Through their eyes:
A Samoan perspective on
child wellbeing

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ABSTRACT

Child wellbeing is the subject of a considerable body of research and policy making globally, and in New Zealand today. Despite its extensive use, the concept of child wellbeing is used differently across disciplines and across diverse social and cultural contexts. Little of the extant literature recognises the influence of 'other' worldviews, cultural beliefs, values, and ways of knowing. Further, the voices of children are largely missing in the child wellbeing debates, despite the fact that children are able to offer authoritative knowledge of their world and of their experiences. A review of the literature on Pasifika, children and childhoods, and wellbeing, highlights that there is currently no literature in New Zealand that connects these three areas together. This is the gap where this research contributes new knowledge to understanding - from the standpoint of Samoan children and their parents living in Wellington - how they conceptualise child wellbeing. The Samoan diaspora is the focus of this research given the diversity that exists within Pasifika.

Guided by the *Talanoa ile i'a* (Faleolo, 2009), this exploratory research positions children as 'experts' on their wellbeing and creates the space for them to share their knowledge. The Samoan children do so through combining Samoan (*talanoaga*) and Western (*photovoice*) research methods. The Samoan children took 10 photos of what made them feel 'happy, safe, and loved', which they used to guide their *talanoa*. The views of their parents were elicited through *talanoaga*.

From the *talanoaga*, the Samoan children defined their wellbeing as "a bunch of stuff that has good bits and bad bits". This definition picks up the relational aspect of wellbeing as well as resilience. Four factors are important to their wellbeing, which are: social connections, not having to worry, feeling valued and included, and being a good person. Connecting with people, particularly their family, stands out as being of overwhelming importance to their wellbeing. The Samoan children bring these ideas together conceptually as a seesaw in a playground. Parents conceptualise the wellbeing of their children as *ola manaia* or the beautiful life. They see their main role as laying the foundations on which their children could have a beautiful life. For many parents, they are drawing on the *fa'asamoa* and the way in which they have been raised, but 'tweaking' this to account for shifts in the broader context. Of note, parents view wellbeing in terms of their children being happy and emotionally stable, being good people, having values, and that they do something meaningful with their lives that they were passionate about. The *talanoa* from the parents are woven together as the *Ola Manaia* model that captures the importance of resilience and the relational aspect of wellbeing.

This research has significance in terms of adding to the community, national and global body of knowledge on child wellbeing. This is the first New Zealand study of the wellbeing of Samoan children that gives priority to the voices of children. In doing so, it adds the child's voice as well as the 'other' to the child wellbeing literature, and does this in a holistic way that takes account of the multi-dimensional aspect of child wellbeing. Further, this research reinforces that, when given the opportunity, children are able to make an incredible contribution to issues that affect them.

DEDICATION

E muamua lava ona si'i le viiga ma le faafetai i le Atua

mo lona agalelei ma lona alofa ua mafia ai ona faataunu'u lenei fa'amoemoe

To my father and mother

Jim Dunlop and Tagalaotele Professor Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop

who taught me to ask the questions and

to question the answers

FA'AFETAI TELE LAVA - ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

O le tele o sulu e maua ai figota, e mama se avega pe a ta amo fa'atasi
My strength does not come from me alone but from many

While my name appears on this thesis as the sole author, it reflects the contribution of many people who have given so generously of their time and knowledge.

To the ten Samoan families living in Wellington who partnered with this research. Thank you for saying yes. I learnt so much from you all. To the children, I stand in awe of your insights, your enthusiasm to participate, and for the way that you *tausi* each other during the *talanoaga*.

To mum and dad, my sisters - Rochelle, Gabrielle, Melissa and Amanda - and their families: I express much love and gratitude for your constant encouragement, unconditional support, and unwavering belief. *Fa'afetai le onosai, fa'amalo le tapua'i.* I also acknowledge with *alofa* Bruce and Tui Bennett, Miki Winton, and my *aiga potopoto*: the Fairbairns (Sā Petaia) and the Dunlops (Ngāti Maniapoto). *Fa'afetai tele lav*a Reverend Au and Keiti Liko for your guidance.

To my husband Simon Bennett (Ngāti Whakaue, Patu Harakeke, Ngāti Waewae) thank you for always being there to talk through ideas. *Ka nui te aroha.* To our beautiful children *o le fanau peleina* - Elena Tui, Grace Marama, Piata Emēle, and Christian Meihana - there is no achievement greater for me than being your mama. You will never know how much your notes of encouragement, your hugs, and the many cups of tea have helped. I am so blessed.

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During my doctoral journey, four people who have been influential in my life were promoted to glory: Uncle Jim Fairbairn (March 2017), Aunty Mabel Barry (May 2017), Uncle Alan Winton (August 2017), and Taua Marama Flescher (September 2018). I acknowledge you all with love and gratitude.

Fa'afetai tele lava ia te outou uma, mo lo outou agalelei, ma le feasoasoani, a'o maua taumafai mo su'esue'ga ma le tusiaina o lenei thesis. Fa'afetai, fa'afetai, fa'afetai tele lava.

SAMOAN GLOSSARY

aiga (potopoto)	family (extended family)
alofa	love, kind, generous, compassion
aganu'u	culture
Atua	God
fa'aaloalo	respect and dignity
fa'alavelave	ceremonial events and/or obligation
fa'asamoa	the Samoan way of doing things
fa'apalagi	the western way of doing things
faifeau	minister
fale (fale tele)	house (family meeting house)
fa'asinomaga	identity
fanau	child
fono	meeting
komiti	committee
ma	embarrassed
malaga	journey
matai	chief title-holder
nu'u	village
ola fa'aleagaga	spiritual wellbeing
ola fa'alelagona	emotional wellbeing
ola fa'atino	physical wellbeing
ola fa'aloto	social wellbeing
ola manaia	a beautiful life
ola fa'alemafaufau	psychological wellbeing
o le faautaga o le i'a	the perspective of the fish
o le faautaga i tumutumu o le mauga	the perspective from the top of the mountain
o le faautaga i tumutumu o le la'au	the perspective from the top of the tree
o le faautaga o le pii ama	the perspective of the person in the canoe
palagi	person of western descent
pikiapu	pick-up truck
pisupo	corned-beef
suli	heir, hereditary rights
talanoa	to talk, to discuss
talanoaga	discussion
talanoa ile i'a	talking to the fish
tagata	people
tautua	service
va'a tele	twin hulled canoe
va	relational space between people
va fealoaloa'i	harmonious relationships between people
va tapuia	harmonious relationships between people, land, and the environment
umu	food baked under-ground

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GUIDING NOTES

1. The 11 children who partnered with this research have been given a pseudonym. These pseudonyms are not their real names nor the real names of any other participant associated with this research.

2. This research uses the term "Pasifika" to refer to peoples living in New Zealand who have ancestral or heritage links to the Pacific, a region comprising of 22 countries and territories. As Pasifika is a word that has been developed within the New Zealand context, it is not italicised. Other collective terms used to refer to people with an affiliation to the Pacific include Pacific Peoples, Pacific Islanders, Pasefika, Pacificans, PIs, Pasifiki and Tagata o te Moana Nui.

3. Chapter 4 traces the *malaga* or the migration story from Samoa to New Zealand, and how the early migrants made their place in New Zealand. Over this chapter, several terms are used to describe peoples from the Pacific that relate to the time period, such as 'Pacific Islanders' in the 1970s and 1980s and then 'Pasifika' from 2000 onwards.

4. This research focuses on the Samoan diaspora, one of the peoples of the Pasifika collective. Data is not always collected and/or analysed for the specific ethnicities encompassed within the Pasifika collective. Where available, data on the Samoan diaspora is used. When this is not available, Pasifika data is used.

5. Diaspora refers to a group of people dispersed outside their traditional homeland. This research focusses on the Samoan diaspora living in New Zealand.

6. Words included in this thesis that are not English are *italicised* for easy referencing.

7. There are multiple ways that child wellbeing is written. This thesis uses 'child wellbeing'. Other versions may appear, when quoted directly from the literature.

8. There are multiple acronyms for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This thesis uses the acronym UNCRC. Other versions such as UNCROC or CRC may appear where this is sourced from a direct quote from the literature.

9. Verbatim *talanoa* is used as supporting narrative in the findings chapters (Chapter 7 for the Samoan children and Chapter 8 for the parents). The following symbols mean:

…	there was a pause in the *talanoa*
[…]	parts of the *talanoa* have been taken out of that particular passage
(xxx)	a word has been inserted to help reference the *talanoa*

10. For easy referencing, legislation, policy and key strategies are *italicised*.

PROLOGUE

If we fail to create our own [narrative]
someone else will do it for us
(Hau'ofa, 1993, p. 128-129)

Narratives help shape our perceptions, ideas, and beliefs, which over time come to be accepted as truths. This is the power of narratives: they can completely change our perceptions of people and communities. In the absence of constructing our own narrative, we may be portrayed in ways that are counter-intuitive to how we see ourselves. That the generalised view of Pasifika tends to be couched in labels such as hard-to-reach, vulnerable, and disengaged (Loto, et al., 2006; Neilson, 2015) is one example of the disconnect between narratives that have been created about us and the ones that we create about ourselves. In the absence of a counter-narrative, this dominant view of Pasifika holds.

This research seeks to provide a counter-narrative by asking 'those that know'. For this research on the wellbeing of Samoan children, 'those that know' are Samoan children and their parents. This research privileges their voices to understand what child wellbeing means to them. In doing so, it shows what it could look like when we collectively move beyond the deficit lens that shapes much of the dominant narrative of Pasifika. In highlighting the voices of 'those that know', we can create new perceptions, new images, and new beliefs.

As I reflect on my own narrative, my life has been a learning journey reflecting many people, starting with my parents as first teachers. My sisters and I grew up with 'learn what you can, do what you can, and give back' reinforced at every turn. Underpinning everything that you do, we were told, must be about making things better for others. We were to be intentional in looking for opportunities to give back, especially as there were others in our *aiga potopoto* who did not have the opportunity to further their education like my sisters and I did. My nana, Emēle Moa Te'o, had to leave school early due to the premature death of her father Te'o Tuvale Petaia. Te'o Tuvale held a number of positions in the indigenous Samoan government such as the Native Clerk of the Enquiry conducted by the Commissioners of the Three Nations regarding the Samoa Lands (1891) and the Chief Justice and Chief Secretary (1897), prior to working in the German Samoa Administration following Samoa's annexation to Germany in 1899. In 1900, Te'o Tuvale travelled to Germany, where he met the Kaiser, as well as my great grandmother Naitua Atoa, who was also visiting Germany as part of a traditional Samoan dance troupe. They had seven children of which my nana was the second eldest. Te'o Tuvale died in 1919. His last job was supervising the mass burials of those that died in the influenza epidemic and his death is believed

to be related to this.[1] As is Samoan custom, following his death my nana and her family moved back to her mother's village of Tanugamanono. It was around this time that my nana left intermediate school to work so that she could help her family.

Passport photo (1940)

In 1920, nana married James Fairbairn, a Scotsman who was in Samoa as part of the New Zealand's armed forces. They had five children when they decided to move to New Zealand, primarily for education. My grandfather came ahead to Wellington to search for a house that was similar to their life in Vailima: something high on the mountain close to the sea. It was 1941 when their passage for the boat arrived. I recall as a child, nana telling me about the rush to get everyone – Mabel, Ian, Jimmy, Rex, and Alfred – from the plantation in Vailima down to the wharf in time to make the boat. Barbara and my mother, Peggy, were born in Wellington.

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[1] The influenza epidemic swept through Samoa following the arrival of *Talune*, the New Zealand passenger and cargo ship, on 7 November 1918. Despite people on board suffering from pneumonic influenza - a highly infectious disease already responsible for hundreds of thousands of deaths around the world - no quarantine restrictions were imposed. Sick passengers were allowed to disembark. The disease spread rapidly, attributing to about 8500 deaths or 22 percent of the population. A United Nations (1947) report ranks it as "one of the most disastrous epidemics recorded anywhere in the world during the present century, so far as the proportion of deaths to the population is concerned". The magnitude was such that there was no time to carry out traditional ceremonies for the dead, but rather bodies were wrapped in mats and collected by trucks for burial in mass graves.

Survivors blamed the New Zealand Administrator, Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Logan, for failing to quarantine *Talune* and for rejecting an offer of medical assistance from American Samoa. A Royal Commission enquiry into the allegations found evidence of administrative neglect and poor judgement. Rather than accept responsibility for the influenza pandemic, New Zealand officials praised the efforts of their personnel in the face of adversity, as shown in the newspaper. At the same time, they condemned Samoa's inhabitants for failing to help themselves. Lieutenant Colonel Logan's view at the time was:
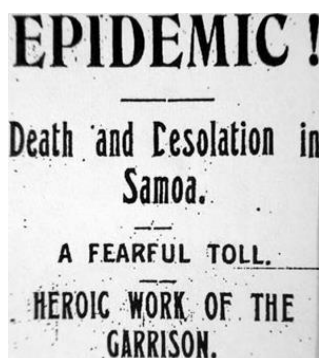
[It is] temporary and, like children, they [Samoans] will get over it provided they are handled with care... They will later on remember all that has been done for them in the previous four years... (Logan's report on the administration of Western Samoa, 8 August 1919, IT 1/1/1D)

Lieutenant-Colonel Logan left Samoa in early 1919. The influenza pandemic had a significant impact on New Zealand's administration of Samoa. This incident formed part of the official apology by the New Zealand government in 2001 (References: Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2012a; 2012b).

In Wellington, my nana worked at the Electrolux Factory. This was similar to many of the other early migrants from Samoa: working long hours, and any overtime that was on offer, to realise 'the migrant dream' and to send money back to Samoa for *fa'alavelave*. As soon as they were settled, nana and grandad arranged for *aiga* to come from Samoa so that they could further their education. My mother recalls, how almost at once, their house became full with *aiga* from Samoa, and the curious stares from neighbours at the number of people coming in and out of their house or from the baker when they picked up 10 loaves of bread on a Friday afternoon (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 2003). The walls of my nana's sitting room were adorned with graduation photos from my aunts and uncles, my mother, and many extended cousins: row after row of photos. I have vivid memories as a young child sitting with nana as she would explain each photo: who they were, how they were related, what they had graduated in, and where they were now working.

My mother and father, Jim Dunlop (Ngāti Maniapoto), met at teachers college. After graduating, they taught in Te Teko and Te Reinga schools before returning to Porirua in the 1970s. My four sisters and I were born at various places along the way. In 1981, we moved to Samoa: part of my mother's migrant dream to 'return home'. Samoa is where I spent most of my childhood. My first vivid memory of life in Samoa is being barefoot and chasing chickens around Tanugamanono. Polynesian Airlines used to have the advertising tag-line "Samoa… you call it paradise, we call it home". Growing up in Samoa felt very much like paradise. It was a simple life: munching mangoes high in the frangipani tree, marching down to parliament each year on Independence Day, riding on the back of the *pikiapu,* picnics at Lefaga after church with our *umu* and can of *pisupo*, and the first rains after the long dry season.

Looking back, Tanugamanono is where I got my first insight into community development. I watched the village coming together in a *fono* to discuss the challenge at hand and how to address it, the village-government partnership that provided primary health and education in the village, planting days so that there was enough food for household consumption (the surplus crops being sold to generate income), and the women's *komiti* providing a social security net. My mother was involved in community development, and many afternoons after school, I would watch her facilitating participatory development where she emphasised the importance of community ownership and partnership. While I did not fully understand these concepts at the time, they have become central to everything that I do.

I did most of my schooling in Apia: from Apia Infants to Samoa College. It was while I was at Samoa College that my parents made the decision to send me to New Zealand to finish off my secondary school. Adjusting from wearing jandels, eating taro, and hot humid days to buckled shoes, kilts, and winter frosts was a challenge. More challenging though, was navigating the change in narrative. In Samoa, our teachers had expected us to do well in school and there was never any question that we wouldn't. This narrative helped shape our perception that we could achieve, a perception that helped to shape our reality. Looking at the success of my classmates from Class 682, this is clearly visible.

At secondary school in New Zealand, I was re-cast as the 'happy go lucky islander'. I didn't fully understand what it meant but I was happy to go along with it. After a couple of years being the 'happy go lucky islander', a turning point came when a career advisor from one of the universities visited our secondary school. He told me '*no*'. I don't recall asking him a question, but in looking at my indicative 7th form grades he told me that I didn't have what it took to be at university. I sat there, *ma* that he had said this loudly in front of all the *palagi* girls. And as I sat there, it began to dawn on me that the 'happy go lucky islander' label - and the narrative shaping it – wasn't actually viewed in this way at all.

Thinking of my nana's wall of graduation photos, I took his 'no' and enrolled into a bachelor's degree at Canterbury University. Three years later, I enrolled at Massey University where I competed a post-graduate diploma and master's degree, majoring in Development Studies. Over the years, there have been many occasions where well-intentioned people have told me *no*, whether I've asked a question or not. If I had accepted the narrative behind these *no's*, I would have missed out on so many incredible opportunities such as working with rural communities on sustainable livelihoods in Zimbabwe, with women on child and maternal health issues at the commune level in Vietnam, or with communities in Vanuatu to strengthen child wellbeing. The valuable lesson that the university career advisor taught me back in 7th form, which is captured by Hau'ofa (1993), is that if we don't craft our own narrative, someone else will do it for us. Influenced by the strength of my *aiga* and *nu'u*, I have learnt to craft my own narrative and to use this to navigate through the many *no's*.

As a mother to four children, the importance of the counter-narrative has been brought more sharply into focus again. It is important to my husband, Simon Bennett (Ngāti Whakaue, Ngāti Waewae, Patu Harakeke) and I, that our children question deficit labelling and the narratives shaping these labels, as they grow up in New Zealand as Samoan-Māori-Kiwi kids. I am always encouraged by how children view the world. They view it mostly with hope and expectation. By prioritising the voices of Samoan children, this research seeks to capture this hope and expectation, and in doing so, to encourage a counter-view of the Samoan diaspora.

CHAPTER 1
The introduction to this research

Le tofa mamao ma le fa'autautaga
The wisdom to visualise the future and the ability to take us there
- Samoan saying

1.1 Introduction

Child wellbeing is the subject of a considerable body of research and policy making globally and in New Zealand today. As is well reported, the wellbeing of children is critical to the quality of life for children, their families, and their communities. Child wellbeing is also critical for a country's social and economic development, and political stability. The significance of child wellbeing is reflected in international consensus. Through the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child* ([UNCRC], UNGA, 1989), 195 countries, including New Zealand, have agreed that every child has the right to wellbeing. This has been reinforced at the *World Summit for Children* (UNGA, 1990) and more recently in the *Sustainable Development Goals* ([SDGs], UNGA, 2015) where safe, healthy, and well-educated children were viewed as critical to achieving sustainable development. In New Zealand, there has been increasing attention on child wellbeing in recent years, amid growing rates of child poverty as well as the Government's broader focus on wellbeing.

Despite the substantial amount of research and policy on child wellbeing, a review of the literature indicates that defining the term 'child wellbeing' has proven to be elusive (Ben-Arieh, 2010; Diener & Schwarz, 1999; Dodge, Daly, Huyton, & Sanders, 2012; Lee, 2009; McAuley, Morgan, & Rose, 2010; Pollard & Lee, 2003; Thomas, 2009). Although the way in which the term is commonly used implies a shared or agreed to meaning, this is not the case (Amerijckx & Humblet, 2013; Ben-Arieh, 2005; 2010; Ben-Arieh, Ferran, Frønes, & Korbin, 2014; Cronin de Chavez, Backett-Milburn, Parry, & Platt, 2005; Ereaut & Whiting, 2008; Lee, 2003; McAuley, et al., 2010; Pollard & Lee, 2003; Statham & Chase, 2010). Simply put, the term is used differently across disciplines, and across social and cultural contexts. Further, little of the extant literature recognises the influence of 'other' worldviews, cultural beliefs, values, and ways of knowing in conceptualising what child wellbeing is and how it is achieved. Instead, there is almost a 'one size fits all' generic approach in child wellbeing discussions and practice. Finally, the voices of children are largely missing in the child wellbeing debates, despite the fact that children are able to offer authoritative knowledge of their world and their experiences. This knowledge should be taken into account in policies and programme planning to support children and their wellbeing.

My interest in this area developed while I was working with World Vision Vanuatu, where we partnered with children, families, and communities to strengthen child wellbeing. Success of this work was dependant on asking people in the community about their priority needs and developing programmes that were contextually relevant; aligning our programming to national-level development goals and processes; investing in early childhood development; and taking a multisectoral approach to support the wellbeing of children and their families. My experience with World Vision Vanuatu reinforced that the best way to start is by 'asking

those that know'. If research, policy, and programming is to be relevant and meaningful, it has to reflect the needs of people in the target community, and be framed by their knowledge. When I returned to New Zealand in 2015, the Government's focus was on child poverty, vulnerable children, and children who were marginalised. More often than not, discussions on child poverty would focus on the over-representation of Pasifika and Māori children. There was little discussion about child wellbeing, and even less about child wellbeing from the standpoint of children. Further, this discussion took little account of cultural diversity and 'other' ways of knowing. These experiences highlighted very compellingly to me the need to explore how children, from their standpoint, conceptualise their wellbeing.

So this is the starting premise of my research: asking those that know. For this research on child wellbeing, those that know are the children themselves. Children have the right to be involved in decision-making on issues that influence their lives. Further, inclusion of children's knowledge adds to the 'basket of knowledge' by which transformational solutions to strengthen their wellbeing can be achieved. Their voices should be the foundation of research, policy, and programming to support child wellbeing. Related to this is my interest in finding out the 'other' view. How do peoples, outside of the mainstream, conceptualise child wellbeing? As noted earlier, although our understanding of child wellbeing is influenced by 'where we stand' culturally and socially, little of the extant literature recognises the influence of 'other' worldviews, cultural beliefs and values, and ways of knowing.

This chapter provides the background to my research. The first part provides the research gap that emerged from the review of the literature of Pasifika, children and their childhoods, and wellbeing (Section 1.3), which my research aims to address (Section 1.3). It then details the significance of this research (Section 1.4) before highlighting some of the risks (Section 1.5). The last part of this chapter sets out the structure of this thesis (Section 1.6).

1.2 The research gap

While there are exceptions, the dominant narrative portrays Pasifika children and their families as hard-to-reach, vulnerable, and disengaged (Loto, Hodgetts, Chamberlain, Nikora, Karapu, et al., 2006; Neilson, 2015). This deficit view does not fit the way Pasifika view themselves nor the aspirations they hold for their children, families, and communities (see Appendix A). As eloquently stated by noted Samoan paediatrician Dr Teuila Percival:

> Nothing matters more to Pacific people than the health, well-being and future success of our children. Our community's future is inextricably linked to their health and success (NZCYES, 2008, p.24).

There is a need to know and understand how Pasifika people conceptualise child wellbeing, and how they support the wellbeing of their children. Pasifika make up 13 percent of all children under the age of 18 years in New Zealand and 49 percent of the Pasifika population is under 18 years old (OCC, 2016; Statistics NZ, 2014b).[2] Further, the Pasifika population is projected to grow to 10 percent of New Zealand's population by 2026 (MPP, 2016).

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[2] This is based on information from the 2013 Census. Information from the 2018 Census was not available in time to be included in this thesis.

Ferguson, Gorinski, Wendt Samu, and Mara (2008) predict that by 2051, one in every five school children in New Zealand will be of Pasifika ethnicity. From a practical and best practice point of view, it makes good sense to include the Pasifika voice in child wellbeing research, policy, and programming.

A review of the literature on Pasifika, children and their childhoods, and wellbeing has highlighted a gap between these three areas. There is literature on Pasifika and children, literature on Pasifika and wellbeing, as well as literature on children and wellbeing. There is currently no literature in New Zealand that connects these three areas together. My research seeks to bridge the knowledge gap that exists between in the areas of Pasifika, children, and wellbeing. This knowledge - connecting Pasifika, children, and wellbeing - will be gained through the use of research models that draw on a Pacific worldview. The findings will add rich knowledge and understanding to national and global debates on child wellbeing, and generate robust policy and programme making. In the absence of such research, the Pasifika experience of child wellbeing will continue to be told by others.

A second and closely related point is the lack of theoretical debate in child wellbeing research (Amerijckx & Humblet, 2014). While a multidisciplinary approach is recognised in the literature as most useful, most of the child wellbeing literature focuses on one discipline or a dimension of the concept (Ben-Arieh, et al., 2014; Camfield, Streuli, & Woodhead, 2010; Cronin de Chavez, et al., 2005; Pollard & Lee, 2001, 2003; Poulton, Gluckman, Potter, McNaughton, & Lambie, 2018). Poulton, et al. (2018) note that a downstream result of viewing child wellbeing sectorally in this way is that its use in policy and service provision is likely to be through sectoral lens, even where a multisectoral response would most likely offer a better account of the realities of children's experiences. Again, the holistic approach of Pacific research models – which see a relationship between physical, economic, socio-cultural, and spiritual factors – challenges a 'one sector' picture.

To summarise, my research addresses these three gaps found in the child wellbeing literature, which are that:

1. Much of the child wellbeing literature focuses on children in Western contexts, which may not reflect the perspective of 'others' such as Pasifika peoples.

2. Children have largely been silenced in research about them, with very little of the literature on child wellbeing features children's views and perspectives.

3. Most of the literature on child wellbeing is from a single discipline (e.g. education or health) and focuses on one dimension of the concept. This research will apply a multidisciplinary approach so recognising a relationship between factors impacting child wellbeing.

As it is well established in the literature, there is no one 'Pasifika' voice. Pasifika is a collective term used to refer to people who have migrated from the Pacific - a region comprising 22 countries and territories - or who identify as Pasifika through descent. While there are some similarities amongst the ethnic groups covered by this collective term, each has its own set of cultural beliefs, values, traditions, language, and social structure (Airini, Anae, Mila-Schaaf, Coxon, Mara, & Sanga, 2010; Anae, Coxon, Mara, Wendt-Samu, & Finau, 2001; HRC, 2005; 2015; MPIA, 1998; MPP, 2017). Crocombe (1976) viewed the use

of collective terms - such as Pasifika, Pacific Islanders, Pasificans, Pasifiki, PIs, Pacific Nation Peoples, Pacific Peoples – as identifying symbols for Pacific unity. More recent views, however, are that this promotes the myth of a homogenous migrant community (Coxon, Foliaki, & Mara, 1994), and that it masks the uniqueness of each Pacific Island country in a way that renders specific Pacific groups invisible (Faletolu, 2010; Foliaki, 1994).

Fleras and Spoonley (1999) have proposed that new forms of Pacific identity are emerging in New Zealand, relating to demographic and other factors such as length of time in New Zealand, education and employment opportunities, for example. They argue:

> Whatever else they are – whether Samoan, Tongan, Cook Islander, Niuean, Tokelauan, Fijian – they are also a product of their New Zealand location… New ethnicities are developing in terms of an evolving ethnic identity that derives from being Samoan, Tongans, Cook Island Māori, Niuean or Tokelauan in New Zealand (Fleras & Spoonley, 1999, p. 209).

This statement captures the changing dynamics of New Zealand's Pasifika population: 62.3 percent are New Zealand-born and there is increasing cultural diversity through intermarriage (Statistics NZ, 2014a, 2014b). At the same time, culture is not static but responds to changing contexts (HRC, 2014; Tui Atua, 2005b). It is often said that Pasifika and other migrant and diasporic families are constantly moving between two worlds – the traditional Pacific and the modern New Zealand – and across spectrums of segregation, accommodation, and integration with the dominant New Zealand culture (Berry, 2006). The potential for cultural shift is particularly true for children.

In addition to the recognition of the diversity that exists within Pasifika, there is growing recognition of the importance of ethnic specific research. Anae (2010) questions the value of most Pasifika research because it has:

> … 'glossed over' and ignored the cultural complexities of not only the multi-ethnic nature of Pacific communities but also the intra-ethnic nuances of the diverse groupings and identifies of Pacific peoples in New Zealand (Anae, 2010, p. 1).

Given the tremendous diversity of New Zealand's Pasifika population today and in line with the call for ethnic-specific research, this exploratory study will focus on a Samoan case study, grounded within a Samoan worldview. While this ethnic-specific approach may not allow for generalisations to be made for a wider Pasifika application, it will "yield more depth and enable intra-ethnic and inter-generational nuances (Anae, et al., 2001, p. 9).

At the 2013 census, the Samoan diaspora in New Zealand comprised 144,138 people (Statistics NZ, 2014a). Of this, 65.5 percent (93,477 people) were born in New Zealand, which means for the majority of the Samoan diaspora it is no longer a 'migrant story' but one in which New Zealand is home. Secondly, the Samoan diaspora is young with 36.5 percent aged 15 years or under (Statistics NZ, 2014a). Thirdly, the Samoan diaspora is culturally diverse with 38 percent said that Samoan was not their only ethnicity (Statistics NZ, 2014a).

1.3 The research questions and approach

My research aim is to fill the conceptual gap in the literature on Pasifika (Samoa diaspora), children and their childhoods, and wellbeing by exploring the ways in which Samoan children and their parents conceptualise child wellbeing. My research seeks to answer the following questions:

1   How do Samoan children and their parents conceptualise child wellbeing?

2   How are Samoan parents supporting the wellbeing of their children?

My research approach for this exploratory study is qualitative and, as stated, through the lens of a Pasifika worldview. This is detailed more fully in Chapter 5, but to briefly summarise here: the Pasifika worldview is holistic and gives prominence to maintaining a harmonious relationship between spiritual, social and natural elements. The Pasifika worldview is communal and family based, and knowledge is constructed, critiqued, validated, and owned through a process of *talanoa* (Vaioleti, 2006). Knowledge construction and process sharing are underpinned by a valuing of the wisdom of the collective and the importance of communally agreed-to decision-making systems and processes (Anae, et al., 2001; Fairbairn-Dunlop, Nanai, & Ahio, 2014; Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2002; Helu-Thaman, 2003; Smith, 1999; Taufe'ulungaki, 2000).

To achieve this holistic picture of child wellbeing, my research process is interdisciplinary and takes a multisectoral approach as captured in research models such as the *Fonofale* (Pulotu-Endermann, 1995). Therefore, while it is couched within the discipline of Pacific Studies, it also crosses into other disciplines that influence child wellbeing such as education, health, child development, culture and identity, human rights, development studies, philosophy, psychology, migration, and sociology. As argued by Hviding (2003):

> … in our search for holistic and inclusive understandings... [research] must have an interdisciplinary scope both to allow for the unexpected and to acknowledge that an interdisciplinary view most closely approximates the worldviews of Pacific peoples. We ought to take interdisciplinary approaches to studying the human lifeworlds… because those lifeworlds are in themselves "interdisciplinary" (Hviding, 2003, p. 60).

While my primary focus is children's aspirations and experiences of wellbeing, these cannot be viewed in isolation. Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Efi (cited in Tamasese, Waldergrave, & Bush, 2005) argues that in the Samoan culture, there are three perspectives to any phenomenon: the perspective at the top of the mountain, the perspective at the top of the tree, and the perspective from the canoe that is close to the fish. Building on this, Faleolo (2009) argues the need for a fourth perspective in his *Talanoa ile i'a*[3] research approach, which is the perspective of the fish themselves.

Against the frame of the *Talanoa ile i'a*, in my research the Samoan children represent the perspective of the fish, separated and distinct from their parents as shown in Figure 1. Their parents are the people in the canoe. The voices of the Samoan children and their parents

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[3] *Talanoa ile i'a* is translated literally as 'talking to the fish'.

will be considered in light of the global (the perspective from the top of the mountain) and the New Zealand (the perspective from the top of the tree) literature.

Figure 1: Talanoa ile i'a

My research will partner with Samoan families living in Wellington. It will explore use of *talanoa* with 10 Samoan children (8-years old) and with their parents. The *talanoa* with the Samoan children will be guided by the use of photos that they have taken about what makes them feel 'happy, safe, and loved'. As outlined in Table 1, the Samoan children and their parents are the source of my research's primary data. The perspectives from the top of the tree and the top of the mountain form the secondary data presented in the literature review.

Table 1: Applying Talanoa ile i'a in this research

The four perspectives of the *Talanoa ile i'a*	Applying *Talanoa ile i'a* in this research	Data source
O le faautaga o le i'a - the perspective of the fish	8 year-old Samoan children	Primary data collection (photovoice and *talanoaga*)
O le faautaga o le pii ama - the perspective of the person in the canoe	Parents	Primary data collection (*talanoaga*)
O le faautaga i tumutumu o le la'au - the perspective from the top of the tree	New Zealand context	Secondary data collection (review of the literature)
O le faautaga i tumutumu o le mauga: - the perspective from the top of the mountain:	Global context	Secondary data collection (review of the literature)

1.4 The significance of this research

Drawing on the Samoan saying at the beginning of this chapter, the wisdom to visualise the future for our children begins with knowing and understanding how children conceptualise their wellbeing. This research will add to the community, national, and global body of knowledge on child wellbeing in a number of ways. This will be the first New Zealand study of the wellbeing of Pasifika children – and Samoan children as part of the Pasifika collective - that gives priority to the voices of children. In doing so, this research will also challenge the assumption that child wellbeing is a universal construct by exploring whether and how perceptions of child wellbeing are influenced by cultural ideals, values, and behaviours. In sum, this research explores the 'other' voice of knowing and being, which has been missing from child wellbeing research and subsequently from policy and programme decision making. Importantly, the interdisciplinary approach chosen for this exploratory study fits the holistic Pasifika worldview of what is important in life and how this is to be achieved. This ethnic-specific study will capture the voices of Samoan children and their parents and does not purport to represent the diversity of New Zealand's Pasifika population. However, it will set a model, which can be adapted by other Pasifika and minority groups as appropriate. That Pasifika make up over seven percent of the total New Zealand population, and 13 percent of all children in New Zealand under 18 years old (OCC, 2016; Statistics NZ, 2014b), adds urgency to capturing the Pasifika voice in this study.

Building knowledge and expanding understanding of how children and parents in the Samoan diaspora conceptualise child wellbeing is important to the lives of Samoan children now, but also for their future wellbeing. The knowledge generated in this research will be an important contribution to policy and service delivery at the national level, ensuring that their design and implementation is based on research that reflects the experiences of 'those that know'. An example of this is the *Child Wellbeing Strategy* currently being developed (DPMC, 2018b). The findings from this New Zealand research could also contribute to the global knowledge base of the conceptualisation, experience, and aspirations for the wellbeing of their children of other migrant, minority, and diasporic peoples.

For the Samoan diaspora, it is hoped that the knowledge generated in this research will further understanding about the wellbeing of their children. The significance of this study to the participating children includes the opportunity to share their views and to have their voices heard and valued. Children's inclusion in this discussion is a powerful benefit in itself and will challenge the dominant *fa'asamoa* (and Pasifika) narrative that children should be seen and not heard. The study will add another strength-based voice to the dominant narrative about the aspirations and experiences of Samoan diaspora families.

1.5 The risks

In designing and carrying out this research, two potential risks emerge. These are:

1   As a Samoan parent of young children and living in Wellington, it is likely that while my experiences may be similar to those shared by parents and children, there will also be differences. While my experiences may at times serve as a touchstone, I will

constantly keep in mind that the participants own, and are the experts of, their life experiences and their hopes for the future.

2   This research is interdisciplinary and, as noted, seeks to integrate knowledge from a number of disciplines that influence children and their wellbeing. The prioritisation and synthesis of this wide body of discipline-specific knowledge and terminologies presents a challenge. Where there is a lack of a 'common language', I will use terminology through a social sciences lens, which is the baseline for this research and the approach I am most familiar with.

1.6 The thesis outline

This thesis has ten chapters and the way in which these chapters come together is shown in Figure 2. Chapter 1 outlined the research gap that exists in the literature on Pasifika (Samoan diaspora), children and childhoods, as well as the questions and approach guiding this research.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of how children, their childhoods, and wellbeing is conceptualised in the literature. It details four perspectives that have been particularly influential in shaping the discourse on children and childhoods, which are the developmental, the investment, the socio-cultural, and the rights-based perspectives. From this review of the literature, the key research gaps are the paucity of literature from the child's view, the 'other' view, and the holistic view. In recognition that the wellbeing of children is influenced by their surrounding contexts, Chapter 3 looks at the influence that public policy in New Zealand has had on children and their families. This takes a 25-year view, beginning in 1993 when New Zealand ratified the UNCRC.   Chapter 4 focuses on the Samoan diaspora in New Zealand. It contextualises the shifting dynamics of the Samoan diaspora by providing an overview of the *malaga* (journeys) to New Zealand through to contemporary times, including the ways in which they are carving out their identity in New Zealand.

Chapter 5 sets out the research paradigm and approach: the ontology, epistemology, research methodology, and methods, each of which are grounded within a Samoan worldview. The research findings are presented in Chapters 6 and 7. Chapter 6 presents the themes that emerged in the *talanoa* with children and in Chapter 7 the voices of the parents are presented. Chapter 8 and Chapter 9 are the discussion chapters. Chapter 8 sets the main findings from the children's *talanoa* within the extant literature and Chapter 9 does the same for the parents.

Chapter 10 presents the research conclusions and recommendations for further study. This chapter draws on and weaves together findings gained from the *talanoa* with the children and with their parents.

Figure 2: Thesis map
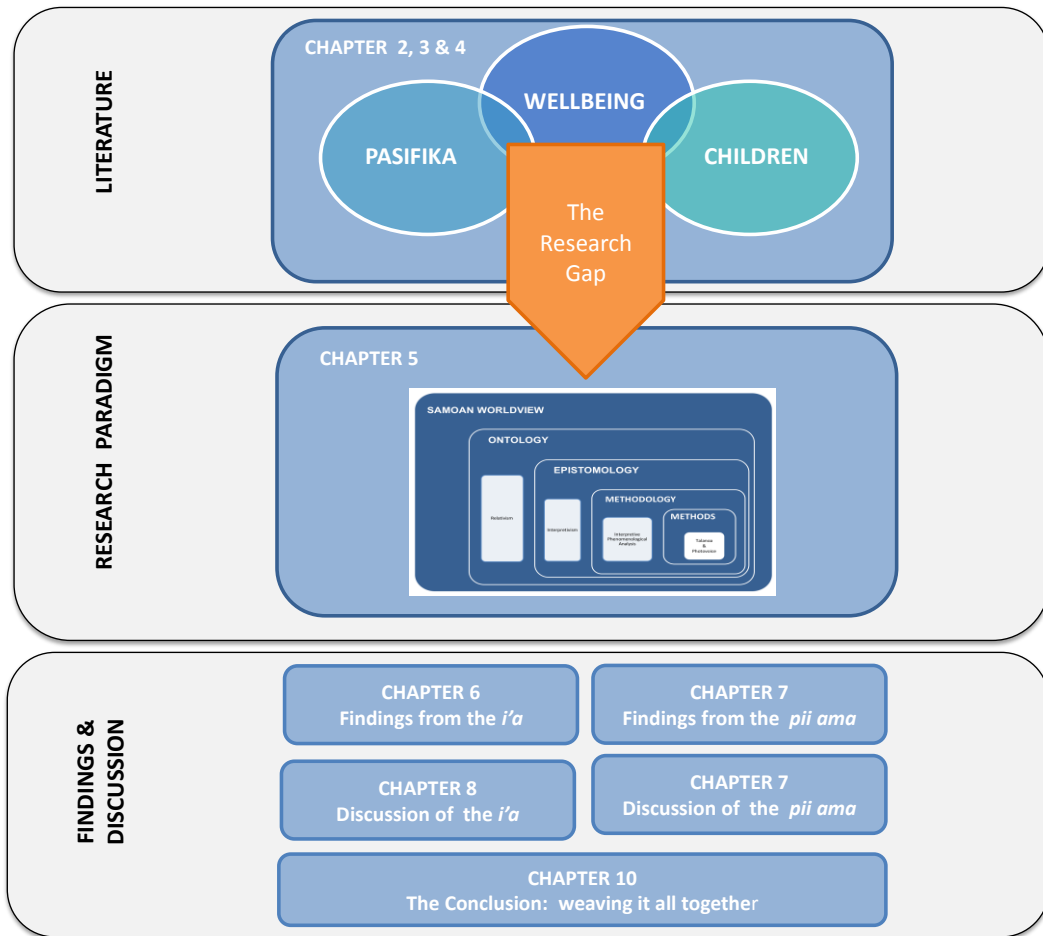
Source: Dunlop-Bennett

CHAPTER 2
Wellbeing and children: a review of the literature

You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes.
You can steer yourself any direction you choose.
You're on your own. And you know what you know.
And YOU are the one who'll decide where to go....
Dr Seuss – Oh! The Places You'll Go!

