketing commitments by Samoan businesses reflects the different needs of businesses, available resources and the goals the entrepreneurs have for their special businesses. Those using the internet and websites target more generic clientele and keeping up with new business trends. Others who rely on word of mouth seem to be closely associated with personal client services where trust and reputation are important factors. This includes those who

advertise through their local newspapers in order to capture a specific market and those who use television advertising to reach a bigger audience with the younger generation market. The variety of marketing services used by Samoan entrepreneurs reflects the mix of products and the extent to which they wish to reach out for a bigger market share. Also evident are the changing marketing methods used and the type of markets targeted. The next section examines financial issues and strategies Samoan entrepreneurs use for their businesses.

### **Funding strategies for Samoan-operated businesses**

Samoan-operated businesses are no different from other small mainstream businesses when it comes to survival in the face of financial challenges (Tuatagaloa & Huang, 2017; Gooder, 2016). While these businesses are of different sizes, and in different stages of development, their funding requirements mirror other small businesses in the mainstream, with some requiring short or long-term finances. Sources of funding and the conditions required for funding differ from business to business. While some businesses are funded through family, friends and community networks, others use mainstream funding sources provided by commercial banks and other institutional lenders that include overdraft facilities and debts raised with personal guarantees and collateral for security.

Cultural obligations constraints funding requirements for Samoan-operated businesses, which are further complicated by cultural obligations that bring extra challenges for owners. In addition, Samoan businesses, like many small businesses lack management skills or resources to invest in areas of planning, organising, financial management and credit control, particularly from the inception phases of a business (Bjerke & Ràmös, 2011). In this sense, the entrepreneurs' inability to manage or invest in these functions may cause businesses to struggle (Baumol, 2010). A review of the data suggests that the longer the businesses has been in operation, the more experienced the entrepreneurs are in managing financial issues. Eighty one percent (17) of the businesses have been in operation for more than five years, with established markets, products and services. This indicates that the longer the time that the business has been in operation, the more positive is its financial outcomes and the more likely it is to be a viable business overall. In addition, 59% (10) of the entrepreneurs have operated more than one business, which may indicate their ability to expand and diversify their operations into similar markets.

Nineteen percent (4) of the entrepreneurs with a mixed length of time in business claim that finance is the main constraint they face. It is not surprising that some of these businesses are new and the financial resources and management experience of the owners would only improve with time as the business grows. For some Samoan businesses, financial constraints are the main reason for failure. One of the entrepreneurs closed her business after three months of operation citing her inability to provide finance to continue the operation. She said:

*The bank really does not want to lend my business any money. It is big risk for them to lend my business. Therefore, I just closed it down.*

[Participant 17]

Ninety one percent of the entrepreneurs claim that their businesses are self-financed; this includes personal funds and equity, family, and friends. For some these sources are cheaper and convenient.

### **Family funding**

While the family in *fa'a-sāmoa* differs substantially from its western counterparts, Family is defined in this study in terms of kinship ties and social networks of entrepreneurs (Faleolo, 2014). The international literature (Light, 2004) on ethnic entrepreneurship alluded to the nuclear family as the main funding source that ethnic entrepreneurs use for the start-up phases of their businesses. Nevertheless, this was not the case for all Samoan-operated businesses in this study. Fourteen percent of the businesses relied on extended family and capital as a source of help for the start-up of their businesses, as the following participants claimed:

*...it is lucky my wife works...that is lucky [it provides most of our finance]. It is lucky so I have my office here at home.*

[Participant 13]

*My wife looks after the management, she invests in them too and she is very good [with looking after finance and other management issues]. It is very good that I have these small businesses that provide finance and back my other businesses.*

[Participant 12]

*For all the growth phases of the operation up to now my in-laws [partners' family] provided some of the start-up finance for some of our operation. So the more we invest on the resources the better for our [for business growth].*

[Participant 19]

The above participant further explains that funding from his Samoan family was also available, yet he saw this offer as something that he was not comfortable in accepting. He was mindful of family expectations and *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations that would be a setback for his business, should he accept it.

*One of my family members came and saw how well organised and growing my business was. He offered finance to help with growth and expansion but deep down I know that it will tie me down to his fa'a-sāmoa request and boasting about the type and nature of his funding. He was big [contributing] in fa'alavelave and fa'a-sāmoa things. I did not trust it so I avoided the topic and him altogether.*

[Participant 19]

### **Funding from friends**

Only one business (5%) relied on finance borrowed from a friend as noted:

*My friend who was like a sister to me has been supporting me financially in every way and since the beginning [when business first started]*

[Participant 17]

### **Personal equity and capital**

Those who could afford to finance their own businesses have the freedom to manage these resources without having to endure the inconvenience of applying for finance and facing the costs of borrowing from lending institutions. These business owners fund their businesses this way as they noted:

*It is my own money and since we were very blessed with cash to start our business, as compared to others who have to get loans, so the supply [business finance] is determined by your own cash flow.*

[Participant 7]

*I had money put into this venture. I never went to the bank to borrow as I only used what [money] I had [to operate the business]*

[Participant 14]

### **Debt Finance**

Some business owners with growing businesses may find, at one stage, that their financial resources are insufficient to improve and fund their business. In such a case, they would require outside funding from banking institutions, and this usually requires them to go into debt. This also, in most cases, requires entrepreneurs to assess their security and collateral bases as they have obligations to outside parties who would require specific levels of security. For other businesses with good lending records with financial institutions, the good business reputation they have built up with commercial lending institutions gives them an advantage with overdraft facilities, term loans and other forms of financing.

### **Bank finance**

The picture looks different for businesses that operate with overdraft facilities. Sixty seven percent of Samoan businesses use bank funding like overdraft facilities, allowing the entrepreneur to develop and manage different growth phases of the business, as the following participants note:

*Yes, I operate on an overdraft. You [a business] must have an overdraft. Only a small number of businesses operate in the green [good cash flows].*

[Participant 6]

*It is a huge issue [credit and financing] for Pacific Island businesses. It is good to seek credit facility to start the business and then it is your ability and various pressures for you to maintain the creditability [your reputation] and paying back that credit. From experience, I think most of our people [Samoans] and business people have failed that tremendously.*

[Participant 4]

*I have to sacrifice a lot of things [for the business], because the bank saw this type of business as a risk [which affected him getting finances] ... Now it's different*

*[the business is growing] when I go to the bank I have a track record [good business financials] ... but in the beginning ... wow [it was difficult]*

[Participant 9]

### **Self-financed**

One participant (5%) alludes to the usage of internal financial facilities that provide finance for their operations. This indicates that the business has been in operation for some time and is more financially viable.

*In our case [business] we don't look for funding, those facilities [like funding] are available [to us]. Banks loans we hardly do that ...we loan from inter-loans within our companies and that is how we finance our businesses.*

[Participant 5]

All participants manage funding challenges in different ways, depending on the needs and stages of their business. The data points to different sources including personal finances, family funding, with some businesses borrowing from institutions like commercial banks. The funding requirements for each business show the phases of growth and development. The next section examines the social embeddedness of the entrepreneurs in *fa'a-sāmoa* and the benefits of social capital for businesses.

## **8.3 The challenges *fa'a-sāmoa* impose on businesses**

In the previous section, the entrepreneurs talked about the different strategies for marketing and financing their businesses. Business regulations may prevent some entrepreneurs from acting in certain ways that disconnect them from serving *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations. However, compliance requirements of the business environment provide mandatory challenges that all businesses must endure. The obligations of culture focus on a different sets of principles where the participant's embeddedness in community values and familial obligations compete with business responsibilities. In this sense, businesses that rely solely on the Samoan community will have less interaction with other business networks in mainstream markets. Responses vary amongst the entrepreneurs on how they view *fa'a-sāmoa* requirements when conflicts arise with their management



styles. The question - *How does Samoan culture shape the way you manage your business?* - focuses on the issues of whether the influence of culture hinders the development of Samoan businesses and how entrepreneurs view its advantages and disadvantages with respect to their businesses. While serving *fa'a-sāmoa* generally means participating in family, church and village, this section provides general evaluations by entrepreneurs of aspects of culture not covered by these institutions; rather it is about the articulation of culture within the structural conditions of the New Zealand business environment.

The data shows that not all businesses relied on the Samoan community as a source of a market for their business. The *mātai* entrepreneurs (10 or 48%), for example, view the reciprocal value of *fa'a-sāmoa* as something that could be utilised to benefit businesses. In activating community networks and social relationships the *mātai*, through their leadership, draw in familial support to serve and benefit their businesses. The non-*mātai* participants (11 or 52%), on the other hand, manage *fa'a-sāmoa* in different ways to suit their business goals. A number of the non-*mātai* participants, who did not see any value in *fa'a-sāmoa* for their businesses, have reduced their participation in its practices and instead invest and manage resources that would benefit their businesses more. A participant said:

*Samoan culture has helped me with many ethical issues in business. My understanding of the vā-feāloāloa'i, gave me a good run in terms of dealing with people. That is needed in business relations ... respect. But you still mix it up with the rational western mentality of business dealing, ... be assertive, not too confident nor boastful but playing to your understanding of the legal system and how the market works and most of all understanding your responsibilities as a business person, you are to run [operate] the operation in a viable manner. That is your responsibility under law [New Zealand business laws] not culture [fa'a-sāmoa]*

[Participant 19]

All ten (100%) *mātai* participants saw the *fa'a-sāmoa* as valuable to their businesses, although all apply these advantages in different ways and with different levels of commitment. Forty percent (4) of the *mātai* entrepreneurs, for example, relied mainly on the Samoan community for their businesses. These businesses did not achieve the success

they anticipated. In this case, all of them relocated their businesses away from the Samoan dominated areas and niches with a change to the type of business operated. Comparatively, 60% of matai participants who factored in and balanced the obligations of *fa'a-sāmoa* values with the responsibilities of the business environment operated successful businesses. Some entrepreneurs spoke about some of the issues relevant to their situation:

*It depends on the players [businesses] but the *vā-feāloāloa'i* is one of the top ingredients in *fa'a-sāmoa* and of who we are. It [*vā-feāloāloa'i*] can strain [setback] the business in one way and it can develop [grow] the business if you know how to play that *vā* [relationships]. That is the beauty of *fa'a-sāmoa*, in a sense ... *a ou poko e fa'aāoga le fa'a-sāmoa I Niu Sila* or if I know how to utilise the *fa'a-sāmoa* with the responsibilities in business environment, I will be the biggest benefactor... and I can use it to my advantage.*

