Tongan women talking about their lives in leadership in New Zealand: a participatory visual methodological approach to talanoa, gender and culture

By

Sandra Kailahi

A thesis submitted to the Department of Communication Studies in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of International Communication, Unitec Institute of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand (September 2017)
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ABSTRACT

This thesis looks at the impact of gender and culture on leadership of Tongan women living in Auckland through a creative project consisting of an online documentary, a website tool and an exegesis.

The desire to do this research was borne out of a personal interest in leadership and a passion for storytelling, specifically telling stories on Pasifika women and in this case, Tongan women. It was also the discovery of limited research on the use of a participatory visual methodology combined with the Indigenous Tongan research methodology *talanoa* (traditional method of face-to-face conversations) that made this master’s research very enticing. Part of the approach was to see how these two methodologies worked together or complemented each other.

As a co-participant, the author was able to use an autoethnographical approach that involved semi-structured interviews, a semi-structured focus group, and reflexive diaries. However, during the research it became apparent that the diaries were not going to work for the women, because of their busy schedules and this was dropped as part of the data collection. Despite this, the researcher was able to keep a personal diary of her reflections throughout the research. This is woven throughout the exegesis to highlight the journey the author went through with the women.

The *talanoa* sessions provided rich, in-depth and personal data. The study asked the women ‘What does leadership mean to them’ and ‘what was the impact of gender and culture on their leadership journeys?’.

The study presents an audio-visual baseline of what is considered leadership by Tongan women living in New Zealand. It forms the basis of a structure to move forward and will contribute to a wider discourse on leadership for and about Tongan women, and how it can be used to help younger Tongan women, or influence older Tongan women to discuss leadership in the future.
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Figure 1.1  Jenny Salesa, Tongan Women talking about their lives in Leadership 2016.

Figure 1.2  Rev Setaita Kinahoe-Veikune & Sandra Kailahi, Tongan Women talking about their lives in Leadership 2016.
DECLARATION

Name of candidate: Sandra Kailahi

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment for the requirements for the Unitec degree of Master of International Communication.

CANDIDATE’S DECLARATION

I confirm that this Master’s thesis project represents my own work. The contribution of supervisors and others to this work was consistent with the Unitec Regulations and Policies. Research for this work has been conducted in accordance with the Unitec Research Ethics Committee Policy and Procedures, and as fulfilled any requirements set for this project by the Unitec Research Ethics Committee. Research Ethics Committee Approval Number: 2015-1069

Candidate’s signature:

Sandra Kailahi (1430609)

Date:
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First and foremost, I would like to thank Rev Setaita Tokiulu Kinahoi Veikune, Salote Heleta Lilo, Hon Jenny Latu Salesa, Emeline Afeaki-Mafile’o, Sita Selupe and ‘Alisi Tatafu for agreeing to take part in my research project. I feel humbled to have been given this opportunity to talanoa with each and every one of you on an individual basis and in a group setting. The talanoa was incredible. It was open, honest and rich. It helped me in more ways than I possibly could have imagined. As a result of our sessions, I was able to find some clarity around my own identity as a Tongan woman, but more importantly, find some acceptance of who I am. That is something I wasn’t expecting, but it is a wonderful blessing. To all the women – fakamalo ‘aufito.

To my supervisors, Evangelia Papoutsaki and Marcus Williams. This certainly has been an adventure with many highs and lows as you both know, however, through it all, I could always count on you for your honest feedback and your support. I really appreciated the way you both challenged me to keep going, to try different things and really open myself up when reflecting on my research. I am certainly grateful to you both and have enjoyed our sessions and our own talanoa. You both rock!

I realised when doing my research that I have a real issue around asking for help. Luckily, others could see that and offered to assist me. Thank you, Emeline for introducing me to Jomine Ayers and thank you Jo for coming to my rescue. Your help with the first two interviews really set the tone for the rest of my research and I will forever be grateful to you.

Once I got over the hurdle of asking for help, I managed to finish filming the other women. Thank you to Malia Latu and Shanlea Peterson-Hibbs from SPLICE. I also want to thank Soana K-Aholelei and Star Kata from Tagata Pasifika for agreeing to help me out. I really appreciate you all.
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Finally, to my son Kingston, a big thank you for understanding that mum had to do her schoolwork and for not making a big deal about it. Actually, I know you liked it, because you could watch more TV but it also helped me out a lot. I love you son.

To the others who cheered me along the way and to the many friends, family members, and others who all encouraged, supported, and remained with me until the end, a big malo ‘aupito to you all.
Fig 1.2 Rev Setaita Kinahoe-Veikune & Sandra Kailahi. Photo by Sandra Kailahi
CHAPTER ONE: SETTING THE SCENE

Mu’omu’a puke fue
[To go in front holding back the branches - Tongan Proverb]

This Tongan proverb essentially explains my leadership journey. For as long as I can remember, I have always been called a leader. From an early age, I was told I had leadership qualities and was earmarked as a natural born leader, but it was a title that I took upon myself with little thought or consideration. It just was. It wasn’t something I really paid much attention to, other than it just felt right to stand up, make decisions and take others on the journey with me. Throughout different periods in my life, I have been called to various leadership positions. I was the Head Girl at my College, a Youth Mayor in Hamilton, and the National Leader of the New Zealand delegation that participated in the Ship for World Youth Programme in Japan. But things are changing. As a woman in my early 50s, who is of Tongan and Kiwi descent and born in New Zealand, a single parent of one child, a freelance media and communications practitioner, a fulltime student and an alumni of the 2015 Global Women Breakthrough Leaders Programme, I find myself for the first time analysing and assessing my leadership capabilities. I am on a quest to find out what leadership is, what Pacific leadership is, and how gender and culture affects leadership. I specifically want to look at gender diversity amongst Tongan women leaders in New Zealand. More importantly, I want to find out what kind of leader I am, improve my understanding of leadership and responsibility as a Tongan/Kiwi woman, and ultimately, how I can improve as a leader.

Introduction: Laying the Foundation

Images are everywhere, and they permeate our academic work, everyday lives, conversations (Pink 1997a), our imagination and our dreams (Edgar 2004, McKessar, 2009). They are inextricably interwoven with our personal identities, narratives, lifestyles, cultures and societies (Pink, 1997a).

This thesis combines a creative visual project with an exegesis. It is a partnership between an online documentary with supporting raw interviews made available through a carefully designed website (www.tonganwomentalkabout.com) on Tongan women talking about the impact of gender and culture on their leadership journeys in New Zealand, and an
exegesis, which critically examines the creative product in the light of contemporary theory and practice.

Kroll (2004) argues that writing an exegesis demands using a reflective and reflexive voice; you must become ‘an expert reader of one’s own work – a critic and examiner’, which involves becoming an expert at ‘reading’ the cultural and theoretical matrix in which their work exists.

This document covers all aspects of the filming process, which involves relationships and interactions with the participants, careful decisions around the choice of angles and cameras used in the filming process, editing the raw footage, and the final cut. It also sheds light on and reflects my personal journey, as outlined in my opening reflection around thematic areas of leadership, culture, gender and identity. It highlights the ethical considerations and dilemmas that underlie these creative and practical decisions, and demonstrates my role as the filmmaker, my relationships with the participants, and my own journey in the style, method and content and the finished product.

The exegesis investigates and evaluates how these intended methods of both filming and editing affects the final documentary. In this introductory chapter, I lay the foundation as a co-participant in the research by using an autoethnographic methodology as an alternative approach. Ellis (2004) states that an autoethnography is an ethnographic derivative methodology that attends enthusiastically to concepts such as positionality (the particular social position and identity of the researcher) and reflexivity (Revell, 2012).

For this reason, this contextual document details the process I undertook using both traditional and non-traditional methodologies, which includes talanoa (an indigenous Tongan methodology) (Halapua, 2003; Vaioleti, 2003), and participatory visual methodological approaches. This initially involved a mix of reflexive video and written diaries, alongside semi-structured interviews and a semi-structured focus group as data collection methods. Both methodologies are complementary in that they allow the participants and the researcher to engage in social conversation, consultation, participation and reflexivity throughout the research process (Vaioleti, 2006; Pink, 2005).
The research involved six carefully selected Tongan women living and working in Aotearoa at the time of the study. During the period of my research, one woman moved temporarily to Tonga with her family, but regularly commuted back to Auckland for work commitments. She has now moved back to Auckland with her family.

The women were asked to focus, reflect on and talk to the researcher/co-participants (talanoa) on camera about the impact of gender and culture on their leadership journeys in New Zealand. But the talanoa approach also helped produce rich information about how these women see themselves; and provided a space for reflection, reflexivity, and to discuss topics they found interesting as individuals and as a collective through the focus group.

Authors Milne, Mitchell & De Lange (2012) describe how participatory video might ‘enhance...participatory capacities’ and how participants ‘negotiate the grounds for participation’. They explain how a participatory video research methodology can evoke effective reflexivity for both researchers and those traditionally perceived as subjects of a research project.

The initial goal of this research was to make a non-traditional documentary. Documentaries awaken a desire not just for information, but also for insight, understanding, and intimacy. We want the camera to take us some place we haven't been and show us something we haven't seen, and we want it to do so in a way, which ‘gives’ us the experience (Fischel, 1989 p.35). Documentary is a genre that is difficult to precisely characterise. Strategies and styles employed in documentary films change over time, just as the dominant modes of expository discourse adjust (McKessar, 2009).

This research examines the participatory visual methodological approach used to make the documentary by looking at different aspects of the entire process undertaken by the researcher and includes the following:

1. The participatory experience and interaction between the participants and researcher.
2. The relationship between the researcher and participants who would become co-creators in the process.

3. The process used to make the documentary.

As an experienced television journalist, I have made several television documentaries, but this master’s project was not about creating a traditional documentary. It was about the unlearning of traditional documentary storytelling. It involved analysing the research method of *talanoa* by interviewing the six women, but also understanding my world as a co-participant, a woman of both Kiwi and Tongan ancestry with an autoethnographic point of view looking at the impact of gender and culture on the lives of Tongan women leaders in New Zealand through a participatory visual methodology. What I didn’t anticipate was a journey of self-discovery and acceptance and unlearning around what it is to be Tongan.

Ellis & Bochner (1998) argue that the self-questioning autoethnography is extremely difficult. They state that honest autoethnographical exploration generates a lot of fears and doubts and emotional pain. There is the vulnerability of revealing yourself and not being able to take back what you have written or having control over how readers interpret it. This is particularly true of my journey as a co-participant in this research.

For many years, I have struggled with the notion of what it is ‘to be Tongan’. It’s more about the pressure I have placed on myself and how I see myself and all the parts that form me – my makeup. As Ellis & Bochner (1998) so brilliantly convey, it was about my fears and doubts from past experiences where I had been challenged about not being ‘Tongan’ enough, because I could not speak the language. While this was not the initial reason for conducting this research, after doing the interviews, I realised fairly quickly that it was becoming an important aspect of my research and my personal journey.

Autoethnography, according to Ellis & Bochner (1998), is an autobiographical genre of writing and research that displays multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural. They argue that the meanings and applications of the term autoethnography have evolved in a manner that makes precise definition and application difficult and includes personal narratives. For this very reason, I kept a personal diary as an
outlet for writing my reflections, not only about the process of talking and sharing with the women, but also about my own journey. I have included some of those reflections from both my diary and segments from the women’s interviews to articulate what the women felt, thought and experienced during the talanoa sessions alongside my own diary entries.

Sandra Kailahi Personal Diary Reflection – 27 May 2016 (Tonga)

I have had time to reflect on the interviews and the process thus far with my research and it has been a real eye opener. I am writing this while in Tonga, which I suppose puts a lot more sentiment or emotions around what I am feeling regarding my thesis. As I sit here typing this, I am looking out into the ocean at Hatafu Beach Resort – it is divine and so therapeutic and not the Tonga that I know, but it is more like the Tonga I am beginning to know and accept. What I mean is that I have been fixed in my ideas and mindset about what Tonga is to me and how I should behave and be, but doing this research has really affected me. It’s given me a release from what I think I am supposed to be as a Tongan, as a NZ-Born Tongan, as a Hakakasi, as Sandra.

I realise I have had so many hang ups about my Tongan identity, especially around not being able to speak the language or to know the Tongan culture fully. The reality is ‘so what!’.. Honestly, I am who I am, but I have let others dictate that identity and what is acceptable, but it is me who sets that acceptability – no one else. I am Tongan, but I am also Kiwi and NZ European. I think doing this has made me accept that a lot more than I have ever done in the past.

There were many challenges around making the documentary, and the final version is somewhat different from what was discussed at the beginning of the study. For this reason, this master’s research is more than just an online documentary and supporting material from an autoethnographic perspective. It is also a pedagogy tool, to help others on a similar journey. It provides an insight into the women’s journeys. The intention is for those in a similar position to use these reflections as a tool for deeper understanding and critical thinking around differences and similarities; and to provoke further discussion around leadership, gender, culture and identity on Tongan women living in New Zealand.
CHAPTER TWO: DEFINING THE RESEARCH TOPIC

Background

There are currently 60,333 Tongan people living in New Zealand, which makes up 1.5% percent of the total New Zealand population. The Tongan population is the third highest demographic within New Zealand’s Pacific population and makes up 1.8 percent of the total Pacific numbers in NZ. ¹

The rationale for this project in terms of its focus on Tongan women and leadership, stems from evidence that supports the view that there is an issue with the lack of diversity of all types at governance level – ‘Pale, Male and Stale’ is the criticism levelled at corporate governance in recent times (McAteer, 2013).