2.1   Introduction

It is important at the outset of every research to define concepts. With this research on child wellbeing, it is helpful to start with a definition of what this is. Having defined the concept, to examine its use in the global and national literature. As this chapter will show, the challenge for this research starts at the outset: defining child wellbeing. In their review of the wellbeing literature, Ereaut and Whiting (2008, p.5) argue that, "…different meanings are being projected by different agents and what is apparently meant by the use of the term depends on where you stand. There are few fixed points or commonalities beyond 'it's a good thing' ". This is also true of the considerable academic and policy literature on child wellbeing. While the way in which 'wellbeing' is used in the literature suggests there is a shared understanding, the concept remains intangible.

In examining the literature, this chapter shows how the term child wellbeing is used across multiple disciplines with different theoretical perspectives; across diverse social structures, which are prone to change; and across a diversity of cultural contexts. Reaching a shared understanding of child wellbeing is challenged by the many ways it can be conceptualised depending on 'where you stand' culturally, socially, and theoretically. To position child wellbeing, the first part of this chapter highlights the major influences on children, their childhood, and their wellbeing (Section 2.2). Having placed children within this broader context, I then highlight how child wellbeing is defined in academic and policy literature (Section 2.3).

In doing this, four questions emerge from the literature that have become the gaps that this research intends to contribute towards. These are the child's view, the 'other' view, a holistic multisectoral view, and defining the concept of child wellbeing. Pulling together these key ideas, the final part of this chapter highlights how the literature review has shaped the direction and scope of this research (Section 2.4). As noted in Chapter 1, this research is guided by *Talanoa ile i'a* (Faleolo, 2009), which recognises that there are multiple perspectives to any phenomenon, and that all of these perspectives are needed to form a complete picture. This chapter provides the perspective at the top of the mountain (the global literature) and the perspective from the tree (the New Zealand literature).

2.2   The discourse on wellbeing

The philosophical theories underpinning wellbeing date back to ancient Greece, and it is only since the late-20th century that wellbeing has been applied more specifically to children. The

first part of this section looks at the concept of wellbeing in the literature to help position child wellbeing, which is the focus of this chapter.

Wellbeing and the good life

Previous reviews of the wellbeing literature have found that wellbeing is used in different ways; not only across disciplines but also within disciplines (Brey, 2012; Cronin de Chavez, Backett-Milburn, Parry, & Platt, 2005; Ereaut & Whiting, 2008). The literature on wellbeing is vast and cannot be canvassed in its entirety in this chapter. Instead, this overview draws on the work of Aristotle which has influenced much of the contemporary thinking on wellbeing, happiness, the good life, personal flourishing, and what individuals believe constitutes having a quality of life (Camfield, et al., 2010; Kahneman, 1999).

Aristotle argued that the ultimate purpose of human existence was *eudaimonia,* which translates loosely to wellbeing, happiness, the good life, or the flourishing life. *Eudaimonia* was achieved by being of good moral character; leading a virtuous life (including virtues of courage, generosity, justice, friendship, and citizenship); and fulfilling or realising one's *daimon* or true nature through the actualisation of one's potential. Aristotle viewed wealth and pleasure as the means by which to achieve *eudaimonia*. In *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle (2000/ n.d.) wrote:

> ...the function of man is to live a certain kind of life, and this activity implies a rational principle, and the function of a good man is the good and noble performance of these, and if any action is well performed it is performed in accord with the appropriate excellence: if this is the case, then happiness turns out to be an activity of the soul in accordance with virtue (Aristotle, 2000/ n.d., p.13).

Not all individuals could achieve *eudaimonia* though, as Aristotle's ideas only extended to the educated men in society, excluding women, children, and slaves due to their status (Okin, 1979). That said, Aristotle's ideas have provided the philosophical underpinnings for much of the contemporary thinking on wellbeing. In psychology for example, self-actualisation of one's nature, seen in Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of human needs as well as in Roger's (1970) actualising tendency are both influenced by Aristotle's *eudaimonic* approach to wellbeing. In her model of psychological wellbeing, Ryff (1989) proposes that a good life is achieved by the interplay of an individual feeling positive about their self; continually growing and developing as a person; working towards a purpose in life; establishing and maintaining positive relations with others; having the ability to manage complex environments; and feeling like they can make decisions. These ideas contain Aristotelian ideals, as does the work of Ryan and Deci (2000) who argue that wellbeing is about one fulfilling their true nature and actualising their virtuous potential. Aristotle's *eudaimonic* approach also underpins Seligman's (2002) definition of the 'good life', in which he conceptualises wellbeing as integrating: 1) the pleasant life, where an individual has positive feelings; 2) the engaged life, where an individual pursues involvement; and 3) the meaningful life, where an individual uses their strengths and talents to accomplish something larger than themselves.

Looking at how Aristotle's thinking has influenced thinking in economics, the progress of countries and the wellbeing of its people is largely measured through gross national product (GDP). Criticism of this narrow view - fuelled in part by Easterlin's (1974) paradox of

happiness, in which increased income does not lead to significant happier people; Sen's (1980) questioning of the 'human' aspect of development; and Waring's (1988; 2018) critique of the undercounting and invisibility of women's care work and the significance of this 'invisible' sector to a country's national accounts – has seen growing recognition of the need to include other aspects. As noted by Stigliz, Sen, and Fitoussi (2009) in their report identifying the limits of GDP as an indicator of economic performance and social progress, "The time is ripe for our measurement system to *shift emphasis from measuring economic production to measuring people's well-being"* (Stigliz, et al., 2009, p. 12).

Aristotelian underpinnings are also visible in the capability approach, initially developed by Sen (1980) and advanced by Nussbaum (1998), that it is of moral importance that people be given the freedom to achieve wellbeing. Sen (1980) framed this freedom to achieve wellbeing as people having the capabilities to lead the kind of lives they want to lead, to do what they want to do, and to be the person they want to be. This approach as well as that of Waring (1988) influenced the work of Dalziel and Saunders (2015) who have proposed five principles to guide wellbeing economics, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: *Principles of Wellbeing Economics*

Principle 1: The purpose of economic activity is to promote the wellbeing of persons.
Principle 2: The wellbeing of persons is related to their capabilities to lead the kinds of lives they value and have reason to value.
Principle 3: Economic policies should expand the substantive freedom of persons to lead the kinds of lives they value and have reason to value.
Principle 4: Wellbeing is created through persons making time-use choices they judge will contribute to their leading the kinds of lives they value.
Principle 5: Market production should enable persons to add value to the kinds of lives they value.

Source: Dalziel & Saunders (2015)

All of this work has added fuel to the global drive to redefine concepts of wellbeing, and shift thinking beyond measuring wellbeing in predominantly economic terms to include consideration of wider aspects of wellbeing. At the global level, this shift in thinking has given rise to a number of initiatives that view wellbeing through a broader lens. Examples of this include the UNDP's annual *Human Development Report*, which since 1990 has taken a people-centred approach to development; the European Commission's (2007) *Beyond GDP* initiative that is more inclusive of environmental and social aspects of progress; and the *United Nations Sustainable Development Goals* (2015), which brings together economic growth, social development and environmental protection. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is leading work that looks beyond the economic system to consider wellbeing. The OECD *Better Life Initiative* measures wellbeing and progress against the domains of material conditions, quality of life, and sustainability. The OECD Framework is shown here in Figure 3, because of the synergies between this initiative

and other models that are considered in this thesis, such as New Zealand's *Living Standards Framework*.

Figure 3: OECD framework for measuring wellbeing and progress
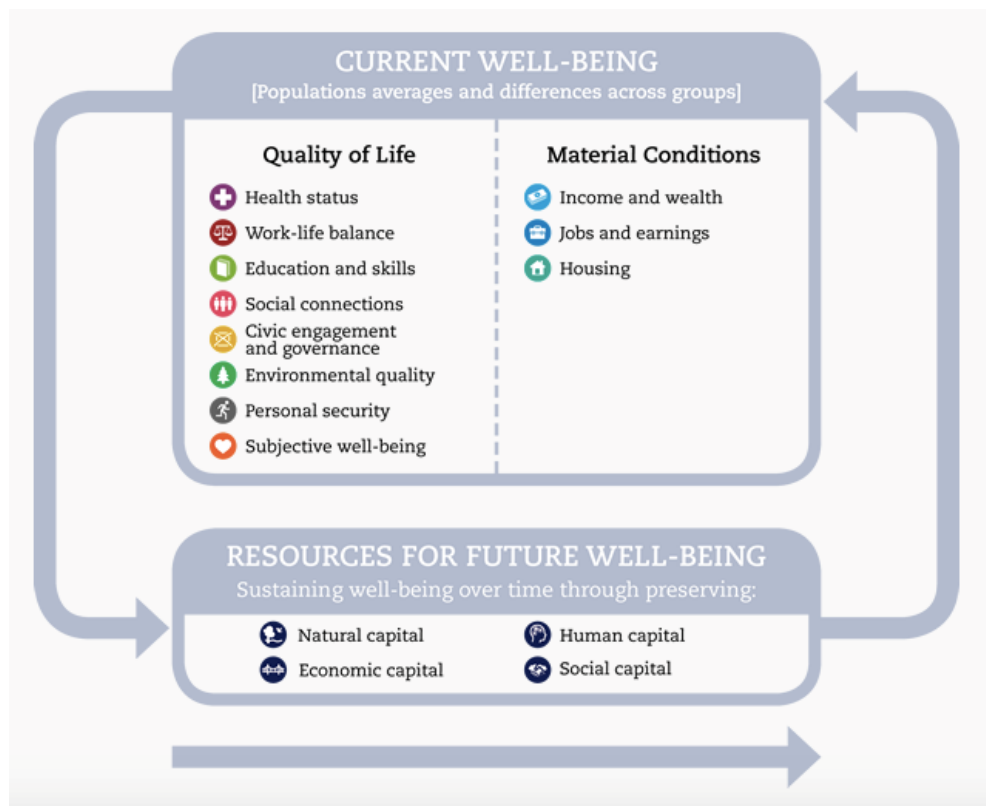
There are also efforts at the country level to broaden measures of progress beyond GDP such as Bhutan's *Gross National Happiness Index* and the United Kingdom's *National Wellbeing Programme*. In New Zealand, its Treasury has developed a *Living Standards Framework* to guide its first national wellbeing budget in 2019.

As noted earlier, the literature on wellbeing is vast and cannot be canvassed in its entirety in this chapter, so these examples from psychology and economics are intended to briefly illustrate two of the many disciplines in which the concept of wellbeing is used. These disciplines were selected because they have been influential in the shift, taking place globally and more recently nationally in New Zealand, to increased integration of wellbeing into public policy settings. Further, these examples show how the concept of wellbeing has evolved over time from ancient Greek philosophers to contemporary thinking, demonstrating that it is not static but a dynamic process.

It is important to note that these are examples from the West and are different from traditional Eastern thinking. Joshanloo (2014, p. 482) refers to these different worldviews as Eastern traditions, which "tend to regard the self as a small part of the collective and the cosmos". This tendency aligns with the general Pacific worldview introduced in Chapter 1. To give an example of the emphasis placed on collective wellbeing over individual wellbeing in the Pacific, Melanesia has developed alternate indictors of wellbeing, which reframe global models that measure progress. The pilot study in Vanuatu found that a critical shortcoming

of the Western-derived wellbeing indicators was their lack of relevance to local context. Locally developed indicators relating to access to land and natural resources, cultural participation, and community and family vitality are now used (Government of Vanuatu, 2012). These alternate indicators of wellbeing reflect the communal culture of Vanuatu, also seen in other parts of the Pacific, in which people primarily think of wellbeing in collective terms.

In New Zealand, there are Pasifika and Māori conceptualisations of wellbeing. For the Samoan diaspora, the *Fonofale* (Pulotu-Endermann, 1995) uses a *fale* (house) to illustrate wellbeing through the lens of the holistic Samoan worldview, as shown in Figure 4. Each structure of the *fale* represents a different factor that is important to wellbeing. The *pou* (posts) represent the spiritual, physical, mental, and other social aspects of an individual. Pulotu-Endermann (1995) argues that if any of the four *pou* become weak, the entire structure will collapse. The foundation of the *fale* represents the *aiga* (family) with the roof representing cultural values and beliefs. The inference is that the individual does not stand alone, but is grounded in the family, which is in turn sheltered by cultural values and beliefs (Fairbairn-Dunlop, Nanai, & Ahio, 2014). Integral to the *Fonofale* is that the individual, the family, and cultural values sit within and are influenced by the wider context. They are not static but change over time in relation to context and the environment. The *Uputaua* (Seiuli, 2012) also uses a *fale* as its metaphorical frame to illustrate wellbeing.

Figure 4: Fonofale

The importance of balance and the collective is also highlighted in the Pacific Conceptions of Wellbeing (Tamasese, Parsons, Sullivan, & Waldergrave, 2010) in which wellbeing is perceived as reciprocity and mutuality, being able to fulfil one's roles and responsibilities, having a place in the community, getting a good education, and living safely. This research with Pasifika reinforced key values underpinning the worldviews of peoples from the Pacific. Tamasese, et al. (2010) write:

Wellbeing is closely associated with balance and wholeness and generates social practices that support and assist the alignment of peoples, cultures, lands, seas, languages, families and nations. Cultural, linguistic, familial and national wellbeing motivates contributions and many projects for the common good. As such, wellbeing is centrally related to Pacific world views and values [...]. Wellbeing is a broad concept that encompasses a life that is lived well and is sustained by relationships, a life that is lived with many blessings, a life that is lived in abundance and in harmony, and a life that is lived in health. Wellbeing is a holistic concept that presupposes wellness in all the relationships in which the self is involved – it cannot exist in isolation (Tamasese, et al., 2010, p. 154).

Wellbeing as a holistic multi-dimensional concept underpins the *Te Vaka Atafaga* (Kupa, 2009), a Tokelauan conceptualisation of wellbeing; the *Fonua* (Tu'itahi, 2007), which reflects a Tongan worldview; and the *Te Whare Tapa Whā* (Durie, 1984), which illustrates *Te Ao Māori* or the Māori worldview. Central to these models is that wellbeing is understood through a communal or collective lens, and that wellbeing needs to be conceptualised in its totality. For Māori, wellbeing is defined as:

The mental, emotional, physical and spiritual state is shaped, maintained and contained in context of whānau relationships. Therefore, when an individual is not well, a whānau is not well. Conversely when a whānau is not well, individuals are adversely impacted. Whānau ora is a state of collective wellbeing that is integrated, indivisible, interconnected and whole (Lawson-Te Aho cited in Tibble & Ussher, 2012, p. 13).

Whānau ora refers to the wellbeing of the whole *whānau* or family. Through *Te Ao Māori* or the Māori worldview, wellbeing is understood through a communal or collective lens. Viewing wellbeing in this way underpins *Te Kupenga*, the Māori Social Survey approach (Tibble & Ussher, 2012).

The Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit ([Superu] 2017) argues the importance of considering the cultural dimension of wellbeing through its comparison of individualistic and collectivistic cultures, provided in Appendix C. The communitarian underpinnings of these Pasifika and Māori cultural conceptions of wellbeing demonstrate why considering culture and identity is important, and why research that contextualises wellbeing is needed.

2.3   The discourse on children and their childhoods

It is only since the late 20th century that wellbeing has been applied to children. Drawing on the literature from Western society, where much of it is located, Smith (2013) argues that prior to this, children were largely regarded as "…passive recipients of adults' teaching, protection, and care, as objects to be shaped and socialised, as the properties of their families, and as incomplete beings who are not yet humans, incomplete being extension" (Smith, 2013, p. 15). A number of factors came together in the late 20th century, which saw a reconstruction of 'childhood'. One of these factors is the work of Philippe Ariès, who in his book '*L'enfant et la vie familiale sous l'ancien régime*' (1960) - and its translation 'Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life' (1962) - distinguished children as a category of people, separate from infants and from adults. While Ariès' work gave visibility to childhood as a stage in Western society, others have argued that childhood as a distinct stage was

already recognised in other cultures, as illustrated by Wells (2015) in her charting of childhood in Africa and Asia. To use an example more closely situated to this research, Turner (1884) refers to childhood as a distinct stage in Samoa, in his book 'Samoa, A Hundred Years Ago and Long Before'. Ariès' argument that childhood is socially constructed, and so the meaning of childhood is different across different historical periods and in different cultures, however remains widely accepted in the literature.

Other factors that contributed to the reconstruction of childhood included increasing concern about children's welfare, growing recognition of children's rights, and a shift in social values in the West from hierarchical to more equal social relations between adults and children (Fattore, Mason, & Watson, 2016; Morrow, 2011; Prout & James, 1990; Sandin, 2014; Wells, 2015). Since then, child wellbeing has been the subject of considerable academic and policy literature, influenced largely by this reconstruction of 'childhood' as well as the centrality of children's wellbeing in the UNCRC (UN, 1993) and to sustainable development. It is well established that while the way in which child wellbeing is referred to in the literature suggests that it has a shared meaning, the concept remains intangible (Amerijckx & Humblet, 2014; Ben-Arieh, 2005; 2010; Ben-Arieh, Ferran, Frønes, & Korbin, 2014; McAuley, et al., 2010; Pollard & Lee, 2003; Statham & Chase, 2010). This is because our understanding of children and wellbeing is shaped by 'where we stand' theoretically, culturally, and socially. To help put this into context, this section highlights four perspectives that have particularly influential in shaping children, their childhoods, and their wellbeing. These are the developmental perspective, the investment perspective, the socio-cultural perspective, and the rights-based perspective (Figure 5). Setting out these four perspectives is important because of their influence on how children are perceived in the literature as well as broader policy settings.

Figure 5: Influences shaping the discourse on children and their wellbeing
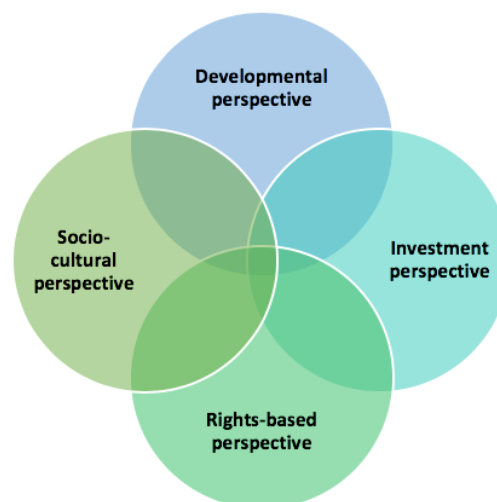
Source: Dunlop-Bennett

The developmental perspective

Underpinning the developmental perspective is the recognition that everyone has capabilities, which develop across an individual's life span, and that early childhood is where these capabilities develop the most. What happens during the early years of a child's life is

critically important to their development and wellbeing (Chan, 2014; Cohen, Ngozi, Onunaku, & Clothier, 2005; Heckman, 2008a; 2008b; Heckman & Masterov, 2006; Jabès & Nelson, 2014; Marmot, 2010) as it lays the foundation on which "virtually every aspect of human development - physical, intellectual and emotional – are laid down" (Marmot, 2010, p. 16). The capabilities that adults enjoy are conditional on their experiences as children (Sen, 1999). Significant influences on the developmental capability perspective have been Piaget's work on cognitive and moral development of children as they interact with their biological environment; Kolberg's work on how children develop a sense of morality; and Brunner's constructivist theory in which he argues that children construct new ideas based on their current and past knowledge (Woodhead, 2004). Also influential is the field of neuroscience, which has identified the early years of a child's life as being critical in terms of brain development (Jabès & Nelson, 2014; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000; Wachs, Georgieff, Cusick, & McEwen, 2014).

These ideas, that children go through a series of developmental stages from birth to adulthood, are critical in laying the foundations of their development and wellbeing, have shaped the discourse on children and refocussed attention on early childhood development (ECD). ECD is a multisectoral approach to support child development through the domains of cognitive development, linguistic development, socio-emotional development, and physical growth (Arnold, 2004; Naudeau, Kataoka, Valerio, Neuman, & Elder, 2011). The entry points to influence these four domains exist in a range of sectors such as child nutrition, maternal and child health, early childhood education, family support, and social protection, with service delivery targeted towards pregnant women, babies, young children, and parents/caregivers. As progress in one domain can act as a catalyst for development in other domains, a key feature of ECD is that policy and service delivery are integrated rather than silo-ised into sectors (Naudeau, et al., 2011; Shonkoff & Philips, 2012).

The investment perspective

The recognition that the early years lay the foundation for virtually every aspect of a child's cognitive, socio-emotional, and physical development is the value proposition of the argument underpinning the investment perspective. Influenced by the developmental capability perspective, child wellbeing has gained currency as one of the smartest financial investments a country can make (Neuman & Devercelli, 2013). The investment argument rests on a 'return on investment' in two ways:

1) *The future productivity of the child*: Investing in the wellbeing of children from an early age lays the foundations for better outcomes in education, health, and economic productivity (Heckman 2008b; Naudeau, et al., 2011).

2) *Potential savings in the social sector*: Investing in the wellbeing of children can mitigate the negative effects of poverty that lead to poor health, low educational attainment, economic dependency, gender inequality, and increased violence (Heckman, 2008).

The New Economics Foundation ([Nef], 2009) has calculated that every £1 contributed to the Action for Children's targeted services designed to catch problems early and prevent problems from reoccurring, returns between £7.60 and £9.20 in benefits to the United Kingdom. Conversely the economic cost of taking no action to improve social problems in

the United Kingdom would be close to £4 trillion over 20 years, calculated on the economic costs of addressing crime, mental ill health, family breakdown, drug abuse, and obesity (Nef, 2009). Similar calculations have been made in other regions including the United States of America (Brookings Institute, 2007; Washington Centre for Equitable Growth, 2015); Europe (European Commission, 2013); South Asia, Latin America, and sub-Saharan Africa (Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, 2016); and New Zealand (Every Child Counts, 2011). In New Zealand - taking into account increased health, welfare, remedial education, crime and justice expenditure, and lower productivity - the cost of poor child outcomes on the economy is believed to be around 3 percent or approximately NZ$6 billion (Every Child Counts, 2011, p. 6). The question underpinning these calculations is not whether countries can afford to invest in children but whether it can afford *not* to.

To gain a maximum 'return on investment', there is growing evidence that investment made in the early years of a child's life yields significantly higher returns when compared to equivalent investments made later in life. This is because investments in early childhood have a long time to pay themselves back. As Heckman argues, "Early disadvantage, if left untouched, leads to academic and social difficulties in later years. Advantages accumulate; so do disadvantages" (Heckman & Masterov, 2006, p. 8). While it is possible to remedy missed opportunities or disadvantages that a child experiences in the early years when they are older, Heckman and Masterov (2006) argue that to do so is cost prohibitive, as this requires higher levels of investment.

The view that children are central to social and political stability as well as economic development is grounded in the post-2015 global development agenda, 'Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' (UNGA, 2015). Globally adopted at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit in 2015, it brings together the three dimensions of sustainable development of economic growth, social development, and environmental protection. In doing so, this post-2015 global agenda affirms the outcomes of all major United Nations conferences and summits including the *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development* (1992), the *Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development* (1994), the *World Summit for Social Development* (1995), the *Beijing Platform for Action* (1995), the *United Nations Millennium Declaration* (2000), the *World Summit on Sustainable Development* (2002), and the *United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development* (2012). The post-2015 global development agenda has 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are:

> …integrated and indivisible, global in nature and universally applicable, taking into account different national realities, capabilities, and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities… Each Government will also decide how these aspirational and global targets should be incorporated into national planning processes, policies and strategies (UN, 2015, para 55).

From the outset of developing the SDGs, the Open Working Group (UN, 2011) regarded children's wellbeing as central to sustainable development, as shown in their introductory text. Safe, healthy, and well-educated children were seen as critical to achieving sustainable development, and to this end, the SDGs include specific targets on child protection, child nutrition, and early childhood education. Further, the Open Working Group (UN, 2011) argued that a holistic approach that supports child protection, health, and education, is

critical if children are to reach their potential as productive and engaged citizens. Building on the developmental capability perspective, the investment perspective has been influential in shaping the discourse on children by making the case for investing in the wellbeing of children.

The socio-cultural perspective

The socio-cultural perspective challenges the idea that there is a universal and homogenous understanding of what constitutes childhood and wellbeing. This perspective recognises that childhood is influenced by the broader social and cultural contexts in which it is being constructed (Manderson, 2005; Smith, 2016; Woodhead, 2004). That there are multiple ways in which childhood is constructed means that diversity exists not only between different cultures and societies, but also within different cultures and societies (Ben-Arieh, et al., 2014; Fattore, et al., 2016; Weisner, 2014; White, 2009). Manolom and Promphakping (2015) argue that research needs to take into account the social and cultural contexts of the child. In their research on child wellbeing in India, Saith and Wazair (2010) argued against taking a universal approach, an argument echoed by Graham (2011) who cautions against using frameworks that universalise the experience of children.

The socio-cultural perspective positions children as 'knowers', who are able to offer authoritative knowledge of their world (Ben-Arieh, 2001; Fattore, et al., 2016; Prout & James, 1997; Sixsmith, Gabhainn, Flemming, & O'Higgins, 2007). That children have a right to have their view considered in all matters affecting them aligns with the rights-based perspective. It also prioritises a 'well-being' perspective, that is the wellbeing of children now, over a 'well-becoming' perspective, arguing that children should not solely be viewed in terms of their future productivity as adults (Ben-Arieh, 2001; 2006; Ben-Arieh, et al., 2014; Fattore, et al., 2016; Frønes, 2007). Focussing on children as "potential, rather than actual, members of society" (Ben-Arieh, 2006, p. 5), fails to value childhood and places emphasis on identifying deficits and problem behaviours in children outside what is deemed to be 'normal' (Prout & James, 1990; Fattore, et al., 2016). Given the multiple pathways that exist to wellbeing as well as the diversity of children's experiences, the validity of age-based developmental markers and their universal relevance for positive adulthood has been called into question (Graham, 2011; Woodhead & Faulkner, 2000).

Influencing these ideas is the sociocultural theory, in which Vygotsky (1962) argues that children may interpret the same environment in different ways because their development is influenced by their parents/caregivers, their peers, and, more broadly, their culture. The ecological systems theory has also been influential, in which Bronfenbrenner (1979) argues that a child's growth and development is shaped by the environments or ecosystems surrounding them. These ecosystems have varying degrees of influence, with the microsystem having the most influence on a child and the outer chronosystem having the least. Realising that the voice of the child at the centre had not been included in his original theory, Bronfenbrenner revised this in 2005, as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Bronfenbrenner's revised ecological model
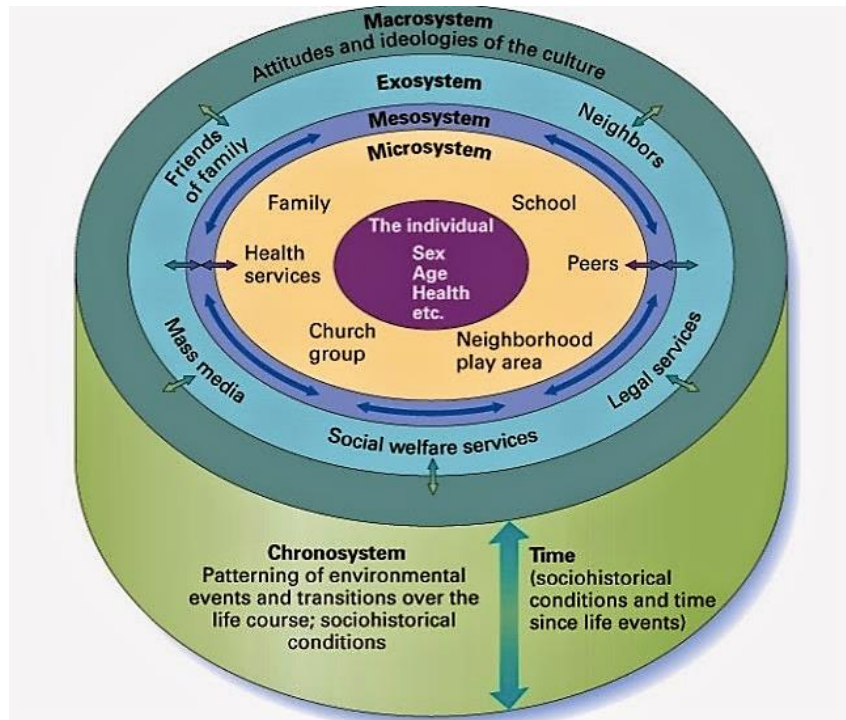
The rights-based perspective

The centrality of wellbeing in the lives of children is grounded in international consensus with 195 countries, including New Zealand, ratifying the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UNCRC). Two pivotal articles of the UNCRC relevant to child wellbeing are that every child has the right to develop to the "…maximum extent, including their physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development" (Article 29) and that the state parties shall "ensure the child such protection and care as is necessary for his or her well-being" (Article 3). The UNCRC affords every child the right to wellbeing (Ben-Arieh, 2006; Melton, 2005). Melton (2005) argues that:

> Not only is the Convention a nearly universally adopted expression of respect for children as persons, but it is also unparalleled in its conceptual breadth. No other human rights treaty directly touches on so many domains of life...The Convention on the Rights of the Child offers an unparalleled framework to guide child research (Melton, 2005, p. 648).

The UNCRC contains 41 substantive articles relating to the human rights of children. While all the rights covered in the 41 substantive articles need to be considered as a whole, there are four overarching rights, which are considered necessary for the fulfilment of all other rights. Known as the general principles, these overarching rights are that all of the rights afforded by the UNCRC must be without discrimination of any kind (Article 2); the best interests of the child must be a primary consideration in all actions concerning children (Article 3); every child has the right to life, survival, and development (Article 6); and that the child's view must be considered and taken into account in all matters affecting him or her (Article 12). The UNCRC affords every child, defined in Article 1 as every human being

under 18 years,[4] provision, protection, and participation rights (Alderson, 2000; Hammarberg, 2008; Lansdown, 1994; Stainton-Rogers, 2004). Appendix B details these three sets of rights.

The UNCRC is the most comprehensive articulation of human rights,[5] the most widely accepted convention,[6] the most rapidly adopted convention, and the only human rights convention to be entered into force within a year after its adoption, despite its criticisms (Ben-Arieh, et al., 2014; Doek, 2014; Lee, 2009; McGregor, Bell, & Wilson, 2015; Smith, 2016). Two criticisms of the UNCRC that have relevance to this research are: 1) the view that the UNCRC does not not go far enough to encompass the diversity of children and their childhoods, but rather it subsumes all children into one essentialist western-dominated vision (Bentley, Johnson, Wasser, Creed-Kanashiro, Shroff, et al., 2005; Freeman, 2000); and 2) the perceived contradictory provisions of the UNCRC in terms of balancing children's autonomy to express views and make decisions, the family's responsibility to nurture and bring up children, and the Government's responsibility to provide services to support children's wellbeing (Ben-Arieh, et al., 2014; Te One, 2008).

Despite these criticisms, the UNCRC has been influential in shaping the discourse of children and their wellbeing in several ways. Firstly, it affords every child the 'right' to wellbeing and sets out, in 41 substantive articles, how this can be achieved. In declaring child wellbeing to be a 'right' with formally agreed entitlements and standards, the UNCRC positions children's wellbeing more strongly than had if it been an 'interest', which may be arbitrary (Alderson, Hawthorn, & Killen, 2005; Smith, 2016). Secondly, through the inclusion of rights - relating to physical, mental, moral, emotional, cultural, social, and spiritual elements - the UNCRC reinforces the holistic nature of wellbeing. Thirdly, it ascribes certain roles and responsibilities to the Government as well as to the parents/guardians of children. Article 3 is particularly important, in which it states that Governments are to provide the necessary protection and care needed for the wellbeing of children. Lastly, the UNCRC has raised the visibility of children within international and national settings (Lee, 2009; Smith, 2016). Smith (2016) argues that in viewing children as human beings with rights, it becomes more difficult to ignore the place of children and their voices.

2.4   Applying wellbeing to children

Having considered the four perspectives that have influenced the discourse of children, their childhoods, and their wellbeing, this section looks at how the concept of child wellbeing is used in the literature, and based on this review, how the direction and scope of this research

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[4] Children are defined as "every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law application to the children, majority is attained earlier" (UNGA, 1989, p. 2).

[5] The Preamble makes reference to the 1924 *Geneva Declaration on the Rights of the Child*, the 1959 *Declaration on the Rights of the Child*, and the 1948 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UNHR), reinforcing the significant role that these declarations played in the development of the UNCRC. It also references the 1966 *International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR) and the 1966 *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (ICCPR) to signal that the UNCRC contains both civil and political rights as well as economic, social and cultural rights in the one document. In drawing together elements of the ICESCR and ICCPR, Doek argues is "an especially unique achievement given the failed attempt to draft, as a follow-up to the UDHR, one international covenant comprising both sets of human rights" (Doek, 2014, p 194).

[6] Every country has ratified the UNCRC except for the United States of America.

was shaped. By detailing the four perspectives, it is clear that they overlap in some aspects and diverge in others. This divergence helps to explain the differences in how child wellbeing is conceptualised and defined in the literature.

2.4.1 Conceptualising child wellbeing

Wellbeing is defined, conceptualised, and referred to in the literature in so many ways, that it has led to some questioning its value. In health, Seedhouse (1995, p. 62) argues, "…either the term 'well-being' should be given clear and substantial content, or it should be discarded by health promoters. The latter option is favoured". Dinham (2006, p. 183) writes "well-being lacks definition, both as a concept and in practice…there is little or no consensus about what it really means or looks like and therefore to produce and reproduce it". Fattore, et al., (2016, p. v) perhaps sum it up best when, at the end of listing the dimensions of child wellbeing they say, "…- in short, almost every possible theme can be related to well-being". Acknowledging that child wellbeing is used in many different ways, the purpose of this section is to look for areas in the literature where there is broad agreement about what child wellbeing is with the view to providing a working definition or frame for this research. From the literature, there is consensus around four very broad areas. Visible is the influence of one or more of the developmental, investment, socio-cultural, and rights-based perspectives.

2.4.1a) It's multi-dimensional

It is well established in the literature that child wellbeing is a multi-dimensional concept. What is less certain are the dimensions or components of child wellbeing. Yarcheski, Scoloveno, and Mahon (1994, p. 288) view these dimensions as "mental/psychological, physical and social dimensions", to which Lee (2009) adds a subjective aspect about how one feels about their quality of life. Fattore, et al. (2016, p. v) list these dimensions as "…material well-being, emotional well-being, families and well-being, upbringing and well-being, health and well-being and a myriad of subthemes like social capital in relation to well-being, risk factors and well-being and sickness and well-being". Andrews, Ben-Arieh, Carlson, Damon, et al. (2002) frame the multi-dimensional nature of child wellbeing, as the:

> …healthy and successful individual functioning (involving physiological, psychological and behavioural levels of organisation), positive social relationships (with family members, peers, adult caregivers, and community and societal institutions, for instance, school and faith and civic organisations), and a social ecology that provides safety (e.g., freedom from interpersonal violence, war and crime), human and civil rights, social justice and participation in civil society (Andrews, et al., 2002, p. 103).

Manolom and Promphakping (2015) view child wellbeing as multi-dimensional and, drawing on the work of Sen and the Wellbeing in Developing Countries Research Group (WeD), used an example from Laos to describe the following dimensions: 1) having, which is the objective dimension of wellbeing; 2) thinking, which is the subjective dimension; and 3) doing, which is what people actually do with what they have and the meanings they assign to material worlds.

2.4.1b) It's a dynamic process

Child wellbeing is viewed as a dynamic process in several ways. Firstly, it is dynamic in that the context in which it is located is continually being reshaped, and so because of this our ideas about childhood, children, and wellbeing are prone to change and redefinition over time (Manderson, 2005). As Ereaut and Whiting (2008) explain:

> There are no uncontested biological, spiritual, social, economic or any other kind of markers for wellbeing. The meaning of wellbeing is not fixed - it cannot be… What it means at any one time depends on the weight given at that time to different philosophical traditions, world views and systems of knowledge… its meaning will always be shifting (Ereaut & Whiting, 2008, p. 7).

Manning-Morton (2014) describes the dynamic nature of wellbeing as factors that,

> …interact, combine and accumulate to enable or preclude experiencing states of well-being. In this way factors that are internal/subjective may be enhanced or exacerbated by the social, economic, and policy factors and our interpretation and engagement with social factors that are influenced by our inner well-being (Manning-Morton, 2014, p.13).

The second way in which the concept is dynamic is that it changes to reflect the change in children's needs as they move through the developmental stages. Pollard and Davidson (2001) include this life-course perspective as well as recognition that measurement of wellbeing needs to take account of both objective and subjective measures. Pollard and Davidson (2001) define child wellbeing as:

> A state of successful performance throughout the life course integrating physical, cognitive, and social-emotional function that results in productive activities deemed significant by one's cultural community, fulfilling social relationships and the ability to transcend moderate psychosocial and environmental problems. Well-being also has a subjective dimension in the sense of satisfaction associated with fulfilling one's potential (Pollard & Davidson, 2001, p. 10).

The WeD (2008) describes the shifts in inter-generational thinking as a third way in which child wellbeing is dynamic.

2.4.1c) The wellbeing of children is shaped by the social and cultural context

The influence of the social and cultural context idea can be seen in Manolom and Promphakping's (2015) work in Laos, noted above. The WeD (Figure 7) conceptualisation has been influenced by their work with children in developing countries. The WeD (White, 2008) note the dynamic process of shifts in the broader context over time as well as changes as children move through the life-cycle. The WeD add another dynamic process and that is the relationships between the three dimensions of: 1) material wellbeing, which brings together human capital, natural capital, and financial capital; 2) relational wellbeing, which is the social capital; and 3) subjective wellbeing, which is the assessment that people make about their lives. These four capitals align to OECD's work (Figure 3).