[Participant 4]

*The network nature of our *fa'a-sāmoa* is rich. The family and community would support their matai and the matai give back. We have this notion of giving. It [matai system] never changed but it worked. I work on the idea that, *o oe nei, o au taeao* or [‘today's opportunities are yours, tomorrow's are mine’] that is also why I'm a matai, I serve the community.*

[Participant 11]

Other *mātai* participants manage this reciprocal duty by avoiding unnecessary commitment, as they are mindful of the pitfalls of overdoing the *fa'a-sāmoa* to the detriment of their businesses. The data show that these participants are more educated, perhaps helping them to make choices based on the economic value of culture. Their experiences of the cost and value of this commitment are drawn from dealing with these requests over time, which allows them to manage cultural obligations the way they did:

*Culture... is good but sometimes you try and avoid it but you can't sometimes. But I move around two worlds [both Samoan and palagi]. Like our other mates we went to university with and are also *mātai* when I have enough of *fa'a-sāmoa* [*fa'alavelave* and cultural obligations] I go to other places where the palagi [white people] are [to avoid the reach of *fa'a-sāmoa*]*

[Participant 6]

*My mum looks after all the cultural obligations...I look after the monetary side [serving cultural requirements] I find it hard to focus on culture and fa'a-sāmoa so I say 'mum you handle all that and I do the other stuff [business] ...it affects my business [dealing with the culture all the time].*

[Participant 13]

Some of those who supported *fa'a-sāmoa* requests stated that there was pressure from the expectations in the community that a Samoan person who operates a business is rich and should therefore contribute more resources to meet requests of family and community. The following participants alluded to these sentiments:

*You know they [family and community] think that we [entrepreneurs] are rich. They think we are made of money ... the social values in the south [Auckland] man [reference to asking for money]. They [family] always expect you to give money... like my mum man [whenever she needs money] she expects it ... why can't M [participant] give money].*

[Participant 9]

*There is nothing wrong with being in business but being Samoan is a problem because they will demand and cut you down at the knees with their [financial requests] ... they [family and community] would look at you but at same time pick your pockets knowing that you are in business [being rich].*

[Participant 13]

*.... my family, I leave them alone but they don't leave me alone [consistently requesting] when they want money they ring. For any fundraising for family, fa'alavelave in the family community and church they ring. But I control my involvement in these things [giving] because the way I look at it they are only interested in you when they want things done.*

[Participant 19]

### **Female entrepreneurs**

All six (29%) female entrepreneurs indicated their support of *fa'a-samoa* in different ways. Their business success is secured by the levels of support from the community, which also extends their political influence in community matters. In essence, this is their *tautua*, which in some cases provide rewards like entitlement to *mātai* titles. One female entrepreneur comments on ways this support is given and the expectations:

*Being Samoan, you always have to give. So indirectly or directly you just give [family and community] like you do in fa'alavelave. It's what we do as Samoans and we get rewarded for it*

[Participant 10]

### **Managing cultural conflicts**

The data also suggests that the support given for *fa'a-lāvelāve* and other community events include requests for finance for special occasions, business advice, and exchanging or providing material goods that would help save costs for the businesses. Conflict may arise when entrepreneurs reason that such support would, in some cases, become unnecessary and taxing on their businesses especially when resources requested are better invested in the business. For some participants, it is obvious that they are aware of the ramifications of not supporting cultural requests where they chose not to overcommit these resources. Seventy percent of the participants acknowledge that culture has an influence in the way they manage their businesses connected with full or partial discharging their *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations. Not all entrepreneurs (7 or 33%) acknowledge or support cultural responsibilities. The embeddedness in culture differs amongst the entrepreneurs with some viewing it as a liability on businesses as the following participants claim:

*Samoan culture is always about giving but it is now about competing ... it makes people poor. They give away too much because of pride and the kids get nothing. You get brainwashed with Samoan culture.*

[Participant 9]

*That is why my business is slow. There are things that are never taken away in our culture [giving and contributing money for fa'alavelave]. This is where you*

*see the [differences between] good and bad businesses [those who do and don't manage fa'a-sāmoa]. Some go broke because of cultural expectations.*

[Participant11]

*The culture demands from them and they work so hard to make ends meet and they don't think of anything else other than that [giving]. Simply because of cultural expectation so they become so ingrained in it that you can take Joseph out of Egypt but you can't take Egypt out of Joseph [references to Genesis37-43]<sup>142</sup>*

[Participant 15]

*I think because as Samoans we have these cultural and the extended family obligations. So you still have to serve [contributing] these. The problem with us Samoans is we are so extravagant. That is where the problem comes from ... o le fia iloa o le Samoa [the Samoan being boastful and showing off with wealth]. That is the 'real killer' [cost incurred when giving money and affecting business] for Samoan businesses.*

[Participant 4]

The experience attained from years of operating a business provides some entrepreneurs with a better understanding of balancing the requirements of the business environment and *fa'a-sāmoa*. Some of the participants (60%) indicate that they manage the requirements of culture to keep up with the social networks connected with their family, religion and community. While these connections provide the social capital that benefit some businesses, the entrepreneurs also manage and in some circumstances restrict association with *fa'a-sāmoa* to minimise any negative influences that may create costs to their businesses. This may also support the idea that the different experiences of managing cultural obligations with business responsibilities allowed some of these entrepreneurs to operate one or more businesses. This is in comparison to the four (19%) who relied heavily on *fa'a-sāmoa* and the Samoan community for their business. These businesses struggle to sustain and develop their businesses. The data also showed that 76% (16) of

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<sup>142</sup> Holy Bible: Good News Revised Edition

the businesses have been in operation for over five years, with 62% (10) operating more than ten years. This indicates maturity that is usually associated with the experiences and viable businesses. The human and capital resources are then matched with the utility that *fa'a-sāmoa* offers when balanced with business advancements.

## 8.4 Discussion

This chapter considers how the New Zealand business environment poses challenges for Samoan entrepreneurs and their businesses. The experiences of the entrepreneurs in navigating the business environment and the opportunities it offers vary from one business to another. The types of businesses and the niche markets these businesses operate in determine the styles of management and resources entrepreneurs deploy. While some businesses rely on Samoan community niches (19% or 4) for their businesses, 48% (10) mix their operations between community niches Samoan and mainstream markets for their businesses, while others (33% or 7) break out and concentrate their businesses in the mainstream markets only. This ability to develop a mixed embedded approach to developing a business for the majority of entrepreneurs is supported by the entrepreneur's education, management experience and the capital resources. For most of the entrepreneurs, their prior experience and familiarity with a specific industry and the requirements of the New Zealand business environment support and serve their businesses.

The consequences of operating a business requires an understanding of the regulatory environment. It enables entrepreneurs to accommodate opportunities by allowing them to operate legally and minimise any misunderstanding of rules and legal responsibilities. For Samoan entrepreneurs, the importance of understanding compliance requirements and the legal responsibilities of a business, while dealing with the obligations of *fa'a-sāmoa*, improves their integration into mainstream markets, and in turn further improves their business development. This also helps to reduce the levels of scrutiny by enforcement agencies on safety issues, especially with council bylaws and the institutional and legal requirements that affect their businesses. The choice of legal entities under which a business may be organised also allows entrepreneurs to develop strategies for marketing

their products and services. All 21 (100%) enterprises in this study are limited liability entities.

The data points to a number of different ways in which Samoan entrepreneurs combine their cultural experiences and their knowledge of the legal and institutional requirements to make decisions that work for their businesses. Forty eight percent (10) of the entrepreneurs in this study applied a mixed embedded approach; combining their knowledge of *fa'a-sāmoa* and their experience of institutional, mainstream markets and industries to develop their businesses. Lacking resources and investment capital creates barriers to growth for some Samoan businesses. Equally important is the fact that most businesses do not have sufficient resources to invest in marketing, legal advice and finance, where by owners are forced to provide these themselves or invest resources their businesses really do not have for these services in order to advance business development (Kloosterman and Rath, 2001). The data point to prior industry experience and education providing some of the owners with confidence and an understanding of the issues that help them mitigate compliance matters that often beset businesses. This in a way helps them to identify issues that are of commercial value to their businesses and to their obligations to *fa'a-sāmoa*.

While it is assumed that serving *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations on top of business responsibilities provide further challenges for some Samoan entrepreneurs, the data shows that the economic value of cultural responsibilities and commitment vary from one entrepreneur to another. Most of the *mātai* are more influenced, and more likely to respond to cultural obligations in certain circumstances compared to those who are not *mātai*. In the business setting, the *mātai*, in some circumstances, view culture as a strategy that helps them manage the social capital emanating from reciprocal relationships within the Samoan community. By committing and associating with the community at different levels such participation helps to confirm their roles as leaders. In cases where *mātai* operate successful businesses and provide limited support to family and community, their roles may be symbolic, but still produce a variety of approaches to accommodating cultural obligations amongst Samoan entrepreneurs. Different factors that exist in the New Zealand business environment produce a variety of Samoan entrepreneurs.

While the data point to the social embeddedness of some Samoan entrepreneurs in *fa'a-sāmoa*, it also indicates an overlap of values within the institutional and regulatory frameworks of the New Zealand business environment, confirming the mixed embeddedness of some entrepreneurs within the business environment. By assessing the intersection of social capital and business dimensions this study demonstrates that there is a variety of approaches and types of businesses amongst Samoan entrepreneurs.

Ninety five percent of the businesses operate in the service industry, with one in manufacturing. This indicates that the different experiences and specific skills motivate entrepreneurs to engage in these sectors, which resulted in the development of different businesses. The most successful businesses are those who are mixed-embedded (48%) in strategizing for opportunities in both the Samoan community and mainstream where they balance their institutional, legal, structural, and *fa'a-sāmoa* responsibilities that helps business growth. The majority of these businesses are well established, have a larger number of employees with businesses that have been operating businesses over longer periods of time that indicate their levels of experience and business resources at their disposal.

Businesses that were socially embedded (19%) in *fa'a-sāmoa* and community niches did not expand, nor progress growth, with 14% relocating and changing services, and with 5% closing down altogether. This suggests that the social embeddedness of entrepreneurs in their social capital and community networks can only provide some limited advantages for ethnic businesses (Pécoud, 2010).