The New Zealand Census of Women’s Participation (2012)² showed women held 14.75% of directorships in New Zealand’s top 100 listed companies. In Crown entities, 35% of directors are female, while the numbers range between 25% and 100% in government agencies. The report calculated that at the current rate of change, it will be another 35 years before boardroom equality will be achieved.

Based on these statistics, and the fact there are very few Tongan women sitting in governance roles of major organisations and a general interest in gender diversity especially from the female perspective, I chose to focus on the voices of Tongan women living in New Zealand.

¹ http://www.mpia.govt.nz/pacific-peoples-in-new-zealand/. The Ministry of Pacific Islands Affairs is the government’s premier adviser on policies and interventions to promote the social, economic and cultural development of Pacific peoples in New Zealand.
² New Zealand Census of Women’s Participation 2012 is the fifth bench-marked report on how women fare in many areas of professional and public life and was released by the Human Rights Commission.
Research Aim

This project aimed:

(1) To explore how a *talanoa* approach and a participatory visual methodology may influence each other;
(2) To produce a documentary that will follow an autoethnographical approach and incorporate a participatory perspective;
(3) To explore the influence of gender in leadership amongst Tongan women leaders in New Zealand;
(4) To explore the influence of culture in leadership amongst Tongan women leaders in New Zealand.

I wanted to identify if there was a relationship between gender and culture for Tongan women living in New Zealand around leadership, as well as looking at the nature of any dynamic that may exist between their culture of origin (Tonga) and the cultural environment in which they now live in (Aotearoa).

Research Question

This led to my research question:

‘How does gender and culture impact Tongan women leaders in New Zealand?’

In order to answer this main question, I developed the following sub-questions as a way to get an in-depth understanding of these women’s experiences:

Sub-Questions

1. How can a *talanoa* approach be combined with a participatory visual methodological approach?
2. What does leadership mean to Tongan female leaders?
3. What is the relationship between culture and leadership?
4. What role does ethnicity play in regard to female leadership in New Zealand?
5. What are the challenges/opportunities in developing leadership as an ethnic minority female in New Zealand?

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Talanoa

For this research, talanoa is identified as an indigenous research methodological approach used by Tongan researchers (Halapua, 2003; Vaioleti, 2003). The concept of talanoa is favoured by many Pacific Island peoples (Anae, Coxon, Mara, Wendt-Samu, & Finau, 2001). It is a combination of two Tongan words, ‘tala’ which means to tell or to talk, and ‘noa’, which means anything or nothing in particular (‘Otunuku, 2011). When Churchward (1959) compiled the Tongan dictionary for the Government, he described talanoa as to talk (in an informal way), to tell stories or relate experience.

‘Otunuku suggests that talanoa is essentially a Tongan term for people who engage in conversation and this approach allows group conversations to develop over a considerable time-period in which, the focus is determined by the interests of the participants. ‘Otunuku argues that the nature, degree, direction, place, and time of the talanoa are determined by the participants themselves and their immediate surroundings and worldviews.

It is a dynamic interaction of storytelling, debating, reflecting, gossiping, joking, sharing families’ genealogies, food and other necessities. It is talking about everything or anything that participants are interested in. (‘Otunuku, pp 45)

Halapua (2003) suggests the philosophy of talanoa is narrative, rather than a written dialogue.

Participatory Visual Methodology

Pink (1997a) argues visual research methods are not purely visual. Rather, they pay particular attention to visual aspects of culture. Ethnographic research is likewise intertwined with visual images and metaphors when ethnographers produce photographs
or video, these visual texts, as well as the experience of producing and discussing them, become part of their ethnographic knowledge (Pink 2005).

Pink suggests, in contrast to more traditional methods which at best emphasise consultation, participation here depends on communication that is critical and equal and that enables participants to become aware and empowered to make their own decisions. Milne, Mitchell & De Lange (2015) describe how participatory video might ‘enhance...participatory capacities’ and how participants ‘negotiate the grounds for participation’. They explain how a participatory video research methodology can evoke effective reflexivity for both researchers and those traditionally perceived as subjects of a research project.

**Tongan Women**

Tongan society is strongly rank-conscious. Within the social hierarchy, no two family members of a *kainga* (extended family) share the same rank (Kaeppler, 1971; Bott, 1981). Bleakley (2002) argues that issues of women’s equity and development in Tonga must be situated in socially and culturally gendered particulars, if only because people are situated in kinship relations that demand different kinds of attitudes and behaviour such as command, respect, avoidance, deference and obedience. She suggests family loyalty is more likely to be stronger than a sense of shared female solidarity. Giovanni Bennardo (2009) explains that a female is always considered higher in rank than a male. Consequently, a sister is always higher in rank than a brother, even if she is younger. The relationship of the *fahu* (*father’s older sister*), which are the customary claims a woman and her children have to the goods and services of her brother, is particularly important in determining social rank and interpersonal behaviour within the family (Bleakley, 2002; Gailey, 1996).

**Gender Women**

There are many definitions around gender. The United Nations refers to it as the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and
those between men. It is a social construct, just like ethnicity or cultural difference and is passed down from one generation to the next within a culture (Walker & Aritz, 2014).

**Gender Leadership Styles**

Some theorists that argue that men and women differ in their leadership approaches classify women, on average, to emerge more as transformational leaders and men as transactional leaders (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Rosener, 1990). Transformational leaders are inspiring and visionary leaders that gain their followers trust and confidence; they create future common goals and set plans for their followers to achieve these goals (Burns, 1978).

**Culture**

Culture is a matrix of beliefs, values, and norms that inform, or give meaning to, and regulate behaviour (Bagdasarov & Edmondson, cited in Choi, 2015). The cultural context includes the historical experiences that have resulted in groups’ economic, social and political status within the general social structure (Matsumoto, Yoo and Choo, 2010). Both Bagdasarov and Edmondson suggest that culture has a significant impact on group members’ psychological well-being. Culture reflects the way a woman views her role in society, family, country of origin, romantic relationships, parental status, and religious beliefs and each of these roles affects others (Kim, 2013).

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

There is very little academic literature on this research topic. This literature review provides a theoretical basis for this research. It is a framework that identifies the limitations around research of Tongan woman leaders in New Zealand. There is limited research around Tongan women leaders in New Zealand, especially from a participatory visual methodological perspective. This literature review focuses on providing a background on Tongan women and how *talanoa* and participatory visual methodological approaches are used in research.
New Zealand has a well-established connection with Tonga, which is also known as the Friendly Islands. It is well documented that Tongan diaspora living overseas maintain a range of transnational ties through kinship networks, churches, ex-students’ groups, business relationships and other links (Morton, 1998; Macpherson, 2004: 139; Teaiwa and Mallon, 2005: 208; Papoutsaki and Strickland, 2008; Lee, 2009). Helen Lee (2004) wrote that her research on young Tongans in the diaspora showed there were significant obstacles to the on-going maintenance of transnational ties, even if the members of the younger generations retained emotional connections to the ‘homeland’.

At the time of this study, research into Tongan women leaders in New Zealand was limited. However, a thesis by Sinama Fa’anunu on the ‘Experiences of Tongan Women Migrants at Paid Work in New Zealand’ documented the dynamics of their social and economic experiences at paid work in New Zealand. The study was guided by the theories of population geography, feminist geography and post colonialism. The inter-relationships of these theories contributed to explain the influence of migration on these women’s gender, and ethnic-identities in New Zealand (Fa’anunu, 2007).

Fa’anunu argues that as a minority group in New Zealand, Tongan women have encountered different experiences, particularly in paid work. Fa’anunu (2007) argues those who want to retain their involvement with Tongans and still maintain their Tongan identity in New Zealand desire change to reduce some of the difficulties they experience. To a number of these women, being a Tongan woman migrant means standing up for who they are and trying to survive in a country outside their own. They still identified themselves as more connected with their families in Tonga than to New Zealand.

In 2015, Mele Paea submitted her Doctorate thesis on ‘Tauhi Va Mafana: Tongan leadership and culture in the New Zealand Public Service’. She presented a Tongan leadership model from a Tongan perspective based on a study of cultural practices that shape the ways in which Tongans perceive and experience leadership differently within the New Zealand Public Service. Paea argues the approach taken in her research reflects

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3 Tonga is also referred to as the ‘Friendly Islands’ because of the congenial welcome accorded to Captain James Cook on his first visit there in 1773.
on Tongan leadership from a strength-based perspective, promoting the leadership capabilities that Tongans bring with them into another cultural context.

Communicating with Tongan people usually follows a certain protocol. When Tongan people meet for the first time, they search to find any connections using *talanoa*. Making connections is an important part of building relationships and locating participants in their own ‘context’. Bishop (1998) refers to this in the context of Maori as *whakawhanaungatanga*, ‘the process of establishing family (whanau) relationships, literally by means of identifying, through culturally appropriate means, your bodily linkage, your engagement, your connectedness, and therefore an unspoken but implicit commitment to other people’. When the researcher appreciates the context and location of their participants, their understanding of their individual competencies is enhanced (‘Otunuku, 2011). Trying to make connections on a personal level builds up trust and confidence among participants.

*Talanoa* is consistent with the Pasifika education research guidelines that suggest the best research methodologies for Pasifika people are sensitive to contemporary Pasifika contexts, capable of embracing existing Pasifika notions of collective ownership, collective shame, collective authoritarian structures, and capable of withstanding the test of time (Anae, et al., 2001).

‘Otunuku (2011) talks about ten guiding principles of *talanoa* which can be used effectively as an indigenous research methodology with Tongan people. He claims making connections or *fekau‘aki* is an important part of building relationships and locates your participants in their own context. Establishing equality or *potupotutatau* is important. ‘Otunuku reported introducing himself to the participants as an equal by including his full name, his parents’ names, parents’ ancestral homes and, grandparents’ names and ancestral homes, as they are important. To first introduce himself as a professional (researcher, post-graduate or scholar) may have generated a feeling of uneasiness and may have hindered participants in opening up and sharing genuine information. They may then see the researcher as an ‘outsider’, so it is vital for the researcher to introduce himself appropriately (‘Otunuku, 2011). The other principles include meaningful
engagement (fe’ilongaki), cultural competency (poto’ianga) and autonomy (tau’ataina) respect (feveitokai’akī), freedom to disagree (‘atā ke fakaanga’i), no enforced, artificial or arbitrary boundary (‘ikai ke fakangatangata) and reciprocity (fe’inasi’akī).

Prescott (2009) argues that those who write about *talanoa* as a Pacific research methodology describe it as a holistic and embodied amalgamation of the emotions, knowledge, interests, and experiences between researcher and participant. He adds that this provides a culturally appropriate setting whereby the researcher and research participants can talk openly and spontaneously about the research topic. The conversation flows freely with very little intrusion of a formal structure with predetermined questions (Farrelly, 2013; Nabob-Baba, 2012). The voluntary nature of *talanoa* implies the occasion is one where participants feel comfortable to take part (Prescott 2009). Manu’atu and Kepa (2006) refer to *talanoa* as ‘critical thinking and action’.

Prescott adds that *talanoa*, as with unstructured interviews, has the tendency to deviate from the topic or line of inquiry. While it is the role of the researcher to bring the discussion back in line, it is important to exercise this with some caution. The participant must be given the opportunity to contextualise their experiences. Some of the seemingly irrelevant stories are an integral part their story. These stories will help the researcher reach a clearer understanding of the participant’s character. Indigenous researchers are framed somewhat differently when working within their own communities (Smith, 2012). Smith believes if they are ‘insiders’ they are frequently judged on insider criteria; their family background, status, politics, age, gender, religions and their perceived technical ability. She argues it takes considerable sensitivity, skill, maturity, experience and knowledge to work these issues. Ganga & Scott (2006) refer to ‘insider’ research as social interviews conducted between researchers and participants who share a similar cultural, linguistic, ethnic, national and religious heritage.

Autoethnography is a qualitative research method that utilises data about self and its context to gain an understanding of the connectivity between self and others within the same context. This qualitative research method is distinctive from others in three ways: it
is qualitative, self-focused, and context-conscious (Chang, 2007; Denzin, 2006; Ellis, 2004; Ellis & Bochner, 2000).

Boylorn and Orbe (2015) highlight autoethnography as a powerful way of working with topics of diversity and identity. They believe the methodology gives voice to previously silenced and marginalised experiences, answers unexamined questions about the multiplicity of social identities, instigates discussions about and across difference and, explains the contradictory intersections of personal and cultural standpoints.

Ethnographers themselves are members of societies in which photography and video are already practiced and understood in particular ways. The ways in which individual ethnographers approach the visual in their research and representation are inevitably influenced by a range of factors, including theoretical beliefs, disciplinary agendas, personal experience, gendered identities and different visual cultures (Boylorn and Orbe, 2015).