Figure 7: Wellbeing as a process
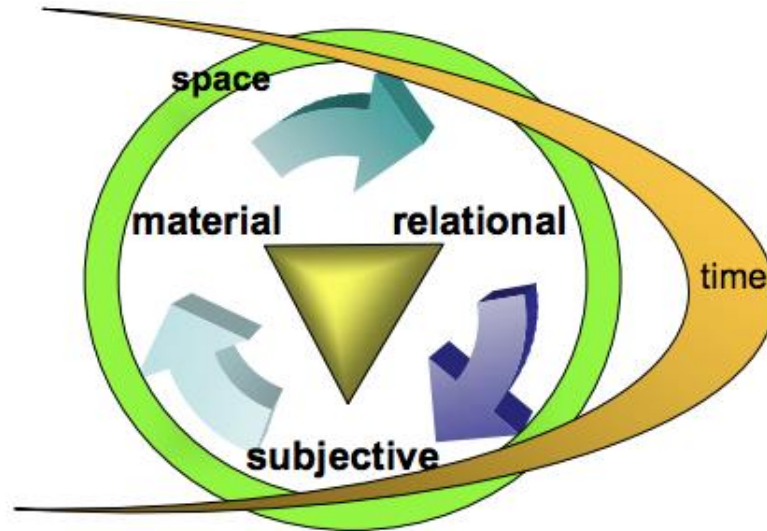
There is consensus in the literature that while some aspects of childhood may be universal, being a child is a different experience for individuals depending on their social and cultural context, as well as historical period (Ariès, 1962; Smith, 2013). This context shapes children's experiences as well as their perspectives, which is why individuals can interpret the same environment in different ways (Vygotsky, 1962).

2.4.1d) The wellbeing of children is influenced by multiple environments

Bronfenbrenner's (1979, 2005) ecological approach has influenced a number of models and definitions that reference a child's wellbeing, growth, and development being influenced by their surrounding environment. While the labelling of these concentric spheres of influence are adapted to fit the specific context in which it is being used, they generally include family in the immediate environment of the child, followed by community and more broadly country-level influences. For example, to meet its goal of "the sustained well-being of children within families and communities, especially the most vulnerable", World Vision (2011) view the wellbeing of children at the centre and works out to the economy at the macro-level (Figure 8).

Figure 8: The World Vision approach to child wellbeing
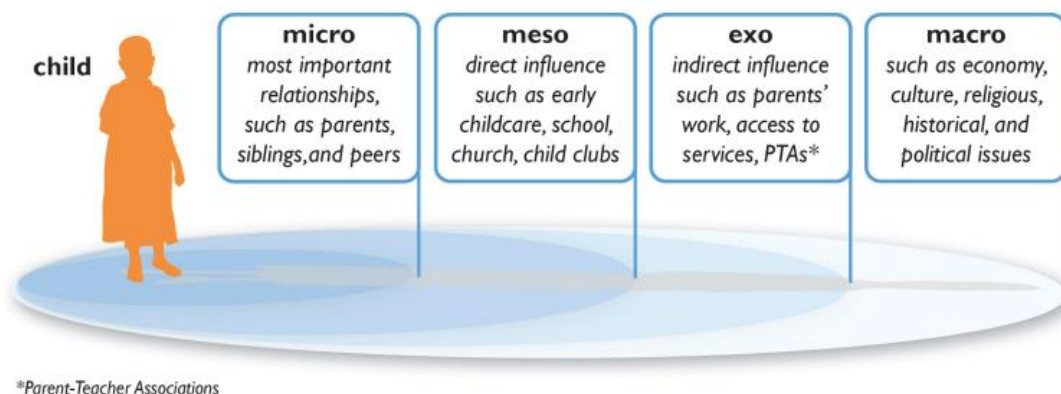
*Parent-Teacher Associations

A second example is the New Economics Foundation's ([Nef], 2006) ecological view of child wellbeing, which does not include the broader economy but includes other structural factors that affect children's lives. In their definition of wellbeing, the Nef (Acked, Marks, Cordon, & Thompson, 2008) say it:

> …comprises two main elements: feeling good and functioning well: Feelings of happiness, contentment, enjoying and engagement are characteristic of someone who has a positive experience of their life. Equally important for well-being is our functioning in their world. Experiencing positive relationships, having some control over one's life and having a sense of purpose are all important attributes of wellbeing (Acked, et al., 2008, p. 1).

The Nef (2006) conceptualise wellbeing as the interplay between children's external circumstances, their inner resources, their capabilities, and their interactions with the world around them. Relationships are a feature of their model (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Nef conceptualisation of child wellbeing
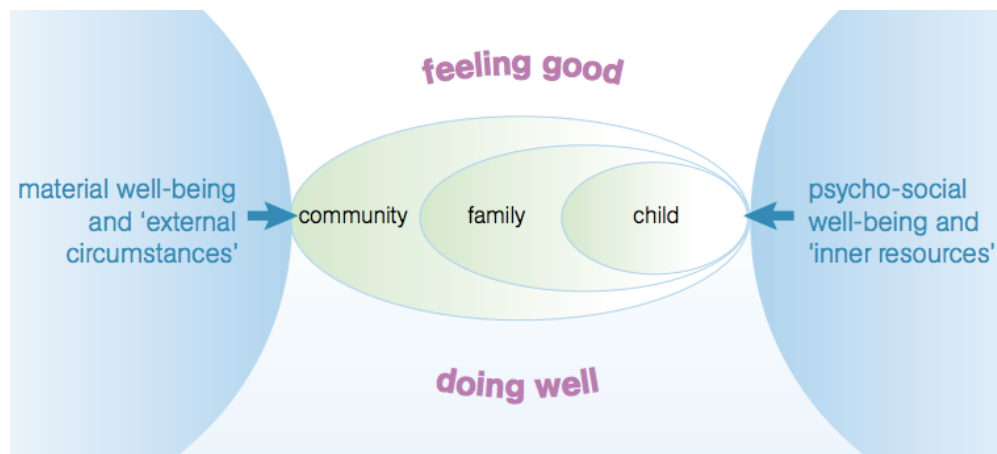
Source: Nef (2006)

A third example is the *Va'aifetu* (MSD, 2015), which are cultural guidelines to guide work with vulnerable[7] children and their families in Pasifika communities. In recognition of the ethnic-specific differences between the peoples that make up the pan-Pasifika term, the Ministry of Social Development developed separate guidelines for the Cook Islands, Fijian, Fijian-Indian, Niuean, Samoan, Tokelauan, Tongan, and Tuvaluan communities in New Zealand. For the Samoan diaspora, the *Tautua* model was developed which places the *fanau* (child) at the centre, surrounded by the *aiga* (family) and community, within a *tanoa* (ceremonial bowl). The *tanoa* depicts the collective unity of decision-making and building "ownership of and responsibility for solutions for children's interests" (MSD, 2015, p. 32). Each leg of the *tanoa* symbolises a cultural value important to the Samoan worldview such as love, respect and honour, identity and belonging, language, cultural and spiritual contemplation of success, mutually respectful, sacred relationships, and harmonious relationships. Implicit within this model is the Samoan worldview that the *aiga* is responsible for its children (Figure 10).

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[7] 'Vulnerable Children' was the language used by the National-led Government (2009-2017). See Chapter 3.

Underpinning the *Tautua* model is *tōfā mamao,* which is a long-term vision of wellbeing, security, and prosperity.

Figure 10: The Tautua model

The Office of the Children's Commission ([OCC], 2018) also takes an ecological view in its proposed definition of wellbeing, contained in its submission to the New Zealand Government's draft *Child Wellbeing Strategy*, by referring to family and society:

> Child well-being is where all children have the resources and support that is required for them to develop and thrive, are able to enjoy their rights, achieve their full potential and participate as equal members of New Zealand society. Child well-being is inseparable from family and whānau well-being (OCC, 2018, p. 19).

Visible in the OCC's definition are the influences of the developmental, investment, socio-cultural, and rights-based perspectives.

2.4.2 Key gaps emerging from the child wellbeing literature

In reviewing the literature, four key questions emerged that formed the research gaps. These gaps in the literature helped to shape the direction and scope of this research. The first relates to the child's view, with much of the knowledge about the wellbeing of children being from the standpoint of adults; the second gap in the paucity of literature from the 'other' view. Little is known about how 'other' people, those outside the majority population such as Pasifika peoples, conceptualise child wellbeing. Thirdly, despite the concept being used across a range of sectors and disciplines, most of the literature takes a sectoral or single discipline view of child wellbeing. The last gap relates to how the concept of child wellbeing is defined. Each of these four gaps are looked at in the next part of this section.

2.4.2a) Locating the voice of the child

Understanding child wellbeing begins with viewing children as 'knowers' who are able to offer authoritative knowledge of their world (Fattore, Mason, & Watson, 2007, 2009, 2016; Prout & James, 1997; Sixsmith, et al., 2007). While children can offer a unique perspective of their world, few publications about child wellbeing include the perspectives of children themselves (Ben Arieh, 2001; Ben Arieh, et al., 2014; Fattore, et al., 2016). Instead, most of the research about what is best for children has been constructed by adults, from their own perspective: a perspective that may not necessarily reflect the views of children (Ben-Arieh, 2001; Ben-Arieh, et al., 2014; Casas, 2011, Fattore, et al., 2016; Sixsmith, et al., 2007). While all adults were once children and have experienced childhood, it is likely that their experience will differ from that of their children because of shifts in the broader social and cultural context, as noted earlier (Manderson, 2005; Smith, 2016; Woodhead, 2004).

Research that has included the views of children has found notable differences in the way that children and adults conceptualise child wellbeing (Manning-Morton, 2014; Sixsmith, et al., 2007). Manning-Morton (2014) found that children and parents in the United Kingdom placed emphasis on different things when asked about the contributing factors to child wellbeing. The font and circle size in Figure 11 relate to the number of times each factor was mentioned by children and their parents. The different emphasis placed by children and their parents supports the view that if we really want to know about child wellbeing, we need to ask the children.

Figure 11: Talking about Young People's Well-Being

Adult-centric perspective

Child-centric perspective
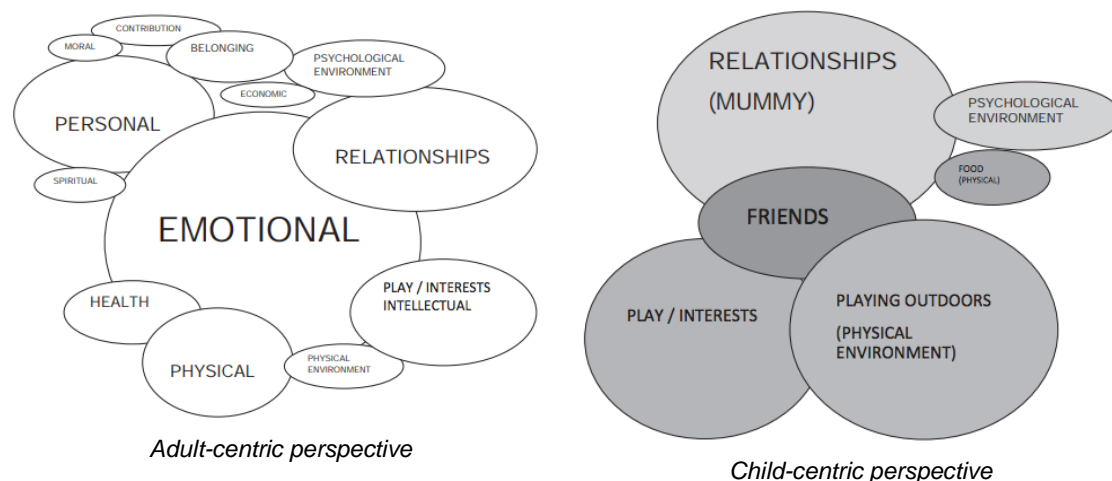
Source: Manning-Morton (2014)

In New Zealand, there is some academic research on child wellbeing that includes the voices of children. For example, Miliffe (2014) used the Developmental Assets Approach with 9- to 11-year-old children in the South Island to understand how they perceive their wellbeing.

The findings from research on child wellbeing that has been from the standpoint of children has shown that as 'knowers' of their world, children are best placed to offer knowledge about their wellbeing, and, that when given the opportunity, they are able to clearly articulate their views (Fattore, et al., 2009; Manning-Morton, 2014; Miliffe, 2014; Sixsmith, et al., 2007).

2.4.2b) Locating the 'other' perspective

Much of the research on child wellbeing has taken place in Western countries, reflecting Western cultures, values, and worldviews (Ben-Arieh, 2001; Ben-Arieh, et al., 2014; Ben-Arieh, 2007; Manolom & Promphakping, 2015; Saith & Wazair, 2010; WeD, 2009). From their review of the child wellbeing literature, Amerijckx and Humblet (2014, p. 411) argue that the "…negative, eudemonic, objective, material and individual approaches to child well-being predominate over its positive, hedonic, subjective, spiritual and collective dimensions". Given that children, their childhoods, and their wellbeing are shaped by social and cultural processes, and that these processes differ not only across societies but also within societies, reinforces the importance of research that takes a contextualised view.

There is no research on the wellbeing of Samoan children, or more broadly Pasifika children, living in New Zealand that is from their perspective. As noted earlier in this chapter in Section 2.2, there has been research on wellbeing from the standpoint of adults such as the *Fonofale* (Pulotu-Endermann, 1995), the *Uputaua* (Seiulu, 2013), and the *Pacific Conceptions of Wellbeing* (Tamasese, Parsons, Sullivan, & Waldergrave, 2010).

2.4.2c) A holistic multisectoral view of child wellbeing

Despite recognition that wellbeing is a multi-dimensional concept, much of the research has been narrowed down to one discipline or to a particular dimension of child wellbeing (Amerijckx & Humblet, 2014; Ben-Arieh & Frønes, 2007; Cronin de Chavez, et al., 2005, Dodge, et al., 2012; Poulton, Gluckman, Potter, McNaughton, & Lambie, 2018). Amerijckx and Humblet (2014) found that 78 percent of child wellbeing publications focused on its determinants. Poulton, et al. (2018) also note the narrow focus of much research on the determinants of wellbeing and the constraints that this places on developing a holistic multisectoral response to support wellbeing. Poulton, et al. (2018) write:

> Specifically, it lacks precision. This problem is exacerbated by a narrow focus on the determinants of well-being in the research literature. The majority of academic papers focus on only one of two determinants at a time […] Very few studies have been capable of operationalising the global concept *and* its multiple antecedents and constituents. Perhaps as a result, its use in policy has tended to emphasis selected aspects, within specific ministries, whereas a more holistic and multiagency response might prove more effective (Poulton, et al., 2018, p. 22-23).

The view of Poulton, et al. (2018) can be seen in the policy literature in New Zealand where child wellbeing is viewed predominantly through a sectoral lens such as health, education, or social services, which focusses on a particular aspect of child wellbeing. There is no holistic multisectoral view of child wellbeing, although the New Zealand Government is currently developing a *Child Wellbeing Strategy* that is positioned to change this.

2.4.2d) A definition or a description of its parts?

In their analysis of the child wellbeing literature, Amerijckx and Humblet (2014) found that only three percent of the publications were theoretical papers that discussed the concept itself. This could help to explain why, despite the extensive academic and policy interest in child wellbeing, it remains a poorly defined notion. Many of the definitions of child wellbeing

focus on describing its components, rather than what the concept is. Dodge, Daly, Huyton, and Sanders (2012, p. 222) argue that the current definitions found in the wellbeing literature do not "…distinguish between the 'description' of a construct and its 'definition' ". While it is useful to understand these components, child wellbeing is not a sum of these components (Amerijckx & Humblet, 2014; Axford, 2009; Ben-Arieh, et al., 2014). Axford (2009) argues that in order to improve children's wellbeing we need a better understanding of it.

As noted earlier, some countries are progressively shifting towards including wellbeing in public policy, which in turn has helped to sharpen focus on child wellbeing. Looking at some of the countries where there is a national-level child wellbeing strategy, the focus is on the dimensions or domains of child wellbeing. Examples of this include England's *Every Child Matters* (2013), Scotland's *Getting it Right for Every Child* (2012), and Wales' *Wellbeing Monitor* (2015). In New Zealand, the cabinet paper on the *Child Wellbeing Strategy* does not define child wellbeing but instead frames child wellbeing more broadly to "enable people to describe wellbeing in a way that fits with their culture, values, and priorities" (DPMC, 2018c, p. 8). The *Child Wellbeing Strategy*, currently in draft, takes a domains-focused approach, with wellbeing achieved by children and young people: 1) being loved, nurtured, and safe; 2) having what they need; 3) belonging, contributing, and valued; 4) being happy and healthy; and 5) learning and developing. The domains-focus can also be seen in the OECD's *Doing Better for Children*, which links to its broader work in wellbeing, mentioned earlier (Figure 3).

Figure 12: A definition of wellbeing

Source: Dodge, et al. (2012)

In seeking to define wellbeing, Dodge, et al. (2012, p. 230) propose it as, "the balance point between an individual's resource pool and the challenges faced". That is, an individual achieves wellbeing when they have the psychological, social, and physical resources they need to meet a particular psychological, social, and physical challenge (Figure 12). Dodge, et al. (2012) argue that the strength of this definition is its simplicity in conveying the essence of wellbeing; it can be universally applied in a way that does not view everyone as homogenous; it is optimistic in that it views individuals as decision makers with choices; and finally it can serve as a basis for measuring wellbeing. Amerijckx and Humblet (2003) propose five theoretical axes: positive versus negative, objective versus subjective, state versus process, material versus spiritual, and individual verses community. Amerijckx and Humblet (2003, p. 411) suggest that research be positioned on each one these five axes as one way to override "a one-dimensional, single-level, unipolar approach to child well-being".

2.5   Shaping the scope and direction of this research

As noted earlier, a review of the literature on Pasifika, children and their childhoods, and wellbeing, highlighted the gap that exists between these three areas. There is research on Pasifika and children, research on Pasifika and wellbeing, as well as research on children and wellbeing. There is currently no research in New Zealand that connects these three areas together. My research seeks to bridge the knowledge gap that exists between in the literature on Pasifika, children, and wellbeing. Table 3 provides examples to illustrate of some of the academic research on Samoan and more broadly Pasifika children and young people. As noted earlier, children's voices were included in Miliffe's (2014) thesis on child wellbeing in a school in the South Island, but it is unclear from the methodology whether any Pasifika children were involved as participants.

Table 3: Selected Pasifika research on children and young people

Research from perspective of Pasifika children	Research on Pasifika children from perspective of adults	Research on Pasifika children from perspective of Pasifika children and adults
Research with 12 Samoan young men attending secondary school in Wellington to examine their lived experiences of identity, belonging, and aspirations (Rimoni, 2016).	Research with five parents raising children of mixed Pacific ethnicities to understand how they are influencing the development and resiliency of their children (Leafe, 2017).	Research with 40 Pasifika learners and 10 teachers at an intermediate school in Auckland to examine the factors that facilitate Pasifika engagement (Van Vuuren, 2016).
Research with 35 Pasifika students attending junior secondary school in Auckland to explore their views on effective teaching and learning (Knight-de Blois, 2015).	Research on 'Samoan kids in the City' that looks at children's independent mobility and physical activity in Auckland through the lens of parents (Fa'avale, 2017).	Research with Pasifika caregivers in the South Island to test the relation between caregivers' strength of ethnic identity and their use of desire, cognitive, and emotion language with their toddlers aged 15 months, 24 months, and 33 months (Taumoepeau, 2015).
Research with 45 Samoan young people attending secondary school in Auckland to understand how family relationships influence their wellbeing (Fa'alau, 2011).	Research with 40 parents and grandparents to understand their perceptions of establishing Samoan early childhood education centres and bilingual units at Primary and intermediate schools in Auckland and Tokoroa (Tuafuti, 2016).	Research with five Samoan parents and their primary-school children to understand their experiences of learning to read and the role this plays in home reading practices (Valentine, 2014).
Research with 38 Pasifika secondary school students who have been taught by teachers in Te Kotahitanga to understand how this has impacted their learning experiences (Siope, 2014).	Photovoice research with 14 Samoan children at intermediate school in Auckland to explore literacy in church and family (Dickie & McDonald, 2011).	Research with 18 Samoan families (10 families in Samoa and 8 families in New Zealand) to examine the role of the f*a'asamoa* in the development of literacy skills for children (Tagoilelagi, 1995).
Research with Year 9 Pasifika students in Auckland to examine teachers' misunderstandings	Research on Pasifika early childhood education in Christchurch worked with	

Research from perspective of Pasifika children	Research on Pasifika children from perspective of adults	Research on Pasifika children from perspective of Pasifika children and adults
that affect their learning (Spiller, 2013).	parents to examine their decisions to use and their experience of Pasifika services (Luafutu-Simpson, 2006).	

In reviewing the child wellbeing literature, four key themes emerged which helped shape the scope and direction of my research. The first point is that that much of the literature on child wellbeing is from the standpoint of adults. The starting premise of my research on child wellbeing is that if it is to be meaningful and of value, it needs to include the voices of children. Samoan children are the primary partners of my research. Taking account of the literature that children, their childhoods, and their wellbeing are influenced by their surrounding environments (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 2005) as well as the Samoan worldview in which individuals are considered within their *aiga* (Pulotu-Endermann, 1995), my research includes the parents of the Samoan children. The second point that emerged was that little is known of the 'other' view. My research focuses on the Samoan diaspora, which is one of the ethnicities of Pasifika in New Zealand. My decision to take an ethnic-specific approach was influenced by the diversity of ethnicities, nationalities, and cultures that exist within the Pasifika collective, as well as my own background as a Samoan researcher. To capture the multi-dimensional nature of child wellbeing as well as the Samoan worldview, I have designed my research to take a holistic approach, through the interdisciplinary field of Pacific Studies. This was the third point of interest that emerged from the literature review. Looking at the fourth point, the extent to which my research is able to define child wellbeing will be determined by the voices of the Samoan children and their parents.

As shown over this chapter, there is no shared definition of child wellbeing in the literature but there are some commonly held ideas. Taking account of these ideas, my research is framed by the view that:

1. Child wellbeing is comprised of multiple dimensions such as physical, emotional, mental, social, spiritual, and cultural.

2. The extent to which children experience these dimensions is influenced by multiple levels from the micro level of their family through to the social structures in the broader context.

3. Child wellbeing should be contextualised. The experiences of children are shaped by the broader social and cultural context in which they are located. These experiences are different between different cultures and societies, as well as within different cultures and societies.

4. As 'knowers', children are able to offer authoritative knowledge of their world.

5. Child wellbeing is a dynamic process reflecting not only the changes in the context in which it is located, but also in the interplay of its dimensions which change as children move through the different stages of childhood.

Many of these key ideas are encapsulated in the *Fonofale* (Pulotu-Endermann, 1995). As noted earlier, the *Fonofale* is grounded within a Samoan worldview that takes a holistic multi-dimensional view of wellbeing. Secondly, it recognises the influence of the broader environment such as *aiga*, and community on wellbeing. Thirdly, the *Fonofale* views wellbeing as dynamic in that changes over time in relation to the broader context. The space through which to ask Samoan children for their views about their wellbeing is created by the *Talanoa ile i'a* (Faleolo, 2009).

2.6 Chapter summary

Chapter 2 highlighted how, in spite of its extensive use in literature, a shared understanding of what child wellbeing is remains elusive. Reaching a shared understanding of child wellbeing is challenged by the many ways it is conceptualised depending on 'where you stand' culturally, socially, and theoretically. This is evident in the four paradigms that have shaped and continue to shape the discourse on children and their wellbeing, which are: 1) the developmental perspective, which emphasises the importance of the early years of a child's life; 2) the investment perspective, which argues that investing in the early years of a child's life is one of the smartest investments a country can make; 3) the socio-cultural perspective, which challenges the idea that there is a universal and homogenous understanding of what constitutes child wellbeing; and 4) the rights-based perspective, where children are afforded the right to wellbeing.

In examining the literature on Pasifika, children and their childhoods, and wellbeing, I found there to be no research in New Zealand that connects these three areas together. My research seeks to bridge the knowledge gap that exists between this literature on Pasifika, children, and wellbeing. Looking specifically at the child wellbeing literature, four key questions emerged which became the research gap. These are summarised as the paucity of literature on the child's view, the 'other' view, a holistic view, and the focus that many definitions place on describing the components of child wellbeing. My research intends to address these knowledge gaps by partnering with Samoan children and their parents to understand through their eyes how they conceptualise child wellbeing. This will be done by taking an interdisciplinary holistic approach to child wellbeing.

As noted, the wellbeing of children is influenced by multiple environments surrounding them such as their families, their communities, and, more broadly, the policy environment. Chapter 3 focuses on the influence of the broader policy environment. This provides further context to influences shaping the wellbeing of children. In looking at the impact of the changing public policy affecting children in New Zealand, the influence of the four perspectives – the developmental, the investment, the socio-cultural, and the rights based perspectives - are visible in shaping this policy.

CHAPTER 3
The place of children in New Zealand (1993-2018)

Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot,
nothing is going to get better. It's not
Dr Seuss - The Lorax

3.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the place of children in public policy over the past 25 years (1993 to 2018). It begins with New Zealand's ratification of the UNCRC in 1993. It is important to consider public policy setting given the influence that it has on children's wellbeing. The first part of this chapter traces key legislation and policy initiatives from 1993 to 2018 (Section 3.2). This 25-year overview is in four parts: the 4th National-led Government (1990-1999), the 5th Labour-led Government (1999-2008), the 5th National-led Government (2009-2017), and the 6th Labour-led Government (2017-current).

The second part of this chapter examines the impact that public policy has had on children in New Zealand (Section 3.3). Three messages stand out from tracing public policy over this 25-year timeframe. The first of these messages is that the broader political context has a significant influence on the wellbeing of children. Secondly, there is a lack of policy coherence. As will be highlighted throughout this chapter, there are examples of successive governments developing policy initiatives to enhance child wellbeing while concurrently instituting significant welfare reforms that put children's best interests at risk. The third message is children's lack of political influence. They cannot vote and, more often than not, their voice is not included in policy where they are a major target. The almost doubling of the rate of child poverty is used in this chapter as one example to illustrate the impact that policy has on children. Over the 25-year period, political commitments have been made to reduce rates of children's poverty and strengthen their wellbeing, but to draw on a newspaper editorial regarding the UNCRC, "Noble declarations, however, achieve nothing without the determination to translate them into action" (The Dominion, 1990).

3.2 The place of children in public policy (1993-2018)

> The place of children in public policy is everywhere and nowhere. They are affected by taxation, and law and order, as well as social policy. In large areas, such as education, they are a major target of policy. Nevertheless, there is no children's policy where the various parts are integrated. Similarly, there is no Minister responsible for policy affecting children or a single focus for public debate on such issues (Dr Ian Hassall, Children's Commissioner, 1994, p. 1).

The view of Dr Hassall, the first Children's Commissioner (1989 to 1994) that children are everywhere and yet nowhere, perhaps best encapsulates children's place in New Zealand's policy settings over the past 25 years. This section provides an overview of the key legislation and policy that has influenced the wellbeing of children. Over this timeframe, New Zealand has been a neoliberal political environment, which from the 1980s has seen a progressive shift towards the privatisation of Government services, emphasis on market

principles, and a focus on individual freedoms over collective good (Cheyne, O'Brien, & Belgrave, 2008; Boston & Eichbaum, 2014). This section is set out in four parts to reflect the four changes in Government between 1993 and 2018. A timeline is provided in Figure 13.

3.2.1 Creating a decent society (1990-1999)

In 1990, the 4th National-led Government was elected on the promise of a decent society with the view of children influenced by the investment perspective: "We will get New Zealand working again – so we can give our children a healthy, happy headstart in life, and we can guarantee the dignity and security of our senior citizens" (National Party, 1990, p. 2).

To place this decent society in context, this section begins with a brief overview of the *World Summit for Children* (UNGA, 1990), *Welfare that Works* (1991), and the pre-ratification of the UNCRC in New Zealand (1990-1993). At the *World Summit for Children* (UNGA, 1990), the New Zealand Government agreed that the wellbeing of children required political action at the highest level and committed to "give high priority to the rights of children, to their survival, their protection, and their development" (UNICEF, 1990, para 19). In adopting the outcome document from this summit, the *World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children in the 1990s*, the Government also promised to uphold the principle of 'First Call for Children', in which children have: "... 'first call' on all resources, that they would always put the best interests of children first - in good times or bad, in peace or in war, in prosperity or economic distress" (UNICEF, 1990, pg. 2).

Having agreed to put the best interests of children first, the New Zealand Government then however announced wide ranging reforms to social assistance in its 1991 budget document *Welfare that Works* (Shipley, 1991), which had a significant impact on the wellbeing of children. St John (2001, p. 9) argues that while *Welfare that Works* was premised on a seamless and integrative approach to social assistance, many of these reforms proceeded in isolation from one another "intensifying rather than solving the welfare mess and poverty traps identified by Treasury". Examples of these reforms included cuts to the unemployment benefit, sickness benefit, families benefit, and the abolishment of the universal payments for family benefits, each of which impacted the wellbeing of children. In addition, market rates for state housing rents were introduced as well as user pays in the health and education sectors (see MSD, 2018 for detailed overview of welfare reforms). In 1996, a *Child Tax Credit* for low-income working families was introduced with the aim of incentivising beneficiaries to become independent from the Government.

Figure 13: Children in public policy (1993 to 2018)

Key milestones for children

4th National government (1990)

1996: Child Tax Credit introduced

1996: Te Whāriki launched

1996: Free under-6 visits to GPs introduced (in-house hours)

1997: NZ Government submits its 1st UNCRC report

1998: Child Health Strategy launched

1998: Child Health Programme review

1993: NZ Government ratifies the UNCRC.

1993: Human Rights Act passed

1996: Guardianship Amendment Act

1995 Domestic Violence Act passed

1998: Our Children's Health released

5th Labour-government (1999)

2002: Ngā Huarahi Arataki launched

2002: WCTO Framework launched

2003: Sustainable Development Plan released

2003: Children's Commissioner Act passed

2003: Families Commission Act passed

2004: ECD Board and ECD Unit dis-established

2004: Working for Families announced

2004: Families Commission established

2004: Care of Children Act passed

2002: Youth Strategy released

2002: Agenda for Children launched

2003: NZ Government submits its 2nd UNCRC report

2006: Free under-6 visits to GPs extended (after hours)

2007: 20-free hours of ECE introduced

2007:Crimes (Substituted Section 59) Amendment Act

2008: NZ Government ratifies the UNCRPD

5th National government (2008)

2010: Revised WCTO Framework launched

2010: Early Childhood Oral Health launched

2011: Healthy Smile, Healthy Child

2011: NZ Government submits its 3rd & 4th UNCRC report

2011: Free Child Health Care Scheme, (under-6 visits to GPs extended to include after hours)

2011: Green Paper & White Paper for Vulnerable Children

2012: Children's Action Plan launched

2012: OCC EAG releases recommendations to address child poverty

2012: Better Public Service targets introduced

2013: Family Courts Amendment Act

2014: The Vulnerable Children's Act passed

2015: NZ Government agree the SDGs

2016: NZ Government submits its 5th UNCRC report

2016: Vulnerable Children (Children's Services) order

2016: Education Amendment Bill passed

2017: Ministry for Vulnerable Children launched

6th Labour government (2017)

2018: 'Vulnerable' dropped from Ministry for Children

2018: Child Poverty Reduction Bill introduced into Parliament

2018 Free visits to GPs extended to 13 years-olds

2018: Families Package, launched

2018: Education Summits for redesign

2018: Child Wellbeing Strategy

2018

Key:

International agreements

Legislation

Policy/Strategy

Programmes/ Services

Research/Reviews

Source: Dunlop-Bennett, compiled from the literature

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Underpinning these reforms to social assistance was the neo-liberal view that the origins of societal problems lie in the culture, attitudes, and behaviours of the disadvantaged, poor, and unemployed, and that the provision of social assistance encouraged dependency and a lack of self-reliance (Boston, 2014; Cheyne, et al., 2008; Cotterell, St John, Dale, & So, 2017; St John, 2014). In other words, disadvantage, poverty, and unemployment were due to personal failing. The "term 'welfare dependency' was introduced, with 'welfare dependents' portrayed as 'the problem' " (O'Brien, 2011, p. 24). This helped to reinforce ideological messaging of the 'deserving' (people in paid employment) and the 'undeserving' (beneficiaries of social welfare).

The New Zealand Government ratified the UNCRC (UNGA, 1989) on 6 April 1993, after it was satisfied that its laws, policies and practices complied with the obligations of the Convention. To reach this position, the Ministry of External Relations and Trade invited comment from the Department of Justice, the Department of Social Welfare, the Department of Education, the Department of Labour, the Department of Health, Te Puni Kokiri, and the Human Rights Commission, as to whether any legislative changes were needed to ensure compliance. Two things stand out from this pre-ratification consultation process. Firstly, it focussed on legislation only, with no reference to policies and practices. Secondly, the views of key Government agencies involved with children such as the Children's Commission, Youth Affairs, and Women's Affairs, were not sought. From those agencies that were consulted, their views to ratification were mixed: the Department of Labour provided a detailed response highlighting why New Zealand should oppose ratification; the Department of Justice and Human Rights Commission provided detailed responses that highlighted the areas where New Zealand law did not comply with the UNCRC; while the Department of Social Welfare took three years to respond with a ten-line fax to say it had no difficulties with ratification (Ludbrooke, 2000).

The New Zealand Government ratified the Convention with three reservations (Appendix D). The UNCRC is detailed in Chapter 2, but I will briefly highlight the key principles here to provide context. As signatory to the UNCRC, the Government agreed that every child in New Zealand has the right to live without discrimination (Article 2), that their interests are the primary consideration (Article 3), that they have the right to achieve the maximum physical, mental, spiritual, moral, and social development (Article 6), and the right to participate in all matters affecting them (Article 12). It also agreed to undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative, and other measures for the implementation of the rights as recognised in the Convention (Article 14).

In ratifying the UNCRC, the New Zealand Government agreed to progressively bring its legislation, policies, and practices into line with the Convention, and to submit regular reports to the *Committee on the Rights of the Child* (CRC). In terms of legislation, the rights of children were included in the *Human Rights Act 1993*, in which the UNCRC was referenced, and the *Domestic Protection Act 1995* was adopted to give greater protection to the victims of domestic violence and to children. In health, the UNCRC was referenced in the Government's *Child Health Strategy* (MoH, 1998). The *Child Health Strategy* adopted a child-focussed approach on children and their families, with services located as close to home as possible, and emphasis placed on cultural diversity, equity, and equality. Through the *Health and Disability Services Act 1993,* publicly-funded personal health and disability

services were placed with Regional Health Authorities, which included the *Well Child Tamariki Ora* (WCTO) programme. The WCTO is a free screening, surveillance, education, and support service to optimise children's development and health through providing support to families and caregivers (MoH, 2013).

In education, child rights were recognised in *Te Whāriki: the Early Childhood Curriculum* (1996), although the UNCRC was not referenced specifically as the starting point (Dalli & Te One, 2002, 2009; May, 2001; Smith, 2009). *Te Whāriki* (1996) was innovative in that it took a child-centred holistic approach to children's development and it recognised and valued cultural diversity. The vision for every child, as stated in *Te Whāriki*, is that they "...grow up as competent and confident learners and communicators, healthy in mind, body, and spirit, secure in their sense of belonging and in the knowledge that they make a valued contribution to society" (MoE, 1996b, p. 9).

In response to the first report that the New Zealand Government submitted detailing its progress against the UNCRC, the *Committee on the Rights of Children* (CRC, 1997) welcomed progress but noted a number of concerns such as the lack of an overarching plan to action for children, the lack of conformity of relevant domestic laws with the definition of the child, and the insufficient measures to ensuring effective coordination across government departments.

3.2.2 A new century and fresh start for children (1999-2008)

Prior to being elected, the Labour Party announced its intention to "put in place policies that ensure New Zealand is the best country in the world to be a child" (New Zealand Labour Party, 1999, p. 10-11). The 5th Labour-led Government was elected in 1999 on its 'New Century: Fresh Start' election policy. Guiding this policy was a social development approach that included values such as civic responsibilities, earned rights, fairness, and individual autonomy (Stanley-Clarke, 2016).

The Government's social development approach placed emphasis on a 'workfare' state where the provision of social assistance was contingent on people seeking paid employment; priority was placed on education and training so people could work; and people could work through initiatives such as paid parental leave (Clark & Maharey, 2001). The *Working for Families* (WFF) package, progressively implemented between 2005 and 2007, was a key pillar of the Government's social development approach. Through WFF, tax credits were paid to families who had at least one parent in paid work for a minimum number of hours per week. In other words, WFF only benefitted those children whose parents were in paid work. For these children, the rates of child poverty decreased from 21 percent to 11 percent (Asher & St John, 2016; Cotterell, et al., 2017; McGregor, et al., 2015), however around 230,000 of New Zealand's poorest children were excluded from WFF (St John & Craig, 2004). Miller (2005 cited in Stanley-Clarke, 2016, p. 55) argues that reframing this as 'social development' enabled the Government to "continue to pursue a more liberal economic and free trade agenda, which appealed to middle-income voters while still providing support to welfare recipients and low-income families".

The *Social Security Amendment Act 2007* reiterated the emphasis on paid work and on parents using resources available to them before seeking financial support from the state

(New Zealand Government, 2007, p. 14). Cotteral, et al. (2017) say that this had the effect of:

> ...dispensing with the true nature of social security and of removing the meeting of need as the legislation's primary concern. Thus, just as in the 1980s, Labour again paved the way for an incoming National Government to make even more extreme reforms. Labour's changes to the Act allowed National to further emphasise the primacy of paid work and to downplay any social insurance aspects of social security or community responsibility (Cotteral, et al., 2017, p. 8).

Against the backdrop of these welfare reforms, three pieces of legislation were passed that strengthened the wellbeing of children. The first of these was the *Children's Commissioner Act 2003*, which established the Office of the Children's Commission (OCC) as an independent Crown entity and set out the primary functions of the Children's Commissioner and the OCC. These primary functions are to monitor, review and report on services provided to children in care; advocate on issues that affect children and young people; and raise awareness of and advance the UNCRC. The second piece of legislation was the *Care of Children Act 2004,* the purpose of which is to, "promote children's welfare and best interests, and facilitate their development, by helping to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for their guardianship and care; [and] recognise certain rights of children" (New Zealand Government, 2004, p. 9). The third piece of legislation was the 2007 amendment of *Section 59 of the Crimes Act 1961*, which brought the wellbeing of New Zealand children into line with the UNCRC by prohibiting the use of physical punishment by parents to correct their children. The purpose of the *Crimes (Substituted Section 59) Amendment Act 2007* was "to make better provision for children to live in a safe and secure environment free from violence by abolishing the use of parental force for the purpose of correction" (New Zealand Government, 2007, p. 2). It removed the legal defence of 'reasonable force' for parents prosecuted for assault on their children. As a result of this legislation, New Zealand now complied with the CRC recommendation that it amend legislation to prohibit corporal punishment in the home.