Businesses that were not socially embedded (33%) in *fa'a-sāmoa* were also successful. The entrepreneurs' characteristics of gender, birthplace, age, matai status and education may contribute in different ways to the success or failure of migrant Samoan businesses. Acknowledging the influence of these experiences for entrepreneurs dispels the idea that Samoan businesses are dependent on their social capital that is associated with the collective. .



## 8.5 Conclusion

In chapters Five, Six and Seven, the contributions of the *aiga*, *lotu* and *nu'u* are considered as both a direct and indirect influence on Samoan businesses. These institutions provide the social capital and community networks in which a number of Samoan entrepreneurs are embedded in varying degrees, in the development of their businesses. Where some entrepreneurs are committed to, and only rely on, community networks for business, others find ways to minimise this reliance by accommodating and strategizing for opportunities in mainstream markets. This chapter explored issues in the business environment that are mandatory for all businesses. The mixed embeddedness concept used in this study dictates that entrepreneurs must provide strategies that accommodate the opportunity structures, compliance in the legal environment, and the *fa'a-sāmoa* in order to reduce any disadvantages that could beset their business. This produces a dynamic situation for Samoan entrepreneurs and their businesses to engage with and enhance the opportunities the New Zealand business environment offers. The variety of businesses outlined in this study attest to the substantial variabilities of entrepreneurialism and how entrepreneurs respond to the requirements and opportunities of the business environment.

# CHAPTER NINE: DISCUSSION

## Introduction

This chapter discusses the research findings. It is an opportunity to review the analysis and the conceptual framework used in this research. The three questions presented below clarify the objectives and larger issues of this study. The first question - *What does a Samoan business look like in the New Zealand context for three categories? (a) businesses operated by Samoan born entrepreneurs who were educated in Samoa and migrated to New Zealand later in their lives; (b) businesses operated by those born in Samoa, but raised and educated in New Zealand; and (c) businesses operated by those born and educated in New Zealand?* – explores whether the social embeddedness of entrepreneurs in *fa'a-sāmoa* and their community resources influence the way they operate their businesses. Question 2 - *What opportunities and challenges exist for Samoan entrepreneurs in the context of their practices of fa'a-sāmoa in New Zealand?* - assesses the New Zealand business context and the strategies entrepreneurs use to utilise the value of both *fa'a-sāmoa* and business opportunities and how these influence businesses. Question 3 - *What factors contribute to business success for Samoan entrepreneurs in the New Zealand context?* - analyses the levels of embeddedness of the entrepreneurs in their cultural and class resources and the context in which these factors contribute to the development of businesses. The migrant business context produces different results for Samoan businesses, which indicate the strategies they employ in analysing opportunities. A model presented in this chapter explains and extends the mixed embeddedness framework to explain the context in which Samoan entrepreneurship exist.

**What does a Samoan business look like for three types of entrepreneurs in New Zealand? (a) Businesses operated by Samoan born entrepreneurs who were educated in Samoa and migrated to New Zealand in later years of their lives; (b) Businesses operated by those born in Samoa, but raised and educated in New Zealand, and (c) Businesses operated by those born and educated in New Zealand?**

From the outset, it was considered possible that Samoan entrepreneurs with different business backgrounds might understand and accommodate *fa'a-sāmoa* values in conjunction with the institutional responsibilities and commercial demands when

operating businesses in New Zealand. Firstly, this study demonstrates that there are variations amongst Samoan entrepreneurs and the types of businesses they operate. The variations are the result of entrepreneurs developing strategies that allow them to develop their businesses by accommodating their *fa'a-sāmoa* values in conjunction with the responsibilities and institutional requirements of the New Zealand business environment (Kloosterman & Rath, 2001). Secondly, the interplay of the characteristics of Samoan entrepreneurs resulting from their migration histories, *mātai* status, family values, church affiliations, education, cultural backgrounds and the New Zealand environment have motivated them to seek and match opportunities with these strengths when starting their enterprises. The international literature emphasised the biographical characteristics of ethnic entrepreneurs as factors that supported their incorporation and empowerment to start businesses in both the ethnic enclaves and mainstream economies (Zhou, 2007; Kontos, 2007). Additionally, for some of the ethnic entrepreneurs their reliance on the collective and social capital provide them the advantages to start businesses while others with class capital venture out to seek opportunities in mainstream markets (Pecoud, 2010).

Earlier literature also referred to the utilisation by business migrants of their social capital and community networks as a response to structural circumstances and discriminatory conditions of the host economies that eventually forced them to start their businesses (Light & Gold, 2000). Within ethnic enclaves, migrant entrepreneurs develop networks with other fellow migrant entrepreneurs in order to develop and stimulate economic prospects for themselves (Zhou 2007). The labour market disadvantage thesis in the literature argued that ethnic entrepreneurs started businesses in order to survive because of institutional and structural setbacks like language barriers, discrimination in the labour market, market accessibility, lack of social networks and lack of capital resources (Kloosterman & Rath, 2001). When such issues pose problems, entrepreneurs turn to their social capital and community networks to have access to resources to start businesses (Light, 2001).

However, the path to entrepreneurship may not be the same for all ethnic entrepreneurs as some rely on ethnic resources, while others on their class resources. Resources such as education, business experience, finances and networks are then matched with economic opportunities in the enclave and mainstream business context (Kloosterman & Rath, 2003).

In the case of Samoan entrepreneurs, their embeddedness in the institutions of *fa'a-sāmoa* provides them with the social capital and community networks that support their businesses, in *some* circumstances. Other Samoan entrepreneurs view this connection to ethnic resources from the community as a disadvantage that, raises the issue of how important *fa'a-sāmoa* is as a resource for developing businesses. This study aligns with recent studies (Beckers & Kloosterman, 2013; Pecould, 2010) arguing that, the success of ethnic businesses rely on the business contexts that underlie the socio-cultural values and economic structures of the host economy. This argument challenges the notion that ethnic entrepreneurs concentrate and operate their businesses mainly in enclaves where other co-ethnic members provide the social capital and opportunities for their businesses (Zhou, 2007).

This said success for ethnic businesses occurs when entrepreneurs combine their resources, skills and experiences with those of market opportunities, which in most cases create the variations of business types and styles (Kloosterman & Rath, 2003). For Samoan entrepreneurs, the challenges of *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations and the social capital it provides could be a resource for some while a disadvantage for others. The above question sought to discover Samoan entrepreneurs who are embedded in *fa'a-sāmoa* and to what extent different levels of embeddedness benefit or disadvantage businesses in the migrant setting.

This study shows that Samoan entrepreneurs operate different businesses both outside and inside the migrant community. Many of these entrepreneurs are socially embedded and utilise *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations at different levels and in varying degrees for business. It is evident that approaches to management and types of businesses depend on the motivation, skills and experiences of the entrepreneurs in managing the requirements of *fa'a-sāmoa* when these conflict with business objectives. While social capital and *fa'a-sāmoa* values may provide advantages for some Samoan entrepreneurs, these also bring challenges for others as their utility diminish in value for services, products and market niches in which they operate.

The literature refers to the practices of *fa'a-sāmoa* in business points to its collectivist nature that is assumed harmonious and equally applicable to all Samoan entrepreneurs (Gooder, 2016, Macpherson & Macpherson, 2011). Yet this is not the case as their

biographical characteristics and the context in which these play out reflect the nature of business operations. This notion also follows the international literature that points to the value of ethnicity and community networks as important advantages for migrant entrepreneurs yet other market factors provide different influences for businesses (Light, 2004). For Samoan entrepreneurs, the practice of *fa'a-sāmoa* institutions of family, religion and community in the migrant setting all pose different influences on Samoan entrepreneurs and the way they commit and manage these factors for their businesses. This suggests that different generations of entrepreneurs have different values, identities, experiences, and commitment to *fa'a-sāmoa* and the ways they utilise these factors to benefit their businesses.

Eighty percent (17) of the entrepreneurs in the study are Samoan-born which suggests their connectedness to *fa'a-sāmoa*. Sixty seven percent (14) of the entrepreneurs (1<sup>st</sup> generation) were born in Samoa and migrated to New Zealand after fifteen years of age. Most of this group were educated and raised in both New Zealand and Samoa, which suggest a positive view of the utility of and commitment to *fa'a-sāmoa*. Fourteen percent (3) of the entrepreneurs were born in New Zealand, with five percent (1) born in Fiji (2<sup>nd</sup> generation). Fourteen percent (3) of the entrepreneurs (1.5 generation) were born in Samoa and migrated to New Zealand under the age of 15 years. Despite all these and the fact that all of the entrepreneurs speak Samoan fluently, with some having stronger commitment to the practice of *fa'a-sāmoa* than others this points to the variations amongst entrepreneurs.

The data show that 42% of those born and educated in Samoa who migrated to New Zealand after the age of fifteen years did not utilise *fa'a-sāmoa*, nor operate a business in the Samoan community. There were no *mātai* in this group, suggesting that they were less likely to be attached to cultural obligations and were less likely to see the collective advantages of *fa'a-sāmoa* for their enterprises, as compared to the other two groups. This group relied heavily on class resources, which in a way shielded them from the hostilities of non-participation in *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations. Businesses types varied amongst this group. These businesses are spread out in different industries that require high capital investments such as real estate (1), a restaurant (2), manufacturing (1), health and fitness (1), and security (1). The nature of the businesses suggest that these enterprises require a

degree of financial investment and management skills to deal with the needed efficiencies in mainstream markets.

In this sense, the disadvantage thesis falls short as a clear explanation of *fa'a-sāmoa* as a drawback for a number of Samoan businesses. The data shows that all Samoan entrepreneurs were opportunity entrepreneurs who used their prior employment experiences to select opportunities in their specific markets, matching these with the social and class resources at their disposal to create businesses (de Vries, 2007; Frederick & Henry, 2004). Although this may be the case, differing results have been achieved at different levels and types of businesses, even when *fa'a-sāmoa* provided clear advantages for the entrepreneurs who relied on it. Some research has shown that even ethnic entrepreneurs who are embedded in their own group networks and resources engage with business opportunities in a variety of different ways and in markets other than their enclaves (Pecoud, 2010). On the other hand, different generations of Samoan entrepreneurs would likely adapt and be able to take advantage of the broader range of markets available to them in the migrant setting, rather than relying on the Samoan community and hence the value and nature of their biographical characteristics. The following question provides some insights on the utility of *fa'a-sāmoa* and its benefits to a business.