When video is used as a research method, it is not merely video recording what people do in order to create visual data for analysis, but rather engaging in a process through which knowledge is produced (Pink, 2005).

Participatory visual and digital research methods are changing the landscape of work across different disciplines and on the grounds of collaboration with communities. Participatory video has been used in development for more than 30 years: ‘NGOs, development workers, and indeed communities themselves [use it] to foster dialogue and to instigate change and empowerment’ (Dietrich, 2011).

This is also evident when it comes to an indigenous approach to visual research and practice, as argued by Thomas, Eggins & Papoutsaki (2016). The authors reflect on Komuniti Tok Piksa (KTP), a research project that puts emphasis on building relationships and entering reciprocal spaces of exchange between researchers and research participants. The indigenous approach to visual research and practice meant that the level of participation was determined by the communities, whether they contributed to the
visual products through interviews or telling their own stories or actively participating in taking pictures (Thomas, Eggins & Papoutsaki, 2016). It allowed the researchers to prioritise and value relationships. An important process for the researchers was the need for reflection on their personal experiences and knowledge prior to the project, and how they related to their role in the project. An indigenous research approach is an encirclement of ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodology, where individual cultural groups process and create knowledge in everyday interactions (Wilson, 2008; Vallance, 2007; Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2001).

This is also evident in the Yumi Piksa project, also in Papua New Guinea, which focuses on developing a community-responsive way of filmmaking in Melanesia. It critically examines the processes of developing a community-responsive approach to filmmaking in order to challenge preconceived notions of media and research practice in Papua New Guinea. It is based on results from a film workshop run at the University of Goroka over a period of six weeks through which a team designed a Melanesian approach to filmmaking practice. The research study finds that stereotypical perceptions and understandings of Papua New Guinea communities can be challenged by respectful and community-responsive ways of making films involving local community members. It presents filmmaking as creating a meaningful space for exploring community relations and practices. Papua New Guinean co-researchers acted to bridge dialogue between rural communities, media technologies and the national and transnational media sphere (Thomas, 2011).

The film *Five Hours with Raja* included a documentary and an exegesis on the study of a young woman coming to terms with her grief when she gave birth to her son knowing that he would not live long due to his medical condition (McKessar, 2009). It unpacked how an invitation to film an unusual and life-changing event developed into an opportunity to question the ethics of the interview. It examined how the intricacies of a trust relationship influence the very threads and textures of the resulting documentary.

*Five Hours with Raja* looks at the developing relationship between Claudia – the documentary’s key protagonist – and the filmmaker, investigating how their relationship affected the style, method, content, and even the fundamental story line of the
documentary. It also looks at the consequential ethical considerations and dilemmas behind creative and practical decisions, investigating ways that a filmmaker can draw the participant into the process to allow a greater degree of ownership, a stronger voice and a more immediate sense of intimacy with the final audience (McKessar, 2009).

Other examples of participatory film-making include the CineCita *La Mirada de Ella* project, which is an example of how transmitting women's voices between Latin America and Europe, to empower female roles in rural communities in the Andes, can foster long-term cooperation between the participating organisations (Dietrich, 2011). A production team of educational video staff travelled in a specially outfitted coach more than 3,000 km through the coastal mountain and jungle regions of the Andean States. They were accompanied by professional video equipment and a mobile cinema secured in a burglar-proof metal box. An international selection of 22 short films representing the female voice were screened a total of 26 times on the tour and were combined to create a specially designed programme for each location. As soon as the screen was put up in public squares or open fields, the audience began arriving. Some had walked as far as 10 km to take part in this big event, and for many, it was the first time they had seen cinema.

Dietrich (2011) believes participatory video helps protect women's indigenous knowledge as well as lifting their perceived positions in their communities especially in a community where traditions and histories are passed on orally, so video can serve as a technical bridge, bringing information from marginalised regions to national centres and to the world at large.

The issues of gender in the context of development in Tonga arose in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Bleakley, 2002). However, at the time it was dismissed in the belief that it was ‘misconstrued Tongan culture’ or that it was only a ‘projection of western feminism’. The high traditional and ceremonial status of women served to obscure gender as an issue (Bleakley, 2002). Bleakley argues that there was an assumption that the privileged status of sisters (*fahu*) in the Tonga family structure would ensure overall gender equality when combined with equal pay for equal work. She points out that this was based on the idea that the assumption overlooked basic imbalances in the division of labour and the
distribution of authority and failed to recognise a series of issues ranging from domestic violence to the disproportional representation of males in the civil service, politics and senior positions in the private and public sectors. It also neglected to take into consideration women’s lack of access to land rights (Moengangongo, 1986).

In some ways, the status of Tongan women over the past century and a half might have been diminished due to church and government agendas. Kaeppler (1982) states Tongan women are disadvantaged further by ideologies reinforced by the church and notions of tradition, that the rank of a wife is inferior to her husband. Social classes in Tonga developed with state formation in the 19th century, catalysed, but not caused, by the activities of missionaries, would-be colonial agents, and merchants (see Galley, 1987b).

Issues around gender continue in Tonga today. A story that went to air on Radio Tonga in March 2012 spoke of Tonga’s commitment towards women’s empowerment and gender equality through its Commonwealth Gender Plan of Action Monitoring Group (CGPMG). However, the story did not specifically outline what those commitments were. In 2015, Tonga was almost brought to a standstill around whether the government should sign the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Tongan women protested the document, arguing that it includes counter-culture clauses such as same sex marriage and abortion (Radio New Zealand, 2015).

The research shows there is a real gap in the data on the impact of gender and culture on Tongan women leaders in New Zealand, especially when it comes to documentaries. This opens the door for future research, particularly with regards to the effects of leadership in the lives of Tongan women living in New Zealand.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

A Qualitative Approach
This research follows a phenomenological framework using a qualitative methodology. The phenomenological or qualitative approach tends to use induction, moving away from the specific to general explanations with the goal of gaining a holistic understanding of the patterns and behaviours that characterise human beings. The reality exists primarily in the eye of the beholder with the researcher playing an integral part of the research process, also known as the epistemological assumption (Frey, Botan & Kreps, 2009).

Integrated research methods, which complement each other, were used to determine the right questions to ask around the impact of gender and culture on Tongan women leaders in New Zealand. The use of participatory and indigenous methodologies together show that the two approaches can support each other in projects such as this. There are other examples from the Pacific that also show a trend in this direction (Thomas, Eggins and Papoutsaki, 2013; 2011; 2010; Harris, 2008; 2009; 2014; see also Komunity Tok Piksa).

Ethnography
There is some controversy around the definition of ethnography, but several attempts consist of it simply being writing about a way of life (McNeill, 1998). It is one of the many approaches found within social research (Atkinson & Hammersley, 2007) which provides ‘a particular method or set of methods’. This involves the ethnographer participating, overtly or covertly, in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions and collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research (Denzin, 1997, Creswell, 2012) rather than under the conditions created by the researcher (Atkinson & Hammersley, 2007). Critical Ethnography, also known as radical ethnography, adds a political agenda of exposing inequitable, unjust or repressive influences that are acting on marginalised cultural groups, in a bid to offer avenues for positive change (O’Leary, 2014).
Autoethnography

Essentially, autoethnography is about the method, research and writing about personal experiences in relation to culture (Reed-Danahay, 1997 Ellis, 2004; Adams, Ellis & Bochner, 2011 as cited in Boylorn & Orbe, 2015). Traditionally, authoethnography was commonly referred to as the ‘insider’ ethnography, a qualitative research method whereby a researcher uses participant observation and interviews in order to gain a deeper understanding of a group’s culture — in that autoethnography focuses more on the writer’s subjective experience rather than the beliefs and practices of others (Hayano 1979).

Prescott (2009) argues that the debate concerning the independence of the researcher is that of the researcher holding a pre-existing relationship with the respondent, either directly or indirectly. He writes that the advantages of research being carried out by an insider include accessibility, language, greater understanding of cultural nuances of communication, and a greater ability to appreciate and interpret the significance of the stories and experiences of the participant. He argues that in small ethnic communities, as in the case of Tonga, individual reputations, family linkages, and social status become common knowledge. This is both an advantage and disadvantage, depending on the good or bad reputation of the individual. He argues that a Tongan researcher with a poor reputation is unlikely to secure access to the data. However, the opposite is seldom going to meet with a refusal to participate.

My background as a Tongan woman in New Zealand, with vast experience in the media world and Tongan community, provided significant advantages, including access to potential participants, a trusted reputation in the Tongan community, knowledge and appreciation of both Tongan and New Zealand societies and cultures, and a strong standing in the New Zealand media landscape. The women knew who I was or knew of me, which helped get my foot in the door initially to discuss my research. As Prescott (2009) states, these advantages were regarded as clearly outweighing those disadvantages often associated with having a researcher who is regarded as an insider.
Documentary

Documentary is a genre that is difficult to precisely characterise. Strategies and styles employed in documentary films change over time just as the dominant modes of expository discourse adjust (McKessar, 2009). The intended design of documentary films are problematic. They purport to provide information about events, institutions and cultures. They organise that information, integrating and synthesising it into a coherent picture of the world (Fischel, 1989).

This research examines the participatory visual methodological approach used to make the documentary by looking at different aspects of the whole process undertaken by the researcher. I have had previous experience in producing short documentaries for television through my work as a journalist for the Pacific programme, *Tagata Pasifika*, but the documentary for my master’s is not intended for a television market. The structure and treatment will not necessarily fit within broadcast parameters.

Typically, a television documentary made for New Zealand’s free-to-air broadcasters is around 44 minutes (a commercial hour) in length or 23 minutes for a half hour documentary. Both formats are structured in a way that they are divided into parts for advertising purposes (Mckessar, 2009).

In the case of a commercial hour, it is structured into a relatively rigid five-part format that allows for advertisements to play between each segment. These breaks in the documentary’s narrative mean that the end of each part is required to ‘tease’ the upcoming attractions of the next part in an attempt to hold viewers to the channel (McKessar, 2009). It is because of this rigid structure that I wanted to make a documentary that is ideally placed within festival and educational programming (Mckessar, 2009).

The documentary for my master’s sits at just over 33 minutes and has no voice-over. It uses graphics to link segments of interviews and features on its own website, which also has supporting interview grabs with the different participants.

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4 *Tagata Pasifika* is the longest running Pacific Island television programme in New Zealand. It screens on TV ONE on a Saturday morning at 9am and then is repeated on a Sunday morning on the same channel at 7.30am.
The indigenous approach to visual research and practice outlined by Thomas, Eggins and Papoutsaki (2016) is appropriate in this research process. Based on a *talanoa* and indigenous approach, I followed aspects of the Participatory Action Research (PAR) cycle (Thomas, Eggins, Papoutsaki, 2016), which identifies key aspects of research around observation, reflection, planning and acting as critical aspects of the indigenous methodological approach.

An indigenous approach, and the creative use of media through a documentary, is a way to engage women to participate in this project (Papoutsaki, Thomas & Eggins, 2016). It allows them to integrate their knowledge of cultural processes in answering the questions around gender, culture and leadership. It also provides them with an open and flexible approach and an opportunity to voice their concerns and thoughts, and to develop these further in collaboration with the researcher (Papoutsaki, Thomas & Eggins, 2016).

The main steps in the research process included the following 7 steps developed by Thomas, Eggins & Papoutsaki (2016):

1. Consent and Community Introduction;
2. Baseline Study;
3. Review Research Topics and Debrief;
4. Recording or Creation;
5. Downloading, Digitalising or Editing;
6. Screening or Performing; and
7. Reflection, Collective Viewing and Discussion.

As reflected in point seven, the main objective of my research is to play the finished work back to the women involved in the documentary as part of the *talanoa* approach of showing respect and thanks for the participants giving up their time and personal information to be part of the research. Smith (1999) believes this is an explicit part of the research process, as part of the final results of a study, and to be disseminated back to the people in culturally appropriate ways in a language that can be understood. She writes that this assumes a principle of reciprocity and feedback. Iedema & Merrick (2008) suggest
that by using visual tools and looking back at them, researchers, as well as community members, enter a process of participation, observation, filming, selection, reflection and positive change (cited in Thomas, Eggins, and Papoutsaki 2016, pp 24-27).

The key points I follow in my research are around consent and community introduction, as previously identified in the talanoa methodological approach. It was important to establish a connection with the women and introduce myself as a co-participant so as to develop a sense of trust. The semi-structured interviews formed a baseline of information in answering the research and sub-questions. I transcribed the interviews and told the women I would put the answers into thematic areas and then come back to them with a final cut to get their thoughts and feedback before submitting my master’s. The intention was to hold a public screening with the women, but as time progressed in my research, the reality of bringing all the women together was problematic due to their busy schedules, work and private commitments. I decided that the website would be an opportunity for the women to watch the documentary and give me feedback in their own time and in their own space. I will, however, also put the idea of a public screening to the women to decide if they would like to go ahead with this.

**Positionality**

Positionality has been conceptualised by social scientists as a central component in the process of qualitative (and to an extent quantitative) data collection (Ganga & Scott, 2006). Vaioleti (2003) argues that potentiality is a cultural aspect of talanoa. It allows people to engage in social conversation, which may lead to critical discussions or knowledge creation that allows rich contextual and inter-related information to surface as co-constructed stories.