In terms of policy, three that were particularly important to the wellbeing of children, were the *Agenda for Children: Making life better for Children* (2002), the *Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa: Action for Child and Youth Development* (2002), and the *Sustainable Development for New Zealand Programme of Action* (2003). The *Agenda for Children* (2002) took a 'whole child' approach, which prioritised a focus on the child's whole life, and aimed to support the wellbeing of children through a whole-of-government approach. The *Agenda for Children* (2002) states in its introductory text:

> The wellbeing of children matters to us all. How well they do affects how we as a society do. All children need love, protection, support and opportunities to thrive during childhood, to grow up healthy and happy, to acquire the skills they need to form positive relationships, and to fully participate as adults. Children who are nurtured and supported throughout childhood are also more likely to reach their full potential at school, in higher education, in work, in sport or artistic activities and in society. This has positive benefits for individuals and for the whole of society (MSD, 2002a, p. 10).

The *Agenda for Children* (2002) was developed concurrently with the *Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa* (2002) so that the two aligned in their coverage of children and young people from 0-18 years and 12-24 years respectively. Coming out of these initiatives was the interagency 'Investing in Child and Youth Development', which also linked with the Government's *Sustainable Development for New Zealand Programme of Action* (2003). The overarching goal of this inter-agency programme was that, "All children and young people have the opportunity to participate, to succeed and to make contributions that benefit themselves and others, now and in the future" (MSD, 2003, p. 22).

Before these strategies could be embedded, however they faded into the background (ACYA, 2009; McGregor, Bell, & Wilson, 2014; Smith, 2009). Referring to the *Agenda for Children* (2002), the Action for Children & Youth Aotearoa ([ACYA], 2009) wrote in its shadow report to the CRC:

> It disappeared from Government policies soon after its introduction. A review by ACYA found no evidence that the Agenda has been implemented by the Government in any sustained, systematic way in formulating policy or making decisions. The *Agenda for Children* has been made obsolete through lack of implementation (ACYA, 2009, p. 9).

Sectorally, child wellbeing was highlighted as a priority in documents such as *Ngā Huarahi Arataki: Pathways to the Future* (2002), which took a multidisciplinary approach to deliver its three goals for early childhood education, which were participation, quality, and collaboration (MoE, 2002). Dalli and Te One (2009) argue that it was a potentially powerful strategy because the collaborative work envisaged would require key government ministries and agencies to meet together and discuss policies relevant to early childhood education, as well as child rights and wellbeing more broadly. While collaboration was a goal of *Ngā Huarahi Arataki* (2002), it did not make any reference to the *Agenda for Children* (2002), which was released in the same year. Through these policies there were a number of initiatives that supported children's wellbeing such as the P*romoting Early Childhood Education Participation Project* (MoE, 2005a) and the introduction of *20 Free Hours ECE* for early childhood education (MoE, 2007). There were also shifts towards increased collaboration across sectors seen through multisectoral programming such as the *Before School Check* (B4SC),[8] which brought together early intervention in the health and education sectors, and the *Parent Support and Development Project* that linked education and social services (MSD & MoE, 2004).

3.2.3 Changing to a brighter future (2008-2017)

In 2008, the National Party was elected to Government to become the 4th National-led Government of New Zealand. Guided by its "unrelenting focus on work", the National-led Government introduced further welfare reforms underpinned by an investment perspective, on the grounds that:

> The current welfare system isn't working... [its] creating too many vulnerable people and trapping them in a life of limited choices, poverty and poor health. Getting people

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[8] The B4SC is the eighth and final check that every child from the birth to five years old is entitled to as part of the *Well Child Tamariki Ora* programme (MoH, 2010).

off welfare and into work means a better life, better opportunities, and a brighter future for people and their families (Bennett, 2012).

As part of this wave of welfare reforms, the Government said it was "no longer going to hand over benefits and leave people to their own devices" (Bennett, 2012). These reforms placed greater work obligations on beneficiaries with children, which Bennett (2012) suggested would "improve financial and social outcomes of beneficiaries with children". Financial sanctions were imposed on those who did not comply with the work obligations or failed the drug tests that were also introduced a part of these reform measures (MSD, 2012). It also included the introduction of social obligations for parents receiving benefits such as requiring them to enrol their children with a doctor and into early childhood education.

The Welfare Working Group (WWG, 2011, p. 2), established to "modernise the welfare system and make welfare work", recommended that the Government adopt a social investment approach. Although the social investment approach was not defined, messaging from Bennett (2012) and English (2015) pointed to it being an actuarial liability approach that used predictive risk modelling (PRM) to target services to those people the Government considers to be 'at risk' (O'Brien, 2016). The premise was that this approach would prevent maltreatment by drawing on big data analytics to identify children most at risk of maltreatment as they entered the welfare system, and in doing so provide wrap around services. This particular application of social investment in New Zealand is narrower than how it has been applied elsewhere. For example, in the European Commission's application of social investment, emphasis is placed on investing in people, not targeting those considered by the Government to be 'at risk'. The European Commission (2013) states:

> Social investment is about investing in people… [It's about] Enabling individuals to live up to their full potential to take part in social and economic life in society entails supporting people at critical junctions in their lives. This starts with investing in children and youth, and continues thereafter (European Commission, 2013, p. 8).

The way in which the social investment approach was applied in New Zealand, O'Brien (2016, p. 12) argues, ignored the "economic and structural forces that create and sustain the poverty and inequalities shaping families". Again this contrasts to the European Commission's (2013) broad view of social investment that encompasses social inclusion and social protection, in which Member States are urged to:

> Better reflect social investment in the allocation of resources and the general architecture of social policy. This means putting greater focus on policies such as (child)care, education, training, active labour market policies, housing support, rehabilitation and health services. Improve the sustainability of the health systems (European Commission, 2013, p .9).

O'Brien (2016, p. 13) argues that in New Zealand the social investment approach was designed in a way that "minimised the role of the state and concentrates on expenditure within a framework of reduced citizenship rights", with success measured as a reduction in total welfare beneficiary numbers and reduced costs to the Government (Chappel, 2013; Rosenberg, 2015). Investment in children was articulated in terms of reduced costs, as seen in Table 4 which shows the calculations to support the idea of being "prepared to spend

money to secure better long-term results for the most vulnerable New Zealanders, and lower costs to the Government in the future" (English, cited in O'Brien, 2015).

Table 4: Investing early in children to secure better long-term results for the most vulnerable New Zealanders and lower costs to the Government in the future

The estimated fiscal cost of a child born in 1990 to a 35 year who:	
Doesn't come into contact with these agencies - the DoC, CYFS, and WINZ - by age 5.	$50,000
Comes into contact with **one** of these agencies - the DoC, CYFS, and WINZ - by age 5	$150,000
Comes into contact with **two** of these agencies - the DoC, CYFS, and WINZ - by age 5	$200,000
Comes into contact with **all three** of these agencies - the DoC, CYFS, and WINZ - by age 5	$250,000

Source: adapted from English (2015)

The narrative of vulnerable, hard-to-reach, and disengaged permeated across Government, as seen in the *Delivering Better Public Services* (2012) as well as in the suite of legislative, policy, and institutional reforms for children that included the *Green Paper for Vulnerable Children* (2011), the *Children's Action Plan* (2012), the *White Paper for Vulnerable Children* (2012), the *Vulnerable Children's Act* (2014), and the *Modernising Child Youth and Family Expert Panel* (2015). For example, the *Delivering Better Public Services* (2012) initiative included the priority theme of 'Reducing Long-term Welfare Dependency' (MSD, 2013). The focus on vulnerable children, defined as those at risk from "abuse and neglect" (MSD, 2012, p. 6) underpinned the reforms for children. From the outset, the *Green Paper for Vulnerable Children* (2011) was criticised in public consultation for its exclusive focus on vulnerable children and its narrow definition of vulnerable. For example, the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) argued that the *Agenda for Children* (2002) which, as noted earlier in this chapter, was not implemented in any sustained or systematic way, was considerably more comprehensive than what was proposed in the *Green Paper for Vulnerable Children* (2011). Further, that a "…broader approach would have been preferable, acknowledging as it does that all children are vulnerable not only to personal violence and neglect, but also to economic and institutional violence and neglect" (CPAG, 2012, p. 1).

The subsequent *White Paper for Vulnerable Children* (2012) retained the focus on vulnerable children, defined as children who are at risk of abuse and neglect, and this became the basis of the *Vulnerable Children's Act* ([VCA] 2014). The *VCA* (2014*)* was described by the National-led Government as the most comprehensive changes to policy and services for children vulnerable to maltreatment since the *1989 CYPF Act* (MSD, 2012). Through the *VCA* (2014), child protection policies were developed for all staff that work with children; standardised safety checking took place for the Government-funded children's workforce; and workforce restrictions were placed on people who posed a risk to children. Accountability for the *VCA* (2014) was placed with the organisational leads of the New Zealand Police, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry Social Development, and the Ministry for Vulnerable Children.

The *White Paper for Vulnerable Children* also led changes to other legislation such as the *CYPF Act* (1989), which was later renamed the *Oranga Tamariki Act* (1989). The amendment of Section 13 of the *Oranga Tamariki Act* (1989), made possible through the *VCA* (2014), led to concerns about its overriding principle. That is, that the welfare and interests of children must be the paramount consideration in child protection proceedings. Martin (2006) raised concern that no specific consultation with Māori was undertaken, despite the paramountcy of the child over *whānau* conflicting with Māori values of *whānau*, and essentially undermining the *whānau*-centred principles of the *CYPF Act* (1989). Martin (2016) argues that:

> …the s13 amendment appears to have been driven by a populist desire on the part of the Government to be seen to be "doing something", by limiting the parenting rights of "bad parents", rather than by well-researched evidence on the effectiveness of the legislation. This neo-conservative framing of "bad" parents sits alongside a neo-liberal economic discourse that justifies the removal of resources and rights from the "undeserving" parents (Martin, 2016, p. 41).

The *Children's Action Plan* (2012) was developed to give effect to the issues affecting vulnerable children outlined in the *White Paper for Vulnerable Children* (2012). The Plan included a focus on interagency collaboration between the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment (Housing), the New Zealand Police, and Te Puni Koriki. Despite the Plan being touted as "bigger than politics and is not only for this generation of New Zealand children, but their children and their grandchildren" (Bennett, 2013), as noted earlier it was considered less comprehensive than the *Agenda for Children* (2002). Against the backdrop of the UNCRC, the narrow focus taken on vulnerable children was a key concern noted by the CRC (2016) in its concluding observations, as was the lack of a comprehensive policy and strategy for children. Some of the key recommendations made by the CRC (2016) for consideration were that the New Zealand Government consider adopting a comprehensive policy and strategy for children, adopting a child-rights approach to budget allocations, and renaming the Ministry for Vulnerable Children as the Ministry for Children.

3.2.4 Let's do this: prioritising children and their families (2017-2018)

On 26 October 2017, the 6th Labour-led Government took office under the pledge of "Let's do this". Its new direction for children over the past 12 months has been signalled by three key initiatives. Firstly, it established the ministerial portfolio of Child Poverty Reduction, with Prime Minister Jacinda Adern becoming the Minister for Child Poverty Reduction. To give effect to the new ministerial portfolio, the Government has established a Child Poverty Reduction Unit within the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) to support the passage of the *Child Poverty Reduction Bill* (2018) and to work across Government departments to support implementation of the legislation, once it is passed through Parliament.

The *Child Poverty Reduction Bill*, passed into law on 20 December 2018, is the second initiative of the Government's new direction for children. The purpose of the *Child Poverty Reduction Bill* is to "encourage a focus on child poverty reduction, facilitate political

accountability against published targets, require transparent reporting on child poverty levels, and create a greater commitment by Government to address child well-being" (DPMC, 2018a).

The *Child Poverty Reduction Bill* includes a *Child Well-being Strategy*, which is currently being developed. The draft *Child Well-being Strategy* (DPMC, 2018b), reflects an aspirational approach for children as well as supporting a preventative focus, and as noted in Chapter 2, takes a domains-focussed approach. The influence of multiple perspectives upon the discourse on children, their childhood, and their wellbeing - the developmental, investment, socio-cultural, and rights-based perspectives - are evident in the draft strategy. For example, it adopts a life-course approach and makes the case for investing early in child wellbeing, reflecting the influence of the developmental capability and investment perspectives. The reference to the rights-based perspective is evident in its stated commitment to the UNCRC and its principles. The Strategy places importance on children's participation by requiring the Minister for Children to consult with children prior to adopting or changing the strategy. This commitment aligns with both the rights-based and socio-cultural perspectives. The influence of the socio-cultural perspective is also visible through recognition of the diversity of children living in New Zealand.

The third key initiative is that, in keeping with its aspirational strengths based approach, the Oranga Tamariki Ministry for Vulnerable Children be renamed as the Oranga Tamariki Ministry for Children, and the *Vulnerable Children Act* (2014) be renamed as the *Children's Act* (2014). The dropping of the work 'vulnerable' also aligns the Ministry to its Māori name, *Oranga Tamariki*, which means child wellbeing.[9] Prime Minister Ardern announced that the Ministry's focus would widen over time to include all New Zealand children, and not just those defined as vulnerable or at risk of abuse and neglect. In this way, it would not stigmatise the children it worked with (cited in Kirk, 11 December 2017).

The work that the New Zealand Government is doing on child wellbeing aligns with its broader initiative of integrating wellbeing into public policy. Speaking of this broader initiative, Prime Minister Adern (DPMC, 2018a) said:

> We want New Zealand to be the first place in the world where our Budget is not presented simply under the umbrella of pure economic measures, and often inadequate ones at that, but one that demonstrates the overall wellbeing of our country and its people (DPMC, 2018a).

Guiding this broader wellbeing work, the New Zealand Treasury has developed the *Living Standards Framework* (Figure 14) comprised of natural, social, human, and financial capitals. Culture has not been included in the *Living Standards Framework* as a specific capital, because Treasury is focussing:

> …primarily on developing an internationally comparable framework for intergenerational wellbeing. While allowance is made for the framework to reflect issues of importance to New Zealanders (including Māori), the proposed framework does not specifically address Māori conceptions of wellbeing. Understanding

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[9] Concern has been raised at the linking of *Oranga Tamariki* with the Ministry of Vulnerable Children, given that the two terms did not mean the same thing. *Oranga Tamariki* means the health or wellbeing of children (re: presentation/Paula King, University of Otago).

wellbeing from a te ao Māori perspective is important for Government policy and for New Zealand more widely…A complementary paper is currently being prepared for the Treasury focusing on Māori perspectives on wellbeing (Smith, 2018, p. 2).

The internationally comparable framework refers to the OECD model (Figure 3) and the complementary paper on Māori perspectives is being progressed based on the *He Ara Waiora / A Pathway Towards Wellbeing* (O'Connell, Greenaway, Moeke, & McMeeking, 2018). Treasury have also developed complementary papers for Pasifika and Asian peoples. The draft Pasifika paper (Thomsen, Tavita, & Levi-Teu, 2018) draws on the *Fonofale* (Pulotu-Endermann, 1995) and the *Pacific Identity and Wellbeing Scale* (Manuela & Sibley, 2014) to frame wellbeing, and positions culture at the centre.

Figure 14: Living Standards Framework
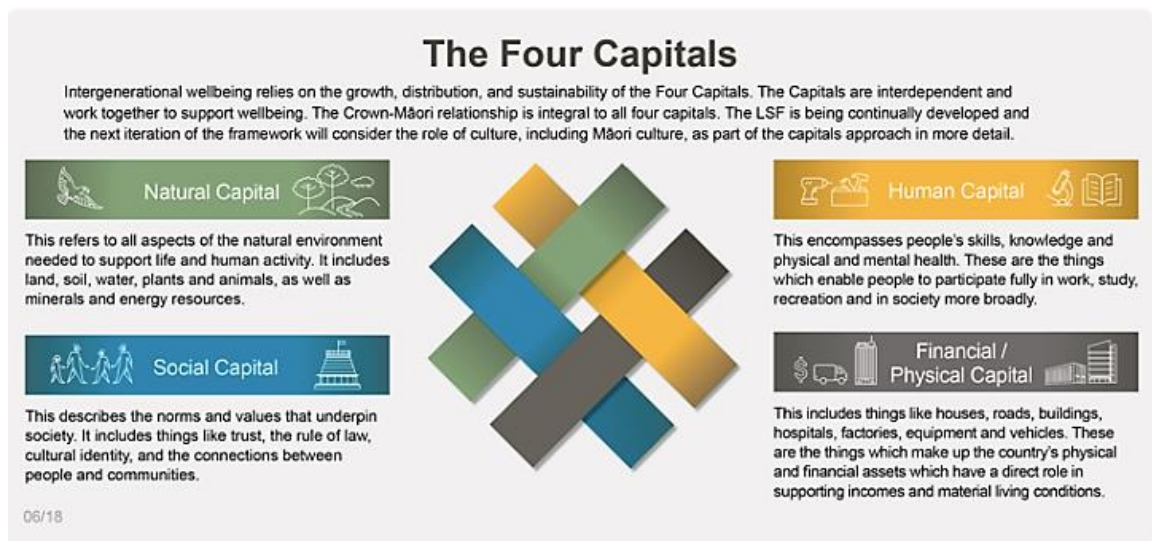
Aligning with the *Living Standards Framework* (Treasury, 2018), Statistics New Zealand (2018, p. 1) is developing *Indicators Aotearoa New Zealand* to measure progress against wellbeing indicators, which it says will "build on international best practice, and will be tailored to New Zealanders by incorporating cultural and *te ao Māori* perspectives".

3.3 The influence of public policy settings on children and their wellbeing

Having traced 25 years of key legislation and policy in New Zealand, this section looks at the impact that this has had on children and their wellbeing. As noted earlier, New Zealand has a neoliberal political environment, which from the 1980s has seen a progressive shift towards the privatisation of Government services, emphasis on market principles, and a focus on individual freedoms over collective good (Cheyne, et al., 2008). Ideologically, the promotion of the individual over the collective conflicts with one of the most central Samoan principles: the 'communal good'. The way in which neo-liberalism ideology has influenced the wellbeing of children can be seen in the legislative and policy reforms instituted by both Labour-led and National-led governments. Speaking of welfare reforms over the past 25 years, McGurk (2008) argues, "The differences between Labour's work-focused incentives and National's 'unrelenting focus on work' are mostly differences of degree" (McGurk, 2008, p. 8).

The neoliberal focus on 'individual freedoms over collective good' helps to explain the apparent lack of policy coherence. Visible across the 25-year timeframe are examples where the Government has taken action that supports child wellbeing in one area while compromises the wellbeing of their families in another area. To highlight one example of this, the National-led Government (1990-1999) ratified the UNCRC, which affords every child in New Zealand the right to wellbeing, while at the same time it introduced wide ranging welfare reforms, which saw a significant rise in rates of child poverty. Understanding that neoliberalism does not recognise the 'social' or the 'community' (Fitzsimons, 2000) helps explain why, within a suite of specific legislation and policies, the wellbeing of children can be strengthened in one area, and compromised in another. That neoliberalism does not recognise the 'social' or the 'community' has also seen social problems being framed in individual terms with little consideration given to the broader structures that cause inequality and poverty (Beddoe & Joy, 2017; O'Brien, 2016).

To help shift societal thinking, successive governments have framed welfare 'dependency' as a problem that can be fixed through paid work, as shown in Section 3.2. Continual welfare reforms, described by some as the 'continual dismantling of the welfare safety net' (Cotteral, 2017; McGurk, 2008; O'Brien, 2011), have been made more palatable by the construction and socialisation by successive governments of narrative that reinforces the perception of the 'undeserving' (welfare dependants) and the 'deserving' (people in paid employment). As McGregor, et al. (2012) argue:

> Successive governments have worked to move societal thinking to a new meaning for 'social security' – namely that the State is not responsible for supporting parents to provide an adequate standard of living to their children when the parent cannot do so. Rather the Government's role is limited to providing some assistance to parents to do so (McGregor, et al., 2012, p. 100).

Over the past 25 years, child poverty has almost doubled, making it a critical development issue for New Zealand. In 2017, the percentage of children under 17 years of age living in poverty was 27 percent, which equated to about 290,000 children (OCC, JR McKenzie Trust, & UO, 2017). There is no official definition of child poverty, but the OCC's Expert Advisory Panel on Child Poverty (2012a) defines it as:

> Children living in an environment where income and other material deprivation are such that they are unlikely to survive, develop and thrive, so that they are unable to enjoy their rights, achieve their full potential and participate as full and equal members of society (OCC, 2012, p. 2).

The most significant increase in child poverty followed the 1991 budget, which cut welfare benefits by more than 20 percent and introduced user-pays polices (Asher & St John, 2016; Boston, 2014; Keddell, 2016; McGregor, Bell, & Wilson, 2015; O'Brien, 2016). While poverty in the whole population rose, the biggest impact was felt by children shown in the increase from 16 percent in 1990 to 28 percent in 1993 (Perry, 2017).[10] Even today, children bear the

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[10] Individuals in low-income households using the 60 percent of median "relative" (not anchored) threshold after housing costs:

brunt of poverty with 26 percent of children living in poverty, compared to 14 percent of those aged 65 years and over, as show in Table 5.

Table 5: Rates of poverty in New Zealand

Age	Percentage of individuals in low-income households (2016)
0-17 years	26
18-24 years	24
25-44 years	19
45-64 years	17
65+ years	14

Source: Perry (2017)

Children living in 'beneficiary' families, those families receiving social assistance, were particularly affected by the 1991 welfare reforms, with the percentage of children living in poverty rising from 25 percent to 75 percent (Asher & St John, 2016). Child poverty, though is not just an issue for those living in beneficiary families, as O'Brien (2016) argues:

> ...Pākeha children, children in two-parent households and children in households whose income is from paid work are very highly-represented among those living in poverty. Indeed, there are more Pākeha children than Māori and Pacific children, and more children in two-parent households than in single-adult sole-parent households living in poverty (O'Brien, 2016, p. 290).

Māori and Pasifika are overrepresented in child poverty; however child poverty is not an issue of ethnicity. The overrepresentation of Māori and Pasifika is largely a feature of social-economic positioning and the influence of colonisation and immigration (Atwool, 2013). In other words, child poverty is almost entirely policy driven (St John, 2014). Broader welfare reforms, by successive governments over the past 25 years, have impacted significantly on the wellbeing of children, as evidenced in the rapid increase of child poverty rates following the 1991 Budget which have remained consistently high. To take one example, in spite of the Government repeatedly advocating that "paid work is the way out of poverty", the Government's minimum wage policy works to "defeat that purpose" (Wilkenson, 2015, p. 11) and about 40 percent of children in poverty live in families where there is an adult in full-time paid work (Asher & St John, 2014). That child poverty is almost entirely policy driven was also a key argument in OECD's (2009) *Doing Better for Children* assessment in which it recommended that New Zealand take a stronger policy focus on child poverty and child health.

The invisibility of children in public policy has not helped. The view of the first Children's Commissioner Dr Hassell (1994), that children's place is everywhere in public policy but nowhere, could apply today. Dale, O'Brien, and St John (2011) have argued that the picture of child poverty would look very different if children had a political voice. Twenty-three percent of New Zealand's population - 1,123,000 children – is under the age of 18 (OCC, 2018). These children cannot vote. Having a political voice can and does influence the priorities of the Government. For example, people aged 65 years and older are entitled to a

pension from the *New Zealand Superannuation Fund,* which has helped protect the elderly from high rates of poverty. The *New Zealand Superannuation Fund* is universal in that everyone over 65 years old is eligible, it does not require one to work, and it is not means tested. The converse is true for welfare benefits that affect children, such as the *Domestic Purposes Benefit.* Dale, et al. (2011) note that to June 2011, $9 billion was spent on the *New Zealand Superannuation Fund* while $1.7 billion was spent on the *Domestic Purposes Benefit*, which supports most of the children in poverty, as well as their parents and caregivers. In spite of the superannuation spend being almost five times higher, only the unemployed sole parents have been classed as 'undeserving' and subjected to ongoing welfare reform. The Public Health Advisory Committee (2010, p. 6) pointed out that public expenditure is five times greater for people in their last two years of life, than the investment made to children in the early years. Children's place in public policy might look very different were they able to influence it.

Related to the lack of political vote, the extent to which children's views are included in policy development is mixed. Brown and McCormack (2005) argue that one of the strengths of the *Agenda for Children* (2002) was that more than 7,500 children were consulted during its development. Yet, children were not consulted in the 2017 update of the *Education Act* (1989), even though they are a major target of the education sector. The Children's Commissioner Judge Becroft (3 February 2017) criticised that omission, saying:

> It is frankly from my perspective astonishing that this bill has been prepared and reached this far without any demonstrable occurrence or example of consultation with children...Child-centred policy adds richness, it adds quality to the decision making, and it is the right thing to do.

More recently, children were included in the New Zealand Government's *Kōrero Mātauranga Education Conversation* consultation across New Zealand to inform changes to the education system to make it "fit for purpose in the 21st century" (MoE, 2018).

The *Child Poverty Reduction Bill* (2018) and draft *Child Wellbeing Strategy* have "the potential to transform the lives and well-being of our children" (OCC, 2018, p. 2), although as shown over the past 25-year review, policy coherence and determination are needed to translate these initiatives into action. The *Agenda for Children* (2002), also a promising signal for child wellbeing, is one example that was not implemented in a sustained or systematic way (ACYA, 2009). In examining the impact of public policy on children and their wellbeing in New Zealand since 1993, it has become very clear that *"*Noble declarations... achieve nothing without the determination to translate them into action" (The Dominion, 1990).

3.4 Chapter Summary

Against the frame of the *Talanoa ile i'a* (Faleolo, 2009), this chapter provided a more detailed perspective from the top from the tree. It demonstrated that policy settings have a significant influence on children's wellbeing. This was a very clear message coming out of the review of key legislation and policy review between 1993 and 2018. The almost doubling of child poverty, with the biggest increase in child poverty following the 1991 welfare reforms, illustrated how pivotal the broader political context is on child wellbeing.

The lack of policy coherence over the 25 years was shown through examples where successive governments developed policy initiatives to enhance child wellbeing while at the same time instituting significant welfare reforms that put children's best interests at risk. Compounding this lack of policy coherence was that children have no political voice. Children under the age of 18 years make up 23 percent of New Zealand's population yet they cannot vote. Further, as this chapter showed, the extent to which children's views were included in policy development has varied. The *Child Poverty Reduction Bill* (2018) and the draft *Child Wellbeing Strategy* signal a promising shift for children.

Having considered the place of children in public policy, the next chapter provides the Samoan context in terms of the *fa'asamoa*, the Samoan way of life, which underpins the Samoan worldview. As noted earlier, Samoan children are often navigating between two worlds: the *fa'asamoa* and the *fa'apalagi*. To be able to place the findings that emerge from the Samoan children into context, it is important to understand the *fa'asamoa*, and the ways in which it is changing, specifically in New Zealand.

CHAPTER 4
Samoan children and the *fa'asamoa* in the diaspora

4.1 Introduction

In positioning research, it is critical to consider the worldview of the participants, their customs, beliefs, culture, values, and practices. These beliefs and practices represent the context that underscores their views and experience (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Doing this will ensure meaningful insights into how the Samoan diaspora conceptualise child wellbeing. This chapter sets the cultural and social context for this research, by looking at how wellbeing is conceptualised in the *fa'asamoa* (the Samoan way) and then the place of Samoan children within this view.

A number of points mark this discussion. First, that culture is not a static concept. Like all cultural ideals and practices, the *fa'asamoa* has adapted, and continues to adapt, to shifts in the broader context (Anae, 2001; Cowley, 2013; Lilomaiava-Doktor, 2009; Mageo, 1998). As the *fa'asamoa* adapts to the changing context, aspects of it fade in prominence while others come more into focus. That the *fa'asamoa* is changing is well established in the literature. What is less apparent is the nature of this change given that we cannot predict the influence that shifts in the broader contexts will have on the *fa'asamoa* or how we will respond to it. The second related point is the diversity of the Samoan diaspora in New Zealand, due to demographic and socio-economic factors as well the many different lived experiences. That the *fa'asamoa* and the way in which the Samoan diaspora identify themselves are changing as they 'make their place' in New Zealand is why it is timely to look at how child wellbeing is conceptualised today.

The chapter is in three parts. In the first part, I briefly outline the *fa'asamoa* values beliefs and practices and how these might influence Samoan perceptions of wellbeing and children (Section 4.2). The second part focusses on the Samoan diaspora in New Zealand today, beginning by briefly tracing Samoa's migration journeys (Section 4.3) and the ways the diaspora have sought to make their place in New Zealand (Section 4.4). The last part of this chapter considers the place of Samoan children against the backdrop of a shifting landscape (Section 4.5).

4.2 Through the lens of the *fa'asamoa*

4.2.1 The view of wellbeing in the Samoan worldview

The *fa'asamoa,* or the Samoan way, is the foundation of the Samoan worldview (Taueetia-Sua, 2017). It is the commonly held cultural beliefs and practices, the protocols, and behaviour that underpin Samoan social and political structures (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 1991, 1998; Lilomaiava-Doktor, 2004; Meleisea, 1987; Mulitalo-Lauta, 2000). Mulitalo-Lauta (2000) describes the *fa'asamoa* as:

> ... the total make-up of the Samoan culture, which comprises visible and invisible characteristics and in turn forms the basis of principles, values and beliefs that

influence and control the behaviour and attitudes of Samoans…[it] is the 'umbilical cord' that attaches Samoans to their culture (Mulitalo-Lauta, 2000, p. 15).

Central to the *fa'asamoa* is the existence of multiple worlds: the spiritual, the physical, and the social (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 1991; Meleisea, 1987; Tui Atua, 2005a). Tui Atua describes the Samoan worldview as "…a worldview that understands the environment, humans, the animate and inanimate - all-natural life - as having its sources in the same divine origin, imbued with life force, interrelated and genealogically connected" (Tui Atua, 2005a, p. 2).

Viewed in this way, all of these multiple worlds are equal and are designed to exist in harmony. Tui Atua (2005a) frames this as the harmony between Samoans and the cosmos, the harmony between Samoans and the physical environment, the harmony amongst Samoan people, and the harmony within a Samoan individual (Table 6). Integral to the *fa'asamoa* is the importance of maintaining these harmonies. Wellbeing is achieved when there is harmony between these multiple worlds. Maintaining these harmonies is described as *tausi le va* or *teu le va*, which means to look after, to protect, and to take care of the *va*. The *va* is the relational space, which Fanafi Aiono Le Tagaloa (2003) describes as:

> Between Creator and created and between all of creation is the *Va*. It governs things and holds all things together….*Va* is relationship, connection, affiliation, boundaries, difference separation, space, distance, responsibility, obligation, state of being, positioning, standing and so much more (Le Tagaloa, 2003, p. 8).

These principles are demonstrated in health. Good health is usually determined by the use of biomedical models that are individualistic, physical, secular, and compartmentalised in focus (Bush & Masoe, 2009; Capstick, Norris, Sopoaga, & Tobata, 2009). By way of contrast, in the Samoan worldview, health is the totality of the 'body, mind, and soul' (Faleolo, 2016; Pulotu-Endermann, 1995; Seiuli, 2012; Tamasese, Peteru, & Waldergrave, 1997; Taule'aleausumai, 1997; Tui Atua, 2005a; Tuitahi, 2016). Each of these dimensions – the body, mind, and soul - need to be balanced and in harmony with each other, to achieve wellbeing and wholeness. Understanding this concept of the 'Samoan whole-self' is important to understanding health and more broadly wellbeing. There are no Samoan words for 'health' and 'disease' but rather these concepts are linked to *va*. Sickness is viewed as a disruption to the *va* (Capstick, et al., 2009; Macpherson & Macpherson, 1990; Masoe & Bush, 2009). As Macpherson and Macpherson (1990) explain:

> The lifestyle which ensures general well-being is achieved and maintained by accepting a Samoan view of the world and by living by those customs, *o le aganu'u samoa*, which support it. Conversely, the rejection of the world view, and the customs which underpin it, can lead to the imbalance which results in illness (Macpherson & Macpherson, 1990, p. 157).

Maintaining the *va* between these multiple worlds, viewed as the relationships between people with the creator and the environment, is essential to maintaining wellbeing. Table 6 provides an overview of the multiple worlds.

Table 6: Maintaining the harmony of multiple worlds

Maintaining harmony	Explanation
Harmony with the cosmos	This involves recognition of the cosmic balance on which Samoans base their navigational, agricultural, and fishing knowledges. Spirituality and the self: wellbeing cannot be achieved if the physical and spiritual natures are not balanced.
Harmony with the physical environment	Samoan people are equal to their physical environment and have a responsibility to use the natural sustainably so as to ensure there is enough for future generations.
Harmony with other people	A Samoan person only has meaning in relation to other people. A Samoan person is not viewed as an individual but within the collective.
Harmony within the individual	A Samoan person has physical, mental and spiritual aspects, which cannot be separated. Individual or personal harmony the *tino* (body), the *mafuafau* (mind), the *agaga* (soul) – being balanced.

Source: adapted from Tui Atua (2005a), Tamasese, et al. (1997), Mulitalo-Lauta (2000)

Drawing on the Samoan worldview, identity and security are given prominence through a collective lens of their *aiga* (family) and *nu'u* (village). Samoans do not stand alone as individuals, but in relationship with their *aiga* and *nu'u,* and it is within these collective relationships that they have meaning, as expressed so beautifully in these words by Tui Atua (2003, p. 51):

> I am not an individual; I am an integral part of the cosmos.
> I share divinity with my ancestors, the land, the seas and the skies.
> I am not an individual, because I share a *tofi* with my family, my village and my nation.
> I belong to my family and my family belongs to me.
> I belong to my village and my village belongs to me.
> I belong to my nation and my nation belongs to me.
> This is the essence of my sense of belonging.

Overseeing the harmony of these multiple worlds is the *fa'amatai,* the chiefly system of rule, which is described as the sociological wheel on which the *fa'asamoa* rests (Fanafi, 1986). Everyone has a place and identity within the *fa'amatai* and each place comes with particular responsibilities, which work together to ensure the wellbeing of the *aiga* and the *nu'u* (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 1991; Meleisea, 1987). As shown in Figure 15, there are five groups in the *fa'amatai*, each of which are self-contained and connected, re-emphasising the idea of unity, collaboration, and wholeness. Fanafi (1992, p. 118-124) explains that, "These exist side by side and operate and inter-relate in concentric connections of blood ties and marital reciprocity – each fitting in harmoniously with the others and all depending on each other to function smoothly".

Figure 15: The Fa'amatai

Aualuma (daughters of the village) Role: hospitality	Faletula ma le tausi (in-marrying wives) Role: domestic tasks &reproduction
Matai (chief) Role: family and village administration	
Aumaga (untitled males) Role: agricultural production & protection	Tamaiti (children) Role: household jobs
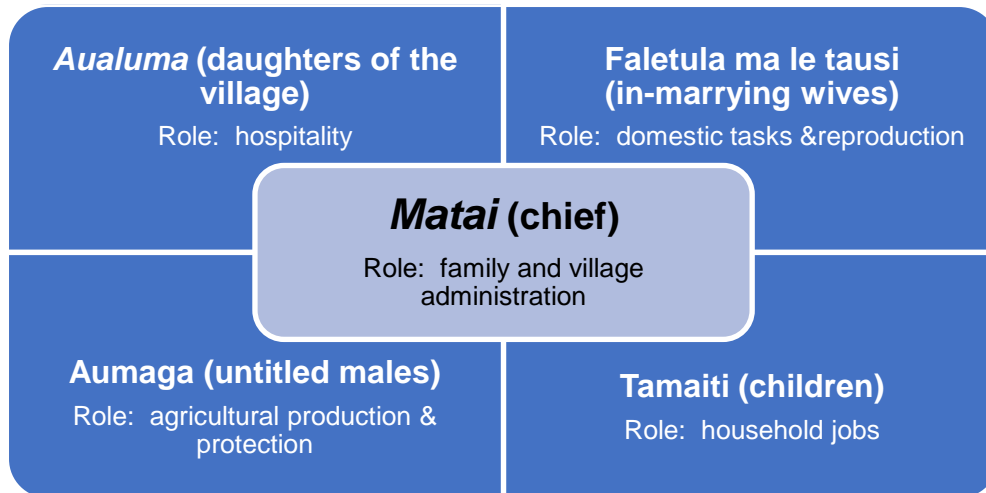
At the centre is the family *matai* (chief) who holds sacredness as the representative of the gods (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 1991; Meleisea, 1987; Tui Atua, 2005a). The *matai* oversee the use of collective resources for *aiga,* as well as represent the *aiga* at the *fono o matai* (the village council of chiefs). Women in the village are either the *aualuma*, the daughters of the village, or the *faletula ma tausi*, the in-marrying wives. The *aualuma* are the highest status group within the *nu'u*, with their sacredness defined by a shared divinity with the gods as well as their role in reproducing life (Fairbairn-Dunlop, Savaii, & Puni, 2016). The *faletula ma tausi* are the lowest ranking group. An in-marrying wife has no entitlements in her husband's village, and if her husband dies, she is expected to return to her own village. The *aumaga*, the untitled men, are considered the strength of the village (Fairbairn-Dunlop, et al., 2016). The main roles of the *aumaga* are food production such as agricultural produce, fishing, and/or raising livestock, as well as the protection of their sisters through the sacred covenant of the *feagaiga*. The *tamaiti*, or children, help with household chores such as taking care of younger siblings, working in the plantation, and sweeping the floor.

Everyone's place is referenced to the *fa'amatai* rather than in an individual context such as a person's age (Government of Samoa & UNICEF, 2006), reinforcing that meaning is not found as individuals but in relationship with their *aiga* and *nu'u* (Seiuli, 2012; Tamasese, Peteru, Waldergrave, & Bush, 2005). Every Samoan is able to establish a relationship to their *aiga* and *nu'u* through their *fa'asinomaga* (identity), as captured in the Samoan saying:

> *O le tagata ma long aiga, o le taga foi ma lona fa'asinomaga*
> Every person has an *aiga* and every person has a source of identity.

Through their *fa'asinomaga*, every Samoan has *suli* or hereditary rights, which gives them the right to approach their village *fono* to request use of customary communal resources such as land to build a house and grow crops for their subsistence living (Va'a, 2009). This access to communal resources is to enable everyone in the village to carry out their role in the *fa'amatai*. The prominence of the collective, demonstrated through the *fa'amatai*, means that all actions have the potential to increase the reputation or status of the family, or to decrease it. For example, the success of an individual is not viewed as an individual's success, but the success of the collective *aiga*, which reflects well on the whole *aiga* and

nu'u. The same is true for any failures (Cowley-Malcolm, 2013; Fairbairn-Dunlop, 1991; Macpherson & Macpherson, 1990; Tuafuti, 2016). Samoans are brought up from a young age to learn about *va* and how to maintain the *va.* Shimamoto and Ishida (1988, p. 220) argue that it is about "knowing your place in relation to others and behaving appropriately in a particular context". Underpinning the *fa'asamoa* are the values of *aga'alofa* (love)*, fa'aaloalo* (respect), *agaga feasoasoani* (support or helpfulness), *fealofani* (relational harmony), *usuta'i* (obedience), and *tautua* (service).