### **What opportunities and challenges does the practice of *fa'a-samoa* present for Samoan entrepreneurs in New Zealand?**

The question explores both opportunities and challenges for business owners where issues of *fa'a-sāmoa* conflict with business responsibilities. The variety of businesses and management styles amongst Samoan entrepreneurs reflect the consequences of a combination of *fa'a-sāmoa* and the influences of cosmopolitanism that entrepreneurs must manage (Pecoud, 2010). Managing a business produces different experiences for Samoan entrepreneurs, which prompts the observation that these entrepreneurs can not be placed in one category. Biographical factors such as gender, place of birth, age, matai status and level of education motivate entrepreneurs in different ways, leading to various types of businesses and management styles.

These factors may also indicate the propensity of the entrepreneurs to make decisions based on the realities of business operations that need to be economically viable (Pecoud, 2010). Samoan businesses are no different from other businesses in the mainstream, and hence the differing degrees of their reliance on the Samoan community. Where these businesses depend on Samoan niche markets that are in some circumstances not viable, they may be forced to compete in the mainstream market. There is a tension for Samoan entrepreneurs when balancing *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations towards *āiga*, *lotu* and *nu'u* and commercial commitments. For some entrepreneurs, structural and institutional responsibilities become more conflicted when mandatory compliance issues are required to be balanced with *fa'a-sāmoa* to mitigate the tensions arising out of competing requirements.

The data shows that *fa'a-sāmoa* is utilised in various ways by entrepreneurs. Thirty three percent (7) of the entrepreneurs do not rely on the Samoan community for their businesses. These entrepreneurs reduce their commitment to obligations of the *āiga*, *lotu* and *nu'u* to minimise any compromises with their businesses. Fifty-two percent (11) of the entrepreneurs who support family are mainly older participants who are *mātai*, and were born and raised in Samoa. This level of support for the *fa'a-sāmoa* also indicates the value of embeddedness in church and community responsibilities that in some circumstances provide niches and resources that can bolster businesses.

Although 14% (3) of New Zealand-born entrepreneurs acknowledge their support for family, these cultural obligations are managed so resources are prioritised for business development. These entrepreneurs are more highly educated, with varied experiences in operating different types of businesses that relate to their education and their skills in the New Zealand business environment. Their commitments to *fa'a-sāmoa* are valuable factors in certain circumstances when their businesses rely on a mixed embedded model that connects their businesses with the opportunities in both the Samoan community and in mainstream markets.

The data also shows varied support for the family and community from female entrepreneurs with 14% (3) giving this support and 14% (3) not supporting. This freedom to give and withhold support follows trends in the migrant setting where economic and

political opportunities for women have improved, giving them the ability to choose to offer this support if, and when it is relevant (Macpherson and Macpherson, 2011).

All six female entrepreneurs were born and raised in Samoa, with some being educated in New Zealand. These entrepreneurs value the importance of kinship and community as these ties provide social capital for the development of their businesses. These female entrepreneurs married outside the Samoan community (three to white New Zealanders, two to Maori, and 1 to a Fijian Samoan). The mixed spousal relationships may explain high levels of business ownership and class resources such as higher levels of education, as well as financial and industry experience that allows them to strategize and balance social commitments to family and to their businesses. The place of Samoan women entrepreneurs in this study is visible as they all own and manage businesses, indicating further higher levels of independence and entrepreneurialism compared to female entrepreneurs in Samoa. This situation differs from the trends explained in the international literature where female entrepreneurship is incorporated into ethnic entrepreneurship and perceived as part of the ethnic economy that is male controlled (Zhou, 2007; Kontos, 2007). While all the women entrepreneurs in this study were first generation migrants, this may suggest a trend that points to the likelihood of increase entrepreneurialism for the second and third generation of New Zealand born Samoan female entrepreneurs.

Another central theme from the data outlines levels of support for religion and the way this support affects businesses management amongst the entrepreneurs. Sixty percent who supported churches were born and raised in Samoa and held *mātai* titles. Association with religion is part of *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations, although other factors also contribute to the variations of religious practices amongst the entrepreneurs in the migrant setting. The ongoing commitment to the church for some entrepreneurs plays a role in connecting with the traditional religious values that are normally practiced in Samoa. The imposition of heavy cultural obligations on members has caused many to change denominations, as well as leading to many entrepreneurs viewing church obligations as taxing on their business resources (Va'a, 2001). Others, who did not support different evangelical churches and other independent congregations, prefer traditional religious models, as they believe these serve their religious beliefs.



The data also shows that participants who were born in Samoa and migrated to New Zealand are committed to different denominations. Although this support varied amongst the entrepreneurs of different generations, commitment to religion overall was stronger for those associated with *fa'a-samoa* and for the Samoan born rather than those who were born and raised in New Zealand. Those involved occasionally with religion were mainly the New Zealand-born (10%) which indicated a sense of freedom to choose belonging to a religion in order to validate their religious identities. Despite these variations, it was noticeable in most cases that the church has a double role, which for one, serves as a village where business and *fa'a-sāmoa* are organised and secondly where religiousity functions are carried out.

There is an equal number for female entrepreneurs who supported religious activities 50 % (3), and those who did not support religious activities 50% (3). This may indicate the different strategies women employ in giving or withholding support. Those who did not support religion were women with tertiary education. Although this may highlight the idea that their higher education and management skills has led them to question the relevance of the church in their lives, it also points to the fact that women entrepreneurs own and manage business resources in different ways.

The data also shows different patterns of commitment to community responsibilities for entrepreneurs. There is a higher level of embeddedness with community networks amongst the participants, who are *mātai* (47%), older males and those born in Samoa (57%). These changes can be traced to aspects of both traditional Samoan society and to the migrant communities where the *nu'u* or community has been remodelled around other *fa'a-sāmoa* institutions to reflect the new urban living styles and identities of Samoan migrants. The church, for example, now plays the role of the *nu'u* or village in Samoan migrant communities, where traditional cultural obligations are practised.

While some entrepreneurs are committed to *fa'a-sāmoa*, others pursue business niches away from the community, allowing them to avoid dealing with community demands. The data points out that it is mainly the older males, Samoan-born and *mātai* entrepreneurs who are oriented more towards Samoan based niches rather than the younger and New Zealand born entrepreneurs. For these specific entrepreneurs *fa'a-sāmoa* and their connectedness to the Samoan community is construed as more of a

cultural resource with glimpses of economic value that requires management to benefit their businesses. Despite this, all of the entrepreneurs keep up some form of commitment to family obligations in different capacities. The commitment to family, church and community are articulated through the practices of *fa'alavalave* where all generations of entrepreneurs view its practices as a way to satisfy their obligation to family (Fa'alau, 2011; Maiava, 2001). In these occasions, the values of *fa'aāloālo*, *ālofa*, *vā-feāloāloa'i*, *tautua*, *tausi-āiga* and *tausi nu'u* are played out as markers of ones Sāmoanness and connectedness to kin ties. While serving the obligations of *fa'a-sāmoa* can create conflicts and more obligations for some entrepreneurs, the effective and successful management of ones business may allow for balancing cultural responsibilities and the commercial realities and therefore satisfying both business responsibilities and cultural obligations. In the following section, the question considers reasons why some entrepreneurs are successful and others are unsuccessful in the New Zealand business context.

### **What factors contribute to business success for Samoan entrepreneurs in the New Zealand context?**

This question examines the degree of success for Samoan entrepreneurship in the migrant environment. One of the contributions of this study to the literature is the extension of the mixed embeddedness framework that takes the focus away from the social embeddedness of ethnic entrepreneurs in their community and ethnic resources. The mixed embeddedness framework acknowledges the influence of the business environment that challenges the entrepreneur to manage the institutional and structural factors of the business environment and strategize for opportunities offered in the market (Beckers & Kloosterman 2013; Kloosterman & Rath, 2003). For Samoan entrepreneurs, the utility and advantage of *fa'a-sāmoa* may be incorporated into the management of their businesses.

The data demonstrates that some Samoan entrepreneurs are more successful than others are, and that the levels of success vary from one entrepreneur to another. The importance of ethnic resources, and in this case the utility of *fa'a-sāmoa*, cannot fully explain the nature and success of Samoan entrepreneurship alone. In most cases, especially for ethnic entrepreneurs, success depends on the degree of incorporation into the host economies in