My positionality as a woman of Tongan and Kiwi descent born in New Zealand who lives in Auckland; and who is from the villages of Kolonga on Tongatapu and Neiafu in Vava’u; and who is involved with various organisations and a graduate of the Global Women – Breakthrough Leaders Programme all come into play as a co-participant in this anticipated research.
During production, I explored the relationship between me as the filmmaker and co-participant with the other participants to see if the nature of these relationships had any consequences on them and the viewers. My positionality is as an ‘insider’, which is part of the reflective practice (Schon, 1993). This process provided all the participants a greater degree of involvement and ownership of their stories, allowing a stronger voice not only in the finished product, but with the overall process (Pink, 2005).

**Reflexivity**

Reflexivity is ubiquitous as it permeates every aspect of the research process, challenging the researcher to be more fully conscious of the ideology, culture and politics of those we study and those we select as our audience (Pink, 2007). Autoethnographers are reflexive. In being reflexive, the researcher turns the critical eye back upon her/himself. Pillow (2003) suggests researchers should ask, ‘how does who I am, who I have been, who I think I am, and how I feel affect data collection and analysis?’ It allows for reflection on the seemingly mundane moments that become life changing by engaging the retrospective lens of autoethnography (Boylorn & Orbe, 2015).

**Validity**

Validity is concerned with ‘truth value’ and whether conclusions are correct (Hammersley, 1987; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; O’Leary, 2014). Denzin (1997) tells us, in conventional terms, this is established through recourse to a set of rules that refer to reality outside the ‘text’ so that we cling to a conception of a ‘world out there’ that is truthfully and accurately captured by the researcher’s methods. Unless you can show your audience the procedures you need to ensure that your methods were reliable and your conclusions valid, there is little point in aiming to conclude a research dissertation (Silverman, 2005).

O’Leary (2014) argues validity considers whether methods, approaches and techniques actually relate to what is being explored. She stresses it can be difficult to assess whether you have been able to control your biases and generate credible data by reflection alone, but there are a number of strategies to ensure thoroughness in data collection and the authenticity of reflections. They include broad representation, prolonged engagement,
persistence, crystallisation, saturation, peer/supervisor review of our processes and full explication of method.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

For the purpose of this research, all semi-structured interviews and the semi-structured focus group were recorded on four different digital cameras. I used the cameras to capture an establishing two shot of the participant and myself, a single shot of the participant, a single shot of myself and then another two shot of both me and the participant from a different angle. The purpose was to have a variety of shots to use in the editing process, which would allow for some variance in the angle shots and interview.

I used memory cards for two of the cameras and hard drives on the other cameras. All data was backed up to my personal computer, saved on a portable drive, and a copy of the data on backed up on a hard drive in the Communications department at Unitec.

All the interviews were transcribed by myself and coded appropriately with dates and other details (Creswell, 2009; O'Leary, 2014). O’Leary states that the main points of difference with quantitative analysis is the use of thematic, rather than statistical analysis; and a closer relationship between entering and coding data, data analysis, and interpretation. All data collected during the semi-structured interviews and semi-structured focus group were transcribed after each respective session. This allowed me as researcher and co-participant to keep up-to-date with the information.

Participants Selection Process

For this research, I adopted a judgement or purposeful sampling approach (Marshall, 1996). Working with key informants means attempting to gather some insider knowledge of those who sit on the inside of a culture or community and who are willing to share the realities of that environment (O’Leary, 2014).
I actively sought out the most productive sample to answer the research question. I started with a list of potential participants and based the final selection on the following key determinants:

1. Age;
2. New Zealand-born or Tongan-born;
3. Career;
4. Leadership position; and
5. Location (based in Auckland).

Another important criterion for the participants was that the women were open not only to being interviewed but also being filmed with the purpose of producing a documentary for my master’s.

As discussed, part of my autoethnographic approach included myself as a participant in the research. I used my extensive networks as a media practitioner within the different Pacific communities, organisations like PACIFICA (Pacific Allied (Women’s) Council Inspires Faith in Ideals Concerning All - the oldest Pacific Islands women’s organisation in New Zealand), the Tonga New Zealand Business Council, and my own personal contacts to select the initial cohort.

The research process was divided into two stages. In the pre-selection phase, I made a list of 10-15 women and then went through a process of elimination by contacting the women I was interested in interviewing. It was not an easy process selecting the women, because there are many Tongan women who I could have chosen to participate in my research. There are definitely more than 6 women who could easily talk about this research topic and confidently and competently speak about their leadership journeys.

The final six women all agreed to participate in the research. Part of the talanoa process meant I went to meet with the women first to discuss my research, to talk about what would be involved, and to answer any questions. I followed this up with an e-mail, and in some cases phone calls, to determine whether the participants were willing to be interviewed.
I tried following up with all the women but was having challenges connecting with Jenny and Setaita. I also contacted Valerie Adams through Facebook. She responded and asked for more details, so I e-mailed her. I knew it was a long shot, but I also thought if there was anyone who was a leader in sports – it was her. When I spoke to others about my master’s, her name constantly came up and it was important that I could say that I had tried. It would be amazing to have her, but it was always going to be a challenge. She came back to me and said her schedule was extremely busy in preparation for the Olympics - I knew that, but at least I tried. She is so awesome. I also found out a few weeks later that she was getting married, so I totally understand why she said no this time.

My intention was to use a combination of three qualitative data collection methods for my research. They include reflexive diaries, which could take the form of a written or video diary; semi-structured interviews, and a semi-structured focus group. The qualitative approach tends to use induction, moving away from the specific to the general explanations with the goal of gaining a holistic understanding of the patterns and behaviours that characterise human beings. The use of video and written diaries, and material gathered through the interviews and focus groups, provided crucial information on the personal stories of each of the women.

I also discussed with the women, as part of the talanoa process, the opportunity for them to Lea Faka Tonga or Lea Palangi (speak in Tongan or English or both). I am not a fluent Tongan speaker, so this was a challenge I set myself from the outset, but I put that fear aside of not being able to converse freely in the Tongan language and decided I would organise the interviews to be translated into English, if I needed to. The decision to do the interviews in English or Tongan was entirely up to the participants, but this was outlined many times at the beginning of the interview and during the initial talanoa process. Most used the opportunity to move freely between both languages throughout the interviews while some women spoke Tongan more than others. The majority of the interviews were conducted in the English language.
The Participants

Emeline Afeaki-Mafe’o
Emeline is a New Zealand born Tongan. She is a businesswoman and entrepreneur and started her youth mentoring company, Affirming Women (now called Affirming Works), when she was 25. She and her husband, Alipate, run Tupu’anga coffee in Tonga. They moved to Tonga in 2016, but have moved back to New Zealand. Emeline also has many governance roles. Her background is in social work. Emeline is a Sir Peter Blake Leadership award recipient and the winner of the inaugural Woman of Influence award for Social Enterprise in 2014. She was awarded the MNZM in 2016.

Jenny Latu Salesa
Jenny was born in Tonga, but came to New Zealand for high school when she was 16. She is a fluent Tongan speaker. She is the current MP for Manukau East and is a member of the NZ Labour Party. In 2017, Jenny was made a Cabinet Minister in the Labour led government. She is the Minister for Building and Construction, and Ethnic Communities. She is also the Associate Minister of Education, Health and Housing and Urban Development. Jenny is a lawyer by profession.

Sita Selupe
Sita was born in New Zealand and is of both Tongan and Niuean ancestry. She is a primary school teacher and started her own homework centre in the garage of her South Auckland home. Today she is the CEO of the Rise Up Academy, the first Pacific Charter School in New Zealand. She is also a Sir Peter Blake Award winner.

Rev Setaita Tokilupe Veikune
Rev Setaita was born in Tonga. She is the Director of Pasifika Ministries for the NZ Methodist Church and is the first Tongan and Pacific woman to hold the role.

Salote Heleta Lilo
Born in Tonga, Salote came to New Zealand in her early twenties. She lived in Grey Lynn, but then moved with her husband to Mangere where she still lives today. She got involved
with a Tongan Trust in South Auckland and so began her work in the community. She got a job in an office and then worked her way up to become an Immigration Agent. Salote runs her own business from her home. She was the President of the NZ Tongan Gay and Lesbian association and has run the Miss Appraxis Tonga beauty pageant for well over a decade.

‘Alisi Tatafu

‘Alisi is the youngest of the women interviewed for my master’s. She currently teaches at Mangere College and is heavily involved with her youth group, which is part of the Tongan Methodist Church in New Zealand. She was born in Tonga, but came over to New Zealand as a young child. She is well connected to the Tongan community and is part of the organising committee for the Tongan stage of the ASB Polyfest and is heavily involved in the Tongan youth group, TOKO, which works on suicide prevention training.

Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews follow a flexible structure. Interviewers start with a defined questioning plan, but will shift in order to follow the natural flow of conversation (O’Leary, 2014 & Bernard, 2011). This complements the principles of talanoa.

All interviews were recorded on four different video cameras. This was the format for all the one-on-one interviews and the semi-structured focus group. This allowed observations to be ‘preserved’ in raw form so they could be reviewed and used later (O’Leary, 2014).

A main reason for holding the interviews was to gather further information on co-participants’ viewpoints to understand the diaries better, but to also provide and generate audio-visual material to be used in the documentary. However, as the video diaries did not pan out, the interviews became the only effective way to find out the participant’s individual perspectives, feelings, opinions, values, attitudes and beliefs about their personal experiences and social world, as well as facts about their lives (Saldana, 2011), especially when it came to the impact of gender and culture on the participant’s leadership journeys. However, while the women didn’t write or record video diaries, I did
keep a diary of my reflections on the process during my research. The main purpose was
to keep note of how I felt about the interviews, what stood out for me, and my reflections
and observations about my own leadership journey.

**Semi-Structured Focus Group**
A semi-structured interview, also known as the non-standardised or qualitative interview
(Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2009), is a hybrid type of interview, which lies in between
structured interviews and in-depth interviews. It offers the merit of using a list of
predetermined themes and questions as in a structured interview, while keeping enough
flexibility to enable the interviewee to talk freely about any topic raised during the
interview (Wahyuni, 2012).

O’Leary (2014) describes a focus group as a type of group interview with around 4-12
people. It is more a discussion than a strict question/answer process and the goal is to use
rich discussion to draw out depth of opinion that might not arise from direct questioning.
Based on the *talanoa* methodological approach, I suggested a time and place for the focus
group. The main reason for this was to coordinate the diaries, especially of two of the
busiest women in my research, namely Rev Setaita and Jenny Salesa.

I contacted both women to see what dates would work for them both and once I had a
date from Rev Setaita, I coordinated this with Jenny Salesa and was able to finalise a date
and a time. I then contacted the other women, gave them plenty of notice and confirmed
the date. I told them I would be in touch later with a venue. I decided to hold the session
at Unitec, which I considered a neutral space and because I could control the lighting and
sound for recording the session. The women all agreed and were happy with the
suggestion.

Trying to organise a date and time that would suit all 6 participants was always going to be
a challenge. The two women who I thought wouldn’t make it because of their hectic
schedules managed to attend the focus group. Unfortunately, one of the women e-mailed
me the night before the focus group to say she was sick and wouldn’t be able to attend,
and another called me the morning of the focus group to say she had been re-admitted to
hospital after her open-heart surgery. There were some mixed emotions around this, as I had tried desperately to organise the event and to get everyone to attend. But things happen, so I had only 4 out of the 6 women attend the focus group on the day. I had originally stated that I had allowed for 90 minutes to help give the women a timeframe for their other commitments, but the focus group actually lasted well over 120 minutes. The discussion was flowing, honest, authentic and incredibly insightful for everyone who attended.

Sandra Kailahi Personal Diary Reflection – 19 August 2016 (Unitec, Mt Albert, Auckland)

The night before the focus group, I received an e-mail from Sita Selupe to say she was sick and wouldn’t be able to make it. Then on the actual day, Jenny Salesa e-mailed to say she had an eye infection and didn’t feel comfortable being filmed so I suggested she still come and that it would only be filmed for research purposes, but not to be shown in the documentary. She agreed. Rev Setaita then rang to say she had a death in her family but would be able to attend for a short time, but that she was running late. I also received a call from Salote Heleta Lilo to say she was in hospital and wouldn’t be able to attend, because she had been readmitted after her operation. Emeline Afeaki-Mafile’o had previously warned me that she would not be able to attend in person, as she would be in Tonga, but that she would be available through Facetime...There were so many challenges around the focus group that I almost cried. Luckily, ‘Alisi Tatafu was available and arrived earlier than expected. I felt at the time that it wasn’t going to work out, but I had made up my mind that what would be, would be and that I would go with the flow.

This was the best attitude to take, because while there were only 4 participants in the focus group, it was amazing! I got to see the women interact with each other and respond to each other. They were also able to reflect on their individual interviews and how that impacted their answers in a group setting. It was very powerful!