4.2.2 The view of children in the Samoan worldview

The way in which children are viewed in the *fa'asamoa* is best encapsulated in the Samoan saying *o au o matua fanau.* This means that children are precious treasures bestowed upon their family from the gods, to continue the *gafa* or genealogy (Anae, et al., 2000; Le Tagaloa, 2000; Schoeffel, 1979). The relationship that children have with the cosmos or the spiritual world is captured through this saying (Table 9). The view that children are precious treasures bestowed upon their family can be seen in their *fa'asinomaga:* every child has a family to which they belong, regardless of the circumstances surrounding their conception, where they are born, whether they are adopted, or the extent to which they identify as Samoan. The *fa'asinomaga* means that every child is a *suli*, which is vital to a child's protection, security, and wellbeing (MWCSD, 2005; Va'a, 2009). Children are not viewed as individuals, but as part of their *aiga* and *nu'u*, and their role is shaped by their place in the *fa'amatai* (Figure 15). This reflects the relationship that children have with other people (Table 6).

A child is viewed as a precious treasure from the moment of conception (Le Tagaloa, 2000; Tui Atua, 2005; Va'a, 2009). Tui Atua (2009) writes, "As a person the foetus gains a sacred essence. It becomes *tapu*. When the foetus is deliberately terminated a breach of *tapu* has occurred. Pardon must be sought for this breach" (Tui Atua, 2009, p. 120). As mentioned earlier, maintaining the *va* is critical to wellbeing, and harming the foetus in any way is viewed as a disruption to the *va*. Any disruption to the *va* is viewed as a disruption to wellbeing. During pregnancy, the *fa'atosaga* (midwife) protects the unborn baby and its mother. *Fa'atosaga* is not only the word for midwife, it also means 'planting and growing the seed' in reference to a midwife's help with conception and pregnancy (Tui Atua, 2009). Following the birth of the child, the cutting of the umbilical cord is described as *vaevae manava*, which is where the link between the baby and its mother is separated and the baby now becomes part of the wider *fanau* or group of children, family, and village (Tui Atua, 2011). When the baby is born, its *fanua* (placenta) is planted in the land, also known as *fanua*, reflecting the harmonious relationship between Samoans and their physical environment (Table 6).

In the *fa'asamoa*, raising children is the collective responsibility of the whole *aiga*, although the mother would assume the primary role as caregiver (Toevai, 2017). Ritchie and Ritchie (1979) use terms such as 'many parents' and 'peer parenting' to describe this approach to parenting as well as 'child caretaking' to describe the practice of older siblings looking after their younger siblings. This collective effort of raising children is viewed as adding another layer of protection, security, and wellbeing. The way in which children were to be nurtured is guided by the Samoan saying:

O fanau a manu e fafaga i fuga o laau a o tama a tagata e fafaga i upu
The young ones of birds are fed with nectar the children of people are fed with words.

The *aiga* are encouraged to teach their children through discussion, to model good behaviour, and to show love through affection and care, all of which is done through the extended family environment. Cowley-Malcolm, Fairbairn-Dunlop, Paterson, Wanzhen, and Maynard (2009) argue:

> Children are raised to know their roles, to act on them diligently in the 'service' or tautua to their 'aiga.' They know where to speak and not to speak, how to look and not to look, who to speak to and not to speak, how to address and not address. Their actions are always guided and directed by the knowledge they have been given by the adults about their ancestors (this is how it was for your mother/ father/ grandparents), and this knowledge acquisition is always under the perusal of the parents and in the first institution of learning, our aiga (Cowley-Malcolm, et al., 2009, p. 27).

Children are raised to have *amio lelei* (good behaviour), which generally includes an expectation that children will study hard at school; that they will come home straight after school so they are available to help with household chores including taking care of younger siblings and running errands for their elders; and that they will listen and obey their elders (Cowley-Malcolm, et al., 2009; Pereira, 2012; Schoeffel & Meleisea, 1996).

4.2.3 The changing fa'asamoa

The *fa'asamoa* underwent significant shifts with the arrival of Europeans to Samoa in the early 1800s. Most notable was the introduction of Christianity in the 1830s[11], Samoa's[12] annexation to Germany in 1899, and New Zealand's occupation of Samoa in 1914, followed by its administration under mandate from the League of Nations in 1946. During this time, the *fa'asamoa* was influenced by colonial administrators, sailors, traders, and missionaries, who introduced western notions of family as well as access to other knowledges. Most reports indicate that these modern ways were integrated into the *fa'asamoa*. Taking Christianity for example, its "overnight transformation of Samoa" (Taule'ale'ausumai, 1990, p. 22) has been attributed to the missionaries introducing a 'Samoanised' version, in which Christianity was to a large extent overlaid onto the *fa'asamoa* (Anae, 1997; Meleisea, 1987; Nokise, 1989; Taule'ale'ausumai, 1990). Doing this made Christianity familiar and more readily acceptable (Meleisea, 1987). One example of this overlay is the way in which the *faifeau* or pastor largely mirrors the *fa'amatai* (Figure 15). While some parts of the Christian belief system appeared to merge seamlessly with the customary ways, other parts were "diametrically opposed to indigenous practices" (Du Plessis & Fairbairn-Dunlop, 2009, p. 111). Writing of one way in which the Christian overlay was diametrically opposed to indigenous practices was the status of women, as Latai (2015) argues:

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[11] Prior to 1830, Samoans had an indigenous religion comprising many gods and spirits.

[12] The Tripartite Convention of 1899 saw the formal partition of the Samoan archipelago into German Samoa (the western islands) and American Samoa (the eastern islands). German Samoa was a German protectorate from 1900 to 1914. Western Samoa became the first country in the Pacific to gain independence (1 January 1962) and is referred to as Samoa, while American Samoa is still a territory of the United States of America.

> Missionaries, in their efforts to 'uplift' the status of women, emphasised the role of women as mothers and wives while downplaying their sacred and powerful role as *feagaiga* 'covenant'. Moreover, in the process of conversion, this sacred status of women was transposed onto the pastoral couple. Thus, the coming of Christianity clearly challenged the revered status of women in Samoa (Latai, 2015, p. 92).

The Christian belief system also impacted on the wellbeing of children, with the widespread use of physical punishment believed to have originated from biblical doctrine, through the lens of Victorian England missionaries (Cowley-Malcolm, 2013; Fairbairn-Dunlop, 2001; Pereira, 2012; Schoeffel, et al., 1996). This idea is explored in more detail in Section 4.4.

4.3 Making our place in New Zealand

The remainder of this chapter focuses on the Samoan diaspora in New Zealand and the shift in narrative. For the Samoan diaspora, with 62.5 percent of its population being born in New Zealand (Statistics NZ, 2014a), it is no longer a migrant story but one of 'this is home'. In tracing their journey, what becomes very clear is that the lived experiences of those in the Samoan diaspora are varied. This has seen an increasing divergence and a diversity of ways in which people from the Samoan diaspora identify themselves. To help put this into context, I will briefly trace Samoa's migration journeys and the ways migrants have sought to make their place in New Zealand, before looking at the demographic and socio-economic profile of the Samoan diaspora (Section 4.3). Having set this context, the final part of the chapter looks at Samoan children in the New Zealand diaspora (Section 4.5). To help guide this section, Table 7 pulls together a general overview of the Samoan diaspora making its place in New Zealand.

4.3.1 The malaga to New Zealand

The contemporary migration story or *malaga* from Samoa to New Zealand is well documented by others (see Ahlburg & Brown, 1998; Anae, 1998; Bedford, 2009; Connell, 2003; Fairbairn, 1961; Fairbairn-Dunlop & Makisi, 2003; Lilomaiava-Doktor, 2009; Macpherson, 1999; 1996; Pitt & Macpherson, 1974; Salesa, 2003; Va'a, 1995). Briefly, the high demand for unskilled labour during New Zealand's economic expansion in the 1950s and 1960s saw New Zealand look to Samoa and other countries in the Pacific to meet its labour shortages. Samoans were encouraged to migrate to New Zealand through immigration schemes such as the one introduced in 1962 by the National Government to bring 1,000 people from Samoa every year. New Zealand was portrayed as the land of 'milk and honey', where people could have a better life through better jobs, higher pay, and higher education.

Early studies of the Samoan diaspora living in New Zealand highlight that economic development - and related social development motives such as education, an obligation to family back in Samoa; and the prestige that comes from living abroad and earning wages - was a dominant factor driving much of this migration (Connell, 2003; Fairbairn, 1961; Pitt & Macpherson, 1974). More recently, studies have positioned this economic argument within a cultural context, in which the collective wellbeing of the *aiga* and *nu'u* was the key driver for

migration, rather than individual wellbeing, helping the Samoan diaspora meet their obligations such as *fa'alavelave*[13] (Anae, 2001; Faleolo, 2016; Schmidt, 2003; Taufa, 2003).

Table 7: An overview of the Samoan diaspora making its place in New Zealand:

Timeframe	Policy environment	Socio-economic context	Shifting identities
Up to the 1960s	Assimilation and accommodation	Few Pacific Islanders Living in scattered pockets	A Polynesian PI identity: Samoan, within a shared Pacific identity. View of homeland: Strong pull of the return home
The 1960s	Emerging biculturalism/multiculturalism Māori renaissance New Zealand economy buoyant. Labour schemes to encourage migration from Pacific.	Increase in migration to the 'land of milk and honey': jobs and plenty of overtime Chain-migration First generation of NZ-born	
The 1970s to 1990s	Economic recession of the 1970s, followed by labour force restructuring in the 1980s and 1990s Immigration restrictions of Samoans Citizenship Act (1982) Western Samoa	Economic recession. Dawn raids for overstayers Fewer migrants Emerging socio-economic constraints affect quality of life	Emerging nationalism within PI: Introduction of separate institutions to preserve languages and cultures, as ethnic-specific populations grow. Drawing on the Samoa homeland but beginning to carve out new identity
1990s to today	Globalisation Diasporic communities Evolving concepts of ethnic identity	Migration quotas introduced <u>2006 Census</u>: Samoans comprised 3.1 percent of NZ population. Of 131,000 Samoans, 40 percent NZ-born <u>2013 Census</u>: Samoans comprised 3.6 percent of NZ population. Of 144,138 Samoans, 62.7 percent NZ-born	A strong NZ-born Samoan identity emerging as a sub-culture, that has seen: 1) reclaiming of externally generated terms - overstayer, freshies, coconuts, FOBs (fresh off the boat), islanders, PIs, and the dawn raids – as part of identity; and 2) developing new terms from within the Samoan diaspora such as kiwi-Samoans, Kamoans, and Samaori. Less reliant on Samoa homeland as source of culture and identity to one that draws on NZ and global diaspora.

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[13] *Faalavelave* refers to ceremonial events such as weddings, funerals, church openings, and bestowing of chief titles. It is expected that *aiga* will contribute their time, goods, and/or service towards.

4.3.2 The land of milk and honey

The *malaga* of the early Samoan migrants is not unlike other migrant groups in the way that they sought to make their place in New Zealand.[14] The ways in which the early Samoan migrants settled in New Zealand was influenced by personal choice, as Macpherson (1984) explains ""… some of them will arrive at quite different assessments of their culture's utility; and as a result, some will decide to cling to it, others to abandon it, and still others to clone to some parts and abandon others" (Macpherson, 1984, p. 112). It was also influenced by New Zealand's orientation towards immigration and cultural pluralism, as Berry (2006) points out:

> Some societies are accepting of cultural pluralism resulting from immigration, taking steps to support the continuation of cultural diversity as a shared communal resource…Other societies seek to eliminate diversity through policies and programs of assimilation, and still other societies attempt to achieve the segregation or marginalization of their diverse populations (Berry, 2006, p. 703).

These influences saw a large variation in the ways that migrants from Samoa settled into New Zealand. Some of the early migrants sought to maintain their culture and heritage by re-creating structures in New Zealand that were reflective of 'village life back home' such as the church (Anae, 1998; Pitt & Macpherson, 1974; Taule'ale'ausumai, 1990; Tiatia, 1998). The church became a critical focal point for the Samoan diaspora, particularly as the early migrants adjusted from living in rural villages in Samoa to smaller family units in New Zealand (Anae, 1998; Macpherson, 1997; Meleisea & Schoeffel, 1998; Pitt & Macpherson, 1974; Taule'ale'ausumai, 1990; Tiatia, 1998). It was a familiar place in a very unfamiliar landscape, where the early migrants could meet with others who understood their worldview and could relate to their migrant experience, a source of comfort and security for new migrants, and a social hub for the Samoan diaspora. This network became increasingly important, as Pacific Islanders became the target of the economic recession in the 1970s.

For other Samoan migrants, their preference was to become more absorbed within the *fa'apalagi,* the dominant society. Even within these two broad acculturation strategies, there were variations. For example, even where the early Samoan migrants created structures to maintain the *fa'asamoa*, they adapted these to take advantage of the opportunities on offer in New Zealand, as Va'a (1995) points out:

> That certain aspects of Samoan culture will undergo change or be lost in the host society is inevitable... new structures, new motivations, new dispositions and new ideologies take their place as migrants construct their new communities. In the process, new identities are forged as migrants do their utmost to both survive and maximise their social and economic capital (Va'a, 1995, p. 3).

One of these opportunities on offer was education, where educational achievement was viewed as the 'ticket' to a better life and a way in which to provide *tautua* to the 'collective good' (Anae, Tominiko, Fetui, & Lima, 2017; Fairbairn & Makisi, 2003; Leafe, 2017; Siope, 2010). Siope (2010) notes the high educational aspirations that parents had for their children

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[14] See Ip (1995), Lieu (1995) and Palat (1996) which detail the migration of Asian peoples to New Zealand.

and the expectations they held that teachers would turn their children into doctors and lawyers. Talking of the stories that emerged from Pasifika during this time, Fairbairn-Dunlop (2008) says:

> While parents constantly encourage their children's efforts however, there is less understanding of how they can support their children. The stories reveal the quite … unrealistic expectations that many PI parents have of their children as well as the failure to understand how different their life experiences are from those of their children (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 2008, p. 11).

This inter-generational disconnect, as well the disconnect between their two worlds - the private sphere of home where the *fa'asamoa* largely dominated and the public sphere of school and work where the *fa'apalagi* was dominant – has been framed as being caught between two cultures (Tiatia, 1998); being born on a bridge in a two-dimensional world (Futagaumu, 2013); living a life of in-betweenness (Taumoefolau, 2013), and of having to be an edgewalker where they operate in-between or at the edge of both cultures (Tupuola, 2004). The myriad of labels and identities arising out of this disconnect, is captured by Anae (1997) in the following:

> I am – a Samoan, but not a Samoan
>> To my 'aiga' in Samoa, I am a palagi
> I am - A New Zealander, but not a New Zealander
>> To New Zealanders, I am a 'bloody coconut' at worst, a "Pacific Islander" at best
> I am – To my Samoan parents, their child

Influenced by the small number of PIs in New Zealand in the 1950s and 1960s, migrants from Samoa largely identified with a Polynesian identity that included Māori. A strengthening Māori identity in the 1970s saw Māori separating themselves from this Polynesian group (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 2008; Te Ara, 2017c). The emerging focus of identity for non-Māori Polynesians was visible in institutions such as the Pacific Islands Presbyterian Church (PIPC) and PACIFICA,[15] the impetus of a collective Pasifika identity.

4.3.3 The economic downturn and the shift in narrative

The reputation of Samoans as a 'reliable and cheap labour force' changed with the economic downturn in the 1970s, which saw a sharp decline in the demand for unskilled labour (Fairbairn & Makisi, 2003; Gough, 2006; Grainger, 2006; Pearson, 1990; Pitt & Macpherson, 1974; Taule'ale'ausumai, 1990). As the economic downturn continued, migrants from Samoa – as well as from other countries in the Pacific - once viewed as assets, now found themselves singled out as 'overstayers' who were a burden to New Zealand. Writing about this public shift in narrative, Fairbairn (1961, p. 18) says, "…the newspapers often draw attention frequently in an irresponsible fashion, to such social ailments as the low standard of housing, over-crowding, misdemeanour, and drunkenness among islanders". Mainstream

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[15] PACIFICA is the Pacific Allied (Women's) Council Inspires Faith in Ideals Concerning All. Established in 1976, this non-governmental organisation works to support Pasifika women to contribute effectively to the cultural, social, economic and political development of Aotearoa New Zealand and its people.

media at the time reinforced these incorrect images of Pacific Islanders by repeating them rather than challenging them (Macpherson & Spoonley, 2004; Neilson, 2015).

Pacific Islanders were singled out as scapegoats, despite there being more overstayers from the United Kingdom and Europe at the time (Anae, 2001; 2004; Bedford, 2003; Grainger, 2006; Te Ara, 2017a). They were portrayed as "taking employment from locals, threatening cultural homogeneity, boosting crime rates and adding strain to public resources such as housing, welfare and education" (Anae, 2012, p. 221). This negative framing of migration and its undercurrents of race and colour became synonymous with Pacific Islander (Grainger, 2006). Racial tensions escalated in early 1974 when policy and immigration officials carried out a series of raids on the homes of Pacific Islanders designed to apprehend those without legitimate immigration status. Called the 'dawn raids', these raids were carried out in the early hours of the morning to catch people by surprise. Speaking of the dawn raids, former Prime Minister Helen Clark, said:

> The dawn raids were shameful because, in essence, they set out to pick up anyone who didn't look like a Pakeha or Palagi New Zealander. They swooped on people who were Māori, they swooped on many Pasifika people who had absolutely lawful residence in New Zealand (Clark, cited in TVNZ, 2005).

Through the dawn raids and other measures, thousands of people were deported back to the Pacific. Even Samoans considered New Zealand citizens by the *1949 New Zealand Citizenship Act*,[16] were not immune from deportation. Falema'i Lesa, a Samoan woman who had been convicted as an overstayer and deported in 1979, took her case to the Privy Council.[17] The challenge of *Lesa v Attorney-General of New Zealand* (1979) was upheld by the Privy Council, who ruled that all Western Samoans born between 1924 and 1948 were British subjects, and that in 1949 they and their descendants had become New Zealand citizens. In response to this ruling, the National-led Government introduced the *1982 Citizenship (Western Samoa) Act*, which essentially overturned the Privy Council ruling. In this Act, Samoans born in Western Samoa while it was under New Zealand Administration do not have New Zealand citizenship rights. The *1982 Citizenship (Western Samoa) Act* remains in place today, in spite of the widespread criticism such as the former Human Rights Commissioner Pat Downey's description of it as "racially biased and only targeting Samoans" and that it was "wrong in principal, on both constitutional and human rights grounds" (cited in TVNZ, 2003). In light of the recent *Executive Order Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States (White House, 2017)* which received global condemnation, Edgeler (2017) argues that the *1982 Citizenship (Western Samoa) Act* is worse in that, "New Zealand's treatment of Western Samoans went further – cancelling the citizenship of people legally entitled to it".

As noted earlier, Samoans were encouraged to migrate to New Zealand in the 1950s and 1960s to fill the unskilled labouring jobs. The economic recession of the 1970s, followed by the economic restructuring in the late 1980s and early 1990s, saw huge job losses across the manufacturing sector, which had significant impact on the Samoan diaspora, and more broadly Pasifika. Between 1987 and 1996, the percentage of Pasifika engaged in unskilled

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[16] The *1949 NZ Citizenship Act* defines Western Samoans born before 1 January 1949 as New Zealand citizens.
[17] The Privy Council is New Zealand's highest appellate court.

labouring jobs decreased from 70 percent to 59 percent, compared to the decline in the overall population from 66 percent to 63 percent over the same timeframe (Statistics NZ, 2001). These job losses saw a rise in the number of Samoans looking to the New Zealand Government for welfare assistance (Tuafuti, 2016) at around the same time that it was introducing wide-ranging welfare reforms.[18] In this way, the Samoan diaspora was caught up in the 'othering' campaign of the 'undeserving welfare dependants' and the 'deserving workers'. The shifting narrative of Samoans in the public discourse – from a reliable source of cheap labour, to overstayers who were responsible for all sorts of social ills in New Zealand, to the 'undeserving welfare dependents' to one of being marginalised and disengaged - has helped shape the emergence of internally generated identities from within the Samoan diaspora.

4.3.4 The Samoan diaspora today

> Culture exists in a constant state of change. For example, the traditional culture that many Samoan migrants carried with them to New Zealand in the 1950s and 1960s is not the same traditional culture expressed in Samoan communities in New Zealand today. What has occurred is the adapting of Samoan culture to the influences of the New Zealand environment. These changes have not created a single Samoan culture – instead they have created varying degrees of Samoan culture (Crichton-Hill, 2001, p. 209).

The varying degrees of Samoan culture are clearly visible in the Samoan diaspora in 2018, with increasing shifts from the Samoan 'whole self' that prioritises collectivism and communal wellbeing towards individualism (Anae, 1997; Crichton-Hill, 2001; Henderson, 2016; Pala'amo, 2017). It has also led to the suggestion that in Auckland, the *fa'asamoa* be renamed the *fa'aaukilani*, because of the unique way in which it is being adapted in Auckland (Macpherson, 1997; Taule'ale'ausumai, 1990). Similar terms could be coined for the Samoan diaspora living in other parts of New Zealand, such as *fa'auelitone* for those living in Wellington. As the *fa'asamoa* has evolved and continues to evolve, some aspects of it have faded in prominence while others have come more into focus. Gough (2006) argued that this adaptation has been a strategic response by Samoans to take advantage of the opportunities in the new context without giving up what is important. Others frame this adaptation in terms of a loss of the 'real' *fa'asamoa* (Anae, 1997).

Looking at the emerging identities of Pasifika, Mila (2013) argues that we have resisted the positioning and stereotypical framing of us; worked through the tensions that have come from shaping and reshaping these evolving identities; and are now reclaiming labels and stereotypes attached to us. Looking specifically at the Samoan diaspora, the way in which the terms overstayer, freshies, FOBs (fresh off the boat), islanders, PIs, and the dawn raids, have been reclaimed in Samoan-generated literature, media, art, music, and business, suggests that this is true for the Samoan diaspora. Terms such as Samoan, kiwi-Samoans, New Zealand-born Samoan, Kamoans, [19] and Samaori,[20] have been created from within the Samoan diaspora, which speak to our evolving identities from our standpoint.

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[18] See Section 3.2 for detail on the welfare reform of the 1990s.

[19] Leleisi'uao (2009) coined Kamoans to reflect Kiwi Samoans

[20] Samaori is a hybridisation of Samoan and Māori (Talo, cited in Misa, 2007).

4.3.4a) The demographic profile

At the 2013 census, the Samoan diaspora comprised about 3.6 percent of the total New Zealand population. It was the largest ethnic group within Pasifika, accounting for 48.7 percent of the total Pasifika population. Of the 144,138 people who self-identified as Samoan at the 2013 census, 62.7 percent (90,347 people) were born in New Zealand and 38 percent said that Samoan was not their only ethnicity. The highest ethnic mix was between Samoans and Palagi at 13.5 percent of the total Samoan population. The Samoan population is young, with 47.1 percent (67,857 people) aged 19 years and under. In addition to being youthful, the Samoan population is fast growing, increasing by 9.9 percent from 2006 to 2013. Based on its young population and high growth rate, the Samoan population is projected to increase to between 222,000 and 240,000 people by 2025.[21] Three points of interest mark this demographic profile. Firstly, the story is increasingly shifting from a 'migrant story' to one where 'New Zealand is home'. Secondly, the Samoan diaspora is becoming increasingly multi-ethnic. Thirdly, with its projected growth rate, the Samoan population is poised to have an increasing presence in New Zealand. Based on this demographic profile, it is important to ask Samoan children for their perspectives, given earlier research that Pasifika models of care privilege the views of the island-born even though they accounted for 37.7 percent of the Pasifika population in 2013 (Agnew, et al., 2004; Anae, et al., 2001; Mila, 2013). Mila-Schaaf (2013) has argued that these models of care disadvantage the New Zealand-born Pasifika, while Anae (1997), speaking specifically about the Samoan diaspora, argues that this perpetuates the myth that culture is static.

4.3.4b) The socio-economic profile of the Samoan diaspora

There are sectoral data gaps for the Samoan diaspora as the New Zealand Government tends to take a pan-Pasifika approach and so this section will draw on pan-Pasifika data to build a picture of the socio-economic profile of the Samoan diaspora. Looking across a range of social and economic factors, the view is that Pasifika have generally not kept pace with non-Pasifika (MoE, 2015). The value of comparing Pasifika with non-Pasifika has been questioned, given that this comparison ignores the broader structural issues and biases that exist, as well as positioning non-Pasifika as the 'golden standard', as Siope (2010) argues, "... deficit thinking is so ingrained in our attitudes and structures it has rendered itself invisible. Moreover, Palagi as the dominant culture is depicted as the "default setting" against which all other ethnicities are to measure themselves" (Siope, 2010, p. 24).

There is value in examining how Pasifika have progressed against key social and economic factors over time. The next part of this section looks at how Pasifika are doing in education, health, and in the workforce. In doing this, it challenges the idea of New Zealand as the 'land of milk and honey'.

Progress in education

Looking at Pasifika educational outcomes, the 2015 mid-term review of *Pasifika Education Plan* (MoE, 2015) found that there had been positive shifts for Pasifika learners across the education pipeline, from early childhood education to tertiary learning. More Pasifika are

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[21] This project is part of the limited release of information from the 2018 Census (Statistics New Zealand, 2018)

leaving college with NCEA Level 1 literacy and numeracy (an increase between 2012 and 2015 of 2.7 percentage points to 85.7 percent) and NCEA Level 2 or equivalent qualifications (an increase between 2012 and 2015 of 6.9 percentage points). In the tertiary sector, more Pasifika learners are participating and completing their qualifications. While more work remains to be done, these shifts in the right direction matter because, as the Ministry of Education (MoE) and Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) have argued, success in education is fundamental to the New Zealand government's goal of building a productive and competitive economy (MoE, 2015; MoE, 2016, TEC, 2014).

A mixed picture in health

The Health Status of Pacific Children and Young People in New Zealand 2015 (Simpson, Duncanson, Oben, Adams, et al., 2017) found encouraging shifts in the health of Pasifika children such as the overall drop in SUDI,[22] and unintentional injury death and hospitalisation rates. There are still areas of ongoing concern such as infant mortality, ambulatory sensitive hospitalisation rates among 0 to 4 year olds, suicide rates among 15 to 24 year olds (Simpson, et al., 2017), as well as child obesity which accounts for a third of all Pasifika children (MoH, 2018). This matters not only to the health of the individual child, but also because of the correlation between poor childhood health and later health outcomes as adults (D'Souza, Turner, Simmers, Craig, & Dowell, 2012; Gluckman, 2011).

Positive shifts in labour workforce participation

There have also been positive shifts in Pasifika workforce data, which now sits at 67.2 percent. In the year to March 2017, employment growth was strong with the number employed increasing by 8.2 percent to 139,200 (MBIE, 2018). Pasifika workforce participation rates increased by 4.1 percentage points between 2016 and 2017 to 67.2 percent (MBIE, 2018). The average income for Pasifika is $40,300 compared to $53,500 for non-Pasifika (Treasury, 2018). The average income for Pasifika has doubled since 2013 (Statistics NZ, 2014b). Acknowledging that income is a narrow measure of wellbeing, incomes that do not keep pace with rising living costs impact on child poverty (Boston, 2014). In his research, Boston (2014) dispels the myth that child poverty is caused by incompetent parents, but is instead the result of inadequate incomes.

4.4 Samoan children in New Zealand

As highlighted earlier, there is currently no literature about how Samoan children living in New Zealand conceptualise their wellbeing. This is one of the three gaps in the literature that this research will make a contribution to, as outlined in Chapter 1. There is some literature for Pasifika young people such as the Youth12 health and wellbeing survey of New Zealand secondary school students. From this survey, 79 percent of Pasifika young people said they generally had good wellbeing and 82 percent said they were satisfied with life (Moselen, 2016).

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[22] SUDI - sudden unexplained death in infancy.

Literature does exist for parenting approaches used by Samoan parents. In their research with Samoan parents, born and raised in Samoa but now living in New Zealand, Schoeffel, et al. (1996) noted that:

> Talking to children was generally not seen as a dialogue between the parents and child but as a process in which the parent spoke, giving advice or instructions… [parents alluded] that children should not argue or disagree with their parents, and defined as "bad behaviour" attempts by children to participate in discussion amongst adults (Schoeffel, et al., 1996, p. 4).

More recently, Cowley-Malcolm (2013, p. 7) found that Samoan parents in New Zealand were "maintaining the cultural values of their elders and discarding some of those values which they view as being contrary to their own beliefs about parenting and managing their children's behaviour". Agee and Culbertson (2013) also note the importance of cultural values in research with grandparents and parents who are raising *afakasi* (half-caste or multi-ethnic) Pasifika children in New Zealand.

There are conflicting views as to the extent to which the physical discipline of children is part of the *fa'asamoa*. As noted earlier in this chapter, the widespread use of physical punishment is believed to have originated from biblical doctrine through the lens of Victorian England missionaries (Cowley-Malcolm, 2013; Fairbairn-Dunlop, 2001; Schoeffel, et al., 1996; Pereira, 2012). Tamasese (2006) argues that there is nothing in the *fa'asamoa* that promotes physical discipline and that this causes disharmony to the *va.* As noted earlier, the *va* is disrupted where there is offence or injury. Others hold the view that physical punishment is a customary practice (Iusitini, Taylor, Cowley-Malcolm, Kerslake, & Paterson, 2011). Comparing parenting practices between Samoan parents living in New Zealand to those in Samoa, Iusitini, et al., (2011) found that age, education, and income strongly influenced the type of parenting. Fathers in New Zealand were less nurturing and more disciplinarian than fathers in Samoa and mothers in New Zealand. Iusitini, et al. (2011) attributed this to the New Zealand fathers having less free time to spend with their children due to working multiple jobs, or to being delegated the task of administering physical discipline. Older parents were less nurturing but used less harsh discipline than younger parents. Iusitini, et al. (2011) were unclear as to why but concluded that it could reflect the generational differences of parenting styles. That educated parents were more nurturing and parents on lower incomes were harsher disciplinarians is more reflective of the universal literature on parenting (Cowley, 2013). Iusitini, et al. (2011) believed that migration to a new country and the desire to protect their children from 'the unknown' could be why Samoan parents living in New Zealand were more disciplinarian than those living in Samoa.

4.5 Chapter Summary

To position my research on the wellbeing of Samoan children through the eyes of the Samoan diaspora, this chapter provided an overview of the *fa'asamoa,* which is the foundation of the Samoan worldview. It highlighted how wellbeing is conceptualised in the *fa'asamoa* and the place of children within this view before looking at the ways in which it has adapted over time, influenced by shifts in the broader context. Shifts in the broader context detailed in this chapter included the social and cultural changes: 1) introduced by colonial administrators, sailors, traders, and missionaries in Samoa in the 1800s; and 2) the shift in location as Samoan migrants made their place in New Zealand, predominantly from the 1950s onwards.

The key argument underpinning this chapter is that, while often presented as an authentic and unchanging way of life, the *fa'asamoa* is continually adapting, influenced by a shifting landscape in New Zealand. Secondly, the Samoan diaspora is diverse as illustrated by their demographic profile, their socio-economic profile, and the plethora of ways in which they identify themselves. That the *fa'asamoa* and the way in which the Samoan diaspora identify themselves are changing as they 'make their place' in New Zealand, is why it is timely to understand how Samoan children and their parents conceptualise child wellbeing.

CHAPTER 5
The research paradigm

O le tele o sulu, e maua ai figota
Great outcomes stem from many contributions
Samoan saying

So open your mouth lad! For every voice counts!
Dr Seuss – Horton Hears a Who

5.1   Introduction

The starting position of this research is that Samoan beliefs, values, and ways of knowing are valid knowledge systems, and that if this research about Samoans is to be meaningful, it needs to encapsulate a Samoan worldview underpinned by Samoan beliefs, values, and ways of knowing. The research paradigm sets the deck-planks of the canoe on this research journey.

The first part of this chapter details the research paradigm. It details the ontology, epistemology, and methodology, framed within my Samoan worldview (Section 5.2). Critical to the design of this research is identifying a model that can capture the intra-ethnic and inter-generational nuances of the Samoan diaspora. To hear the voices of those who know and live the phenomenon, I considered 16 research models grounded in a Samoan worldview, before selecting *Talanoa ile i'a* (Faleolo, 2009).

The second part of this chapter details the methods used, which is the last piece of the research paradigm (Section 5.3). This section details how the Pacific-wide practice of *talanoa,* that is integral to *Talanoa ile i'a,* is applied in this research. *Talanoa* was used with both the Samoan children and their parents. The Samoan children also took photos about their wellbeing, which they used to guide their *talanoa.* The final part of this chapter provides a critical reflection of the research design (Section 5.4).

5.2   The research paradigm

My Samoan worldview is the lens through which I have designed this research. It encompasses the research paradigm, as shown in Figure 16. The research paradigm provides a holistic picture of how I view knowledge, how I see myself in relation to this knowledge, the methodology I have selected to guide how this knowledge will be generated, and the methods used to generate this knowledge (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). It is comprised of an ontology, epistemology, methodology, and methods (Crotty, 1998; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Section 5.2 sets out the Samoan worldview, the ontology, epistemology, and methodology while the methods are detailed in Section 5.3.

Figure 16: The research paradigm
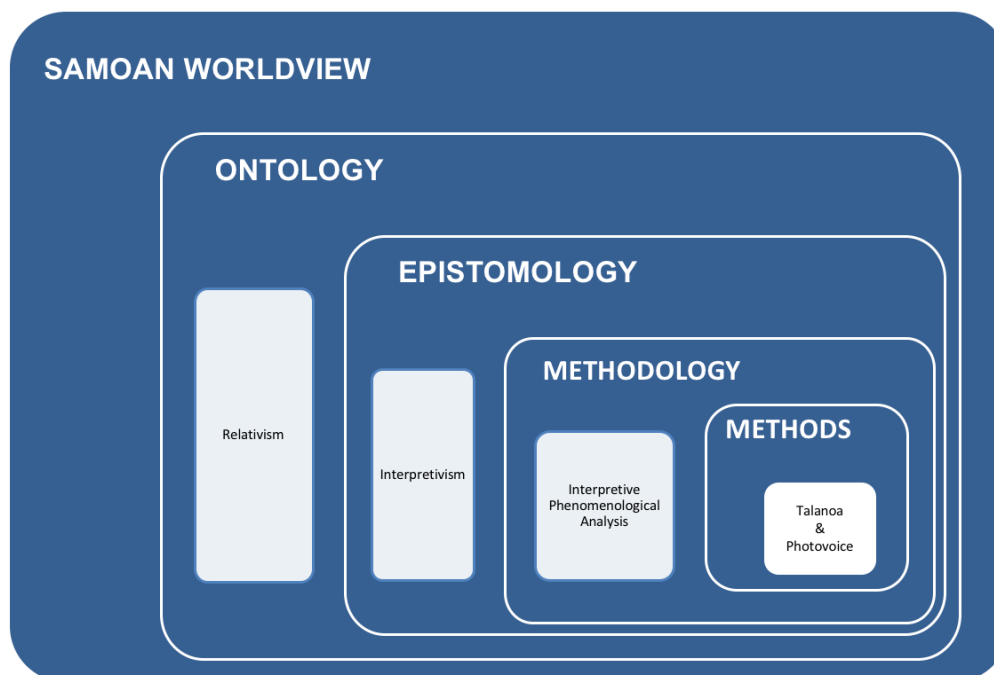
5.2.1: Through a Samoan lens

5.2.1a) From a pan-Pasifika to the ethnic-specific

The growing recognition that generic research models cannot capture the lived realities facing Pasifika nor the challenges they face in New Zealand has seen the development of research guidelines encapsulating Pasifika values, beliefs, and ways of knowing. Examples of such research guidelines include the *Pasifika Education Research Guidelines* (Anae, et al., 2001), *Teu le va: relationships across research and policy in Pasifika education* (Airini, et al., 2010), *Guidelines on Pacific Health Research* (HRC, 2005), the *Pacific Health Research Guidelines* (HRC, 2014), and institutional-specific guidelines such as the University of Otago's *Pacific Research Protocols* (UO, 2011). Alongside these Pasifika research guidelines, policy analysis frameworks (Pacific Analysis Framework, MPIA, 1998; Kapasa, MPP, 2017) and service delivery approaches in key sectors such as health (*Ala Mo'ui: Pathways to Pacific Health and Wellbeing to guide health services*, MoH, 2010; 2014); education (*Pasifika Education Plan*, MoE, 2000; 2006; 2012), social services (*Pacific Strategy*, MSD, 2002b); and economic development (*Pacific Economic Strategy*, MBIE, 2015) have also been developed.

In synthesising the literature on Pasifika research methodologies, policy analysis frameworks, and service delivery approaches, three ideas were particularly influential in shaping this research, in the following ways:

1. *The diversity that exists within the Pasifika diaspora*: Pasifika is a collective term used to refer to the diasporic Pacific peoples and cultures in New Zealand. While there are some shared values and beliefs across the ethnic groups covered by this

collective term "Pasifika", each group has its own set of cultural beliefs, values, traditions, languages, and social structures. Differences exist not only across the ethnic groups but also within each ethnicity. In recognition of this diversity, my research takes an ethnic-specific approach to focus on the Samoan diaspora. While taking an ethnic-specific approach will not enable generalisations to be made across the wider Pasifika, it will "yield more depth and enable intra-ethnic and inter-generational nuances" (Anae, et al., 2001, p. 9).

2. *Generating new knowledges:* Samoan knowledge is structured in two parts: sacred knowledge, that is gifted from the gods and is to be protected, and communal knowledge, that is collectively owned and generated (Anae, et al., 2001; Fairbairn-Dunlop, et al., 2014; Tamasese, et al., 1997). Communal knowledge is constructed, critiqued, and validated through *talanoa*, with the value lying in the wisdom of the collective views. Taking account of this, I designed the research paradigm to be participatory.

3. *Interdisciplinary research to capture the holistic nature of the Samoan worldview*: The holistic way in which we frame our worldview is viewed in the balance of the physical world including the environment, the spiritual world or the cosmos, and within the social systems (Anae, 2010; Anae, et al., 2001; Fairbairn-Dunlop, et al., 2014; Hviding, 2003; Tamasese, et al., 1997; Tui Atua, 2005a). To capture this multi-dimensional nature of the Samoan worldview, I designed this research to take an interdisciplinary and multisectoral approach (Hviding, 2003; Taufe'ulungaki, 2000).

My research is firmly grounded in a Samoan worldview underpinned by Samoan values, beliefs, and ways of knowing. Grounding my research in Samoan values, beliefs, and ways of knowing acknowledged the effect that "silent but pervasive colonization of intellectual spaces… [has had on] marginalizing indigenous knowledge systems" (Roberts cited in Hviding, 2003) and calls to "decolonise" research methodologies and reframe indigenous research (Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2002; Helu-Thaman, 2003; Smith, 1999; Taufe'ulungaki, 2000). Part of this reframing is the recognition that Samoan values, beliefs, and ways of knowing stand on their own as valid knowledge systems (Du Plessis & Fairbairn-Dunlop, 2014) and that if research about the Samoan diaspora is to be meaningful, it needs to be grounded within a Samoan worldview. As Vaioleti (2006) explains in reference to the Pasifika diaspora living in New Zealand:

> Researchers whose knowing is derived from Western origins are unlikely to have values and lived realities that allow understanding of issues pertaining to knowledge and ways of being that originated from the nga wairua (spirits) and whenua of Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, Tuvalu or the other Pacific nations. Research methodologies that were designed to identify issues in a dominant culture and provide solutions are not necessarily suitable in searching for solutions for Pacific peoples, whose knowledge and ways of being have unique epistemologies, as well as lived realities here in Aotearoa (Vaioleti, 2006, p. 22).