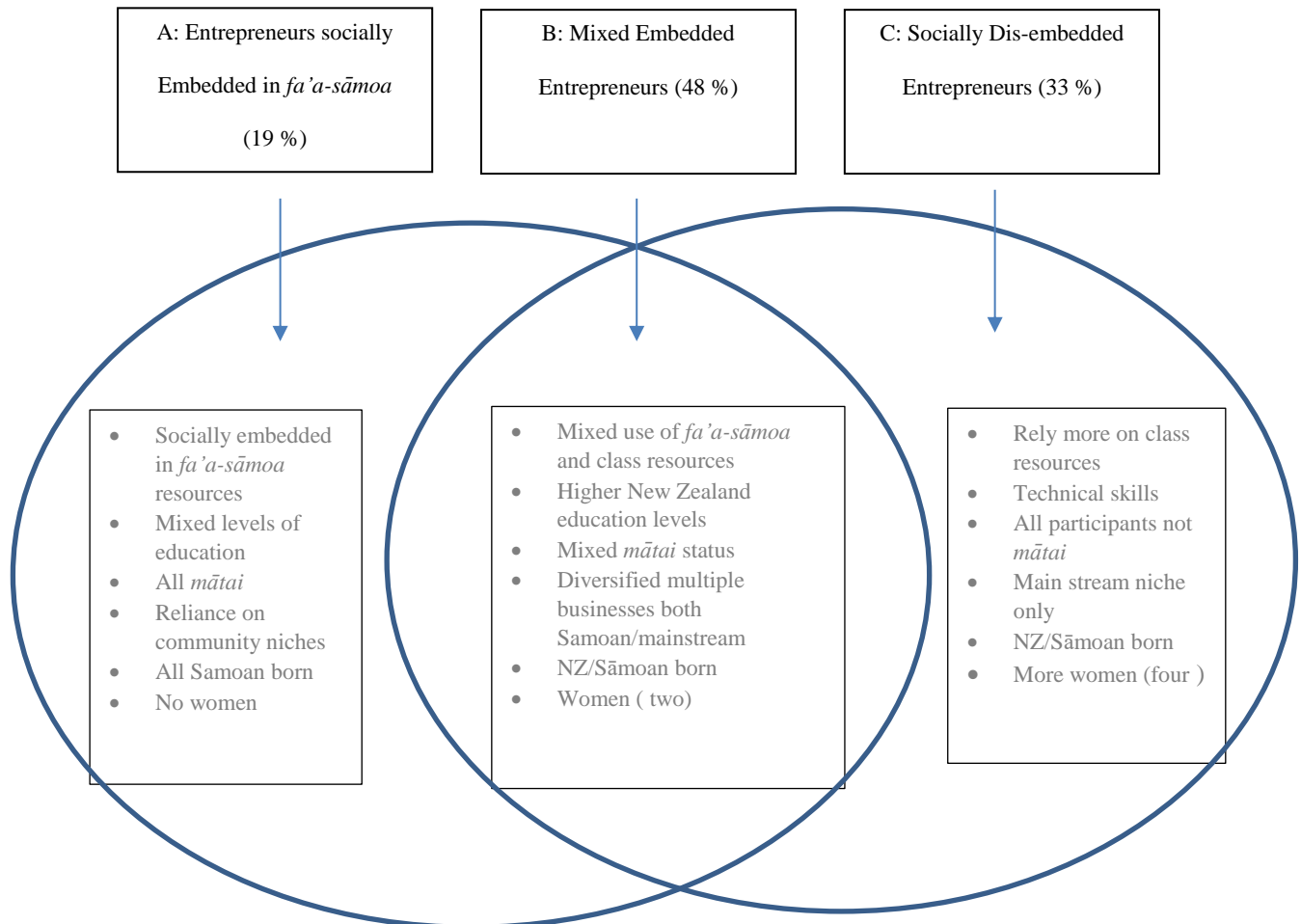
which they exist (Min & Bozormehr, 2000). Furthermore, global trends in entrepreneurship coupled with elements of the local economy, such as structural and institutional compliance requirements, contribute to business development, which in itself can vary from one country to another (Pecoud, 2010, Kloosterman & Rath, 2001). For Samoan entrepreneurs, their biographical characteristics such as gender, place of birth, age, *mātai* status, education, and years of experiences in business also contribute to and motivational when starting a business. In this sense, the application and accessing these values by entrepreneurs in the development of their businesses debunk the generalised view of ethnic entrepreneurs' whose advantages emanate from their social embeddedness in cultural and community networks.

In Figure 1 below, the variations amongst Samoan entrepreneurs and their businesses are illustrated which show that some entrepreneurs rely on *fa'a-sāmoa* and community networks; others are mixed-embedded in both community networks and the opportunity structures of the business environment, while others dis-embedded from community support rely totally on mainstream markets for their businesses.

Category A represents 19% (4) of the entrepreneurs, those who are socially embedded in *fa'a-sāmoa*. All these businesses relied on niches, social capital and clientele within local Samoan communities. All these businesses operate in the services industry (one in accountancy, one funeral director, one in carpet sales and one in building). Fifty percent (2) of this group operate their businesses in South Auckland and another 50% (2) in West Auckland where their community networks exist. The education levels of this group vary with 25% (1) having a University qualification and 75% (3) with a high school education. Fifty percent (2) of the entrepreneurs operated other businesses before their current operations, while another 50% (2) their first business. All entrepreneurs in this category are males, all *mātai* and Samoan born and raised, which indicates a strong connection to *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations. They view their commitment to employing family and their association with community and church as an advantage for their businesses. However, all four businesses struggle to survive which may explain the challenges *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations impose on their businesses. As a result 50% (2) of the businesses closed, relocated and changed to new business, while the other 50% (2) closed their operation altogether. This points to the idea that *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations often weaken businesses, and hence businesses in this group (who are socially embedded in community networks)

fail more often, or need to change more often in order to survive, compared to the enterprises of the other two groups (B and C in Figure 1 below).

**Figure 1 Diversity of Samoan entrepreneurs in relation to their Samoan community and business: the degree of embeddedness, mixed-embeddedness and dis-embeddedness.**



This result is not consistent with the international literature that points to the advantages of the social embeddedness of entrepreneurs in their ethnic resources, helping to alleviate the disadvantages they face in the business environment when starting their businesses (Light, 1984). For some Samoan businesses, their embeddedness in Samoan social values allows them to draw on any opportunities and resources from the Samoan community that bolster businesses. In this sense, they are opportunity oriented and creative rather than necessity entrepreneurs who are usually forced into business for survival in a new environment (Frederick & Henry, 2004). Furthermore, the ease in which Samoan

entrepreneurs start and close businesses when uneconomical makes their situation different from the disadvantaged conditions of the ethnic entrepreneurs referred to in the international literature. In this sense, the disadvantage thesis that explains the influence of institutional and structural factors, such as discrimination, language problems and a lack of networks that ethnic entrepreneurs face in the host society cannot adequately explain the success or failure rates of Samoan entrepreneurs.

Category B represents 48% (10) of entrepreneurs, who were mixed embedded and sought strategic advantages in both *fa'a-sāmoa* and mainstream markets. Ninety percent (9) of these businesses have been in operation more than five years, with 10%(1) under three years of operation. The survival rates of these businesses reflect the experiences of entrepreneurs in managing the dual requirements of the business environment and *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations. It is suggested here that these entrepreneurs are able to control their expenditures for *fa'a-sāmoa*, reducing risks that beset businesses. This group of entrepreneurs employ the most employees amongst themselves (167), which further reflects their success and on the other hand the possibilities of these businesses diversifying into familiar markets for their operations.

Not all businesses in this group needed development. Levels and types of education varied amongst this group. Fifty percent had University degrees, 40% had technical qualifications with 10% having prior industry skills which suggested the types of industries and businesses the entrepreneurs operated (Restaurant 1, Consultancy 1, Education and Health 2, Quantity surveying and Building 2, Engineering and Construction 1, Hair saloon 1, Dairy and gym 1, Travel and Farming 1). Fifty percent of this group operate more than one business while the other 50% were in their first business. The high proportion operating more than one business shows substantial levels of business and managerial experiences, investments and levels of resources invested in these businesses.

Sixty percent (6) of this group are *mātai*, which suggests a strong cultural and community network base that was mobilised for the businesses. Sixty percent were found in the South Auckland area, 20% in central Auckland and 20% in West Auckland, which reflects a mix of niche markets and accessibility to the concentration of the Samoan community. The majority of the New Zealand born entrepreneurs are found in this group with their

businesses geared more towards both the Samoan community and mainstream markets. Although these limited figures and statistics do not give any clear explanations of generational trends on the mixed embeddedness concept, the result, however, illustrates the mixed use of both ethnic and class resources by different entrepreneurs at different levels. Businesses in this category have been successful in managing the dual responsibilities of *fa'a-sāmoa* and the business environment and were good models and teachers for those businesses that did not do well in managing these responsibilities.

Category C, on the other hand, contains 33% (7) of the entrepreneurs. These businesses are dis-embedded from *fa'a-sāmoa* and do not rely on the Samoan community. These businesses rely heavily on their class resources that allow them to venture into mainstream niches. Eighty six percent (6) of the entrepreneurs in this category operated successful businesses with fourteen percent (1) struggling during the time of the interviews. This business later discontinued its operation. Fourteen percent (1) operates in Central Auckland, while 86% (6) operate in the North Shore area, reflecting the choices of markets and clientele in an affluent market. These businesses vary in size, with some providing specific services that require extensive capital investments. Twenty nine percent (2) are in the restaurant trade, 14% (1) in sports fitness, 14% (1) in real estate and property, 14% (1) in health, and 14% (1) in the security industry. Five businesses in this group employed 71 employees, which shows the viability of these businesses. Twenty nine percent (2) of the entrepreneurs are self-employed with businesses been developed from their prior specialised experiences in previous employment (one real estate and another in health). Capital resources such as education, interpersonal skills, markets, a network system, management experience and finances offered more advantages for this group than relying on the social capital the Samoan community provides. Operating in affluent areas distant away from the Samoan community also shows a deliberate decision by owners to distant themselves from committing to cultural obligations, which allow them to strategize for business opportunities the markets provide.

### **The mixed embeddedness model extended**

In this study, the mixed embeddedness model is used to provide a better understanding of the status of Samoan entrepreneurship in New Zealand. The model focuses further on the motivation, the role of ethnic resources that are internalised by entrepreneurs and the strategies they use to develop opportunities for their businesses. Knowledge of ethnic and

class resources allow the entrepreneurs to tap into opportunities that not only increase their economic bases, mitigate employment issues for the younger populations with no skills or education but also increase standards of living for ethnic groups who internalise these opportunities motivating them further to break out into mainstream markets. A review of the different dimensions A, B, and C shows the causal effects that bring about the variety amongst the Samoan entrepreneurs.

Dimension A, shows that entrepreneurs are embedded in their *fa'a-sāmoa* and social networks, that influence the types, nature and outcomes of their businesses. These enterprises were not particularly successful due to their reliance on the social capital the Samoan provides which provided lower commercial returns for the businesses. The draw of ethnic and social networks were not only motivating for entrepreneurs but were also viewed as an advantage to businesses and hence their concentration in the Samoan community (Kloosterman & Rath, 2001).

Dimension B demonstrates the working of the mixed embedded concept where the entrepreneurs combine the values of the *fa'a-sāmoa* relative to the institutional and the opportunity structure of the business environment. The businesses in this dimension are able to mediate the requirements of *fa'a-sāmoa*, and the institutional and structural responsibilities within the New Zealand business environment context that are required to operate viable businesses. Businesses in this category are successful businesses with some operating more extensive and diversified businesses.

Category C on the other hand, points to entrepreneurs who are dis-embedded from the *fa'a-sāmoa* that operate more in mainstream markets. The nature of the businesses and the characteristics of the entrepreneurs helps to explain their motivation and detachment from cultural responsibilities. The majority (19% or 4) of female entrepreneurs are represented in this group. This points to the possibility of a growing development of female entrepreneurship in the migrant Samoan community and the levels and types of resource they invest in their businesses. They all marry non-Samoan New Zealanders, which reflect other influences and advice on business and resource management.