Solicited reflexive diaries

Social researchers have developed the use of solicited diaries as a method for ‘logging’ events of daily life (Bolger et al., 2003), or providing a space for participants to reflect on experiences in their lives. This method reflects the breadth or research using solicited diaries from very different theoretical and epistemological frameworks (Bell, 1998). These diaries can be structured, providing guidelines or surveys for participants (Corti, 1993) or require participants to write less structured text in memory books (Thomas & Holland, 2005).
You can derive very rich material from asking people to document their own lives through diaries, photography projects, sound recording and other media (Taachi, Hern, Slater, 2003). For this research, the participants were asked to keep a diary, either through video or their smartphones, or in a written diary. However, none of the women took up this opportunity despite numerous e-mails requesting the diaries and personal phone calls and during face-to-face interactions. This went on for months until it finally got to the point where I made the decision not to include the diaries. All the participants are incredibly busy women who lead extremely busy and full lives. The decision to drop the diaries was made easy due to the rich data collected during the one-on-one interviews on camera. It did not work out in the end and I dropped the idea of the reflexive personal diaries as part of my research. This research is thus a combination of semi-structured interviews and a semi-focus group.

Sandra Kailahi Personal Diary Reflection (16 December, 2016)

So, none of the women have come back to me about their diaries. I have asked many times, even sent e-mails and had phone calls and there were some times when the conversation between me and the women looked like it would happen. But it didn’t. And I get that, I really do. I just know it is a hard thing to ask busy women to sit down or do a video diary on something they are still coming to terms with. I think the scope was too wide or the brief too broad to do a diary about their leadership over a period of a month. I was a little disappointed, but I have so much rich data from my interviews, I know I am not going to miss out. It just means my research will be based on semi-structured interviews and a semi structured focus group. I am happy with that, but I will keep writing my reflections.

Feedback

The next stage was to then let the women see the rough cut of the documentary by sending them a link to a cloud-based service (e.g. Vimeo) where they can all view the documentary, make notes and give me feedback before submitting my master’s. I e-mailed all the women to ask them for their feedback on the actual documentary and sent them the following questions:

1. Are you happy with the way you look, talk, and are represented in general?
2. Do you approve of the approach?
3. Are you satisfied with the overall content of the documentary, the way I identified and grouped emerging themes of leadership, identity, culture and gender?

4. Do you think your message is clear and as you intended it to be?

5. Is there anything you would like to cut or edit out?

6. What are your reflections on the whole process of being approached to be in the research, the filming and viewing the project?

Four of the six women responded, one woman said she was unable comment in time and another participant did not respond due to campaigning for the election.

The four women responded via e-mail. All responses were very short. Only one of the women answered the questions directly, while the rest just gave messages of support.

Sita: I'm so encouraged to hear each of your journeys in Leadership. I'm so sorry I missed the group session. Sandra I'm fine with my bits. Emeline should write a book :) Maybe when we're free we can meet in person and have a cuppa or chop suey. :) God bless you all.

Salote: All good Sandra when you're ready.

Setaita: Malo e ngaue lahi. All good. You've done well.

‘Alisi was the only one to respond directly to the questions. She e-mailed that she was happy with the way she looked and was represented in the documentary. She also approved of the approach taken throughout the research.

The Founga (process) you took was Fakamafana & a great honour for me. It allowed each of us to share individually and as a group. It was great to hear and meet the other women too. Even Emeline via video camera from Tonga was pretty savvy.

‘Alisi approved the overall content and themes and confirmed that her message was clear and as it was intended to be. She thanked me for the founga (process) I had taken during my research. Her final thoughts were around watching the documentary.
I finally got to watch the documentary. It's wonderfully edited, Sandra! You are such a Koloa Taonga (Tongan treasure) for our Pan Pacific community. Malo e ngaue lahi (good work) and wish all the best with the last lap of your master's journey.

While I was hoping for more in-depth feedback from the women, I am not surprised by the brevity of responses because the women are all incredibly busy. I appreciated that most of them took the time to respond despite their heavy schedules. The fact that all those who responded gave their approval, albeit through a brief e-mail, also follows on from the general consensus from the focus group that this was an important topic and a great opportunity for the women to come together and talanoa about leadership now and for the future.

From my own perspective as the researcher, this was an interesting component of my project, because as previously mentioned, I am not used to getting feedback before a story or documentary is completed. It was a little nerve wracking, but it was also a real learning curve about participatory visual methodologies. It would have been ideal if I had more clear feedback from the women as the participatory process requires, but given the experience with the reflexive diaries, I am pleased I was able to get the responses I did.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

O'Leary (2014) states that ethically the researcher has an explicit and fundamental responsibility towards the researched. She argues the dignity and well-being of respondents, both mentally and physically is absolutely crucial. Bryman (2012) adds that the ethical issues should be taken seriously due to the fact that they could affect the principles of the research and disciplines associated with it.

The issue of ethics in ethnographic work refers to more than simply the ethical conduct of the researcher. Rather, it demands that ethnographers develop an understanding of the ethical context(s) in which they work, a reflexive approach to their own ethical beliefs, and a critical approach to the idea that one ethical code of conduct could be hierarchically superior to all others.
This research was carried out under the ethical guidelines of Unitec’s Research Ethics Committee (UREC). As the researcher, it was crucial that I protected the research participants in order to minimise any possible harm that may emerge during and after research.

As I followed a talanoa approach in my research, I was careful to follow a culturally appropriate process. It was imperative that Pacific research ethics emerged from Pacific world-views in order to keep synergy with the methodology and to protect the integrity of the participants as Pacific cultural beings. The protocols must be based in ‘anga faka-Tonga (Tongan ways) (Vaioleti, 2006). This includes Faka’apa’apa (respectful, humble, considerate), Anga Lelei (tolerant, generous, kind, dignified), Mateuteu (well prepared, hardworking, cultural versed), Poto He Anga (knowing what to do and doing it well), and ‘Ofa Fe’unga (showing appropriate compassions, empathy and love). Vaioleti argues problems can arise if a talanoa research methodology is examined using conventional interpretations or research validity and reliability. Talanoa affects the learning of both researchers and participants; therefore, viewpoints and reactions will change. Perhaps what Lincoln and Guba (1985, cited in Cohen et al., 2001) suggest; is that replacing validity and reliability with trustworthiness and its components, is more fitting.

You could argue, it is difficult for those who are being filmed to give informed consent to a creative and unfurling process prior to its completion (Brooker & Brooker, 1997 cited in McKessar, 2009). Capturing the fragility of being human is also a careful consideration when filming participants.

When cameras invade arenas that are intended to haven people during times of vulnerability, then their presence deserves moral scrutiny. (Kendrick & Costello, 2000, p.16)

This was a particularly important aspect of making sure the participants were well informed and kept safe during the entire process.
As part of my commitment to the participants, I will destroy data and consent forms 5 years after my thesis has been accepted. I will store hard copies of consent forms and data in a safe place, as well as keeping any electronic copies on a computer and on a portable hard drive protected by a user password. I will also give copies both in hard copy and electronic form to my supervisor.

CHAPTER FOUR: REFLECTIONS

Connecting Theory with Practice

Fundamental to understanding the significance of the visual in ethnographic work, is a reflexive appreciation of how such elements combine to produce visual meanings and ethnographic knowledge (Pink, 2005). It is impossible not to be reflexive, because essential reflexivity is a part of language – an integral feature of all discourse (Marcus, 1994). This section outlines the reflections I have made throughout my research from the beginning to the end and the discoveries I made along the way.

My first reflection is around my decision research Tongan women talking about the impact of culture and gender on their leadership journeys in New Zealand. It came about due to a real interest in leadership. I was selected to be in the Global Women Breakthrough Leaders programme in 2015, which was around the same time I began my master’s at Unitec, and for the first time in a long time, it got me thinking about how I see leadership. I started to ask myself, ‘What is my leadership style’ and ‘how does it impact on the way I see leadership as a Tongan/kiwi woman leader in New Zealand?’.

As outlined in my personal reflection at the beginning of this exegesis, I wanted to explore the notion of leadership and how gender and culture impact on this for Tongan women living in New Zealand. It took me some time to finalise the topic, because I had some personal challenges around whether I could do actually do this as I do not speak Tongan fluently.
My second reflection was around my ability to do this research. I questioned my own leadership place in the Tongan/New Zealand community in Aotearoa. I am aware that I am one of the first women of Tongan descent to work on screen at Television New Zealand as a journalist and presenter for Tagata Pasifika and then also in mainstream programming through my stint on Fair Go.

I have always claimed my Tongan heritage, but was that enough? All my insecurities about not speaking the language kept coming up and I knew this would be a challenge because it would rock the foundation of my identity and how I see myself. It was a great place to be but a scary one at the same time. It was comforting when discussing identity and my ‘Tongan-ness’ that the other women all saw me as Tongan despite my own insecurities as outlined below by Salote:

I think you are unique of who you are and what you are...you grew up here and brought up here and that should be respect by people like me and others...even though we are different you grew up in NZ, I grew up in Tonga but at the end of the day we still have a Tongan blood in both of us that we can connect in some way ...seeing you wearing Ta’ovala thing today, I see you a Tongan...you are a Tongan walking into my house even though you don’t speak Tongan to me but in the way you presented yourself today, you are a Tongan.

This idea of being considered Tongan really struck a chord with me. It brought about an emotional release, but it also triggered something else. I started to realise and understand that it is important how I see myself. I am Tongan and a New Zealander. I also reflected on this point after my interview with Sita Selupe and made an entry in my diary stating that our journeys around identity had many similarities.

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**Personal Diary 16 Feb 2016**

...Sita is half Niuean and Tongan and wasn’t brought up the Tongan way. She is not fluent in the language, like me, but she understood what that meant and from my observation came to that realisation a lot quicker and didn’t put pressure on herself like I have. But because she’s in a position of leadership she has had to deal with situations where people expected or thought she would respond more culturally – more Tongan and she didn’t. The difference was she didn’t seem to beat herself up to no end like I have.
This diary entry sets the scene for my personal journey throughout this research. While the journey was essentially about having the opportunity to discuss and talk about leadership with the women, it was also an opportunity to explore my own thoughts around leadership and identity. An example of this was during the focus group where I got quite emotional while talking to the women. I felt free to truly express my feelings around identity.

(Focus Group)

Sandra: ‘I think for me doing the whole process, it was really liberating in the sense for me, because I am New Zealand born and I have talked to you all about it that I don’t have the beauty of cultural capital that a lot of you had when you were growing up and for me... I am going to start crying... it was just really because I thought there were so many challenges I thought I am going to do this about Tongan women, but I am scared because maybe of my own fears around it and the I thought I can’t do it in Tongan, but if they want to speak in Tongan that’s fine and get it translated and I will do that, but when I went through the process and interviewing all of you I felt this amazing liberation and of actually I have had these issues and hang ups over the past but I am who I am it doesn’t matter what anyone else thinks and it matters what I think…”

The emotional release or outburst was unexpected but in hindsight, it wasn’t really. It seemed to come out of nowhere but because of the experiences and talanoa I had with the women, I felt quite safe to talk openly and freely but I didn’t realise how much that would affect me. It also opened up a huge discussion around identity especially for New Zealand born Tongans.

Jenny: ‘You know it’s a very important issue because when you look at the demographics of New Zealand and the Tongans in New Zealand, most of our kids and our grandkids are not going to be full Tongan and many of them going to grow up not speaking the language and so in terms say the leadership model for most of us in the next 5-10-20 years it will be different and most of our kids are going to be like you and Ems, born here and can’t speak the language including my two daughters they are not fluent in either Samoan or Tongan and their grandmother is Pakeha so that’s the reality of our kids growing up in New Zealand, three ethnicities running through their veins and not speaking the language so the question, the leadership model we have now which most of us aren’t comfortable with…’

Sandra: ‘We don’t know what that is yet?’
Jenny: ‘But it will be an innovative one, an ever changing one and will be different not just for your generation Sandra but for our kids and grandkids so what do we do as the trailblazing leaders of today to assist and mentor our upcoming Tonga women leaders of tomorrow here in New Zealand and in Tonga...that’s a crucial question for us to answer so we don’t continue this tradition oh you want to be a leader, let me step on that...(laughs).’

My third reflection was based on the decision to combine a participatory visual methodology with a *talanoa* approach. I felt compelled to do this research as a creative project and liked the challenge of combining the two approaches together to make a non-traditional documentary. This was very appealing, because I knew I would be learning new skills and experience a lot of ‘unlearning’ and deconstructing what I have learnt through my experiences as a journalist and visual storyteller.

This was particularly evident during the focus group. This provided a platform for a fantastic discussion and a true *talanoa* experience because the women got to hear from the others in the research about their perceptions and experiences around leadership and the impact of gender and culture on their journeys. It was led by the women, and done in their own time and with respect and reciprocity. This was quite inspiring, revealing, and a powerful moment in my research as is expressed in the below exchanges:

*(Focus Group):*

Rev Setaita: ‘...You know, for me it was the first time I sat down and was asked those questions in a one-to-one conversation...and so because I didn’t quite expect the line of questioning it felt to me afterwards that felt...empowered because I was stopped to reflect honestly on what I was doing.’

Sandra: ‘Which you haven’t thought about before when we were talking about it...is that right?’