To design the research in a way that is culturally congruent with the Samoan diaspora and the diversity that exists within, I looked at the current research approaches grounded in a Samoan worldview that have been designed by people from Samoan diaspora living in New

Zealand. To determine which one would shape the design and approach of my research, I did a "clear survey of the field" (Sanga & Reynolds, 2017, p. 201) and reviewed each of these models.

5.2.1b) A clear survey of the field

To determine which model would shape the design and approach of my research, I reviewed 12 models developed to guide research and service delivery for the Samoan diaspora living in New Zealand as well as four pan-Pasifika models (Table 8). I included the four pan-Pasifika models - the *Seitapu* (Pulotu-Endermann, Suaali'i-Sauni, Lui, McNicholas, Milne, & Gibbs, 2007); *Teu le va* (Airini, et al., 2010)*, Aua'i i le galuega* (Nakhid, et al., 2007)*,* and *Va'a tele* (Si'ilata, 2014) - because they are underpinned by a specific Samoan concept.

Table 8: Models grounded within a Samoan worldview

Model	Sector	Characteristics of model
Fonofale - Pulotu-Endermann (1995)	Health	Based on a *fale* (house), this model highlights the holistic nature of mental health, the importance of culture and family, and recognises shifts in context over time.
Fa'afaletui - Tamasese, Peteru, & Waldergrave (1997)	Health	To understand mental health from a Samoan perspective, *fa'afaletui* was developed as research framework to collect, share, and validate knowledge, and weave this knowledge into consensus.
Seitapu (pan-Pasifika) - Pulotu-Endermann, et al. (2007)	Health	A model, drawing on Samoan term *seitapu*, developed to strengthen Pasifika cultural and clinical competencies of mental health workers.
Uputaua - Seiuli (2012)	Health	Based on a *faletalimalo* (house used to welcome guests), each pole represents an aspect of wellbeing which need to be balanced for the individual to achieve wellbeing.
E leai se tu fa'amauga - Su'a (2017)	Health	Drawing on the saying that 'no man is an island', this model encourages recognition that individuals are shaped by wider influences such as their values, beliefs, and culture.
Aua'i i le galuega (pan-Pasifika) - Nakhid, et al. (2007)	Education	Drawing on a double-hulled canoe, this model encourages the direct involvement of Pasifika learners in tertiary education.
Pou Tu - Samu (2007)	Education	*Alofa* (love and commitment), *tautua* (service), and *fa'aaloalo* (respect and dignity) should inform the design, structure, and implementation of education services.
Teu le va (pan-Pasifika) - Airini, et al. (2010)	Education	*Teu le va* encourages researchers to take care of the space that exists between them and research participants.
Ula - Sauni (2011)	Education	The flowers of the *ula* represent aspects of the Samoan culture, which need to be taken into account if engagement with Samoans is to be effective.

Model	Sector	Characteristics of model
Va'a tele (pan-Pasifika) - Si'ilata (2014)	Education	Drawing on a double-hulled canoe, this model depicts the balancing that Pasifika learners need to do between the languages, literacies, and cultures of their home with those of their school.
Tofā'a'anolasi - Galuvao (2016)	Education	*Tofā'a'anolasi* is a Samoan form of Critical Discourse Analysis that combines two main methods of collecting data: *iloiloga o le gagana* (examining of language) and *fa'afaletui* (focus groups).
Lalaga - Mulitalo-Lauta (2000)	Social work	Based on Samoan cultural values of *fa'asamoa* protocols, this model offers guidance on how social workers can engage with Samoan families effectively.
Talatalaga a Aiga - Masoe & So'o (2001)	Social work	This model was developed as way of engaging primarily Samoan families and communities in the process of *talatalaga* or *talanoa*. The concept of *talanoa* is central to this model.
Talanoa ile i'a - Faleolo (2009)	Social work	This model creates space for children and young people to participate through recognition that all perspectives are needed to form a complete picture.
So'otaga - Faletolu (2010)	Social work	Using the focal point of a *fale*, this model assigns four cultural symbols – *tuiga* (head-dress), *fu'e/to'oto'o/ulafale* (chiefly instruments), *foafoa* (conch shell) and *tanoa* (kava bowl) – to symbolise knowledge, skills, responsibility, and resources.
Tautua model - MSD (2015)	Social work	Viewed through a *tanoa* - a ceremonial bowl used when chiefs gather to discuss matters affecting families of the community - this model places the child at the centre of efforts with concentric spheres of influence. Each leg of the *tanoa* symbolises a cultural value important to the Samoan worldview.

To decide which model would best fit this research, I drew from the work of Agnew, Pulotu-Endemann, Robinson, Suaalii-Sauni, et al. (2004) and Suaalii-Sauni, Mariner, Lui, Siaosi, Wheeler, Warren, et al. (2007) who make a distinction between belief models, service delivery models, and process models. Belief models are defined as those that articulate the beliefs and values underpinning the Pasifika worldview. Service delivery models include Pasifika beliefs and values, but are also explicit about how the beliefs and values can be applied to service settings. Process models are defined as those that provide a method to discuss, engage, and/or gather information to guide activities such as research or service delivery. In proposing these three types of models, Agnew, et al. (2004) and Suaalii-Sauni, et al. (2007) note that some models can be classified in more than one category. I used this approach to classify each of the 16 models, as shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Classification of the Samoan models

Belief model	Service delivery model	Process model
Aua'i i le galuega	*Seitapu*	*Fa'afaletui*
E leai se tu fa'amauga		*Talanoa ile i'a*
Fonofale		*Teu le va*
Lalaga		*Tofā'a'anolasi*
Pou Tu		*Talatalaga a Aiga*
So'otaga		
Tautua model		
Ula		
Uputaua		
Va'a tele		

Source: Dunlop-Bennett, adapted from Agnew, et al. (2004) and Suaalii-Sauni, et al. (2009)

As research is a process, I specifically considered the processes models: the *Fa'afaletui, Talanoa ile i'a, Teu le va*, *Tofā'a'anolasi,* and the *Talatalaga a aiga* and I examined each model against the purpose of my research. As a result, I selected *Talanoa ile i'a* (Faleolo, 2009) because it privileges the voice of children and young people, which is of particular relevance to this research on child wellbeing.

5.3.1c) Talanoa ile i'a

Faleolo (2009) acknowledges that the origins of *Talanoa ile i'a* lie in the parable used by Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Efi (2005).

> In Samoan culture, there are three perspectives. The perspective of the person at the top of the mountain, the perspective of the person at the top of the tree, and the perspective of the person in the canoe who is close to the fish. In any big problem, the three perspectives are equally necessary. The person fishing in the canoe may not have the long view of the person at the top of the tree, but they are closer to the school of fish (Tui Atua, cited in Tamasese, et al., 2005, p. 301).

All three perspectives – *o le faautaga i tumutumu o le mauga* (the perspective from the top of the mountain), *o le faautaga i tumutumu o le la'au* (the perspective from the top of the tree), and *o le faautaga o le pii ama* (the perspective of the person in the canoe) – are necessary to form a complete picture. Faleolo (2009) argues that a fourth perspective should be considered, which is the perspective of children and young people. He calls this the fourth perspective: *o le faautaga o le i'a,* the perspective of the fish. Faleolo (2013) says that *Talanoa ile i'a* is about:

> ...honouring and creating a pathway for the lesser known to become known, acknowledged and institutionalised...the fish or Samoan young people, and their experiences. So in order to find out what are the important issues for Samoan young people we simply ask them. We talk 'to' them and not 'around' them...The Samoan young people are the authority, they are the experts (Faleolo, 2013, p. 118).

Faleolo (2013) argues that while in the *fa'asamoa* the fish may not be considered as significant as the canoe, the tree, or the mountain, they are equally as important. Faleolo

(2013) likens the slippery nature of fish to the challenges that young people face as they transition from childhood to adulthood. He notes that while all young people go through this transition, Samoan children living in New Zealand may face the additional challenge of navigating between two worlds - the *fa'asamoa* and the *fa'apalagi*.

The Pacific wide practice of *talanoa* is integral to the *Talanoa ile i'a* model. *Talanoa* is described as a talk, a discussion, or an exchange of ideas, without a rigid framework (Vaioleti, 2006, p. 23). *Talanoa,* as a concept, has resonance across the Pacific, but it is Vaioleti who is credited as "adding to it a technical research-related meaning" so that it is not only simply about the 'talk' itself, but also the way in which the 'talk' is done (Suaalii-Sauni & Fulu-Ailoupotea, 2014, p. 333). Vaioleti (2006, p.26) frames *talanoa* as a flexible process that provides opportunities to probe, challenge, clarify, and re-align, and where "the precise nature of questions has not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the Talanoa develops". *Talanoa* supports the creation of 'safe places' where people can share their stories and share them in way where their voices are privileged (Fairbairn-Dunlop & Coxon, 2014). Fa'afoi, Parkhill, and Fletcher (2006, p. 105) argue that *talanoa* gives "shared ownership over the direction and focus of the discourse", where the relationship between the researcher and participant is respected. Respecting this space is known in Samoan as *tausi* or *teu le va*, which translates as to take care of (*tausi*) or look after (*teu*) the space (*le va*). As noted earlier, the *va* refers to the relationship, the connection, the space, or the positioning between (Aiono, 2003). Airini, et al. (2010) and Anae (2010) propose *teu le va* as a frame for Pasifika research. *Talanoa* creates the space for the participant to 'give voice' and for the researcher to 'make sense' of this voice. As Van Manen (1990, p.62) argues, "this is where the listening to and witnessing of the life stories of others lies. You listen because you do not know and you listen because you understand that each person is the expert of his or her own life". In this way, *talanoa* aligns with interpretive phenomenological analysis, which is the methodology guiding this qualitative research (Gadamer, 2013; Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006; Vaioleti, 2006). Vaioleti (2013) argues:

> If phenomenology is about an authentic and true representation and description of (Pacific) phenomena, then what more authentic way for Pacific Island peoples to describe their phenomena than using their own tools preferred over thousands of years (what Heideggers refers to as 'ready to hand'), such as *talanoa* (Vaioleti, 2013, p. 132).

Talanoa ile i'a influenced this research in three ways. Firstly, *Talanoa ile i'a* is a community-based participatory research approach in which the views of partners or participants are privileged as well as protected. The Samoan diaspora play a critical role in leading and shaping research, policy, and service delivery on issues that affect them by identifying challenges that impact on their lives and in identifying solutions that are socially and culturally valid. *Talanoa ile i'a* supports the generation of new knowledge in a way that is culturally valid for the Samoan diaspora. As Fairbairn-Dunlop, et al. (2014) explain:

> While all knowledge was a gift from God, there are distinctions between knowledge that is protected and sacred (as specialist knowledge) and knowledge that is communally owned and shared. For example, the specialised knowledge held by healers and midwives was closely guarded and shared within families… Communal knowledge on the other hand was constructed and validated in the many meetings

which characterised life in these predominately oral communities. Meetings were times when community members raised concerns and pooled their knowledge so as to identify solutions that would ensure the best community outcome... This gathering of knowledge from multiple sources and the social engagement in critiquing these views together is a vastly different experience to the use of research surveys and questionnaires (Fairbairn-Dunlop, et al., 2014, p. 83).

Secondly, *Talanoa ile i'a* values the voices of children. It recognises that children are competent social actors, with voice and agency (Pufall & Unsworth, 2004) and that to be relevant, children's own perspective and experience need to be reflected in research about them (Ben-Arieh, 2006; Fattore, et al., 2007; Graham, 2011; Lansdown, 2006; Sixsmith, et al., 2007). As noted in Chapter 2, including the perspective of children is important because children have the right to participate in decisions that affect them. Including children leads to better decision-making and outcomes on issues affecting them, and it also strengthens accountability. *Talanoa ile i'a* gives greater recognition and cognisance to the perspective of the school of fish by giving Samoan children a pathway to have their needs and concerns acknowledged, including their cultural identity. As already mentioned, in this research, the Samoan children are the fish.

Thirdly, *Talanoa ile i'a* recognises that children are part of *aiga* and communities. This view aligns with Bronfenbrenner's (1979, 2005) bio-ecological theory and Vygotsky's (1962, 1978) socio-cultural theory. As noted earlier, the bio-ecological theory recognises that the environments or ecosystems surrounding children shape their development. These ecosystems have varying degrees of influence, from the microsystem with the most influence on a child to the outer chronosystem with the least influence. These ideas put forward by Bronfenbrenner (1979) build on socio-cultural theory, in which Vygotsky (1962) argues that a child's development is influenced by their parents/caregivers, their peers, and, more broadly, their culture. Both of these theories are visible in child-centred approaches such as World Vision's ecological approach to child wellbeing (Figure 7), the Nef's model of child wellbeing (Figure 8), and the *Tautua* model (Figure 9). In my research, the parents of the Samoan children represent the *pii ama* or the people in the canoe. This research seeks to form a complete picture by *talanoa* with Samoan children and their parents, and weaving their knowledge with the perspectives of policy and services in the New Zealand (the people in the tree) and the broader global context (the people at the top of the mountain) as shown in Figure 1.

5.2.2: The ontological and epistemological position of this research

Ontology is defined as the study of being (Crotty, 1998). In this research, I adopt a relativist ontology, which holds the view that our version of reality or truth depends on 'where we stand'. What we perceive to be true is shaped by our beliefs, our values, our lived experiences, and the context in which we are located: all of which are prone to change over time (Gadamer, 2013). Taking a relativist ontology recognises that the ways in which Samoan children and their parents conceptualise child wellbeing will be influenced by 'where they stand'. In tracing Samoa's contemporary migration to New Zealand, Chapter 4 showed the diversity that exists within the Samoan diaspora, which was shaped, and continues to be shaped, by factors such as ethnicity, gender, social class, education, and lived experiences. Relativism holds there are many realities because reality is subjective and differs from person

to person (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). By adopting a relativist ontology, I am acknowledging that the *fa'asamoa* and the way in which the Samoan diaspora identifies itself is changing, and that there is no one perspective that can adequately capture this. In light of this, my research will capture the perspectives (the realities) of 10 Samoan families in the diaspora.

My choice of ontology then determines the epistemology. Epistemology is about how knowledge is generated, gained, and socialised. It considers the nature of the relationship between the researcher and what can be known about the phenomenon (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The epistemological position of relativism is interpretivism, which is also referred to as subjectivism or constructivism. Interpretive epistemology is concerned with understanding phenomenon from the perspective of the individual. What that means for my research is that if I am to truly understand the perceptions that Samoan children and their parents have of child wellbeing, I must ask them for their views. Creating the space to ask the Samoan diaspora and then prioritising their voices underpins what is known in community-driven development as partnership. To acknowledge the influence of my own background on this research: I am a Samoan mother of four children, raised in Apia and now living in Wellington, with a background in community-driven development. My lived experience has reinforced for me the value of taking a partnership approach and this is the default frame through which I view the world.

5.2.3: The methodology

As the epistemology of this research is interpretivist, I considered using Grounded Theory to frame the methodology. Described as involving "the discovery of theory from data", Grounded Theory was designed to create a space for researchers to develop new contextualised theories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p.1). Grounded Theory merges the processes of data collection and analysis, with the researcher moving backwards and forwards between the two in an attempt to 'ground' the analysis in the data and develop an explanatory theory of basic social processes. While this theory could have framed my research, I selected instead a phenomenological approach because my research goal is to describe the meaning of the lived experience of the phenomena, rather than to develop an explanatory theory of basic social processes (Stark & Brown-Trinidad, 2007, p. 1373). In saying that, the methods that I used with Samoan children and their parents have been shaped to some extent by a constructionist approach to Grounded Theory. For example, I took into account my positionality as well as that of the research participants; the research process emerged from interaction with the Samoan diaspora; the data was co-constructed by the research partners and I; and as a starting point, I acknowledged the multiple 'realities' that are experienced by the Samoan diaspora (see Charmez, 2008, p. 402).

I selected an Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as the methodology. IPA is a philosophical study of 'being', which essentially focusses on understanding an individual's lived experience and how they make sense of their lived experience. Integral to this approach is 'giving voice' to the views of the research partners and 'making sense' of what is being said (Larkin & Thompson, 2011). I selected a phenomenological approach, because I want to understand the Samoan diaspora experience of the phenomena as a whole, rather than as parts of that experience. The two major underpinnings of phenomenology are transcendental and the existential or hermeneutic (Larkin & Thompson, 2012). In

transcendental phenomenology, researchers 'bracket' or put aside their natural everyday world influenced by culture, context, history, and experience. By doing this, Husserl (1962) argued that a researcher could transcend their everyday assumptions and capture the essence of the phenomena. Heidegger (1985), however, contended that it is impossible to ignore our epistemological assumptions, because we are unable to remove ourselves from our knowledge, our beliefs, and our thoughts. So even if we wanted to remove ourselves from the interpretation of how others view a given phenomenon, it is not possible as we are always a 'person-in-context'. As Larkin and Thompson (2012) explain:

> At the heart of this argument lies Heidegger's view of the person as always and indelibly a 'person-in-context'. It is a mistake to believe that we can occasionally choose to take up a relationship with the various somatic and semantic objects that 'make up' our world, because such relatedness is a *fundamental part of our constitution*. We cannot occasionally jump out of an isolated subjective sphere to impose meaning on a world of otherwise meaningless objects, because we are always-already 'out there' in a meaningful world (Larkin & Thompson, 2012, p.106).

This view, known as existential or hermeneutic phenomenology, posits that phenomenology can only ever be interpretive. The phenomenological piece of this research is understanding how the Samoan diaspora conceptualise child wellbeing. The interpretive piece is making sense of how the Samoan children and their parents have made sense of their world, known as a double hermeneutic. Sense-making is the process by which people give meaning to their lived experiences. It is defined as "the ongoing retrospective development of plausible images that rationalize what people are doing" (Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005, p. 409). To develop a detailed account of the phenomena in focus, a primary data collection method is the use of semi-structured interviews (Smith & Osborn, 2003). This method positions the research partner as the primary expert, with the open-ended approach enabling them to tell their story in their own way.

In this section, I set out the ontology, epistemology, and methodology of my research that is encapsulated within a Samoan worldview. In Section 5.3, I will detail the methods, which is the last part of the research paradigm (Figure 16).

5.3   The methods

5.3.1: Recruiting the fish and the people in the canoe

The eligibility criteria for this research were 8-year-old Samoan children resident in Wellington and their parents. I selected this eligibility criteria for the following reasons:

1. *Samoan:* To enable in-depth research that captures the intra-ethnic nuances within the Samoan diaspora, the largest Pasifika ethnicity in New Zealand, and my ethnicity as a Samoan.

2. *Age*: The investment perspective argues that investing in children's early childhood development (ECD) yields the greatest rate of return in terms of social and economic development. The global definition of ECD is children from birth to 8 years of age.

3. *Wellington:* To account for regional differences across New Zealand, I focussed on one region.

In developing my ethics proposal, I took into account particular ethical considerations that come from researching with children, specific research techniques that take a child-centred approach, legal requirements stipulated in the *Vulnerable Children Act* (2014), and cultural considerations that arise with working with Samoan children. To guide ethical considerations such as ensuring that children did not feel coerced into a particular view, that they felt comfortable sharing their views with an adult researcher; and that they were treated with dignity, I drew on guidance from the *Ethical Research Involving Children initiative* ([ERIC], Graham, Powell, Taylor, Anderson, & Fitzgerald, 2013). The ERIC provides comprehensive advice on how to address these ethical considerations, with respect for the dignity, the wellbeing, and the rights of all children being central. I also drew on guidance from O'Reilly and Dogra (2017) to assist me to design the research in a way that was child-friendly and age appropriate. Central to the design was ensuring that children felt comfortable and believed that their contribution mattered. To ensure that my research complied with the provisions of the *Vulnerable Children Act* (2014), I worked through the University of Otago's Compliance Advice for Staff and Departments (University of Otago, 2016). Finally, to ensure my research was culturally appropriate, I drew on the article by Suaalii and Mavoa (2001) about who gives consent for Pasifika children to participate in research, in which they argue:

> …legal and ethical considerations around child rights are generally framed and understood using a Western lens that privileges the individual emphasising individualised ownership of knowledge and property. This individualistic framework is incongruent with the perspective of collective ownership and responsibilities… the right to give consent and to pass on knowledge is enmeshed in collective frameworks where the individual is an integral part of an extended family and wider community (Suaalii & Mavoa, 2001, p. 39).

Suaalii and Mavoa (2001) point out that knowledge is *measina* (treasure) and Pasifika children may not have the right to share this treasure without the consent of other family and community members. They recommend that the researcher ground the methodology in Pacific epistemologies, be cognisant of the collective nature of knowledge, and consult carefully with the community to ensure that the research is culturally appropriate. These recommendations align with my worldview as a Samoan, and as noted earlier, the default frame through which I view the world.

I incorporated these three strands of guidance – ethical, practical, and cultural guidance - into my ethics proposal, and this was approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee (the Committee) on 13 June 2016 (reference: 16/048). The Committee granted approval for my research to include 8-year-old Samoan children and their parents; for the children to take photos; for the children to use the photos to guide their *talanoa*; and for individual *talanoaga* to take place with their parents. The Committee considered my research compliant with the *Vulnerable Children Act* (2014) in that the children would take the photos under the supervision of their parents and the parents would have practical oversight of their child during the *talanoaga*. As part of the Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Otago and *Te Runanga o Ngāi Tahu*, I consulted with *Te Komiti Rakahau ki Kāi Tahu*, the Ngāi Tahu Research Consultation Committee. *Te Komiti Rakahau*

ki Kāi Tahu discussed the research proposal on 5 April 2016 and determined my research to be of importance to Māori health.

To recruit Samoan children and their parents to my research, I used a respondent-driven sampling approach. That is, I developed an information flyer (Appendix E) and sent this to my contacts - family, friends, churches, and primary schools in Wellington – asking that they forward it on to their contacts. As parents were recruited to my research, they recommended others to join, which resulted in several waves of research participants, with each wave recruited by the last (Ellard-Gray, Jeffrey, Choubak, & Crann, 2015). I selected respondent-driven because it was useful in reaching people beyond my social group. Shaghaghi, Bhopal, and Sheikh (2011) also suggest this approach as a way to mitigate against any potential risk of the sample population feeling labelled, subject to stigma and discrimination, or over-researched.

When parents signalled their interest in participating, I sent them background information about my research and discussed it with them (Appendix F). Prior to participating in this research, parents were required to sign a consent form (Appendix G). In relation to the children, I designed a two-step consent process. Firstly, I asked the parents, who had agreed to be part of this research, for their consent for and on behalf of their children. For those parents who consented to their child's participation, I gave their child information about my research (Appendix H) as well as a consent form (Appendix I). My initial target of 10 children increased to 11 children as one family had twins. I implemented the two-step consent process in recognition of the collective nature of the *fa'asamoa*, in which the children's identity and voice are closely bound within family and community contexts. Figure 17 shows the profiles of the Samoan children and their parents. I recruited participants in two phases:

- *Phase 1 (January to May 2017):* Of the seven families who expressed interest in participating: four families became research partners; two did not meet the eligibility criteria (one family moved away from Wellington and the other family's child was nearly 10 years old); and one family decided not to proceed as their son did not want to be involved. With the set of twins, the research participants for Phase 1 were four families and five children.

- *Phase 2 (June to September 2017):* I targeted recruitment for Phase 2 to ensure greater representation of the multiple faces and lived experiences of the Samoan diaspora. Of the nine families who expressed interest, I selected six to provide representation from across the Wellington region, gender balance of the children, and inclusion of a child living with a disability.

Figure17: The profiles of the Samoan children and their parents
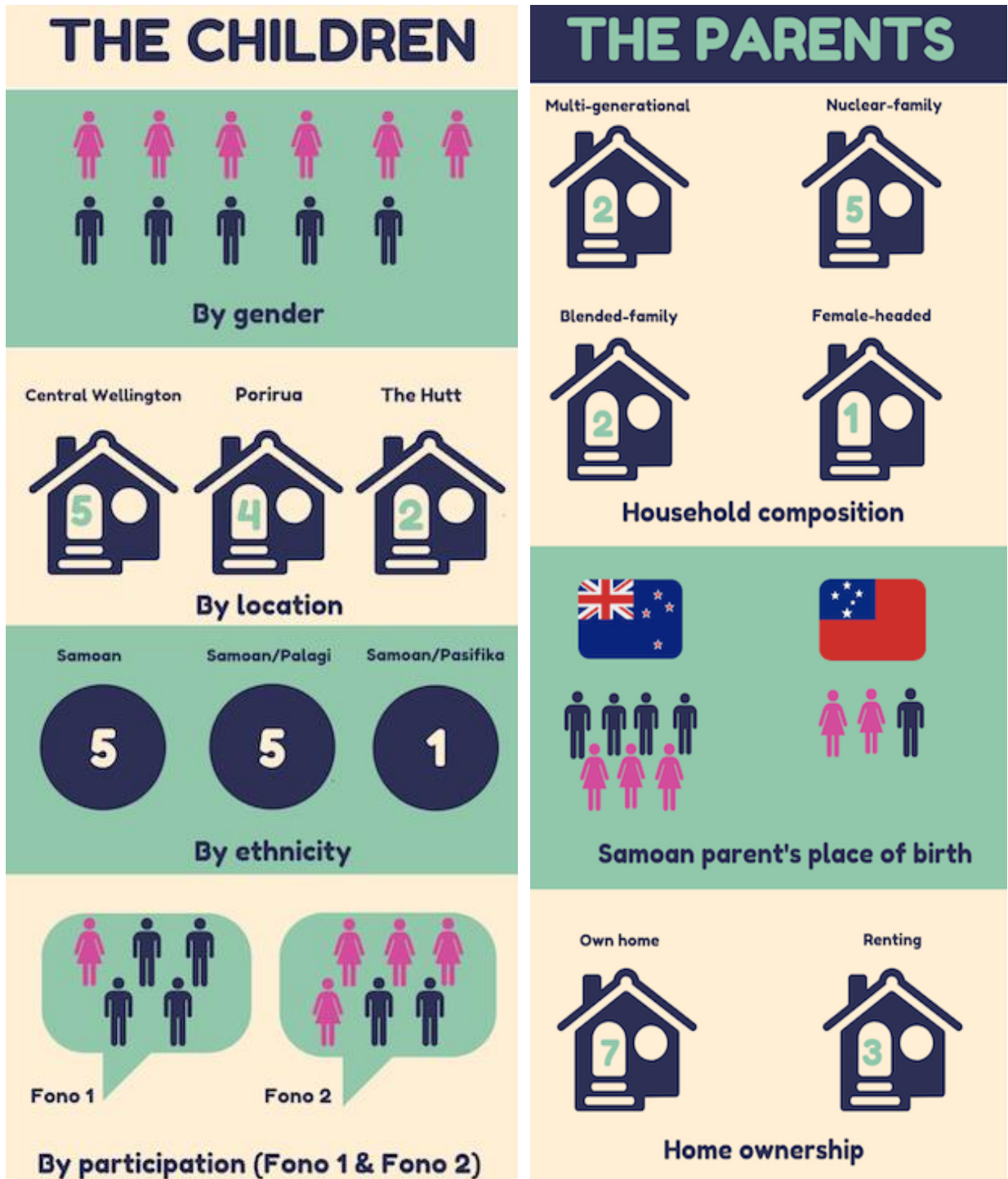
Source: Dunlop-Bennett

5.3.2: Asking the fish: the methods used with the children

To guide this methods section, Figure 18 provides an overview of the methods used with the children.

Figure 18: An overview of the methods used with the children
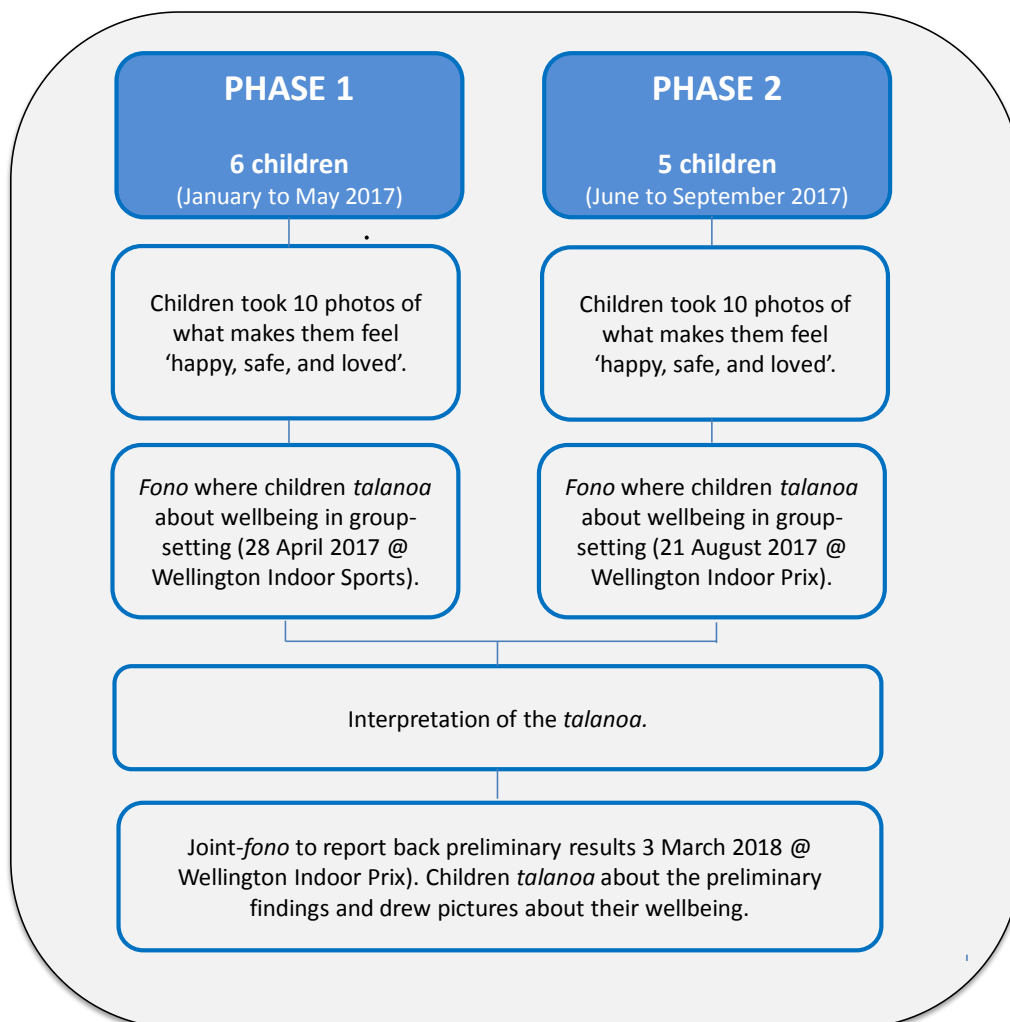
5.3.2a) Children's photos about wellbeing

From the outset of my research, I explored using photography as a tool to assist young children to communicate their ideas about their wellbeing. As can be seen in Table 10 children can use photography in research in a number of ways. I piloted these ideas with two 8-year-old Samoan children living in Wellington to gauge their interest in photography as a research tool. The children thought that taking photos would be something fun to do and that it was within their capability. They were most interested in being able to decide what photos they took.

Developed by Wang and Burris (1997), photovoice differs from other approaches to documentary photography in that participants are given cameras to take images that reflect their story through their eyes. Participants are not standing as passive subjects in other people's images. In the first stage of photovoice participants choose themselves what

images to photograph and from the images they have taken, which ones should be used for the research. I found disposable cameras were used in other research with Samoan children living in New Zealand (Dickie & McDonald, 2011). In piloting this with the two 8-year-old children, they said they were not familiar with disposable cameras and suggested that an iPhone or iPad would be easier for them. I amended the methods accordingly.

Table 10: Different approaches to using photography in research

	Approach	Advantages	Disadvantages
1	Children are given photos which they use to guide their answers during discussions with the researcher.	It is easier for young children to have photos provided for them.	The photos may not resonate with the children. The children may want to refer to topics that are not included in the photos
2	The researcher follows the children and takes photos of what the children point to or make mention of.	The children feel like they are leading this process, and guide it	The scope of photos will be limited to the selected environment, which may be too narrow to capture the children's views.
3	Children take photos of what they think is important to the topic	Children lead the process themselves and can take photos of anything, any place, and any person that demonstrates their view.	Children may need guidance to be able to take the photos they want to demonstrate their view.

Source: Dunlop-Bennett,

Guided by this I asked children to take photos of what wellbeing meant to them. As wellbeing is a term that may not be used in the everyday language of children, I asked them to take photos of what makes them feel "happy, safe, and loved". I considered other descriptors like those used in other national-level definitions such as asking children to take photos of what makes them feel, "healthy, safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution, and having economic wellbeing" (Every Child Matters, 2003) or "healthy, safe, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, and included" (Getting it Right for Every Child, 2012). In exploring these and the other options, I decided to keep the list of descriptors short so that it was easy for the children to remember. Over the research process, the descriptors 'happy, safe, and loved' almost became jingle like for the children.

I wrote to all of the children explaining the research process and asked them to take ten photos of whatever they wanted that made them feel "happy, safe and loved" and reassured them that whatever photos they took would be useful (Appendix K). Other than this, I did not provide any guidance to the children so that they were able to lead the photography process. In allowing children to lead the photography process, a number of different ways or processes emerged. For example, one child said that she took 25 photos and then selected her "best 10" to send in. Another child said that he took 10 photos and these were the photos he submitted. To give a third example, one child said that she took some photos especially for this research and she also used photos that she had taken the year before. The photos from the year before were of a family holiday.

5.3.2b) Group talanoa at the fono

The second stage of photovoice is contextualising that is voicing the individual and collective experience. As Wang and Burris (1997, p. 381) explain, "Photographs alone, considered outside the context of [their] own voices and stories, would contradict the essence of photovoice".

Faleolo (2013) argues that listening to the voices of those who know, live and breathe the Samoan culture is the foundation of cultural validity. The contextualising of photos or the *talanoa* took place in a *fono*. A *fono*, translated as a meeting or gathering, was organised for the children so that they could *talanoa* about their wellbeing. The children used their photos to guide their insights during the *talanoa*. For both phases, the children took photos in the month leading up to the *fono*. The Phase 1 children took photos over March and April for the *fono* on 28 April 2017, while the Phase 2 children took photos in July and August for the *fono* on 21 August 2017.

Prior to the first *fono*, I sought the advice of a primary-school trained Samoan teacher who works in Wellington about how to: a) keep the children engaged in the *talanoa*, b) ensure that all the children participated, and c) that the *talanoa* was age-appropriate. Before each *fono*, I developed an outline of the day and sent it to the children (Figure 19). As the children were from different parts of Wellington and may have not known each other, I organised activities to 'break the ice'. The first *fono* (28 April 2017) was held at the Wellington Indoor Sports Centre, where the children took part in indoor bowling and laserforce. The second *fono* (21 August 2017) was held at the Wellington Indoor Prix where children did go-karting, laserforce, and mini golf. The change in venue for the second *fono* was to make it more accessible for children from Porirua and the Hutt to attend.

Figure 19: The letter sent to children with the fono details

University of Otago Human Ethics Committee Reference Number: 16/08

CHILDREN'S FONO

Hey guys....thank you so much for the photos that you have sent me. You are super!

To say thanks, we've organized a hang-out:

Date:	Friday 28 April
Time:	1.30pm to 5.30pm
Where:	Wellington Indoor Sports Complex (52 Hall Street, Newtown)

In between the laserwarfare and the bowling, we'll have some food/drink and a chat about the great photos that you have taken. Below is how we're thinking the hang-out might go:

WHAT WE'RE GONNA DO

	1.30pm	Say hello and get to know each other
	2pm	Laserwarfare
	3.30pm	Refuel with food and chat about photos
	4.30pm	Bowling
	5.30pm	Time to say goodbye

I so hope you can come!

Please let your parents know that if they want to come and hang also – they are welcome to.

If you need a lift – all good. Please ask your mum or dad to let me know and we'll sort it out.

Research: Through their eyes. A Samoan perspective on child well-being

Source: Dunlop-Bennett

Following the ice-breakers, I sat with the children around the table to *talanoa* about their photos. Each child had a hand-sized copy of their photos so that they could easily flick through their photos and find the one they wanted to support their *talanoa*. In addition to the hand-sized pack of their photos that I gave each child, I printed all of the photos onto A4 paper and pinned them to the wall.

To help put the children at ease, I began the *talanoaga* with an example of how they could answer the questions. In doing this, I could be viewed as a 'participatory voice' which could potentially influence the outcome. Acknowledging the potential risk, my primary concern was ensuring that the children felt comfortable enough to participate. Below is the *talanoa* at the beginning of the Phase 2 *fono* to demonstrate:

Researcher	*So the chat that we are going to do now is about your photos and how they are important to you. So like I'm keen to hear more about your photos. Like this one for example, it's a photo of a ….*
Moana	*It's a beach.*
Tomasi	*A beach.*
Mele	*I like going to the beach.*

Researcher	*Yes….it's a beach…. absolutely. This photo here really makes me feel really happy because when I was young, my parents used to take us to the beach…and so I get really happy when I think about the beach. If I'm unsure about something, I like to go to the beach to think.*

To keep the children informed of process, I told the children how the *talanoaga* would take place, reiterating that there were no wrong answers. The following is an excerpt from the beginning of the first *fono*:

Researcher	*Before we start, there are just a couple of things. First of all…there are no wrong answers. Everything you say is right because it's important.*
Tomasi	*ohhhh that's cool.*
Tavita	*I can do that.*
Researcher	*If you don't want to answer a question, that's okay you don't have to just say pass.*
Pele	*Say nothing.*
Moana	*Just don't say anything.*
Ioane	*Say I ignore you (laughs).*
Researcher	*(sings) PAAAAAS….that's right….no worries (laughs).*
	(kids laugh).
	And if I've misunderstood you or you don't get something I say, just let me know. It's all good. And the last thing… it's okay if something you say [points to a child] is different to something you say [points to another child] because we all have different stories and that's what makes this so cool. Alright guys?

I made the *talanoa* like a quiz game, structuring the initial questions along the lines of "You have ten seconds to show me a photo of what makes you feel loved" and then starting a timer. The children could choose whichever photo they wanted to answer the question. As shown in the *talanoa* below, some children chose one photo to guide their answer while others chose several. It was entirely up to the children themselves to decide.