Using the mixed-embeddedness model in this study captures factors that produce the variance amongst Samoan entrepreneurs and their businesses. The model identifies

Samoan entrepreneurs who were born and raised in different environments. Some, as Figure 1 shows, are highly educated with knowledge of the New Zealand business context that allows one to manage and strategize business outcomes. Some are committed to *fa'a-sāmoa* at different levels, having different social networks and capital, with some connecting to transnational ties to their home countries that can expand business niches should these businesses expand. The extension of the model points to the need to identify success factors for different generations of Samoan entrepreneurs where the utility of *fa'a-sāmoa* is incorporated into their business strategies. This model hopes to address the variations amongst the entrepreneurs, especially where cultural obligations, national institutions and opportunities in both national and international market influence and benefit Samoan entrepreneurship at different levels. This will place Samoan entrepreneurship explicitly in the realm of entrepreneurship, which further deemphasises the role of ethnicity and emphasises more the role of class resources in the development of businesses in specific business contexts.

## Conclusion

Samoan entrepreneurship is not an isolated phenomenon nor are Samoan entrepreneurs passive actors in the business environment. The institutional and structural responsibilities posed by the New Zealand business environment present challenges that entrepreneurs must manage. The literature from the United States emphasised the social embeddedness of entrepreneurs in ethnic resources as advantages that help support their businesses. The disadvantage thesis from Australia and European literature on the other hand evaluate the structural and institutional factors, which become push factors that motivate immigrants to establish businesses as a way to survive. Themes from these different entrepreneurial concepts partially explain the nature of Samoan entrepreneurship in the migrant settings. The Samoan institutions of the family, religion and community add other dimensions to the management of Samoan businesses in the migrant settings. While the utility of *fa'a-sāmoa* and community resources may be helpful for some businesses, such advantages should not be over-emphasised. Strategies for capturing business opportunities in the business environment differ from one entrepreneur and business to another, which must matched with resources and management styles of the entrepreneurs. For some entrepreneurs, business success means managing the



obligations of *fa'a-sāmoa*, for others, a profitable business that rely on on balancing the responsibilities of the institutional and structural factors of the business environment which result in an ongoing successful business for future family generations.

# CHAPTER TEN: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations of the study. The study emphasises factors that contribute to the successful operation of Samoan businesses and the contribution of Samoan entrepreneurship to entrepreneurship in New Zealand. There is little information on Samoan entrepreneurship in New Zealand, however literature in the social sciences, namely anthropology and sociology, provide descriptions and socio-cultural themes of the Samoan community that are pertinent for conceptualising Samoan entrepreneurship in a migrant setting. Themes raised in the international literature on ethnic entrepreneurship explore the social embeddedness of the ethnic entrepreneur in social capital and community networks that provided support in the inception phases of their businesses. Samoan entrepreneurship, however, suggests that while some entrepreneurs value the utility of *fa'a-sāmoa* in their businesses, successful outcomes for most are achieved when a mixed embedded approach is adopted that takes into account the institutional and structural contexts of the New Zealand business environment.

Furthermore, an examination of the biographical characteristics of Samoan entrepreneurs (gender, birthplace, age, *mātai* status, education and business experience) shift the focus away from the social embeddedness and the value of ethnic resources as strengths for developing ethnic businesses. Acknowledging these individual characteristics emphasises the motivation, experiences and strategies the entrepreneurs employ when capturing business opportunities. My study confirms that Samoan entrepreneurs are successful when the mixed embeddedness framework is applied to their businesses that consider the New Zealand business context where entrepreneurs utilise *fa'a-sāmoa* in co-ordination with the institutional and structural responsibilities of the business environment. This chapter firstly presents a statement of the study findings. It then compares the issues raised in the international literature on ethnic entrepreneurship and their relevance to the development of Samoan entrepreneurship amongst the different generations of entrepreneurs. This leads to some recommendations for future research in Samoan and ethnic entrepreneurship in New Zealand.

### **Study findings**

This study concludes that there is not one type, but a variety of Samoan entrepreneurs and businesses. The varieties of Samoan entrepreneurship are a result of dealing with the accelerated changes of the New Zealand business environment; an environment that is not only dynamic, but also challenging when dealing with *fa'a-samoa* issues and the institutional, legal, and structural responsibilities of business. The findings in this study show that some Samoan entrepreneurs rely on Samoan community niches in developing their businesses, while others co-ordinate *fa'a-sāmoa* obligations with the institutional and structural responsibilities of the business environment, matching the two with available opportunities. For some entrepreneurs, serving their obligations towards the *āiga*, *lotu* and *nu'u* may add challenges that complicate their ability to run a successful business, yet for others connecting and networking with these institutions provide the social capital vital for their business. Although the business experiences of Samoan entrepreneurs may have led to an assumption that their embeddedness in *fa'a-sāmoa* is an advantage for businesses, their biographical characteristics produce different levels of motivation, types of businesses and management styles.

Samoan entrepreneurship is not homogenous, nor do all entrepreneurs depend on the social capital that *fa'a-sāmoa* provides to promote entrepreneurialism. This observation leads to a consideration of the dichotomy of individualism and collective enterprising, which is crucial in understanding the nature, characteristics, types and generations of Samoan entrepreneurs with their individual endowments, social, and class resources, that influences the way they mobilise cultural values for businesses. In this sense it is evident that ethnic entrepreneurship, and in this sense Samoan entrepreneurship, is part of capitalism. Entrepreneurship is an economic phenomenon that involves exploiting opportunities and developing new products and services that satisfy demands in different markets, whether they are new or old. Consequently, what distinguishes Samoan entrepreneurship from entrepreneurship in general is rarely made explicit due to the motivation and diversity of approaches to business opportunities amongst the entrepreneurs. In light of this statement, this study suggests that Samoan entrepreneurship while based on western capitalism also incorporate the obligations to family, religion, and community in the management of their businesses. These obligations are expressed

through cultural values of *faaāloalo*, *vā-feāloāloa'i*, *ālofa*, and *tautua* associated with duty to family, obedience, pressure, family reputation and status in the community.

### **Issues in the literature**

The study of entrepreneurship now involves many disciplines, with varying points of view, ranging from sociology, economics, anthropology, history, psychology and others. In ethnic entrepreneurship, anthropology and sociology provide early analysis that emphasised the importance of ethnicity and the collective as advantages for ethnic businesses. These analyses point to the ethnization process associated with ethnic enclaves as inhibiting the incorporation of ethnic businesses into mainstream economies. However, empirical research has acknowledged internal and external environmental factors, as well as market processes, that influence migrant businesses in different countries for the better. Quantitative and qualitative research has brought further understanding of the realities of commercial circumstances that influence the growth of ethnic entrepreneurship.

Most of the literature from Australia, the United States and European countries suggests a structural top down approach to labour market disadvantages that described ethnic entrepreneurs as relying on their ethnic and community resources to start their businesses. This early literature defined ethnic entrepreneurship in terms of ethnicity first, then as entrepreneurship second, just because these were businesses operated by immigrants, which contributed to the indiscriminatory references to ethnic entrepreneurship. One of the main themes in the earlier literature was the purpose and nature of the social embeddedness of entrepreneurs in their social networks. This was viewed on one hand as inhibiting their integration into mainstream business but seen on the other of reducing the disadvantages, they faced in the development of their businesses.

Evidently, the social embeddedness argument was one-sided as it did not fully explain the normal commercial business and competition amongst the entrepreneurs. Reliance on the social embeddedness argument distorts broader entrepreneurial developments and the real contributions ethnic entrepreneurs provide through different uses of their social and class resources. This would lead to competitive behaviour that is individualistic, where market competition is the norm and the survival of the fittest characterizes normal

entrepreneurial behaviour. The early conceptualisation of the phenomenon and the lack of uniform policy development in developed countries with a concentration of ethnic entrepreneurship, mainly Europe, USA and Australia, has influenced the conceptualisation of ethnic entrepreneurship in New Zealand. Recent conceptual developments of the phenomenon however have expanded more into the contexts of the individual developed host economies, where ethnic entrepreneurs operate businesses.

New concepts in the area defined entrepreneurs as necessity and opportunity entrepreneurs who enter the market and develop the business opportunities that they see available to them and fitting in with their experiences. Economic sociology explained the metropolitanism process, pointing to the opportunity and the economic structures in which entrepreneurs are integrated in terms of the role of institutions, social networks and how power relations interact at societal and business levels. The notion that social, political and economic forces shape the entrepreneur's behaviour and their businesses takes into account the legal and structural responsibilities of global, metropolitan and local settings. Furthermore, policy frameworks in North America, Europe and Australia, all developed countries with a higher ethnic entrepreneurship presence, have contributed to the changing nature of the phenomenon. In this sense, the entrepreneurial orientation of entrepreneurs involves assimilating and incorporating their collective values into western and individualist models of business.

A collective approach and reliance on the utility of ethnicity does not necessarily provide a complete advantage for ethnic entrepreneurs and their businesses; a better approach involves a mixed embedded model that recognise a mix of market and cultural factors and their respective advantages to a business. In this sense, the mixed embeddedness concept counter balances the social embeddedness argument by expanding and explaining the economic contexts where the entrepreneurs make rational decisions when framing strategies for their businesses. This concept expands the use of social, cultural, and class resources, as well as institutional and regulatory elements that ethnic entrepreneurs mix and are able to access for their businesses.

### **Migrant Samoan entrepreneurship**

This study finds that class and ethnic resources are important values used at different levels of Samoan entrepreneurship. The participant's experiences are internalised through

their migration history and the socialisation processes of living in both New Zealand and Samoan societies. The ethnic entrepreneurship literature in general describes the experiences of ethnic entrepreneurs as those who struggle to find jobs, who face market disadvantages in the host societies, with some hailing from entrepreneurial family backgrounds, who have relied on social capital for the development of their businesses (Light, 2004). Other literature also refers to the new type of entrepreneur who relies on their class resources and business experience in conjunction with strategies they initiate for their new business opportunities in new environments (Kloosterman & Rath, 2001; 2003). These examples may be comparable to some of the Samoan entrepreneurs in this study; 33% of the studied Samoan entrepreneurs had family business backgrounds in both Samoa and New Zealand that provided experience with managing a business.