Rev Setaita: ‘Yes, it was like I was reassured and it gathers your thoughts and your elements together and know that there are people there who look to you as a leader. I was always doing what I was doing because I felt I was convinced I was called to this by my role model who is actually a servant leader.’
Jenny: ‘I find this conversation interesting because the interview we had with me, I have always known because of the position that I am in... is that some people look up to me as a leader...it doesn’t sit comfortably with me and it still doesn’t. Yes, I am a member of parliament but I have grown up similar to Setaita as a servant and I still see myself as a servant and you know I find the talanoa from Setaita interesting because I see Setaita as a leader.’

Sandra: ‘Same, we all do!’

‘Alisi: ‘I always had people follow me (laughs)....no...I feel so cool right now being amongst all these...’

Em: ‘I would follow you Alisi (laughs).’

‘Alisi: (Laughs) ‘No, Ems, I would follow you!
I am just honoured, honoured now and thank you Sandra for the honour and to be amongst [... ] I am mafana (warm love/inner warm passion) right now. I feel so honoured like I would like to agree with everyone but in hindsight we all have theories of leadership and we have styles of leadership and when I looked at the styles of leadership they were right there with our mothers, our aunts, our Fanga Fa’e (Mother’s Sister) our Fanga Mehikitanga (Father’s Sister)... that’s the styles and I just look up and each of these lovely ladies...’

Being able to record the interviews on camera was an important aspect of my research. It seemed appropriate, because of my experiences as a broadcast journalist and my love of visual storytelling. It almost felt like I had a blank canvas in front of me using both methodologies, because of the limited academic research on the topic.

However, there was some angst with using both methodologies. I am used to being in control of an interview and taking it where I want it to go, usually through an agreed script with my producer or depending on the interviewee’s answers. However, this time the talanoa sessions were about how I as the co-participant and researcher interacted with the different women. I wasn’t performing as a journalist or trying to entice or direct the questions with the view of getting certain answers; this was about mutual respect, an aspect of a true talanoa and an invitation to really talk about the impact of gender and culture on leadership for the participants leadership journeys.
So, my fourth reflection relates to finding my way with this. It was a little overwhelming at first, because I tried not to direct the interview, but there were times when I had to take the lead to make sure I had the opportunity to ask my key questions. Sometimes, I wasn’t sure where the talanoa was going, but it also gave an opportunity to hear things that perhaps would never make the final cut or see the light of day in a conventional interview.

At first, I was quite nervous that I would revert to my journalistic interviewing style and take control of the discussion. Thankfully, my first interview was with Emeline Afeaki-Mafile’o and that did not happen. We had discussed, prior to the interview, the style of using talanoa in the research and I encouraged her to ask me questions too and gave her the choice of being able to converse in Tongan should she choose to.

The interview was amazing. I listened very carefully to what Emeline was saying and tried not to push myself into the interview, but rather to let it flow in true talanoa form. Then it happened, Emeline threw a question back to me about identity and I had to answer it. It threw me a little, because I am not used to this happening at all. I did feel vulnerable especially talking about ‘not being Tongan enough’. However, I felt it was a safe environment and I knew Emeline understood what I was saying. It was a moment of reflection and vulnerability, but release too. It made for a great discussion or talanoa about leadership, identity, culture and gender as outlined in my diary reflection.

Sandra Kailahi Personal Diary Reflection – 16 February 2016 (Hillsborough, Auckland)

The interview with Emeline was fantastic. I wasn’t nervous about doing the interview but about more about making sure I was following a true talanoa with Em, which is really different for me as a journalist. I normally take control of the interview and ask the questions I want and take the interview in a certain direction. I don’t give a lot of me in the interview because I want to remain objective. This talanoa however, was different and I had to give more of myself and then Em was fantastic in that she put many of the questions back on me, which felt really weird and unusual.
SHAPING THE PROJECT – THE VOICE

Finding the voice of the women in this documentary was a priority. It was important as a co-participant and as the researcher that the message was authentic and honest. Messkar (2009) argues voice is narrower than style: it communicates a sense of the text’s social point of view, of how it is speaking to us and how the various materials are presented and organised (Nichols, 2005, p.18).

The blueprint for this documentary was always something that excited me. The fact that I was not only the researcher, but also a co-participant, was one of the positives or alluring aspects of my master’s. I have conducted many interviews throughout my career in journalism, however, this wasn’t about just doing an interview, it was about *talanoa* and exploring where the mutual discussion would take us.

Sitting in front of a camera is not something that is new for me or something that I find intimidating at all. It has always been an aspect of the job that I have enjoyed as a broadcast journalist. But I experienced something new with this research – something I like to call ‘the unlearning’ around how to make a documentary. I have years of experience making television documentaries, where I have presented the programme or have been actively involved in the programme, but this research proved quite difficult at times, especially when it came to putting myself in the film. Despite numerous meetings and suggestions from my supervisors, I could not find the right tone, the right words or reflection to include in the documentary as a co-participant. This dragged on for well over a year and despite several attempts to make this happen; it just didn’t. The versions were either stilted or performance based, as if I was doing a ‘Piece to Camera’ for a conventional television programme. It just didn’t work.

Finally, after a year, I was able to sit down and record my reflective links for the documentary. The difference this time was I was ready to do it. I recorded the links in the same venue as I had done with the previous recording, but this time I wasn’t presenting the links. I was able to do them in an authentic manner that didn’t feel forced, it was more natural. It still took a couple of hours to film but I was able to produce short introductions for the documentary and for the focus group, including the themes around identity,
leadership, gender and culture including a look to the future with a ‘where to from here?’ piece.

**Carrying out the work**

I decided I would film the interviews and focus group using four moving image cameras. I used a Canon XF305 camera to film the main interview with each participant and I decided to keep the shot on a Mid Close Up (MCU). The angle did not change during filming. I used a Canon 70D camera to record a wide 2-shot of both myself, and the participant. The quality of the pictures on these cameras is excellent and quite similar. Sound was not an issue as I used two radio microphones that were directly connected into the Canon XF350. I hired a second radio microphone for most of the interviews.

I also used two Panasonic DSLR cameras from Unitec. These are great little cameras, but the sound is not really broadcast quality, as you cannot plug in a microphone. I used one camera to record my questions and reactions on a similar MCU shot similar to the one I used for the participants. The other Panasonic camera was used to get a different wide 2-shot angle.

There was an issue with the difference in quality of pictures between the Canon and Panasonic cameras. Sometimes the light was different, and the grade of the cameras was quite mismatched, leaving very noticeable differences in the exposure of different shots. The lens on the Panasonic camera is quite basic and not as advanced as the lenses on the Canon cameras. While the quality of the pictures of the Panasonic cameras are still acceptable, the footage sometimes appeared a little grainy. I worked through this with the ‘colour board’ grading tool on Final Cut Pro, but there were some real challenges around balancing over-exposed shots and with the time it took to even out the tones from the different *talanoa* sessions and focus group.

**Structuring the Documentary - Editing and Data Analysis**

The problem for the researcher and the filmmaker is the same – how do you visualise a large data set and then look for meaningful relationships? (Goodman, 2004 cited in
McKessar, 2009). It was my intention to use the interviews as a framework for the basis of the documentary.

When I began the editing process, I made sure I had copies of the footage in different venues. One copy of the footage was kept at Unitec where it was stored on the communications drive, another copy of all the footage was placed on a portable drive and another copy was saved to my personal hard drive on my home computer.

I had a lot of footage from my interviews and from the focus group. Each interview went well over an hour and the focus group went for over two hours. I transcribed all the footage after each interview so that I would have a paper edit of each talanoa session. I assembled all of my visual material first and categorised everything into lists of interviews and by camera angles.

I transcribed the participants’ interview on the Canon XF305 camera so I could hear myself during the talanoa, but I could not see myself. This was an interesting process, because I could hear a real vulnerability in my voice in my questions and answers. I don’t normally do that in my job as a journalist, but because of the talanoa approach, I could hear a lot that I would normally miss if I were actually looking at the footage.

Diary Reflection 16 Feb 2016
The talanoa methodology is really interesting and has opened my eyes to a true participatory visual approach. I knew we talanoa all the time and had already done the ground work with Emeline, but to see it on film and how it works is really interesting. It’s interesting, because when I was transcribing this interview I could only see Em, but I could hear myself and I could hear my vulnerability with my answers. I opened up which is not something I do on film as I am usually the one doing the interviews and even when I get interviewed myself, I am deliberate and conscious of what I am saying or need to say. However, this time, I am really open and honest because I know the women are too so I want to be the same. It’s a fantastic process.

My plan was to show each participant their interview paper edits and to give them an opportunity to highlight, discuss or query any points before proceeding to the next stage
of choosing themes for a first edit. By facilitating a collaborative creative process, values, decisions can be reflected on and collectively shared (Thomas, Eggins, Papoutsaki, 2016).

However, this did not happen according to my plan, like a few things in this master’s research. Some of the women told me they did not need to see the paper edit of the interviews and were happy for me to just send them a rough cut of the documentary when it was ready. This somewhat took the wind out of my sails, but in reality it was probably the best thing given the example of the reflexive diaries. It also highlighted the busy schedules of these women.

Due to budget limitations, I could not afford a sound person or a crew so I had to rely on friends and asking favours from people including workmates and fellow students to help me with the filming.

When I decided to do this research, I was pretty naïve in thinking I would be able to do the filming on my own, as I have done many times in the past through my work, while to also being part of the talanoa process. I turned up to my first interview at Emeline’s house with my four cameras. I didn’t even ask for help to bring the gear inside. Emeline was aware of this and had asked one of her friends, who just happened to be visiting when I arrived and who also happened to be a documentary maker, to help me during the interview. That was my first realisation; I need others to help me.

Jomine Ayers also helped me with interview with Sita Selupe, but wasn’t available for the remaining four interviews. I went through this process four more times and asked two fellow Unitec students to help me with the filming, Malia Latu and Shanlea Hibbs, and two colleagues, Soana K-‘Aholelei and Alistar Kata.

It was unrealistic to think I would be able to do the filming of the talanoa sessions and the focus group on my own. It would have been difficult, as I would have been worried about the sound and cameras right throughout the talanoa. I wouldn’t have been able to concentrate on what the women were saying and participate in a true talanoa.
I was grateful to have the support of many different people, but it also meant I had to spend time going over the shooting plan with a new person each time. I relied on them to be able to turn on the Canon 70D camera when after 20 minutes it would turn off. I also had to rely on them to make sure the sound was okay during the interviews. Sometimes there were glitches in the sound, but I did not know about this until I was transcribing the interviews.

Setting up in each venue was also a challenge. I had to arrive early for the interview or factor in extra time to set up the four cameras and to also check for lighting and sound issues. The interview with Jenny Salesa was set inside her house on the top floor, but right next door construction was going on and the noise was quite overwhelming. Luckily, it wasn’t that noticeable on the footage.

Another challenge was in not having enough observational footage to overlay the women’s interviews. I thought I would be able to get away with just having the interview grabs, but it become quite obvious after the first cut that this documentary would need some other footage. I tried asking the women for photos, but as with the experience with the diaries, this was challenging so I ended up using some photos from Facebook with the participants’ permission. This wasn’t enough so I had to go and film some observational sequences or use footage from Tagata Pasifika. It was the right decision and helped to make the documentary easier to watch rather than seeing a lot of ‘talking head’ or interview after interview. This allows for the viewer to have some space and time to digest what has been said.

**Language - Translation**

Part of my approach in this research was to allow the women the choice to speak in Tongan or English. All of the women decided to speak in English, but would oscillate between the two languages quite fluidly. As previously mentioned, I do not speak Tongan fluently and understand more than I can speak, so I organised for the Tongan grabs to be translated. When selecting the final grabs for the documentary, I sought translation advice to authenticate the interviews.
I chose to document my reflections on the process with entries from my reflexive diary that I kept during my research and interview grabs from the participants.

**CHAPTER FIVE: EMERGENT THEMES**

I decided my research would take an autoethnographic approach. Sharing the stories (interview grabs) of the participants is more effective as a form of analysis and discussion rather than theoretical analysis (Revell, 2012).

For the purposes of this research, I categorised the data in the interviews into themes. Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that a theme can be based on how many times it is mentioned in the data, or it can be driven by a particular analytic question. After finishing a rough cut, I began to see some themes start to emerge throughout the interviews. I started with themes based around the research questions on leadership, the impact of culture on your leadership journey; and the impact of gender on their leadership journey.

Thematic analysis involves searching through data to inductively identify interconnections and patterns. Patterns are then analysed and explored as potential themes. As these solidify, the next level of abstraction hopes to build theory (O’Leary, 2014). Based on this, I was able to identify a consistent number of times certain references or themes were made during the interviews and focus group. This helped me to finalise the answers to my research questions.

**Emerging Themes**

- Styles of Leadership;
- Stories of Migration;
- First Generation Themes;
- Culture;
- Gender.
Theme 1: Leadership

The themes that are consistent throughout the research are around the notion and styles of leadership which are categorised into the following areas:

- Service Leadership;
- Reluctant Leadership;
- Role Model Leadership;
- Aunty Leadership.