Researcher	*Okay now we are going to look for a photo….have you all got your photos still? Great. You have 10 seconds to find a photo that makes you feel safe....Okay who is going to go…ola you all want to go first (laughs)....Mosese, what photo have you chosen?*
Mosese	*This is a photo of me looking after my cousin. We were at the waterfront… ummm on the ice and my cousin couldn't go by herself. She was too young… so there was a frame that she leant on and I helped her.*
Researcher	*What a great big cousin you are. What is it about this photo that makes you feel safe?*
Mosese	*Well my cousin felt safe cos she was with me. I feel safe when I'm with someone…you know, someone who is looking after me.*
Researcher	*That's a really great answer. Thanks Mosese. Tualagi, what photo do you have there?*
Tualagi	*I've got three photos (laughs).*
Researcher	*(laughs) Great, which photo would you like to talk about first?*

Tualagi	*This one. It's my bedroom…and it makes me feel safe because…. I'm in a house that won't blow away.*
Researcher	*That's great Tualagi.*
Tualagi	*Also it has all my special things in it…like my toys and now I have a bunk bed…and I like being with my little lamb that makes noises….. Mata gave it to me before she died so…..*
Researcher	*So that's really special then?*
Tualagi	*Yeah.*
Researcher	*That must have been sad?*
Tualagi	*Yeah…my mum and dad say she's ok though…we know where she is*
Researcher	*Yes, your mum and dad are right. What is your other photo of?*
Tualagi	*Oh this one…its popcorn.*
Researcher	*(laughs) Popcorn?*
Tualagi	*(laughs) Yeah…cos my sister makes it for me…it's my favourite snack.*
Researcher	*What is it about your sister making you popcorn that makes you feel safe?*
Tualagi	*Cos she looks after me…I'm safe with her…I like it when she looks after me…you know, if mum and dad are busy…I feel safe.*
Researcher	*That's really great. And your last photo.*
Tualagi	*It's this one…with my dad again.*
Researcher	*In your onesie?*
Tualagi	*Yeah, I don't have a photo of my mum…I don't know why….cos my mum and dad make me feel safe all the time…they protect me and help me when I'm hurt….or when I'm sad they make me feel better…*

As noted earlier, the *talanoa* process is flexible in that the precise nature of questions are not determined in advance but depend on the way in which the *talanoa* develops (Vaioleti, 2006 p. 25). Consideration of the children's age, the number of children attending each *fono*, and how to keep them engaged in the *talanoa* guided my decision to develop a set of questions to keep the *talanoa* more focussed (Table 11).

Table 11: Questions that I asked the children

You have ten seconds to find a photo of what makes you feel happy
You have ten seconds to find a photo of what makes you feel safe
You have ten seconds to find a photo of what makes you feel loved
What are you grateful for?
What are three words that you would use to describe yourself?
What is something that you are learning now that will help you when you become an adult?
(Showing a photo of a child from the internet):   What should we name him?   How do you think this child is feeling?   Thinking of what makes you feel happy, safe and loved, how could you help [insert name]?
If you are feeling unhappy or sad about something, what do you do to feel better?

I invited the parents to attend the *fono* so that they had oversight of their child at all times, in line with my ethics approval. For the first *fono*, I hired a separate room and parents sat outside the room where the *talanoaga* was taking place. For the second *fono*, a separate room was not available to hold the *talanoaga* so I set up the tables and photos in a private part of a communal space, which nobody else was using. The parents of the Phase 2 children sat on the other side of this communal space. At both *fono*, parents could see their children, but were not close enough to hear the *talanoa* or participate in it. In other words, the parents had no direct influence over the *talanoa*.

5.3.2c) Using IPA to interpret children's views

To frame my approach to Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), I drew on the work of Larkin and Thompson (2012), Larkin, et al. (2008), Pietkiewicz and Smith (2012), Smith, et al. (2009), and Smith and Osborn (2007), before looking at specific guidelines for using IPA with focus groups, as provided by Palmer, Larkin, de Visser, and Fadden (2010), Phillips, Montaguea, and Archer (2016), and Tomkins and Eatough (2010). I drew on the latter set of guidelines to reflect the methods that I used with the *i'a,* which is similar to a focus group setting. While the group dynamic can add something extra to the discussion, it can also make it more difficult to develop personal phenomenological accounts (Phillips, et al., 2016). The presence of multiple voices, moving between individual and shared contexts, and the interactions between individuals for example, all add complexity to undertaking standard IPA. Tomkins and Eatough (2010) argue that applying standard IPA process to focus groups tend to privilege the group at the expense of the individual's account or privilege the individual at the expense of the group's account. Extending this argument, Phillips, et al. (2016) add that most IPA focus group research has treated the data as representing a multiplicity of individuals' perspectives, which do not take into account the interactions between individuals of the group. Disregarding the context in which the accounts are given can, they argue, impact on the phenomenological interpretation of the data.

Phillips, et al. (2016) suggest a four-step approach with specific group focussed analytical strategies of looking for 'groupness', clustering re-occurring group interactions, identifying interactional relationships, and incorporating these group elements into the analysis. Tomkins and Eatough (2010) suggest balancing the individual and group level interpretation by mapping the individual's account onto the themes that come out of the group. They also suggest that consideration be given to the sense-making that may take place within the group setting at the time of the discussion. In drawing on these suggested processes for undertaking IPA of a group setting, I also took note of Pietkiewicz and Smith's (2012) advice that IPA guidelines:

> ...can be adapted by individual researchers, according to their research objectives... these guidelines are merely an illustration of one possible way of analysing the qualitative material. They should not be treated as a recipe and the researcher is advised to be flexible and creative (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012, p. 6).

To balance the voices of the individual fish within the school of fish, I used IPA process (Smith, et al., 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2007) as well as focus-group guidelines (Phillips, et al.,

2016; Tonkin & Eatough, 2010). I used IPA process to get an overall sense of the group-level *talanoa* before exploring the individual child's account and the interactions between the children. Table 12 shows how the IPA process and group-focus IPA were used. While the way in which they are set out in Table 12 suggests that they are discrete blocks, in practice there was overlap between the stages. In line with Larkin, et al. (2006), I was engaged in sense-making throughout, moving around the hermeneutic circle before returning back to the earlier stages of the process, as the interpretation developed.

Table 12: Stages to interpret the perspectives of the i'a

	Stage	Action that I took
Standard IPA	1. Become immersed in the data	• I transcribed the *talanoa* from the two *fono*: Phase 1 and Phase 2. • I read the transcripts against the audio recording checking for accuracy. • When confirmed as verbatim transcripts of the *talanoa*, I read the transcripts multiple times, making notes in the margin. These notes included my recollections from the *fono*, my reaction to the experiential knowledge shared by the children, my sense of the meaning behind what the children had said, as well as imagery that came to mind.
	2. Identify emerging themes	• Using a clean copy of the transcript, I carried out a line by line interpretation of the text. I did this for each of the two phases separately. • I did the interpretation at the group-level, focussing on the experiential claims, concerns and understandings of the children from each group. • I then re-immersed myself back into the data to ensure that initial themes still held and that there were no other themes emerging from the data. • I completed this process for Phase 1 *fono* and Phase 2 *fono* separately.
	3. Cluster themes	• Following group-level interpretation from each *fono*, I developed a table that contained the themes.
Focus-group IPA	4. Overlay of the individual perspective	• From the Phase 1 *fono* transcript, I separated out the individual transcripts for each child. These individual transcripts also contained narrative from other children, where there had been an interaction between children (in preparation for Stage 5). • Working from individual transcripts of the children, I coded 10 narratives for each child. • I mapped these narratives onto the table of themes to trace the individuals account within the group-level interpretation. • I refreshed the overall thematic structure for the group-level analysis to reflect the views of the individual children.

	Stage	Action that I took
		• When this process was completed for the Phase 1 *fono*, I repeated it for the Phase 2 *fono*.
	5. Bring in group dynamic	• I examined the transcripts of the individual children at the Phase 1 *fono* to identify the interactions between children, to understand the extent to which the group dynamic influenced the *talanoa*. These interactions were clustered.
		• I examined the transcripts of the individual children at the Phase 1 *fono* to identify instances where real-time sense-making took place, to understand the extent to which a response from one child influenced another.
		• When this process was completed for the Phase 1 *fono*, I repeated it for the Phase 2 *fono*.
Standard IPA	6. Look for connections between the themes	• I compared the two thematic structures – Phase 1 and Phase 2 – and integrated • I did this manually on a printed verbatim transcription.
	7. Feedback to the children	• I held a *fono* to feedback the preliminary findings back to the children. This was a joint *fono* for all children from Phase 1 and Phase 2. • I amended the preliminary findings in line with the children's *talanoa*.
	8. Evaluation process	• I evaluated my process of IPA against Smith (2011) evaluation criteria.

Source: adapted from Phillips, et al., 2016; Smith, 2011; Smith, et al., 2009; Tomkins & Eatough, 2010).

In relation to the stages highlighted in Table 12, I carried out Stages 1 to 5 separately for Phase 1 *fono* and Phase 2 *fono*. The first time that I considered the preliminary findings from the two *fono* together was at Stage 6, as shown in Figure 20. From this point onwards, the process was joint.

Figure 20: The interplay of IPA stages
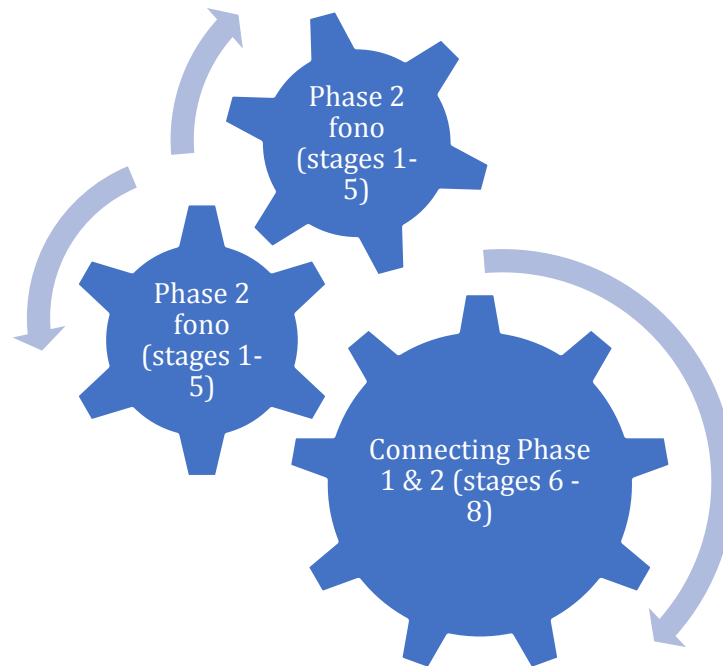
Source: Dunlop-Bennett

To become immersed in the data, I transcribed the audio recordings myself. This involved me listening to the audio recordings multiple times. Each time that I listened to the audio recordings, I gained new insights into what was the children had said. Once the audio recordings were transcribed, I checked the draft transcripts against the original audio recordings to check for accuracy. I then adjusted the transcript where it had not accurately captured things like pauses or children interrupting each other.

When the transcript was finalised, I read the complete transcript making notes in the right-hand margin, as shown in Figure 21. These notes included my recollections from the *fono*; my initial reaction to the experiential knowledge shared by the children; any narrative that stood out to me as interesting, significant or unexpected; as well as any imagery that came to mind. This laid the foundation for the second stage, which is a line-by-line interpretation of the transcript. I did or performed this several times. With each subsequent read, I found that I was adding more notes in the margins. Patterns began to evolve and become more prominent as I worked.

Figure 21: A sample of the free coding process
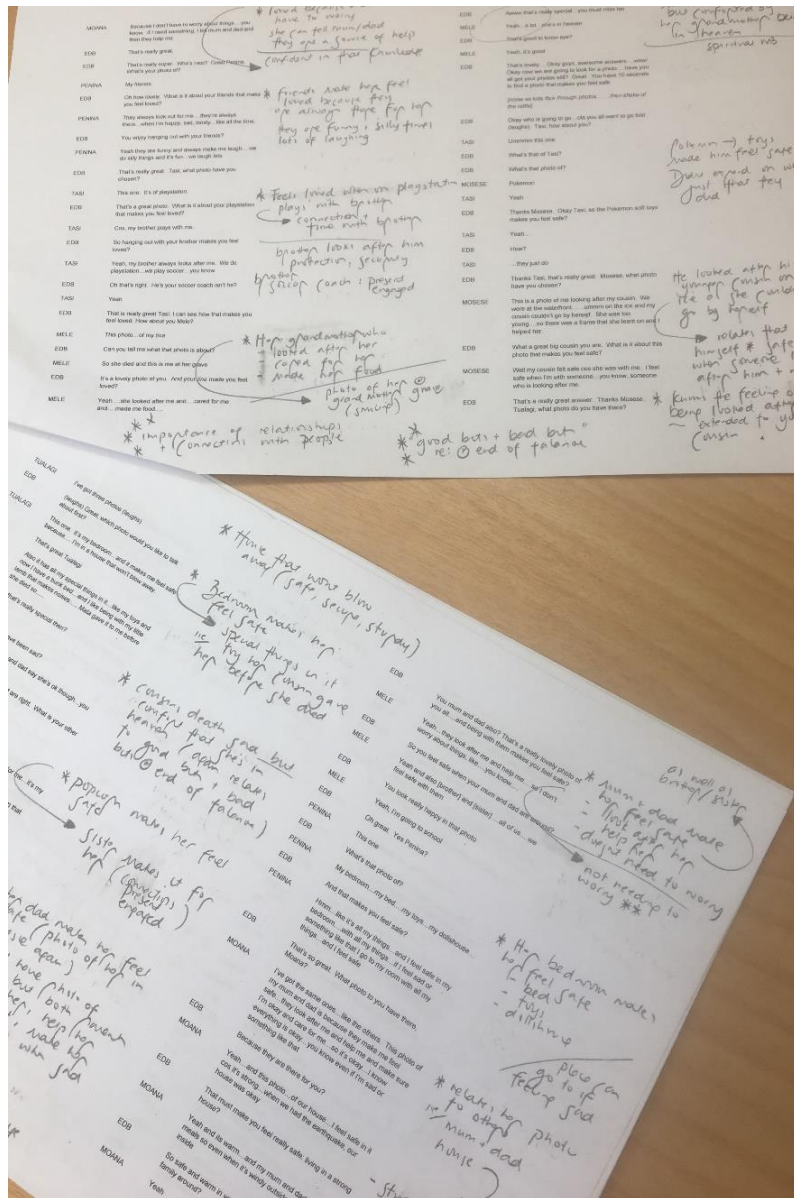
In the third stage, I transformed the notes into themes. To use the example of the Phase 2 *fono,* from Figure 21, one of the emerging themes was 'Social Connections'. Children spoke of enjoying swimming, spending time on PlayStation, and playing sports. When I asked the children what it was about the activity they enjoyed, their replies related to spending time with family or friends. Figure 22 shows the *talanoa* from the children that related to spending time with family, with my notes on the right. The numbers against each name relate to the line of *talanoa* as it appears in the group-setting transcript. This is so I could easily refer back to the broader narrative to which the text related. I found this to be a useful way to keep track of the emerging themes.

Figure 22: An extract from emerging themes from Phase 2 fono

Theme 2: Connections

Mele 241	This one of us at the beach…all my family were there and we went swimming	Enjoyed swimming primarily because spending time with family - connecting with family
Mele 253	Yeah…it was a fun day…everyone….together	
Moana 67	My family…they make me feel loved because they are always around. I'm never lonely because there is always someone there….like my sisters…or my brother.	Feels safe and secure when connects with family
Tasi 88	This one. It's of PlayStation.	Enjoys PlayStation because hanging out with brother [spending time, connecting]
Tasi 91	Cos, my brother plays with me.	
Tasi 94	Yeah, my brother always looks after me. We do PlayStation…we play soccer…you know	
Tualagi 262	Yeah, this one with me is with my little brother and my mum, helping my mum	Enjoys helping out – behind this activity is connections made with mum, brother, cousin
Tualagi 267	Because….I like helping and I like being with my brother and my mum	
Tualagi 273	It makes me feel happy because I like reading to them...to my brother and my cousin. Here they are laughing at each other. [Brother] and [Cousin]	

Source: Dunlop-Bennett

As cumulative patterns within the transcript emerged and the themes began to take shape, I developed a table showing an overall summary of themes at the group-level. Table 13 shows the table that I developed in relation to the example used earlier from the Phase 2 *fono* I developed a separate table of themes for each *fono*.

Stage 4 involved the overlay of the individual child's account. Having identified the themes at the group-level interpretation, I diverged from standard IPA process to one that could capture the individual child within the group setting of the *fono*, as well as interactions between the children. To do this, I separated out each child's narrative from the group transcript. Working from individual transcripts of the children, I coded 10 sense-making blocks of narrative for each child. Each block of narrative reflected a point of view from the child. I mapped these narratives onto Table 13 to trace the individuals account within the group-level interpretation.

Children participated at different levels during the *fono*. Reflecting the individual nature of the children, some children gave more detail in their answers while others gave less. While this could have potentially become a limitation, by selecting 10 blocks of *talanoa* for each child I believe that this balanced out the *talanoa*.

As Tomkins and Eatough (2010) suggested, I numbered each block of narrative for every participant from 1 to 10. When I showed the table with individual mapping on it to other researchers, they were unclear about the purpose of the numbering and initially misinterpreted the numbers as referring to the number of times that a child had spoken of that particular theme. To eliminate this misinterpretation, I took the numbers out and only retained the colour, as shown in Table 14. Layering the individual narrative onto the group-level themes changed the picture. Following through the previous example of Theme 2: Social Connections for example, there was a particular intensity of mapping for *spending time*

with my family and hanging with my friends but not so much for connecting with the environment or spending time reading books, playing with toys, or on my device. When the individual narratives of the children were taken into account, it changed the prominence of some of the themes. The intensity of clustering, which represented the frequency of which a theme was mentioned, required me to revisit the overall thematic structure. As a result, I refreshed the thematic structure to reflect the individual accounts.

Table 13: The group-analysis themes (Phase 2 fono)

| **Theme 1: Wellbeing is a bunch of stuff** |
| It's made up of good stuff and bad stuff |
| It's a whole bunch of stuff [physical, mental, emotional, social, spiritual, cultural] |
| What I'm learning is important to me now and when I grow up |
| **Theme 2: Connections** |
| Spending time with my family |
| Hanging out with my friends |
| Connecting with the environment |
| Spending time reading books, playing with toys, or on my device |
| **Theme 3: Not having to worry** |
| Knowing I can depend on mum and dad |
| Taking time out |
| Having someone to talk to |
| Being looked after, cared for, and protected |
| **Theme 4: A sense of belonging and feeling included** |
| Not feeling lonely |
| Feeling included with friends |
| Belonging to the team |
| Having a place at school |
| **Theme 5: Feeling safe and secure** |
| Having my family around |
| Living in a safe house |
| My bedroom full of special things |
| **Theme 6: Being a good person** |
| Helping others |
| Being respectful, having integrity, being kind |
| **Theme 7: Achieving** |
| Learning |
| In the team [shooting the goal, kicking the goal, defending the goal post] |

Source: Dunlop-Bennett

To account for the 'group-dynamic', I examined the transcripts of the individual children at each *fono* to identify the interactions that took place between children (Stage 5). The purpose of this was to identify where the children appeared to respond to the group setting. This helped me to understand the extent to which the group dynamic may have influenced the experiential claims and understandings of the individual children. The second part of this stage was to understand what Tomkins and Eatough (2010, p. 255) describe as working with "real time sense-making". As noted earlier, the interpretative piece of IPA is making sense of how the participants themselves have made sense of their world. This interpretation piece is usually done post-*talanoa*. As the *talanoa* took place within a group setting, this gave rise to

the potential that some of the sense-making occurred during the *fono;* for example, by children making sense of and building on each other's narrative. To understand the extent to which this may have been a factor, I examined the transcripts looking for instances where this happened. I did this separately for both of the *fono*. When I had completed this for both Phase 1 and Phase 2 *fono*, I brought the preliminary findings together to look for linkages across the *fono* (Stage 6). As illustrated in Figure 20, this was the first time that I considered the preliminary findings from the two *fono* together. By identifying these linkages for the 11 children, I developed or was able to develop the final thematic table.

Table 14: Mapping individual accounts onto group-analysis (Phase 2 fono)
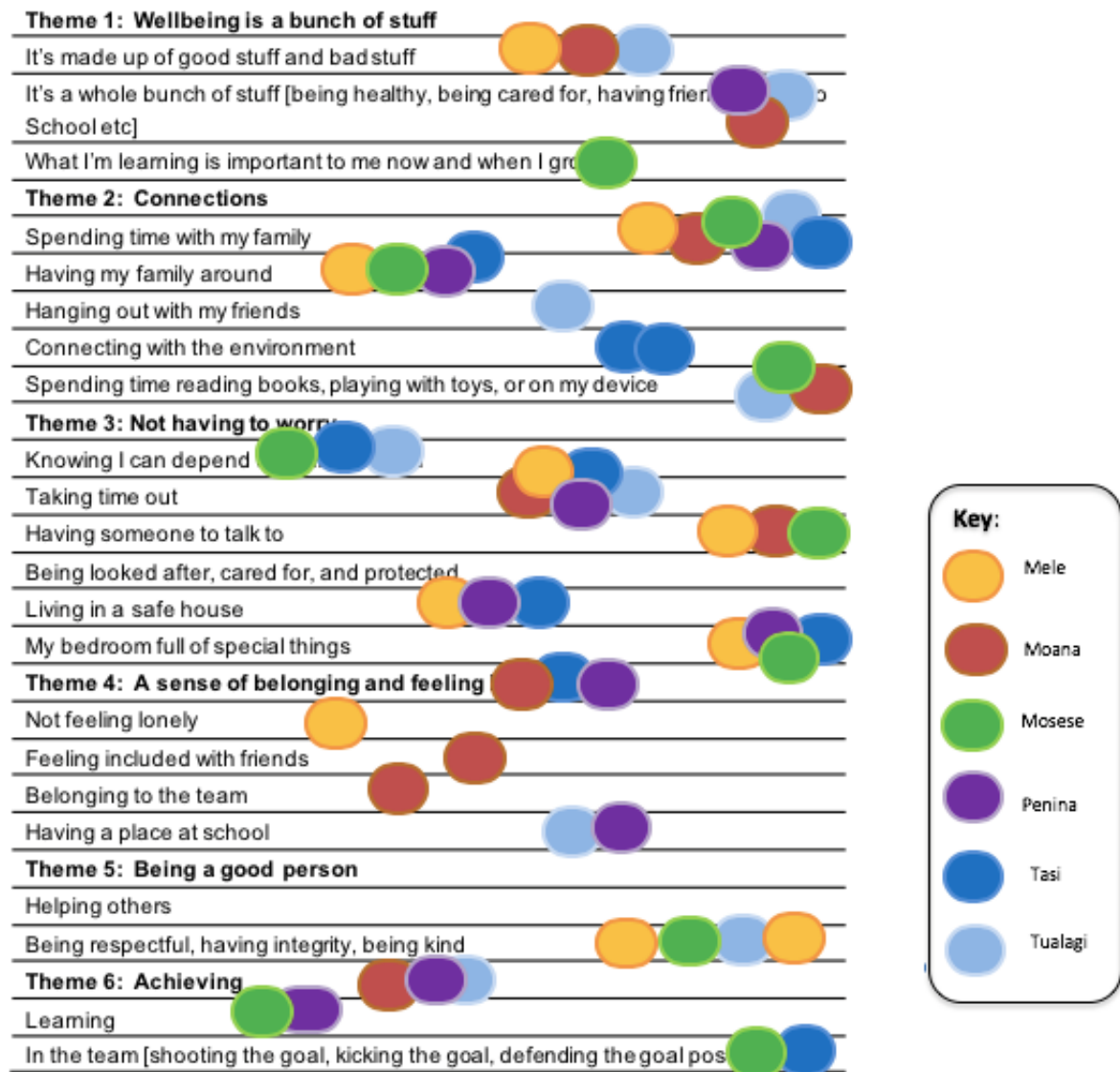
Stage 7 involved accountability back to the children. I invited the children from Phase 1 and Phase 2 to a joint *fono* so that we could discuss the preliminary findings. This was an important measure to ensure that I had interpreted their views correctly. Of the 11 children who participated in Phase 1 and Phase 2, seven were able to attend this report-back *fono*. The structure of this report-back *fono* ran along similar lines to the Phase 1 and Phase 2 *fono* in terms of the children doing a fun activity before and after the *talanoaga*.

To guide the *talanoaga*, I printed each theme onto an A3 piece of paper with a selection of anonymous *talanoa* from the children that supported each theme. While the *talanoa* was not attributed to any individual child, the children who attended the joint *fono* were able to recognise the *talanoa* that was theirs. I hung these A3 themes onto the wall and talked the children through each theme as a group. Between each theme, I gave the children the opportunity to share their views about whether what I was saying matched their views. After I had presented all of the preliminary findings, I again asked the children whether it matched with their thinking about their wellbeing. There was some discussion, which I incorporated into the final findings, but overwhelmingly the children agreed with the preliminary findings. This agreement could reflect a power dynamic between the children and I, although reflecting on the confidence that the children displayed during the *talanoaga*, I am of the view that they would have informed me if the preliminary findings were off target.

While I had intended that reporting back the preliminary findings to the children would feature as part of my methodology, I had not envisaged that this would offer another opportunity to generate data. Towards the end of our discussion, I noticed that some of the children were doodling with the coloured pens that I had on the table. Guided by this, I asked the children how they would draw their wellbeing. The children's pictures, provided in Chapter 6, use the language of the preliminary findings such as naming the dimensions of wellbeing as physical, mental, socio-emotional, cultural, and spiritual.

In the final stage, Stage 8, I evaluated the IPA process against Smith's (2011) evaluation criteria. This evaluation is provided in Table 18 in Section 5.4. Throughout the IPA process, I continually reviewed the steps that I took to ensure the process was robust. Through using this adapted IPA process, I was able to identify the key findings, from the lens of the children. These findings are provided in Chapter 6.

5.3.3: Asking the people in the canoe: the methods used with the parents

5.3.3a) Talanoa with the pii ama

In this research, the perspective of the people in the canoe is represented by the parents of the 8-year-old Samoan children. The purpose of the individual *talanoaga* was to explore in-depth how Samoan parents conceptualise their child's wellbeing, to learn about the aspirations they held for their child, and how the wellbeing of their child was supported in the home and by the broader community. As noted earlier, parents were either recommended by mutual family and friends, or responded to an information flyer in their child's school newsletter. The ten families that partnered with this research were diverse in terms of their geographic spread across Wellington, their household composition, and their ethnic mix, as illustrated in Figure 17.

As noted earlier, *talanoa* is an open technique where the precise nature of the questions are not determined in advance, but rather questioning unfolds in a way that is largely determined by the research partners. In this way, *talanoa* creates the space for all sorts of things to be shared, and discussed. To allow the *talanoaga* to unfold at a pace set by the parents and for the direction of the *talanoa* to go where they chose, I deliberately did not provide any cultural references to child wellbeing nor any phrasing or definitions about what child wellbeing might or might not include. I wanted to hear what the parents wanted to share and let them frame

their views in ways that were authentic to them. To help start the *talanoaga*, I prepared four broad questions (Table 15).

Table 15: The starter questions for parents

When you think of the wellbeing of your child, what comes to mind?
What are the aspirations that you have for your child?
How are these aspirations supported: in the home and in the community?
If you had to write a letter to your child's teacher, what would you want them to know about your child

Source: Dunlop-Bennett

I scheduled the *talanoaga* around the parents' availability and at a place that was convenient to them. In looking for a place that was most convenient for the research partners, I offered the university meeting rooms as one option. Of the ten *talanoa*ga: four took place in the homes of the research partners, two took place at a café, one took place at the research partner's place of work, two took place at the University of Otago's Wellington Campus, and one took place at a church. Partners could choose for the *talanoaga* to be in English or *Gagaga Samoa*. All of the parents opted for English, with several switching to *Gagaga Samoa* when making specific cultural references. I recorded the *talanoaga* on an iPhone and backed them up onto the university computer prior to transcribing each *talanoaga*.

I transcribed and interpreted each *talanoaga* prior to carrying out the next one. Van Manen (1990 p.62) argues that as "we gather people's experiences…they allow us to become more experienced ourselves". This was true for my research: by interpreting each *talanoaga* before carrying out the next one, I was acquiring 'new' knowledge before each *talanoaga*. Put another way, my starting position was different for each of the 10 *talanoaga*. By the time I undertook the tenth *talanoaga*, I was drawing on knowledge that I had gained from the previous nine *talanoaga*.

5.3.3b) Interpreting the voices of the parents

As with the children, I drew on guidelines offered by Larkin and Thompson (2012), Larkin, et al. (2008), Pietkiewicz and Smith (2012), Smith and Osborn (2007), and Van Manen (1990) to interpret the views shared by the parents during the *talanoaga.* I did not need to adapt the IPA process with parents, as I needed to with the children, because I did not hold group-setting *talanoaga*. Instead, I held separate *talanoaga* with the parent, or in some cases, both parents of each child. A comparison of how IPA was used for the Samoan children and for their parents is provided in Figure 23.

Figure 23: A comparison of the IPA process used with the Samoan children and their parents
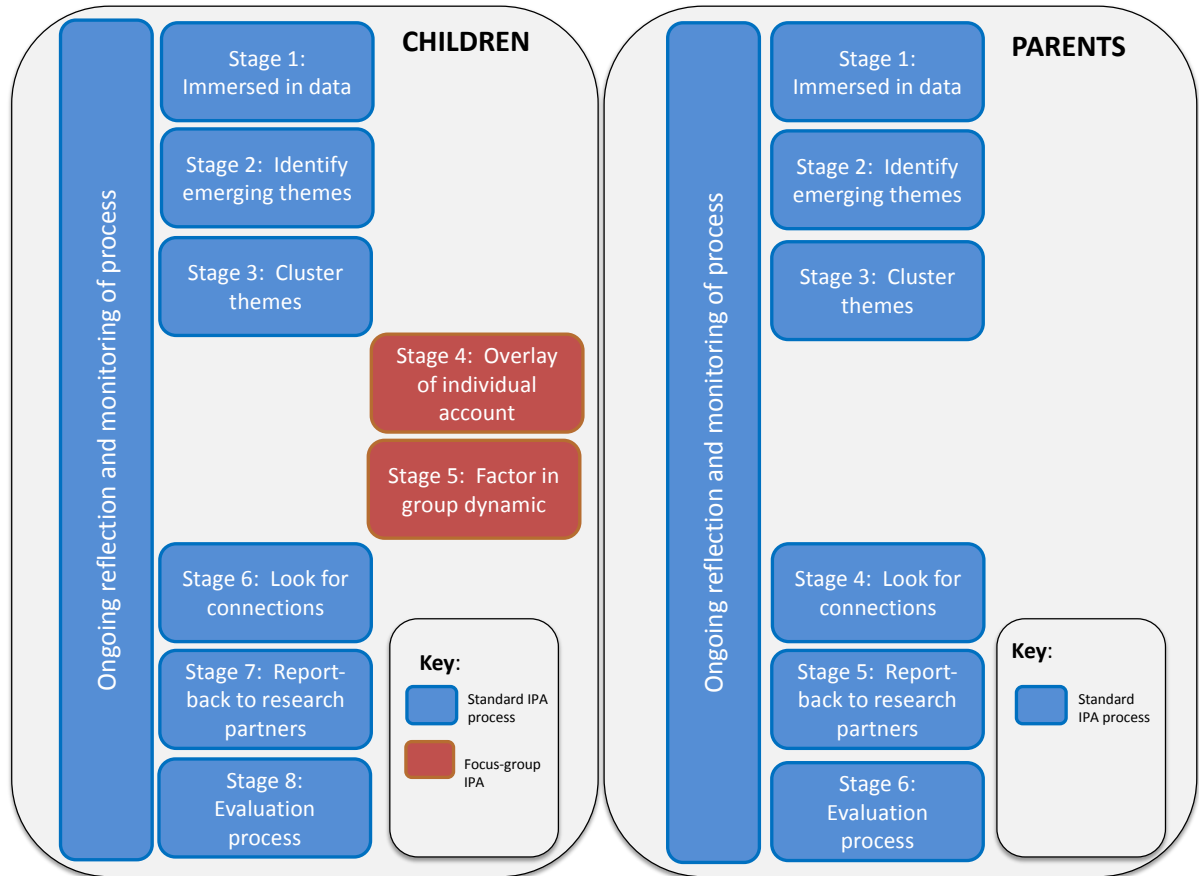
Table 16 details the six-stage IPA process I used to interpret the perspectives of the parents. As noted in the methods used with the children, there is overlap between these stages reflecting what Larkin, et al. (2006) describe as the researcher being engaged in sense-making throughout the process - moving around the hermeneutic circle before returning back to the earlier stages of the process - as the interpretation develops.

Table 16: Stages to interpret the perspectives of the pii ama

	Stage	Action that I took
S t a n d a r d I P A	1. Become immersed in the data	• I transcribed the *talanoa* from the 10 *talanoaga* that took place with the parents. • I checked transcripts against the audio recording checking for accuracy. • When confirmed as verbatim transcripts of the *talanoaga*, I read the transcripts multiple times, making notes in the margin. These notes included my recollections from the *talanoaga*, my reaction to the experiential knowledge shared by the parents, my sense of the meaning behind what the parents had said, as well as imagery that came to mind.
	2. Identify emerging themes	• Using a clean copy of the transcript, I carried out a line by line interpretation of the text from the first *talanoaga*. I made notes of the emerging themes. • I developed a table of the emerging themes from the first *talanoaga*. • I went back to the original transcript to ensure that these emerging themes reflected the *talanoa*.

	Stage	Action that I took
	3. Cluster themes	• I rearranged emerging themes into 'like' themes. • When I completed the first *talanoaga*, I carried out the second *talanoaga* and completed Step 1 to Step 3. I repeated this until all 10 *talanoaga* had taken place, the *talanoa* had been transcribed, and a table of emerging themes had been developed for each *talanoaga*.
	4. Look for connections between the themes	• I examined the 10 tables of themes looking for connections as well as instances where there was a disconnect in the *talanoa* of the parents. • Once established, I went back to the line-by-line transcript to look at supporting narrative to support the theme. • I further refined these into key themes and lessor themes
	5. Feedback to the parents	• I emailed the summary of the key themes to parents, asking for their views as to the extent to which my interpretation reflected their perspectives. • I amended the preliminary findings in line with the feedback from parents.
	6. Evaluation process	• I evaluated the IPA process against Smith's (2011) evaluation criteria.

Source: adapted from Larkin & Thompson, 2012; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith & Osborn, 2007; Van Manen, 1990

In Stage 1, I immersed myself in the data by transcribing the audio recordings myself. I listened to the audio recordings multiple times and each time I gained new insights into what the parents were saying. Once I had transcribed the *talanoaga*, I checked the transcript against the original audio recording for accuracy, and adjusted the transcript if it had not been captured accurately. Once I had confirmed the transcript was an accurate account of the *talanoaga*, I reflected on my own preconceptions (Larkin & Thompson, 2011). I did this by writing on the transcript my recollections from the *talanoaga*, my emotional reaction to what the parents had shared with me, my sense of the meaning behind what the parents had said as well as the unspoken, and imagery that came to mind when I read through the transcript as a coherent whole. When the transcript was finalised, I read it several times searching for *talanoa* that stood out as interesting, significant, or unexpected. I made notes of this in the margins of the transcript.

For Stage 2, I carried out a line-by-line interpretation of the *talanoa* on a clean copy of the transcript. Table 16 shows a portion of the *talanoaga* with Masina. To the left of the transcript, I made notes of the experiential knowledge shared by Masina, as well as my sense-making of what Masina was saying. To the right of the transcript, I made notes of the emerging themes. Each time I read the transcript, I gained another layer of insight, which I noted in the margins. I repeated this process until I was unable to find new insights emerging from the *talanoa*. As the cumulative patterns within the transcript were identified and the themes began to take shape, I developed a table as an overall summary of themes for that *talanoaga*. This laid the foundation for the third stage, which involved looking at similar themes in the line-by-line interpretation and clustering them together in groups. This process helped me to refine the number of themes.

Table 17: An example of the line-by-line interpretation

EXPLORATORY COMMENT	TRANSCRIPT	EMERGENT THEMES
INTRO - thanks	[introductory *talanoa*] Emma — Thank you so much for saying yes to being a part of my study, especially when you've got baby. Masina — It's alright. Happy to share what I can. Emma — I'm keen to hear your thoughts about the wellbeing o le tamaiti. So when you think of wellbeing, what springs to mind?	
Wellbeing is more than health. In Samoan, equated to ola maloloina (health) but more apt to say ola manaia (beautiful life) **All dimensions in balanced.**	Masina — Some people say its *ola maloloina* but I think it's more than health. You know, health is important, it's a part of it… but there are other things too. I'm thinking like mental, emotional, *ma le* spirituality. *Ola manaia*… that's what I think when I think of wellbeing.	*** Wellbeing is multi-dimensional** *** Balanced** *** Ola manaia (the good life)**

Source: Dunlop-Bennett,

When scheduling these *talanoaga*, I allowed enough space between them so that I could transcribe the *talanoa*, complete a line-by-line interpretation, and develop a table of emerging themes. The information gathering phase and the interpretation phase were not discrete phases, but rather happened simultaneously over 12 months. I began Stage 4 once all 10 *talanoaga* had taken place, they were fully transcribed, the line-by-line interpretation was complete, and I had completed a table of emerging themes.

During Stage 4, I looked for relationships across the 10 tables of themes and clustered them. As themes emerged, I grouped them in line with their conceptual similarities. I also made notes of instances where there was divergence in the views of the parents. As I did this, I would go back to the transcripts to make sure that the *talanoa* supported the theme. As themes were clustered together, I began to refine the number of themes. To ensure that I had heard and made sense of the *talanoa* correctly, I emailed the preliminary findings to all of the parents, and invited them to provide feedback (Stage 5). I incorporated their feedback on the preliminary findings into the interpretive process. In the last stage, Stage 6, I evaluated the IPA process against Smith's (2011) evaluation criteria. The evaluation is detailed in Table 18 in the next section.

5.4   Reflecting on the research approach

After critical reflection on the research paradigm, I found several areas came to light as the research developed that might have been strengthened. Firstly, however I will consider the strengths of the research approach.

5.4.1: Strengths of the research approach

5.4.1a) Asking 'those that know' - the children

The grounds to include children in research about them are compelling, however, as Ben-Arieh, et al. (2014) argue, still too few publications include children. Most research about what is best for children is conducted from the adult's standpoint whose perspectives may not necessarily reflect the views of children themselves. The starting position of my research about child wellbeing was that it needed to include the voices of children if it is to be relevant, meaningful, and credible. My starting position recognises that as 'knowers' children can offer a unique view of their world (Fattore, et al., 2006; Prout & James, 1997; Sixsmith, et al., 2007). In designing and carrying out my research, I positioned Samoan children as the authority and experts about their wellbeing.

It has been argued by some that young children are not able to clearly articulate their views, however I found that the 8-year-old Samoan children who participated in this research were highly capable of forming and articulating their views very clearly. Further, during the *fono*, the children were engaged and keen to participate. My sense from the children was that they felt valued in being asked for their views, and for those children that attended the joint *fono*, they could see that their views had been heard and formed the basis of the findings. Drawing on the voices of those who know, live, and breathe child wellbeing, which are the Samoan children, provided for a much richer research.

5.4.1b) Child-centred research methods

The combination of children taking photos themselves, and then using these photos to guide their *talanoa* proved to be a strength of the research approach on several grounds. Firstly, it appealed to the children and it was something they could do that was well within their capability. At both of the *fono*, the children were excited to see their photos on the wall. Almost all of them commented on how much fun they had at the *talanoaga*, with several asking when they could do it again.