For most entrepreneurs their prior experience from their previous occupations and careers in New Zealand helped them to select and start a business. Sixty seven percent of the entrepreneurs were not exposed to an entrepreneurial culture, nor operated businesses before migrating, and subsequent residence in New Zealand. This suggests that the majority were opportunity entrepreneurs who created businesses from their skills, adopting the opportunities in the market environment. While 67% of the participants value *fa'a-sāmoa* in their businesses, its utility is measured only in terms of the niches and the value of social networks that are turned into business results. Nineteen percent of the businesses rely heavily on the *fa'a-sāmoa* networks and community niches. These businesses struggled. In this sense, the social embeddedness argument alone falls short of explaining the success rates of Samoan entrepreneurship in the migrant setting. The forty eight percent of entrepreneurs who combined both their class and *fa'a-sāmoa* resources (those who were mixed embedded) have more businesses that are successful. Another group (33%), comprising those who are dis-embedded in *fa'a-sāmoa*, relied heavily on their class resources and mainstream market niches, and had successful businesses.

Samoan female entrepreneurs are also represented in these two entrepreneurial groups. Thirty three percent (2) of all female entrepreneurs were found in the mixed embedded group with successful businesses. The majority of women (66% or 4) in this study were found in the socially dis-embedded group; they relied heavily on their class resources and mainstream markets. All female entrepreneurs had married non-*Sāmoans*, which may indicate their lesser attachment and access to community resources. This may also point

to the way they manage their business resources where any cultural requests may be managed effectively in order to achieve successful business outcomes. This also means that the different resources and opportunities at their disposal lead to them operating a variety of businesses. It is notable that their educational achievements and business experiences open up opportunities in the New Zealand commercial setting that are different from the traditional roles of women in the traditional Samoan community. The changes departs from the nature of female entrepreneurship in the international literature which has been defined within gender migration trajectories and also associated with the ethnic entrepreneurship phenomenon that was mainly male controlled.

Consequently, the second generation of entrepreneurs produced in the migrant community are more or less oriented with Samoan culture, yet exhibit considerable social variety and new identities. The intergenerational gap may further change management styles and business opportunities as the third and fourth New Zealand born generations enter into businesses with class resources that allow them to meet the requirements of the global and metropolitan challenges of business. They will not particularly depend on, nor confine themselves to the Samoan community for their clientele and businesses, as they would likely utilise class rather than ethnic resources. This may also suggest that other younger migrant Samoan entrepreneurs are not all locked into the same forms of embeddedness, but rather adapt and integrate into the opportunity and economic structures of the New Zealand business environment.

This research extends the mixed embeddedness approach (Kloosterman and Rath, 2001) that emphasises the strategies ethnic entrepreneurs use in co-ordinating cultural and ethnic resources with business opportunities, together with the structural and institutional responsibilities of the business environment. This study argues that the use of *fa'a-sāmoa* cultural values and institutions of family, religion and community by entrepreneurs and the possession of class resources changes over time and through different generations. In the New Zealand context, *fa'a-sāmoa* is a dynamic, evolving and in most cases motivating factor for entrepreneurs. This demonstrate that Samoan entrepreneurs are not passive actors in the New Zealand business environment, nor are they always socially embedded in the Samoan community networks and resources for their businesses. Using *fa'a-sāmoa* or being Sāmoan only represents a marker of one's Samoanness; how its commercial utility is realised by entrepreneurs at different levels to serve their businesses.

Furthermore the variety evident amongst Samoan businesses in New Zealand are also influenced not just by the biographical characteristics of the entrepreneurs themselves but also the strategies they employ to accommodate the requirements of the New Zealand business environment. Characteristics such as *mātai* status, gender, birth place, educational levels, cultural orientation, ethnic and class resources are used at different levels of business operations. Cultural variables of *fa'aāloālo*, *vā-feāloāloa'i*, *ālofa*, *tutua*, *tausi-āiga* and *tausi nu'u* bring dynamism to Samoan entrepreneurship that add value for some while they are besetting for others. The three generations of Samoan entrepreneurs, *the lupe fa'alele* as used in this study inspired differently to these. Their business goals and successes are based on how they accommodate and manage these cultural values as utilities for their businesses. Furthermore, the global business trends and the national economy not only expand Samoan entrepreneurialism but also accessing opportunities in transnational locations where Samoan communities are expanding.

### **Recommendations and future research**

The findings from this research show that there is a variety of Samoan entrepreneurs in New Zealand. While concepts such as social embeddedness and ethnic resources are used to define ethnic entrepreneurship, they could not fully explain the nature of Samoan entrepreneurship. Migration and acculturation in the migrant settings have changed the identities of the Samoan population, community and entrepreneurship in general. The challenges provided by the structural and institutional regimes of the New Zealand business environment require entrepreneurs to develop strategies that allow them to accommodate viable business opportunities. For some Samoan entrepreneurs, the advantages of their embeddedness in social networks, the ubiquitous nature of *fa'a-sāmoa* as a utility and their class resources provide different strategies that allow them to capture market niches. Understanding these and entrepreneurship themes discussed in this thesis require further empirical studies that would clarify the impact of the wider New Zealand business context and policy initiatives that take into account the socio-economic and structural conditions of the New Zealand economy. It is anticipated that policy initiatives that accommodate the value of ethnic resources would contribute further to understanding entrepreneurship amongst other migrant groups. This study recommends:



- Further research that would contribute to the policy-making process of government departments, as well as to community and private institutions that deal with the cultural features of the Samoan community and their influence on entrepreneurship.
- Further research on Samoan entrepreneurship in areas of New Zealand other than Auckland. Such research would benefit from the issues raised in this study and provide a better representation of Samoan entrepreneurship in New Zealand as a whole.
- The study of ethnic entrepreneurs, other than Samoans. Such research could benefit from the results of this study in terms of identifying issues common to a variety of different ethnicities.
- Future research in terms of the roles of third generation New Zealand-born Samoans in business. Such work would have a clear tie-in to problems of unemployment and government dependency.
- More studies in the area of the involvement of Samoan women in entrepreneurship in the migrant environment. Such a focus would be of value in terms of providing insights into expanding their involvement in the development of businesses.

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A:

### PROVERB: *IA SEU LE MANU AE TAGA'I I LE GALU*

The proverb has its origin in the hunt of the *fuaō*<sup>143</sup> by *bonito*<sup>144</sup> fishermen to supplement their catches or make up for their lack of success. The *fuaō* colonies are usually found around Samoa's rocky coastal islets mainly in Tutuila, where they dive for fish. Trapping the *fuaō* occurred on the rocks by using a scoop when the birds dived for fish. Heavy and unexpected breakers are common that present a danger to the fishermen, hence the reminder that one must be alert<sup>145</sup>. The birds were hunted for bait and occasionally food and thus the importance of the hunt.

'*Ia seu*' literally means to drag side to side in order to capture. In the context of this research, it means to be inclusive and directive. Metaphorically, the proverb is used in this study to mean to evaluate and plan. This require that all research protocols must be reviewed during the research processes.

'*Le manu*' refers here to the *fuaō*, the preferred bird, for bait and sometimes as a delicacy. In this research *le manu* is understood as the research goals, the knowledge both cultural and businesses, the knowledge of *fa'a-sāmoa*, social capital, the western episteme, and other institutional requirements and expectations required of this research.

The words '*ae taga'i i le*' mean to see or view. One must see, understand, respect and pay attention to protocols. Caution and professionalism are required and expected because in *fa'a-sāmoa* these actions are encapsulated in reciprocal relationships. For this research '*ae taga'i i le galu*' can also mean to view, to adapt and negotiate with those (in this respect, the community) whose knowledge and ideas are transferred and translated. It takes into account respecting all those participating in the research.

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<sup>143</sup>Boobies and gannets

<sup>144</sup>Tuna or bonito fishing or '*aloatu*' occurred in the deep sea using canoes

<sup>145</sup>An extended analysis of this proverb is provided in Appendix A

*'Galu'* is a wave. For this research the wave signified Samoan and western community protocols. It contains in it the community and all the relationships that are connected by the *va* (spaces that govern them). The *galu* reflects a holistic and complete world with different dynamics reflecting different communities, their ideologies, ethical behaviour, the education and learning responsibilities, political and public opinions, intellectual property, markets and all that makes society.

In applying the proverb *'ia seu le manu ae tagai'i le galu'* as the basis for the methodology, there is an acknowledgement of not just Samoan or Pacific world views, but also other perspectives relevant in achieving the objectives of this research.

## APPENDIX B:

### Information Sheet

**Massey University**  
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
Te Kura Pūkanga Tangata

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL  
AND CULTURAL STUDIES  
Private Bag 102 904  
North Shore City 0745  
Auckland  
New Zealand  
T 04 9 414 8800  
F 04 9 411 8162  
<http://social.massey.ac.nz>

### Information Sheet

#### Factors Affecting Samoan Businesses in New Zealand

This letter invites you to be a participant in my PhD project which I'm currently undertaking at Massey University's Albany Campus. The research looks at factors affecting Samoan businesses in New Zealand with specific attention on three categories of businesses: namely businesses operated by the Samoan born who migrated and now run businesses in New Zealand; businesses operated by people born in Samoa but educated in New Zealand; and businesses operated by the New Zealand born.

My name is Maatua Vaoiva Tofilau and this research is supervised by Professor Cluny Macpherson and Associate Professor Ann Dupuis within the School of Social and Cultural Studies at Massey University, Albany.

Existing research on ethnic businesses is largely dated and related mainly to disadvantaged minority ethnic groups migrating and setting up businesses in wealthy European and North American countries. More recently, research has focused on educated migrants who move between countries in their efforts to establish new businesses drawing on their experiences and characteristics. Neither of these strands of research tells us much about the situation of Samoan businesses in New Zealand. This is due to the fact that there have been long and historical links between Samoans and New Zealanders. The Samoan populations are not homogeneous, their businesses are diverse in nature and mostly fall in the small to medium enterprise category.

The focus of this research is on the cultural and economic factors that affect these businesses. The findings will form the basis of my Doctoral study and are intended to contribute to the limited literature on Samoan businesses. The findings should also be of value to the community at large.

You have been invited to participate in this research because you fit one of the categories. Through a Samoan network of existing businesses and communities your name and that

of your business was picked for this purpose. I personally thank you for reading this information sheet and considering participating in my research.

If you do agree to participate you will be interviewed once, with a follow up discussion if necessary to confirm validity and corrections of any issues that provide doubt. For Auckland participants these interviews will be held at my office (4f William Pickering Drive Albany), at Massey University, or a place of your choice. Interviews in other locations in New Zealand will be organized and agreed upon in due time.