The extracts are presented from interviews from the participants’ views on the different ideas of leadership.

Servant Leadership

Most Tongan people (88%) in New Zealand are affiliated with at least one religion (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). The church not only provides for their spiritual needs, but has become the village in the New Zealand city setting. It is where language and culture is regularly practiced through meetings, seminars, choir practice, festivals and funerals, youth groups and worship (Tu'inukuafe, 1996, p. 211 & Paea 2015).

The idea of the servant as a Leader comes from Hesse’s Journey to the East (Greenleaf, 1977) where the notion is that a great leader is seen as a servant first. As Patterson (2003) states:

Servant-leaders are those who serve with a focus on the followers, whereby the followers are the primary concern and the organisational concerns are peripheral. The servant-leader constructs are virtues, which are defined as the good moral quality in a person, or the general quality of goodness, or moral excellence.

The majority of the women all speak about servant leadership in some way or form to explain what leadership means to them. This is a strong notion with all of the women. Examples of this come from Jenny and Emeline’s interviews:
(Jenny’s interview):

Jenny: ‘For me leadership is when you see something that needs to be addressed you just get on and do it. I think to be deemed a leader...just whatever you do, you do it to the best of your ability. But I always see my role as a person who serves and I think I mainly got that from my.’

(Emeline’s interview)

Emeline: ‘It sounds really cliché, but I do seriously believe leadership is service and it is sacrifice.’

Reluctant Leader

As well as the majority of the women referring to themselves as servant leaders, there is also a common thread with most of them being what I like to call the ‘reluctant leader’. I noticed that all the leaders speak about being of service to their community, church or organisation, though not for their own purposes but rather to help others. While they do this reluctantly, they do not hesitate to answer the call to help others. This may go hand in hand with servant leadership, but it is an interesting finding as reflected in Rev Setaita’s interview.

(Rev Setaita’s interview):

Setaita: ‘You know I never myself as a leader, but when asked this question then I stop and think about leadership but personally my idea of leadership is a servant is a server. If there is a role model of me in leadership, it is Jesus the Christ who served his people, served the people and to me if there is a servant there is a leader. A server is one who is there to serve the people and one who has the people at heart so that is what I am about.’

(Emeline’s interview):

Emeline: ‘I think my heart was to serve my community and be resourceful and to be someone who championed their cause in their different areas and particularly as a young person for other children and youth... I was still at a youth age when I started doing work in my community so obviously that became a natural journey and it has always been something as a youth that I shied away from but now I do feel that our young people and our children and our community need positive role models or good leaders so you know it’s kind of scary for me to be honest and I kind of dread being identified as a leader amongst our own community.’
(‘Alisi’s interview):

‘Alisi: ‘I have never been asked that question cos I work...anything I do is to glorify God and it is not through my might and strength but the collective but however, I can see that I have a part, a small part to play in driving conversation and also where our youth sit in the decision making so as in our Tongan community they want you to do the hard yard so observing and being there and just listening and they want to know you have been listening and for some of our young people that is really hard but some of us had to do the time and we have listened and now they have given us the opportunities and so it is a very exciting time to be a young leader in the Tongan community.’

Role Model Leadership

The notion of being a role model leader is something I noticed when interviewing some of the women and in particular, Salote Heleta Lilo. She views herself as a leader with the purpose of helping fellow Tongans and especially Tongan women. Here is an excerpt from Salote’s interview.

Salote: ‘Leadership for me personally, it is a good example; you have to a good person that you will lead people to something good. Lead people from living in fear to be proud of themselves and helping people from difficulty to a better life.’

Aunty Leadership

An interesting point that comes out in the research is the notion of ‘Aunty Leadership’. This takes into account the social and hierarchal structure of women in Tongan society, but it also provides a familial context of Tongan women being there for their own kin, as Sita explains in her interview.

Sita: ‘I think that my leadership style has come from almost an aunty style of leadership and what does that look like? Well in my family when you need something and I think this is where the Fahu (Most honorary female in a family usually the ‘mehikitanga’ or Father’s sister) role becomes really important which I now understand but when you need something you don’t just go to your mum and dad but your aunty and they are always there and can never say no.’

Stories of Migration

Helen Lee (2009) writes that Tongans have a history of transnationalism stretching back centuries before European contact, when Tongans established ties with islands across the

Many Tongans began migrating to New Zealand in large numbers from the 1950s and 1960s, mainly to work in industrial and agricultural sectors and for economic reasons (Taumoefolau, 2014; Morton, 1998; Macpherson, 2004: 139; Teaiwa and Mallon, 2005: 208; Papoutsaki and Strickland, 2008; Lee, 2009).

Despite the relatively young population, and the high number born in New Zealand, Tongan people have maintained and nurtured their Tongan way of life (Tu’i’inukuafe, 1996, p. 207; Crocombe, 1973). In countries such as New Zealand, Australia and the United States, Tongan people have formed community groups that resemble and nurture traditional Tongan society (Tu’i’inukuafe, 1996). These have normally taken the form of Church groups, regional clubs, ex-students’ associations, and more recently education and health associations. The experiences of the women who were born in Tonga are slightly different to those born in New Zealand, but all the women have their own stories or migration.

(Salote’s interview)

Salote: ‘I was born in Tonga in Kolofo’u on 25 November, 1956 and grow up in Tonga and went to primary school and college there and came to NZ in early 1977 on a tourist visa and somehow I came and lived in Grey Lynn, Ponsonby and end up in Onehunga and then met my husband in 1979 and from there to where I am now and ended up in South Auckland but yes that is my journey from Tonga and I am still proud, very proud to be a Tongan and living in NZ.’

First Generation Themes (use issues of displacement and identity here)

Samoan academic Melani Anae popularised the phrase ‘NZ-born’ as a label to characterise Pacific people born in New Zealand, and the particular experiences that that implies (Wilson, 2013). Anae’s work on NZ-born identity for Samoans in New Zealand aligns closely with western ideas of identity development, most particularly in her formulations of ‘secured identities’, which Anae suggests can be reached by viewing the identity
journey as a series of rites of passage – enforced rituals which challenge one’s right to be ‘a New Zealander’, and on the other hand, one’s right to be a ‘Samoan’ (Anae 1997:128).

The theme running throughout her work is that the space NZ-borns inhabit, is a space dense with crises – the successful negotiation of which will eventually lead to a secure identity, which seems only to be possible through the return to and re-practice of Samoan traditions.

Research by Karlo Mila has furthered the work on Pacific peoples in New Zealand in new and compelling ways. There is now a distinction between a first generation of NZ-born Pacific people who were negotiating their identities seemingly without precedent, and a second generation NZ-born Pacific population that are growing up into strong, articulate Pasifika (Wilson, 2013).

Tongan academic Tevita O. Ka’ili defines the practice of keeping good relations with kin and friends as tauhi vā, which is also thought of as a commitment to sustain harmonious social relationships with kin and kin-like members (Wilson, 2013). Tauhi – to care for, or to nurture – is describing a particular dynamic of the pan-Pacific word vā (or wā in Hawaiian and Māori (Wilson, 2013).

These issues, as well as discussions of ‘displacement’ and ‘identity’ particularly around being either New Zealand-born or Island-born, were discussed at different times throughout the talanoa sessions and again were highlighted during the focus group.

(Emeline interview)

Emeline: ‘One of the biggest influencers on my life is that I am first generation NZ born so then I think unlike and I am assuming unlike 2nd or 3rd generation there’s not a sense of a great loss because it’s kind of been watered down a bit so like when your parents are sitting there and mum spoke Tongan, and then second language was Samoan and then English you know you can only not necessarily sense a disconnect in language but in world view and philosophy and perspective and it is a huge displacement.’

Sandra: ‘I feel that!’
Emeline: ‘I just think that craving and loss and provides a sense of hunger and desire not to just know your identity but to be Tongan and not sure if that is what you might have experienced?’

Sandra: ‘Different experiences that’s displacement...my dad never spoke Tongan to us when we he was growing up when we were growing up...in fact, I thought I was more Maori than Tongan for a long time being around that kind being around that community but at different points at my life, you are not a real Tongan because you don’t speak the language and that has been an ongoing debate, has that every affected you?’

(Jenny’s Interview)

Jenny: ‘I think the main difference I see goes back to whether or not a person can speak the Tongan language right. The New Zealand born Tongans I come across who are fluent in their language are I think stronger somehow in their identity as a Tongan. So that is the main difference. If you are born and raised in Tonga, most likely you are fluent in the Tongan language and with that the confidence in your culture and more connected to being Tongan in terms of ethnicity because you speak the language and I think I see that as the main difference.’

Culture

Paea (2012) conceptualises leadership as a cultural practice. In her thesis she defines leadership from a Tongan perspective as a cultural practice of nurturing warm relationships, in which people are influenced to change their ways of thinking and behaviour in a given context.

Paea defines culture in her thesis as a social practice that includes people’s deeply-held knowledge and belief systems, and ways of life in which these are shaped and acquired. This was true of the women and their personal reflections on the impact of culture on their leadership journeys.

Sita: ‘I think I am mindful now of my culture now and of who I am, because of the different places that I am required to go as a community leader requires me to use a different register sometimes, different attire sometimes and just some little things. When I am at school because there is a culture in any place, not just our ethnic culture or identity but I am always mindful when I go somewhere people want to know about me and my journey and so I try not to...and you know some time you tailor it to the audience that you are speaking to but I learned now to just be me.’
Salote: ‘...when it comes to culture...it is part of me and high percentage of me belongs to culture...I remember in my young age and we have a family children meeting with mum and I was always told to shut up or close your mouth and you don’t have a say...you are the youngest...please shush...so they sort of talk themselves now I am a woman who is married with children...when we meet with our same brothers and sisters... they don’t treat me that way.’

Setaita: ‘Whether it is leadership or not or servant hood my culture never passes me it is part of me and it is me because I was born and raised in Tonga so that is how I do my thing with my culture. It is my culture that helps me in my faith so my faith and my culture go hand in hand to shape me to mould me to empower me to do what I do...my faith is that I am here because of God’s love never ending and incomparable love that’s my culture.’

Emeline: ‘It was probably the biggest impact in my life. It’s not just the culture but the values that our culture adheres to...’

Gender in Leadership
Some research on gender differences in leadership styles has come to the conclusion that there are no quantifiable differences between men and women in leadership roles, but rather that leadership roles are just extremely situational. This line of literature argues that neither men nor women are better in leadership positions, but that the effectiveness of a leadership style is contingent on various features of group and organisational environments (Foels, Driskell, Mullen, & Salas, 2000). This was also evident through all the women’s interviews and their reflections on the impact of gender on their leadership journeys.

Sita: ‘... it was really interesting because it felt like I had an invisible voice but that was to do with gender and age because a lot of the pacific or renown Pacific leaders are a lot more mature and men and much older than me, 20 or 30 years older than me and I found that really interesting but I just came to understand you are a woman and you are younger than everybody here but I think that’s normal for most Pacific cultures.’

Jenny: ‘I think it would be fair to say that it was mostly what I experienced from my own ethnic group, from Tongans that I found quite challenging. I think it is mainly because traditionally, when you look at the political system in Tonga now you better understand what it is I mean. You have 26 MPs in Tonga and all of them are men...only 3 women ever have been elected into the parliament in Tonga during the whole history of parliament...’
Setaita: ‘...I feel that some people really think I am a woman and some people, I can read or try and read between the lines if there are things that I come up against because I am a woman and that is not just in the Pasifika world that is in the real world. I feel that we women need to accept that and that is still a challenge this day and not a much yesteryear but if we accept it that’s alright and we can deal with it and we can move on.’

The themes outlined in this chapter are in direct response to the question ‘How does gender and culture impact Tongan women leaders in New Zealand?’ Chapter Six will provide some concluding reflections on this project that have relevance on the theories and concepts outlined in the literature review and in my research.
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, I set out to explore the influence of identity and the relationship between gender and culture for Tongan women living in New Zealand and their connection to leadership, as well as looking at the nature of any dynamic that may exist between their culture of origin (Tonga) and the cultural environment in which they now live in (Aotearoa). Through my research, I have come to the realisation there is definitely a relationship between the impact of gender and culture for Tongan women living in New Zealand around leadership. All of the women shared their personal insights around how important culture is for them as Tongan women, as individuals, and as ethnic women.

One of my sub-questions on the meaning of leadership was also a very important question for me. There are so many definitions of what leadership is, but what struck me the most was the word servant or service, which was mentioned in all six talanoa sessions. Each woman clearly articulated that leadership equates to ‘service’. If I interviewed six European-Kiwi women, I am not sure I would get the same answers, but for all six Tongan women in this project service was at the root of their leadership journeys without any hesitation.

Culture plays an integral part of how the women see themselves. Culture is part of their make-up and their history but also relates to their present-day circumstances. Interestingly, it didn’t matter whether the women were born in New Zealand or Tonga, they all considered culture or ‘being Tongan’ an important aspect of who they are. This feeling contributed to their journeys around leadership.