As a participant you have the right to refrain from answering any questions that are sensitive or that you don't wish to answer and you can end the interview at any time you want. Any information pertaining to this interview that you want withdrawn may be withdrawn within 28 days from the time the interview takes place.

The information you provide will be treated confidentially. I will personally handle all the information and interviews for this research and great care will be taken to ensure all research materials are kept safely. Please note that this interview will be tape recorded and the recording can finish at any time if you wish. When writing up the thesis I will not include any details that might identify you. However, you might wish to identify yourself and your business. If so, I will ensure that you have the opportunity to read and agree to any material in the thesis that mentions you.

Thank you for participation in this research project. Please don't hesitate to contact me or Professor Cluny Macpherson or Associate Professor Ann Dupuis if you want to talk about the research or have any further questions.

Maatusi Vaoiva Tofileu



Professor Cluny Macpherson  
c.macpherson@massey.ac.nz  
(09 414-0800 ex 9057

Associate Professor Ann Dupuis  
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(09 414-0800 ex 9055

## APPENDIX C:

### Research Ethical Approval From MUHECN

**Massey University**  
AUCKLAND

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT  
TO THE VICE-CHANCELLOR  
(Research Ethics)  
Private Bag 102 904  
North Shore 0745  
Auckland  
New Zealand  
T 64 9 414 0800 extension 5539  
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humaneethics@massey.ac.nz  
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9 June 2009

Mastusi Tofia  
c/- Professor C Macpherson  
College of Humanities and Social Sciences  
Massey University  
Albany

Dear Mastusi

**HUMAN ETHICS APPROVAL APPLICATION – MUHECN 09/020**  
**"Factors Influencing Samoan Businesses in New Zealand"**

Thank you for your application. It has been fully considered, and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern.

Approval is for three years. If this project has not been completed within three years from the date of this letter, a reapproval must be requested.

If the nature, content, location, procedures or personnel of your approved application change, please advise the Secretary of the Committee.

Yours sincerely



Dr Denise Wilson  
Chair  
Human Ethics Committee: Northern

cc: Professor C Macpherson & Associate-Professor A Dupuis  
College of Humanities and Social Sciences

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## APPENDIX D:

### RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Participants	Gender	Birth Place	Age	Employees	Matai	Years in Business	Economic Sector	Education	Church	Community
1	M	NZ	37	40	No	6	Service	School	N	No support
2	F	S	53	10	No	30	Manufacturing	Technical	Y	No support
3	M	S	52	3	Yes	15	Service	Technical	Y	Yes
4	M	S	58	20	Yes	3	Service	School	Y	Yes
5	M	S	48	40	Yes	17	Service	University	Y	Yes
6	M	S	52	11	Yes	13	Service	Technical	Y	Yes
7	M	S	40	5	Yes	10	Service	School	Y	Yes
8	F	S	58	30	No	30	Service	University	Y	Yes
9	M	S	35	9	No	3	Service	Technical	N	No support
10	F	S	34	4	No	11	Service	School	Y	Yes
11	M	S	41	1	Yes	13	Service	University	Y	Yes
12	M	S	34	3	No	7	Service	School	Y	No support
13	M	NZ	50	4	Yes	12	Service	University	Y	No support
14	M	S	53	3	Yes	2	Service	School	Y	Yes
15	F	S	70	1	No	28	Service	School	Y	No support
16	F	S	40	0	No	6	Service	Technical	Y	No support
17	F	S	39	4	No	2mnths	Service	University		Sometime
18	M	Fiji	62	11	Yes	32	Service	Technical	Y	Sometime
19	M	S	52	7	Yes	27	Service	University	Y	Sometime
20	M	S	48	20	No	5	Service	University	Y	No support
21	M	NZ	50	32	Yes	21	Service	University	Y	Yes

## APPENDIX E:

### BUSINESS BACKGROUNDS OF PARTICIPANTS

Participants	Male Female	Samoa NZ born	Age	Employs	Matai	Length Yrs	Service Manufacturing	Edu	Marital Status	Bus Type
1	M	NZ	37	40	No	6	Service	School	M	Limited Liability
2	F	S	53	10	No	30	Manufacturing	Technical	M	Limited Liability
3	M	S	52	3	Yes	15	Service	Technical	M	Limited Liability
4	M	S	58	20	Yes	3	Service	School	M	Limited Liability
5	M	S	48	40	Yes	17	Service	University	M	Limited Liability
6	M	S	52	11	Yes	13	Service	Technical	M	Limited Liability
7	M	S	40	5	Yes	10	Service	School	M	Limited Liability
8	F	S	58	30	No	30	Service	University	M	Limited Liability
9	M	S	35	9	No	3	Service	Technical	M	Limited Liability
10	F	S	34	4	No	11	Service	School	M	Limited Liability
11	M	S	41	1	Yes	13	Service	University	M	Limited Liability
12	M	S	34	3	No	7	Service	School	M	Limited Liability
13	M	NZ	50	4	Yes	12	Service	University	M	Limited Liability
14	M	S	53	3	Yes	2	Service	School	M	Limited Liability
15	F	S	70	1	No	28	Service	School	M	Limited Liability
16	F	S	40	0	No	6	Service	Technical	S	Limited Liability
17	F	S	39	4	No	2mnth s	Service	University	Sep	Limited Liability
18	M	Fiji	62	11	Yes	32	Service	Technical	Sep	Limited Liability
19	M	S	52	7	Yes	27	Service	University	Sep	Limited Liability
20	M	S	48	20	No	5	Service	University	M	Limited Liability
21	M	NZ	50	32	Yes	21	Service	University	M	Limited Liability



## **APPENDIX F:**

### **INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE**

#### 1. Introduction

Please note that all information provided for this research will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and all privacy will be protected.

#### Introduction of Study

This research is conducted for the purpose of completing the doctoral degree at Massey University, Albany campus, Auckland. It looks at operational issues that affect the profitability and viability of Samoan businesses in New Zealand.

#### Reasons for carrying out study

Contemporary studies have been carried out internationally on the success and failure of ethnic businesses in developed countries in North America and Europe, however little has been carried out in the Samoan community in New Zealand. This research will look at a number of these issues and the way they may impact on the Samoan business community in New Zealand.

#### Background in Business

My past experience in managing and owning businesses ( operating a security firm in the Auckland area for ten years) and teaching business at the University level (nine years) has given me some insights into issues involving business management. With my current business of a Sports Academy, the experience has been very helpful and invaluable in identifying issues pertinent for this research. This research is based on developing an understanding of business issues that influence the operation of Samoan businesses in New Zealand.

#### Interview Language Preference

Please indicate which language you would prefer this interview to be conducted in: Samoan or English?

### Agreement to Record

Please indicate whether you would agree to this interview being recorded. These recordings will not be played to any other person and will remain stored securely at Massey University. All recordings, for the purpose of this research, will be transcribed by myself personally.

Yes or No?

### 2. Demographic Profile

Introduction: The purpose of this part of the interview is to develop comparisons between all Samoan business people and their views as to factors affecting operations in New Zealand.

1. Age
  - (a) 20-29
  - (b) 30-39
  - (c) 40-49
  - (d) 50-59
  - (e) 60-69
2. Gender
  - (a) Male
  - (b) Female
3. Place of Birth
4. Length of residence in New Zealand
5. Current Address
6. Marital status
  - (a) Single
  - (b) Married or in relationship
  - (c) Separated
  - (d) Divorced
7. Children
  - (a) Number
  - (b) Ages
8. Other dependents (parents or other family members)
9. What school or institution did you attend for?
  - (a) Primary School

- (b) Intermediate School
  - (c) Secondary School
  - (d) Tertiary
10. What was your highest educational qualification?
  11. Have you had to study to acquire specific skills since you started your business?
  12. Do you have a matai title?

### 3. Business Profile

Please note that these questions are designed for the purpose of attaining information about the business that you are presently operating. The following questions assess whether operational and cultural issues that are affecting Samoan businesses in New Zealand are the same throughout.

1. How long have you been in business?
2. What type of business do you operate?
3. Is this the first business you have operated?
4. If your answer is no, what other businesses have you operated?
5. What skills do you require for this venture?
6. Where did you learn those skills?
7. How many people do you employ?
  - (a) Full time ?
  - (b) Part time?
8. Do you employ any relatives in your business?
9. Are other members of your family in business?
10. What influenced your decision to get into business?
11. Is your business growing?
12. What are the main factors shaping the future of your business?
  - (a) Credit
  - (b) Market
13. What are the most common day to day operational problems in your business?
14. How important is the Samoan community to your business?
15. Do you have a business plan?
16. Succession plans?
17. Do you have a business mentor?
18. How did you find your mentor?

19. How did you form the business plan?
20. Where do you advertise your services and how often?

#### 4. Personal Social Network

These next questions are to help create an understanding of the effect and influence of the family and ethnicity on your business operation.

1. Are you involved in family activities?
2. What is the extent of this involvement?
3. 3 How does your family influence your business practice?
4. Are you involved in village activities?
5. What kind of activities?
6. How does your village involvement influence your business practice?
7. Are you involved in church activities?
8. How does your church involvement influence your business practice?
9. Are you involved in Samoan community organisations?
10. How does your community involvement influence your business practice?

#### 5. General Profile

For this part of the research it is important that individual entrepreneurs evaluate their position as entrepreneurs from a personal viewpoint about general issues that may have influences on the ways their business decisions are made.

1. How do you think the Samoan community views ethnic entrepreneurs?
2. How does Samoan culture shape the way you manage your business?
3. How does gender shape the way you manage your business?
4. How does your immediate family shape the way you manage your business?
5. How does the size of your business shape how you manage your business?
6. How does credit availability influence your business?
7. Do other family members assist you in business?  
- If yes, how?
8. Anything you would like to say about being an entrepreneur?

## APPENDIX G

### PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM



**Massey University**  
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
Te Kura Pūkenga Tangata

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL  
AND CULTURAL STUDIES  
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<http://sscs.massey.ac.nz>

#### FACTORS INFLUENCING SAMOAN BUSINESSES IN NEW ZEALAND

##### PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM - INDIVIDUAL

1 I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

2 I agree/do not agree to the interview being sound recorded.

3 I wish/do not wish to have my recordings returned to me.

4 I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature:

Date:

Full Name - printed

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