To what degree they identified themselves as Tongan did differ though, depending on where they were born. Those born in Tonga were more inclined to instinctively describe themselves as Tongan, whereas those women born in New Zealand viewed this differently because of other parts of their ethnic makeup or being first generation Tongan/New Zealanders.
This made me look deeply into my own thoughts around culture. It is something that I have taken for granted. I know I am Tongan, but for many years I neglected or placed my New Zealand side in a second position in the pursuit or quest to be more Tongan. I now realise that while I am proud of my Tongan ancestry, I am equally proud of my kiwi roots because both sides have played a part in the person I am today.

Culture plays an integral role in each of the women’s lives. It became quite apparent that there is no real separation between culture and leadership (Paea, 2012). They are both intertwined and for some of the women, this forms the basis from which they use their leadership.

In regard to gender, whilst it definitely played an obvious role in the women’s leadership journeys, the experiences were different. Jenny Salesa, one of the participants, noted that one of the biggest challenges she faced in her early political career was from other Tongan women, especially when she first ran for parliament in 2014. The consensus from the focus group participants was that Tongan women in Tonga were somewhat limited in their mindset when it came to gender and leadership in the political sphere. The notion that age equates to wisdom and that you must be a man to hold leadership roles were some of the issues discussed by the women.

To have the opportunity to film the women and then get their feedback before submitting my master’s research was not only a new experience for me, but also a very rewarding one.

Autoethnographers recognise several challenges and concerns in using autoethnography as their chosen research method. Vulnerability is part of what makes reading autoethnographic works so compelling, as researchers expose their pains, hurt, loss, grief, heartbreaks, and other emotions experienced as they travail through events in their lives. Whereas such topics can be studied using ethnographic, phenomenological, and other qualitative approaches, autoethnography allows researchers to dig deeply into their own experience, including the attendant emotions in ways that may not be possible if they were being interviewed by someone else (Ngunjiri, Hernandez, Chang, 2010).
The method not only enables researchers to access personally intimate data with ease, but also to reach readers with their vulnerable openness (Ngunjiri, Hernandez, Chang, 2010). Using a participatory visual methodology combined with a *talanoa* approach allowed me as the researcher and co-participant an opportunity to really delve into areas around the impact of culture and gender on each woman’s leadership journey, but it also allowed me space to reflect on my journey and identity – something I wasn’t quite prepared for in the research.

Using *talanoa* was an incredible experience. It allowed me the opportunity to really explore and dialogue with the women in a respectful, in-depth and honest way. I had to really concentrate on the process. I didn’t want to control the discussions but rather just let them follow their own pace and direction. That really opened up my eyes and produced rich conversations, which are reflected in my research. It also allowed me as a co-participant but also as the ‘lead’ in the *talanoa* sessions to establish a connection quite quickly with the women about the topic (Prescott, 2009; Paea, 2015).

The *talanoa* sessions broke down the barriers from the start, because all the women knew exactly what my intention was once I explained that I wished to *talanoa* about the impact of gender and culture on their leadership journeys.

**Positioning the Documentary**

Positioning the documentary created a unique opportunity to reflect a little deeper on the process and the issues that are discussed here in this exegesis. The documentary is not meant for a television audience. This film does not adhere to the rules of commercial imperatives, nor does it conform to advertising breaks for a commercial half hour programme. I shot and edited ‘Tongan women talking about their lives in leadership’ the way I wanted to, in a non-traditional convention. The interview grabs I used are longer than in a conventional documentary and are arranged in a non-traditional manner where they play immediately after each other with little observational material in between. As it is not a commercial programme, it really gives viewers time to listen and ponder what the women are saying without the distraction of other footage.
The term ‘commercial’ can be interpreted in two ways. The first is that television has been developed to be profitable by the standards of a business and the second is a certain style that flaunts capitalist values (McKessar, 2009). The final result is a documentary that is not for television – its structure and treatment do not fit neatly within those boundaries. The film’s slower, more reflective pace is perhaps more suited to a theatre audience (McKessar 2009). It was originally intended that this documentary would be entered into different indigenous film festivals, but I have decided that it would be more effective as an online tool.

It is my intention to now use this documentary as an online tool and an educational resource through the website www.tonganwomentalkabout.com which will showcase the women, feature the documentary and have supporting footage of the interviews divided into the themes of leadership, identity, gender, and culture.

This is particularly important to me, because it will live beyond the research. There are no other film tools like this on this subject and in today’s society where content is king. This will provide Tongans, living in New Zealand and around the world, an opportunity to hear and see first-hand what it is like to be a Tongan woman leader in New Zealand and how culture and gender impacts the leadership journey of six Tongan women living here.

My own journey
The decision to do my research on Tongan women leaders was a real journey. I had to overcome my own fears and stumbling blocks, which was attributed to my insecurities about not being fluent in the language. Once I overcame this, I became very excited about the project.

I feel incredibly blessed to have interviewed Emeline Afeaki-Mafile’o as my first participant as she was gracious, patient and generous with her story. The following interviews were just as amazing, and I felt like I was really getting into a groove when I finished the last talanoa session with Rev Setaita.
Writing my reflexive diary helped me to articulate my thoughts in words. I was able to use these reflections in my exegesis and identify what leadership means to me. It wasn’t that different to what the women had expressed in their sessions. Service is at the heart of what leadership is about for me. I could relate to each woman as they outlined service as the basis of their leadership. It made me remember when I was growing up and being told that service is the basis of true leadership. This was role modelled to me by my church and community leaders. I see that service in each woman through the work they do in their communities.

The impact of culture on my leadership journey was different to most of the women, in that I did not grow up with the cultural capital of being able to speak Tongan or have the culture around me. Unfortunately, I saw a mostly negative side of the culture, because of the clashes and lack of understanding about all things Tongan from my mother. My father never explained cultural practices to her, so she only ever saw him give their money away for cultural and familial obligations. But in saying that, I had been to Tonga at an early age and I always knew I was Tongan, but because my father never spoke Tongan to my siblings or me, I didn’t quite know what that really meant. It wasn’t until my late teens that I started to spend more time with my Tongan family and was exposed to the culture and *koloa* or treasures of the culture and through my work that I finally started to understand my Tongan side.

Many of the women shared their experiences around being a woman or gender issues in their chosen fields or lives. It was interesting to note the differences, but they all expressed their own challenges around the impact of gender on their leadership. Like the women, I too have had my own experiences. As a leader, I didn’t shy away from responsibility or let any issues relating to gender affect my leadership, but I was aware of prejudice and fixed or closed mindsets around this. I just didn’t let it affect me. I also have experienced challenges of being a woman in leadership roles. It usually stems from being labelled aggressive, as opposed to being assertive, by men or other women who are challenged by my leadership style.
This study did challenge me to think about my leadership style and if I use my reflection from the beginning of this research as the starting point, I have come to the conclusion that service is at the heart of my leadership style as well as being open minded, encouraging and authentic. Conducting this research has helped me to accept my identity as a New Zealander and a Tongan. I am both and it is more important how I see myself than how others see me.

Having the opportunity to ask the women how they see themselves and reflect on my own identity and the impact of culture and gender on my leadership journey was an eye-opener and a catalyst for self-acceptance.

**Future Directions**

The findings in this exegesis can now be used as an invitation for debate and future research on leadership, gender and culture of Tongan women in New Zealand.

Paea (2015) quite clearly states that it is worth noting that future researchers who wish to conduct studies with Tongan participants should consider the powerful and positive influence of participants’ cultural backgrounds, particularly their māfana (warm love/inner warm passion) in shaping their capabilities and authenticity of their views and experiences on a particular subject. As demonstrated in this exegesis, this point was clearly reinforced in my research. Arguably the impact of culture and gender has affected all the women in similar and different ways but what is certain is the call for leadership to serve others.

This study goes a long way to close the gap around what is leadership for Tongan women living in New Zealand, but it is a drop in the ocean of where future research can go. Further studies can perhaps look at taking a specific look at culture on leadership for Tongan women in New Zealand and compare with Tongan women back in the Friendly Islands. Reflecting on gender and even identity are also potential topics for further study.
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Appendices

Appendix 1: Questions for individual semi-structured interviews

Main Interview questions
1. What’s your history in terms of being Island or New Zealand born?
2. How do you identify yourself?
3. What does leadership mean to you?
4. So, what has been your leadership journey?
5. How does gender impact your leadership as a Tongan woman in NZ?
6. How does culture impact your leadership as a Tongan woman in NZ?
7. How do you navigate both gender and culture in your leadership journey?
8. What impact does being an ethnic minority woman have on your leadership journey?
9. What are your thoughts on cultural diversity in New Zealand today?
10. Which leaders inspire you and why?
11. What are your goals for the future?
12. Is there anything else you would like to add?
Appendices

Appendix 2: Draft questions for semi-structured focus group

Warm Up
1. Ask how the participants are feeling? Mou Fefe Hake? (How are you all?)
2. [questions around family, work, church, community work so as to set the scene and not put pressure on the participants.]
3. Talk about last time they were interviewed.

Main Questions
1. What does leadership mean to you?
2. How do you describe your leadership style?
3. What have you learnt about your leadership from your diaries?
4. What have you learned during this process about who you are as a Tongan woman leader in New Zealand?
5. What’s important to you in your leadership journey?
6. How has gender impacted your leadership journey?
7. How has culture impacted your leadership journey?
8. What are the challenges around being an ethnic minority female in New Zealand?
9. Who stands out as a great Tongan woman leader in New Zealand? Why?
10. Is there anything else you would like to add?
Appendices

Appendix 3: Participant Consent Form

Participant Consent Form Research Project Title: “The impact of gender and culture on Tongan women leaders in New Zealand.”

I have had the research project explained to me and I have read and understand the information sheet given to me.

I understand that I don't have to be part of this research project should I chose not to participate and may withdraw at any time prior to the completion of the research project.

I understand that everything I say will be recorded on camera to form part of a documentary. I also understand that all the information that I give will be stored securely on a computer at Unitec for a period of 5 years.

I understand that my discussion with the researcher will be taped and transcribed.

I understand that I can see the finished research document and documentary. I have had time to consider everything and I give my consent to be a part of this project.

Participant Name:

Participant Signature:

Date:

Project

Researcher:

UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER:

This study has been approved by the UNITEC Research Ethics Committee from 2015 to 2017. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Committee through the UREC Secretary (ph: 09 815-4321 ext 6162). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendices

Appendix 4: Information for Participants

Information for Participants

“The impact of gender and culture on Tongan women leaders in New Zealand.”

Synopsis of project

The aim of this project is explore the relationship between gender and culture for Tongan women living in New Zealand around leadership. It will look at the nature of any dynamic that may exist between their culture of origin (Tonga) and the cultural environment in which they now live in (Aotearoa).

The researcher will collect your perspectives on this topic and interview you for a documentary.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to sign a consent form. This does not stop you from changing your mind if you wish to withdraw from the project. Your parent/guardian can also ask for you to be withdrawn. However, because of our schedule, any withdrawals must be done within 2 weeks after we have interviewed you.

All information collected from you will be stored on a password protected file and only you, the three researchers and our supervisors will have access to this information until you have given your permission to use parts of your interview for the documentary.

Please contact us if you need more information about the project. At any time if you have any concerns about the research project you can contact our supervisor:
My supervisor is Dr. Evangelia Papoutsaki, phone 815 4321 ext. 8746 or e-mail epapoutsaki@unitec.ac.nz

UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER:
This study has been approved by the UNITEC Research Ethics Committee from 2015 to 2017. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Committee through the UREC Secretary (ph: 09 815-4321 ext 6162). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendices

Appendix 5: Participant Information Form

Participant Information Form

Malo e lelei

My name is Sandra Kailahi. I am currently enrolled in the Master of International Communication degree in the Department of Communication Studies at Unitec in Auckland and seek your help in meeting the requirements of research for a Thesis course which forms a substantial part of this degree. The aim of my project is to explore how gender and culture impact Tongan women leaders in New Zealand.

I request your participation to participate in the interview. This interview will be video recorded for the purpose of the research including the master thesis and journal and producing a documentary. The results of the research activity will be discussed with you throughout the process. You are free to ask me not to use any of the information you have given, and you will be consulted throughout the research and will have input into the final cut before the documentary is premiered at a public event.

I hope that you will agree to take part and that you will find your involvement interesting. If you have any queries about the research, you may contact my principal supervisor at Unitec New Zealand. My supervisor is Dr. Evangelia Papoutsaki, phone 815 4321 ext. 8746 or e-mail epapoutsaki@unitec.ac.nz

UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER: 2015-1069. This study has been approved by the UNITEC Research Ethics Committee from 2015 to 2017. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Committee through the UREC Secretary (ph: 09 815-4321 ext 6162). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.
Full name of author: ................................. Sandra Kailahi

ORCID number (Optional): .................................

Full title of thesis/dissertation/research project ('the work'):
Tongan women talking about their lives in leadership in New Zealand: a participatory visual methodological approach to talanoa, gender and culture.

Practice Pathway: ................................. Business Enterprise & High Technology Network

Degree: ................................. Master of International Communication

Year of presentation: ................................. 2017

Principal Supervisor: ................................. Evangelia Papoutsaki

Associate Supervisor: ................................. Marcus Williams

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Signature of author: .................................

Date: ................................. 11/4/2018