Secondly, the children felt at ease and were relaxed with the process, which I believe helped with the quality of discussion that emerged from the *talanoaga*. Organising it so that children shared their views about their wellbeing in a group-setting *talanoaga* helped them to feel at ease, as did having a copy of their photos which they could easily draw from to help them articulate their viewpoint.   Planning fun activity for the beginning of the *talanoaga* also helped the children feel at ease.

A third strength is that these child-centred research methods are easy to replicate and lend themselves to other research on child wellbeing. With *talanoa* being a Pacific-wide practice,

it is possible that these methods could be used with children from other peoples within Pasifika.

Lastly, the *talanoaga* with parents took place when their children were not there. I made the decision to do this after reading of other research where children deferred to their parents when asked a question, or were influenced by their parent's answers. To mitigate against this possibility, I chose to *talanoa* with the children separately from their parents. Other researchers may wish to *talanoa* with the children and their parents at the same time, and this could be an area for further research.

5.4.1c) Positioning the Samoan diaspora as critical partners

In my research, the Samoan diaspora were positioned as critical partners. Their views were central not only in understanding more about the wellbeing of Samoan children but also in shaping the research approach. For example, at the outset of the research, I sought the views of *Tagata Pasifika* community leaders, which in part guided my decision to refine the scope of this research from pan-Pasifika to a focus on the Samoan diaspora. When I was designing the research paradigm, I spoke with a leader from the Samoan community who recommended that I use a *talanoa*-based research model. To take a third example, prior to the *fono* with the children I sought the views of a Samoan primary school teacher who helped with ideas about how to make the *fono* child-friendly and age appropriate. Lastly, when designing the methods to use with children, I spoke with two 8-year-old Samoan children in Wellington. My research was strengthened by positioning the Samoan diaspora as 'knowers' and seeking their views at various points along the journey. In doing this, it became clear that:

- The Samoan diaspora want to tell their own stories and not have stories told about them. In other words, they want to craft their own narrative about themselves. That children are so highly valued demonstrates one disconnect between the generalised view of Pasifika (and the Samoan diaspora, which is one peoples within the Pasifika collective term) and in this research, how the Samoan diaspora themselves view children.

- Samoan children and their parents have the knowledge needed to provide a strong foundation from which to inform the design and implementation of policy and services to address issues that affect our people. An important first step is to ask those that 'live, know, and breathe' the phenomena.

5.4.1d) Bringing together research processes grounded in the fa'asamoa and the fa'apalagi worldviews

The starting position of my research about the wellbeing of Samoan children living in New Zealand is that if it is to be meaningful and of value, it needs to be grounded within a Samoan worldview but also informed by Western research process. This research brought together specific (Samoan or *fa'asamoa*) and generic (Western or *fa'apalagi*) influences, and in doing so the research was carried out in a way that was culturally appropriate as well as took into account the changing times. I used *talanoa*, which is a qualitative research method that prioritises the voices of the parents, to gain their insights into the wellbeing of their children.

Using *talanoa* supported the ontological and epistemological underpinnings of this research, and enabled the Samoan children and their parents to participate in a way that is known to them. For the Samoan children, I combined *talanoa* with photos as detailed in Section 5.4.1b). For the parents, I used four broad questions to help start the *talanoaga*. In prioritising the voices of the parents, the *talanoa* unfolded at the pace set by the parents and in the direction, they chose to go. It was important to allow the parents to share their knowledge, their stories, and to frame their views in ways that were authentic to them. The result of the *talanoa* approach is a rich narrative, which I believe would not have been so rich had the parents only answered my questions. The parents shared their lived realities and what was important to them, in a way that was familiar to them.

5.4.1e) Adopting a robust interpretative process

To ensure that the IPA process used was robust, I evaluated it against Smith's (2011) evaluation criteria. In Table 18, I detail the methods I used to achieve high-quality IPA. Performing an evaluation of the IPA process that I used for the Samoan children and for their parents was another strength of this research.

Table 18: Methods used to meet high-quality IPA criteria

Criteria to achieve high-quality IPA	Methods I used to meet these criteria
The research should have a clear focus	The focus of this research was how Samoan children and their parents conceptualise child wellbeing.
The research should have strong data	The data generated for this research came from: • **Parents**: Individual *talanoaga* with parents that included open-ended *talanoa* guided by four questions. • **Children**: Group-setting *talanoaga* with the *talanoa* was guided by the photos that the children had taken on what makes them feel happy, safe, and loved.
The themes should be elaborated on sufficiently	When I had identified the joint themes from both phases, each was discussed within an interpretive narrative and checked back against the original line by line coding of the transcripts to ensure coherence.
The analysis should be interpretative not just descriptive	The analysis of the data was iterative, with me going back through the hermeneutic circle several times, to unpack the meaning behind the *talanoa* of the children and the parents. This process helped move the analysis from descriptive to more interpretative
The analysis should articulate both convergence and divergence	I made notes not only on where the parents had similar views but also where their views diverged. I consider diverging views to be a finding in itself as it speaks to the diversity that exists within the Samoan diaspora. The laying of the individual accounts of each child onto the group-level analysis, helped to illustrate where the *talanoa* reinforced each other, and where there was divergence.

Source: Dunlop-Bennett, adapted from Smith (2011)

5.4.2: Limitations of the research approach

5.4.2a) Capturing the multiple faces of the Samoan families

Carrying out in-depth research on the Samoan diaspora allowed me to examine the intra-ethnic nuances that exist within it (Anae, 2010). While focussing on 10 Samoan families living in Wellington has enabled in-depth research about how these Samoan families conceptualise child wellbeing, it is not possible to generalise these perspectives to the whole Samoan diaspora. The findings that are presented in Chapter 6 (children) and Chapter 7 (parents) reflect the voices of 10 Samoan families living in Wellington, at this particular time. These findings may or may not resonate with Samoan families living in other parts of New Zealand. How Samoan families in other parts of New Zealand, or more broadly other peoples within the Pasifika collective conceptualise child wellbeing, could be an area for further research.

5.4.2b) Conducting research with children within the timeframe of a doctorate

In their extensive work with children, Clark and Moss (2011) recommend researchers take a 'mosaic' approach. That is, to use multiple methods so that the information can be triangulated. Using multiple methods would have been useful in this research, however I was limited by the timeframe of a doctoral degree and so I focussed on children taking photos to guide their *talanoa*. Some of the children that attended the joint report-back *fono* did drawings that illustrated their wellbeing but I believe that this does not fit the criteria of a 'mosaic' approach, in that not all children did this. A larger research project would make a mosaic approach a viable option.

5.4.2c) Photos on smart devices

As noted earlier, there are several ways in which children can use photography in research. Guided by the pilot phase, I selected a process where children took their photos on a smart device and their parents emailed these to me. There are strengths to using smart devices, as the Samoan children were familiar with taking photos in this way. It is possible however that the photos taken by children could have been influenced by their parents, as they were the conduit for sending photos to me. While this is a possibility, given how well the children knew their ten photos and their ability to describe in detail how these photos made them feel 'happy, safe and loved', I am of the view that if this did occur, it was not a significant influence on the children's views.

5.4.2d) Comparability between the Samoan children and their parents

Influenced by the literature that a group-setting *talanoa* would counter the risk of children being be too shy to *talanoa* had it been a one-to-one *talanoaga* with me, I held group-setting *talanoaga*. I believe this to be a strength of the research approach, as noted above. There could be value, however, in holding individual *talanoaga* with the children so that their *talanoa* could be directly linked to their parents. I made the decision at the outset that this research was not about comparing the children's views with those of their parents, but rather it was about building up multiple layers of views to form a complete picture about child

wellbeing. Comparing the views of individual children with their parents could be explored as an approach in other research.

5.4.2e) Interpreting their stories through my lens

I interpreted the voices of the Samoan children and their parents through my own lens: as a Samoan mother of young children who lives in Wellington. While I could identify with a number of the lived experiences shared by the parents and see some similarities between the participant children and my own children, I tried carefully to not bring any 'preconceived' ideas to the *talanoaga*. Larkin, et al. (2006, p.108) suggest that if I am prepared to adjust any 'preconceived' ideas in response to the promptings of the children, I am on my way to developing a Heideggerian phenomenology. In re-telling their stories and making sense of the children's voices, I do so from my own sense-making stance - influenced by my own interpretation of my culture, context, history, and experience.

The findings that will be presented in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 can only reflect my perception of what the research partners were telling me. While I am a Samoan mother of an 8-year-old who lives in Wellington and am able to present the views of the research partners as close as I can, it is still an interpretation through my lens. In retelling their stories and trying to make sense of their lived experiences - from my own sense-making stance - I reflect on Kögler (2005, p. 247) who asks, "How can one adequately recognise a different situated human agenda, given that all interpretation is grounded in culturally local, partially implicit and socially shaped background assumptions?"

5.5   Chapter summary

This chapter set out the research paradigm, which is encompassed by a Samoan worldview underpinned by Samoan beliefs, values, and ways of knowing. To determine the approach of my research, I reviewed 16 models grounded within a Samoan worldview, and from this process selected the *Talanoa ile i'a* (Faleolo, 2009). *Talanoa ile i'a* prioritises the voices of those who live the phenomena, creating opportunities for alternative perspectives to be heard (Faleolo, 2013). Underpinning this approach is *talanoa*, which at its simplest, is a discussion where ideas are exchanged. In this way, *talanoa* aligns with IPA (Larkin, et al., 2006; Vaioleti, 2006).

Phenomenology is a philosophical study of 'being', which essentially focusses on understanding an individual's lived experience and how they make sense of their lived experience. *Talanoa ile i'a* privileges the voices of those who know, live, and breathe the phenomena. For this research, those who know about child wellbeing are the children themselves and their parents. Guided by *Talanoa ile i'a,* I designed a research approach that created a space for children to conceptualise wellbeing from their standpoint, and to do so in a way that was culturally appropriate. To contextualise the children's perspectives and in recognition that children are part of families, the views of their parents were also needed.

The ontology of this research is relativism and the epistemological positioning is interpretive. Influenced by this, IPA framed the methodology of this research. To balance the voices of the individual fish within the school of fish, I drew on standard IPA process as well as focus-group guidelines. For the children, I used standard IPA process to get an overall sense of

the group-level *talanoa* before exploring the individual child's account and the interactions between the children through an adapted group-setting IPA process. For the parents, I used standard IPA. The last part of the research paradigm is the methods, which was a mix of photovoice and group-setting *talanoa* for the children and *talanoaga* for their parents.

The last part of this chapter critically reviewed the research paradigm. A key strength of my research is that it positioned the Samoan diaspora as critical partners. In engaging with the Samoan diaspora from the outset, this research was strengthened in terms of designing and carrying out research that is culturally relevant and of value. This research included the voices of children themselves, which is vital if the findings are to be viewed as valid, credible, and meaningful. A possible key limitation of this research could be the extent to which these families represent the multiple faces of the Samoan diaspora. The findings presented in Chapter 7 (children) and Chapter 8 (parents) are their stories. Other Samoan families may yield other views. Partnering with Samoan children and their parents in other parts of New Zealand, or with other peoples that make up the Pasifika collective, to explore how they conceptualise child wellbeing could be an area for further research.

CHAPTER 6
Listening to the children's voices

You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes.
You can steer yourself any direction you choose.
You're on your own. And you know what you know.
And YOU are the one who'll decide where to go....
Dr Seuss – Oh! The Places You'll Go!

6.1   Introduction

In this chapter, I present the findings that emerged from the *talanoaga* with the *i'a*, the Samoan children. To briefly summarise the research approach, each child took ten photos of what made them feel 'happy, safe, and loved'. They then used these photos to guide their *talanoa* at the *fono*. Two *fono* were held, with five children attending the first *fono* and six children attending the second. Using IPA, I interpreted the *talanoa* individually for each child, then within the group-setting of each *fono*, and finally as a combined group across the two *fono*. The third *fono* I held was a joint *fono* in which I reported the preliminary findings to the children and then I revised my findings based on their feedback. Of the 11 children who participated in this research, seven attended this report-back *fono*. After discussing the preliminary findings, some of the children at this *fono* drew pictures about their wellbeing.

Five themes emerged from this process of photos, *talanoa*, and drawings. The first theme to emerge was how the children conceptualised their wellbeing as being "a bunch of stuff that has good bits and bad bits" (Section 6.3). In terms of what was important to their wellbeing, the next four themes emerged from the *talanoa*. Firstly, social connections with family and friends was important to their wellbeing (Section 6.4). Secondly, it was important that they felt secure and did not have to worry (Section 6.5). Thirdly, important to their wellbeing was feeling valued, that they were included, and they belonged (Section 6.6). Finally, being a good person was important to their wellbeing (Section 6.7). Although presented as distinct themes, there are overlaps between them. For example, cutting across the four themes was the importance to the children of their relationships with their parents, family, and friends. To guide the structure of this chapter, Section 6.2 provides an overarching snapshot of the findings.

6.2   An overarching snapshot of the findings

As detailed in Section 5.4, to ensure that the individual voices were heard within the group setting, I coded 10 blocks of *talanoa* for each child. Each block of *talanoa* reflected a point of view from the standpoint of that particular child. Figure 24 shows how the 110 blocks of *talanoa* were mapped onto the themes that emerged from the two *fono*.

Figure 24: Mapping individual accounts onto group-analysis (all 11 children)

Theme 1: Wellbeing is a bunch of stuff

It's made up of good stuff and bad stuff

It's a whole bunch of stuff

Theme 2: Social Connections

Spending time with my family

Having my family around

Hanging out with my friends

Connecting with the environment

Spending time reading books, playing with toys, or on my device

Theme 3: Not having to worry

Knowing I have someone I can rely on

Taking time out

Having someone I trust who I can talk to

Being looked after, cared for, and protected

Living in a safe house

My bedroom full of special things

Theme 4: Feeling valued, included and that I belong

Having a place in the family

Feeling included with friends

Belonging to the team

Having a place at school

Theme 5: Being a good person

Helping others

Being respectful, having integrity, being kind

Key:

Ioane

Isaia

Mele

Moana

Mosese

Penina

Siaki

Sina

Tasi

Tavita

Tualagi

Source: Dunlop-Bennett

Five themes emerged from this process. The first theme related to how the children conceptualised wellbeing (13 blocks of *talanoa*). The other four themes encapsulated what children perceived as important to their wellbeing, which included connecting with family and friends (29 blocks of *talanoa*); feeling secure and not having to worry (35 blocks of *talanoa*); feeling valued, being included, and that they belong (20 blocks of *talanoa*); and being a good person (13 blocks of *talanoa*). As shown in Table 19, 87 of the 97 blocks of *talanoa* across these four themes related to connecting with people and building relationships. This was integral to the children feeling 'happy, safe, and loved'. For example, it made them feel valued and secure; it helped them to not worry knowing that they had somebody they could talk to when they needed; and that values such as kindness and respect were good as was helping other people. Only 10 of the 97 blocks of *talanoa* across these four themes related

to material objects. Overall the findings indicate that Samoan children conceptualise their wellbeing primarily in relational terms. That is, connecting and building relationships with other people is important and underpins all of the other themes.

Table 19: A summary of what is important to the wellbeing of Samoan children

Key theme	Description	Frequency
Defining wellbeing as a bunch of stuff	It's a bunch of stuff	9 blocks of *talanoa*
	It's made up of good bits and bad bits	4 blocks of *talanoa*
Connecting with loved ones	Spending time with family	15 blocks of *talanoa*
	Having my family around	5 blocks of *talanoa*
	Hanging out with friends	5 blocks of *talanoa*
	Connecting with the environment	2 blocks of *talanoa*
	Spending time reading books, playing with toys, or on my device	2 blocks of *talanoa*
Not having to worry	Knowing I have someone I can rely on	6 blocks of *talanoa*
	Taking time out	5 blocks of *talanoa*
	Having someone I trust who I can talk to	7 blocks of *talanoa*
	Being looked after, cared for, and protected	9 blocks of *talanoa*
	My bedroom full of special things	4 blocks of *talanoa*
	Living in a safe house	4 blocks of *talanoa*
Feeling valued, included, and with a sense of belonging	Having a place in the family	7 blocks of *talanoa*
	Feeling included with friends	7 blocks of *talanoa*
	Belonging to the team	4 blocks of *talanoa*
	Having a place at school	2 blocks of *talanoa*
Being a good person	Helping others	5 blocks of *talanoa*
	Being respectful, having integrity, being kind, and sharing	8 blocks of *talanoa*

Source: Dunlop-Bennett

For some children a particular theme was more important to them than another. For example, spending time with his family was so important to Ioane that he mentioned it in three separate blocks of *talanoa* (refer to Theme 2/Social Connections/Spending time with family), but did not talk about anything related to Theme 4/Feeling valued included, and that I belong. In contrast, Sina's *talanoa* was more evenly spread over all five themes.

6.3   Defining wellbeing as "a bunch of stuff that has good bits and bad bits"

The children's *talanoa* showed that the children conceptualised wellbeing holistically, with the "bunch of stuff" referring to the multiple dimensions of wellbeing. Some children also spoke of wellbeing having positive and negative aspects, or a "good side and a bad side". These two ideas are detailed in this section.

6.3.1 It's a whole bunch of stuff

When asked what wellbeing is, children spoke about how it was a "bunch of stuff." The "bunch of stuff" included things that could be categorised as physical, socio-emotional, mental, spiritual, or cultural. For example, children spoke of playing sport and eating healthy food (physical); feeling looked after, protected, and not feeling lonely (socio-emotional); of not having to worry about things (mental); of praying when they were uncertain about something (spiritual); and of being proud to be Samoan (cultural). Table 20 categorises the *talanoa* shared by the children into five dimensions. These are the physical, socio-emotional, mental, spiritual and cultural. It should be noted here that the children did not use these terms themselves. Some of the *talanoa* fit several dimensions, which reflects the interrelatedness of the dimensions that make up wellbeing. The dimensions are not distinct, but rather they influence and are in turn influenced by each other.

Table 20, which provides *talanoa* from the children specific to these five dimensions, shows all 11 children described wellbeing in social-emotional terms. That is, they spoke about being loved; cared for and protected; being helped; of not feeling lonely; and of spending time with loved ones. Eight children described a mental dimension to wellbeing, which came through when they spoke about not having to worry and being reassured that things are okay, as well as having somebody they trust to talk to. Six children spoke about the physical dimension of wellbeing, which they spoke of in terms of playing sport to keep fit and eating the right food to be healthy. Fewer children mentioned things that were related to the spiritual and cultural dimension of wellbeing. For example, three children mentioned church or praying (spiritual dimension) of their cultural identity as a Samoan (cultural dimension).

Table 20: Aligning the children's talanoa to dimensions of wellbeing

Physical	Socio-emotional	Mental	Spiritual	Cultural
... it's really good to be healthy. This other photo is of a falafel wrap…I like eating falafel wraps cos they're healthy. *Tualagi* ... rugby because it makes me happy because… I get to run around a lot and score tries. *Isaia* Netball makes me happy [...] I get fit and play with my friends. *Moana* Ummm this one walking. I like doing hikes uphill… and the view [...] Walking and stuff. Oh and I also like playing netball. This photo here [...] I like playing netball because it makes me feel happy… even if we lose, I like playing it. Also playing netball makes me fit, healthy. *Tualagi* [Grateful for] My family because whenever I'm sick they buy medicine for me and they make me feel better. *Isaia* Plants keep you safe because they give you something to eat and help us to breathe. *Siaki*	Okay. So this is a photo of me with my brother and my dad. I love being with my baby brother. And being in my onesie. You can't really see it but I'm in my onesie [...] Because I'm not alone. I always have my family with me and….my family look after me and they care for me and…they are there for me and stuff like that. *Tualagi* This one is of my parents… unconditional love, they say [...]. My family…they make me feel loved because they are always around. I'm never lonely because there is always someone there… like my sisters… or my brother. I don't have to worry about things…. you know. If I need something, I tell mum and dad and then they help me. *Moana* This photo… of my *tina* [...] So she died and this is me at her grave [...] Yeah… she looked after me and… cared for me and… made me food. *Mele* My mum makes me feel loved because she looks after me at home. *Sina* My mum makes me feel loved because when I'm stuck with something she can help me [...] Like with homework and building Lego and something. *Isaia* My friends [...] They always look out for me... they're always there…when I'm happy, sad, lonely…like all the time [...]Yeah they are funny and always make me laugh….we do silly things and it's fun…we laugh lots. *Penina* My family because they keep me warm, look after me…help me…help me a lot. *Isaia*	This one of my dad and mum [...] they look after me and help me… so I don't worry about things, like… you know. *Mele* This photo of my mum and dad is because they make me feel safe… they look after me and help me and make sure I'm okay and care for me… so it's okay… I know everything is okay… you know even if I'm sad or something like that. *Moana* This is a photo of me looking after my cousin [...] Well my cousin felt safe cos she was with me. I feel safe when I'm with someone…you know, someone who is looking after me. *Mosese* My bedroom, my bed, my toys, my dolls house [...] like it's all my things… and I feel safe in my bedroom… with all my things. If I feel sad or something like that I go to my room with all my things… and I feel safe. *Penina* [Grateful for] Family and my mum and dad especially [...] cos… I wouldn't be by myself. I would be with other people [...] and they would like help me to get through. *Sina* ... I don't have a photo of my mum… I don't know why… cos my mum and dad make me feel safe all the time… they protect me and help me when I'm hurt…	I'm grateful for lots of things… my family, my friends, my school, my church… for my clothes, my things you know books… there's too many (laughs). *Moana* [About someone who is feeling sad] Including him would be really great…and also praying…saying "hi" that can help. *Mosese* [About someone who is feeling sad] We could pray for whatever is making him feel sad... and we could pray that we show kindness and to know what to do… to make him happy cos we don't know why he's sad. *Moana*	Being Samoan is important… it's hard to explain but it's everything that I do… *Tualagi* It's who I am…it makes me feel confident …knowing who I am. *Moana* It's who I am…it's important to know who you are. *Mosese*

This is my mum [...]. She helps me…she looks after me… she takes me places. *Mosese*

She helps me with things [...] Heaps of things…like maths and I'm really grateful for mum. *Siaki*

My house keeps me safe because I can stay there….and these thingy-me-bobs keep me safe. There're called vitamins …because they don't make you sick. That's what my mummy says. *Sina*

...my family keep me safe in like times like earthquakes. *Tavita*

Lego makes me happy. I play it all the time [...]. When we're doing it together… making new stuff. *Siaki*

... family and cousins that play with me. And I get to play on their PlayStation. *Ioane*

or when I'm sad they make me feel better. *Tualagi*

What I do when I'm feeling sad and that… whenever I'm sad, I just walk around the school thinking about what happened… alone… so I can calm down [...] Then I just go and say sorry or… just see what happened after that… but only after I go for a walk… and you know, take time out. *Mosese*

[If I'm unsure about something or sad] I find somebody to talk to… like my friends or my mum [...] It makes me feel much better. I talk about what happened and… then my friends tell me that it's ok. *Mele*

I talk to someone I trust… like my mum or dad… so I can let it out and not bother about it … then I feel better. Also talking can help me understand cos sometimes I don't get why I'm feeling like that and so… talking helps. *Moana*

I talk with my nana… she always knows what to do… and when I tell her she helps me feel better… I also talk with my friends but sometimes that's hard. *Penina*

The pictures in Figure 25 were drawn by Moana, Pele, and Mosese during the report-back *fono*. It is important to note that the children only started talking of their wellbeing in terms of physical, socio-emotional, mental, spiritual, or cultural dimensions, after I used these terms in my report back of the preliminary findings. In these drawings, Moana conceptualised wellbeing as a treehouse, with each rung of the ladder representing a particular dimension of wellbeing. Pele saw wellbeing as a flower made up of multiple petals, each of which depicted a different dimension, while Mosese viewed it as an x-box with apps on the screen representing a different aspect of wellbeing.

Figure 25: Conceptualising the multi-dimensional nature of wellbeing

<div align="right">Source: Moana, Pele & Mosese</div>

6.3.2   It's made up of good bits and bad bits

The idea that wellbeing has a good side and a bad side was introduced by Moana as towards the end of the *fono*. As I was bringing the *talanoa* to a close, Moana said, "Everything has a good side and a bad side". The following exchange shows the *talanoa* in context:

Researcher	*That's really great, Penina. Okay guys, I know you are keen to start playing mini-golf. Yes Moana?*
Moana	*Everything has a good side and a bad side.*
Researcher	*Oh, that's a clever way of putting it Moana. Can you tell me more about that?*
Moana	*Well… like social media. It's good but then too much is bad.*

Moana gave another example of the good side and the bad side to somebody dying, saying:

Moana	*If someone dies… well the good side is that they're in heaven...God is looking after them now. The bad side is that you don't get to spend time with them anymore.*
Researcher	*You've explained that really well. So wellbeing is made up of good stuff and bad stuff?*

Moana   Yeah.

As Moana introduced this idea at the end of the *fono*, I was unable to explore this idea with the other children. Earlier in the *fono*, however, other children spoke of people close to them who had died. When speaking about how her bedroom filled with her special things made her feel safe, Tualagi said:

> *Also it has all my special things in it… like my toys and now I have a bunk bed… and I like being with my little lamb that makes noises…. Mata gave it to me before she died so……my mum and dad say she's ok though… you know where she is.*

Similarly, Mele spoke about her *tina* (grandmother) being in heaven:

Mele	*This photo…of my tina*
Researcher	*Can you tell me what that photo is about?*
Mele	*So she died, and this is me at her grave*
Researcher	*It's a lovely photo of you. And your tina made you feel loved.*
Mele	*Yeah… she looked after me and… cared for me and… made me food...*
Researcher	*Awww that's really special… you must miss her*
Mele	*Yeah… a lot, she's in heaven*
Researcher	*That's good to know aye?*
Mele	*Yeah, it's good*

Mele's photo of her and her *tina*, is provided in Figure 26. The idea that good can be found in sad or bad situations is central to the views shared by Tualagi and Mele, and relates to Moana's idea that wellbeing has good side and a bad side.

Figure 26: Mele with her tina

Using another example, Ioane viewed being corrected by an aunty, which could be perceived in a negative light, as a good thing. Ioane understood that part of wellbeing was about

making mistakes and being corrected. It is clear from the *talanoa* that Ioane has a sense of achievement in accomplishing something, which in this case was learning his times tables.

Ioane	*Ummm maybe it's my times tables… because I know my times tables... when I was learning them, my aunty corrected me, and I want to thank her for correcting me.*
Researcher	*What were you happy about being corrected?*
Ioane	*Cos it helped me… I showed one of my cousins and they… they couldn't do it and then they started getting angry… but I could do it.*
Researcher	*You were telling me earlier how much you love maths, your timetables. That's really great.*

Tualagi drew several pictures about wellbeing (Figure 27). I made notes to the right of the page as Tualagi explained what each picture was about. In all of her drawings, Tualagi illustrated the contrasting postive and negative elements of wellbeing. In the first drawing Tualagi conceptualised the bad bits of wellbeing as being hard ice-cubes and the good parts as being soft water. In the second picture, Tualagi saw wellbeing as having good bits and bad bits. The key idea coming through the third drawing is that wellbeing is like a bumpy path of highs (positive things) and lows (negative things). Tualagi said that the path is always going up and down, "so when it was low, it's ok cos it will go up again.

Figure 27: Wellbeing is like a bumpy path with ups and downs
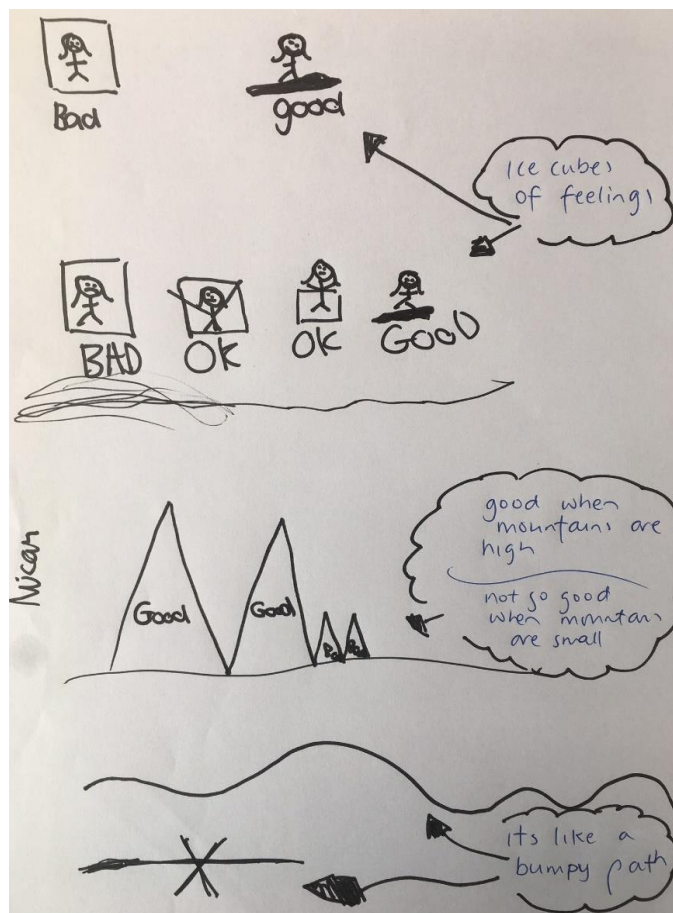
Source: Tualagi

The drawing in Figure 28 was done by Moana during the joint-*fono*, when I reported back the preliminary findings to the children. Moana described her drawing to me as wellbeing being like a see-saw in a park. The see-saw goes up and down according to the good things and the bad things that happen. Moana saw wellbeing as a balance of the two.

Figure 28: Wellbeing has good bits and bad parts
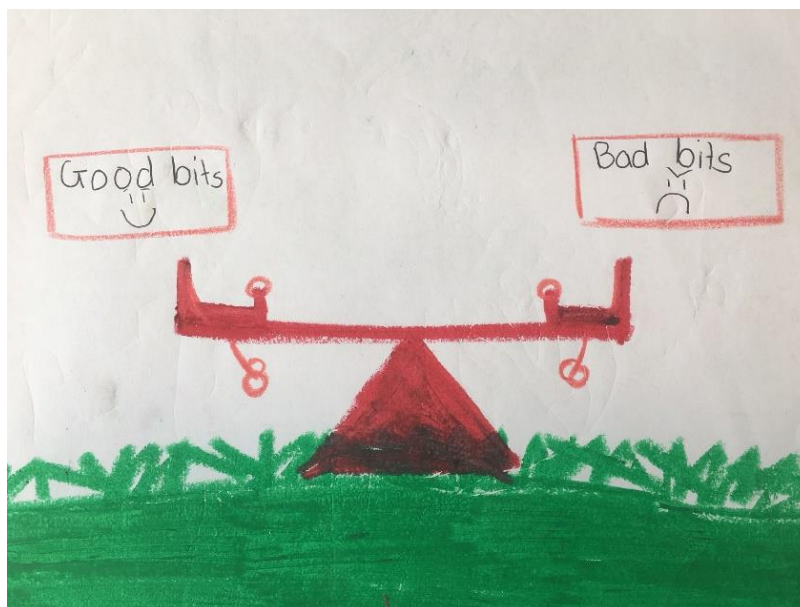
As noted earlier, Moana introduced the idea of wellbeing having good bits and bad bits at the end of the *fono*. I picked this idea up with the children who attended the joint-*fono*, where I reported the preliminary findings back to then. During the discussion, the children agreed to the following definition of wellbeing: it's a bunch of stuff that has good bits and bad bits.

In summary, the findings suggest that children viewed wellbeing in holistic terms, that is, the concept included physical, socio-emotional, and mental dimensions, and to a lesser extent spiritual and cultural dimensions. The second idea that emerged from this theme is that wellbeing is made up of good stuff and bad stuff.

Having looked at what wellbeing means to children, Section 6.4 through to Section 6.7 explores what the children saw as being important to their wellbeing.

6.4   Wellbeing is about social connection with loved ones

A consistent theme from all of the children was the importance of connecting with others, primarily with their parents and family, as well as their friends. Connecting with the environment or objects such as books and toys was also mentioned, although to a lesser degree. The two main sub-themes, spending time with family and hanging with friends are detailed below.

6.4.1 Spending time with my family

The theme or sub-theme most frequently mentioned by the children as being important to their wellbeing was spending time with parents as well as siblings and cousins (15 blocks of *talanoa*). This was also most widely mentioned in that it was raised by all 11 children. The children also spoke of having their family around, which referred to instances when their parents might be doing something else in the house but were close by (5 blocks of *talanoa*).

This theme of social connections emerged primarily in relation to the children's responses about what made them happy, such as, playing with Lego, being on PlayStation, playing soccer or netball, eating ice-cream, helping out in the home, cooking, gymnastics, and going on hikes. When I asked the children what it was about the particular activity that made them happy, the most frequent answer once again was about spending time with people they loved such as their mum, dad, grandmother, brother, sister, or their cousins. For example, when I asked Tavita about why watching movies and playing cards made him happy, he said it was about spending time with his older brother Solomona. For Siaki, Lego made him happy "...when we're doing it together". Mele used a photo of her family at the beach to illustrate what made her feel happy, saying "it was a fun day… everyone together". Tasi described how he felt loved by showing a photo of his PlayStation. Like the others, he enjoyed this activity because:

> *...my brother plays with me [...] my brother always looks after me. We do PlayStation… we play soccer… you know?*

In the following exchange, Tualagi provides two examples of helping out at home. Helping out made Tualagi happy because she saw it as another way to spend time with her family.

Researcher	*How about you Tualagi? I can see you have a couple of photos there with you?*
Tualagi	*Yeah, this one with me is with my little brother and my mum, helping my mum.*
Researcher	*Ohhhh lovely. What were you helping you mum with?*
Tualagi	*Making coffee and hot chocolate.*
Researcher	*Oh great and tell me how that makes you feel happy?*
Tualagi	*Because… I like helping and I like being with my brother and my mum.*
Researcher	*Ohhhh lovely. What about the other photo you have?*
Tualagi	*This one. I'm reading a book to my little brother and my cousin.*
Researcher	*How does that make you feel happy?*
Tualagi	*It makes me feel happy because I like reading to them... to my brother and my cousin. Here they are laughing at each other.*
Researcher	*They must love you reading to them.*
Tualagi	*Yeah.*
Researcher	*What other photo have you chosen that makes you feel happy?*
Tualagi	*This one walking. I like doing hikes uphill…and the view.*
Researcher	*The view when you get to the top? It looks like an incredible view there. And who do you do hikes with?*

Tualagi	Sometimes my whole family, or my mum's family or sometimes just my mum. I like being with them... my family and I like being outside. Walking and stuff. Oh and I also like playing netball. This photo here.

Having highlighted how connecting with her family is important, Tualagi then discusses how one of the reasons she likes netball is because she plays with her friends. This is picked up in the next section.

6.4.2 Hanging with friends

Connecting with friends was mentioned by five of the children. The *talanoa* below picks up directly in the conversation where Tualagi is showing me a photo of her playing netball.

Researcher	That's a great photo. What is it about netball that makes you happy?
Tualagi	I like playing netball because it makes me feel happy... even if we lose, I like playing it.
Moana	I play netball.
Tualagi	Also playing netball makes me fit... healthy. I like playing with my friends.

In the *talanoa* below, Mosese spoke about how bowling with his friends for his birthday made him happy. Mosese enjoyed bowling but it was also about hanging with his friends.

Researcher	Who is going to go first? Mosese again...okay great? Great. What photo have you chosen?
Mosese	This is a photo of me and my friends. It's at my birthday.
Researcher	Oh you look really happy.
Mosese	Yeah...we went bowling in Porirua...with my friends. It was really fun, and we just laughed and laughed. We had cake too... this photo (shows another photo), it was really great.
Researcher	It looks like you had so much fun and that cake looks yummy.
Mosese	(laughs) Yeah, it was.
Researcher	Do you like bowling?
Mosese	Yeah...and you know, hanging out with my friends.

Figure 29: A selection of photos showing the importance of social connections
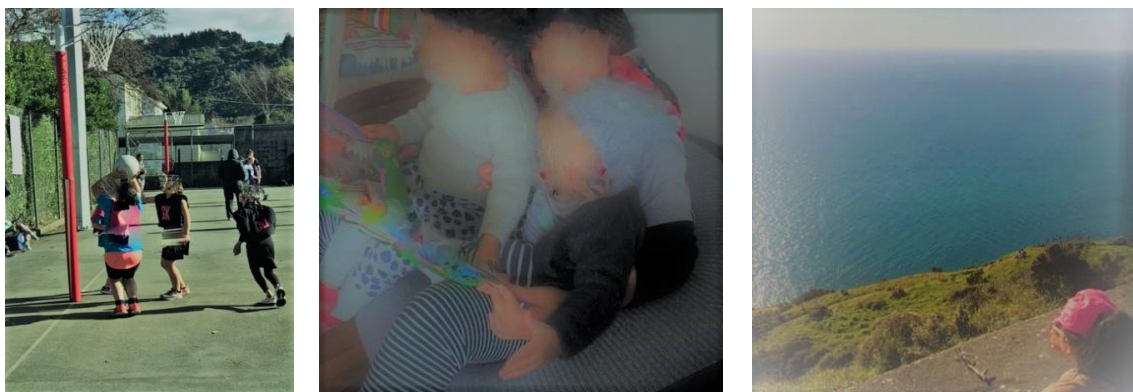
Source: the Samoan children

These two examples illustrate the value that children place on social connections with their parents, their family, and friends, are shown in the selection of photos in Figure 29. Spending time with family was the most frequently mentioned sub-theme and was mentioned by all 11 children. Overall, this finding indicates that making social connections, particularly with their family, is viewed through the children's eyes as important to their wellbeing.

6.5   Wellbeing is feeling secure and not having to worry

The most frequently referred to theme across the two *fono* was feeling secure and not having to worry (37 blocks of *talanoa*). Within this theme, children spoke about being looked after, cared for, and protected (9 blocks of *talanoa*); having somebody that they could talk to (7 blocks of *talanoa*) which closely related to knowing that they had someone they could rely on (6 blocks of *talanoa*), and taking time out (5 blocks of *talanoa*). There were also references to living in a safe house (4 blocks of *talanoa*) being surrounded by their special things (4 blocks of *talanoa*) and knowing what to do in an earthquake (2 blocks of *talanoa*).

6.5.1   Being looked after, care for, and protected

Nine children spoke about how being looked after, cared for, and/or protected was important to their wellbeing. Isaia framed this as his family who, "...keep me warm, look after me… help me… help me a lot". Sina said that having mum and dad at home looking after her made her feel loved. Tualagi agreed saying that her family made her feel loved because:

> I'm not alone. I always have my family with me and…. my family look after me and they care for me and… they are there for me and stuff like that.

Mele spoke of how her grandmother "...looked after me and… cared for me and… made me food". Mosese used an example of helping out his little cousin to illustrate how he felt safe when someone was looking after him:

Researcher	*Mosese, what photo have you chosen?*
Mosese	*This is a photo of me looking after my cousin. We were at the waterfront... ummm on the ice and my cousin couldn't go by herself. She was too young… so there was a frame that she leaned on and I helped her.*
Researcher	*What a great big cousin you are. What is it about this photo that makes you feel safe?*
Mosese	*Well my cousin felt safe cos she was with me. I feel safe when I'm with someone… you know, someone who is looking after me.*
Researcher	*That's a really great answer. Thanks Mosese.*

For Tavita, being looked after was having his mother help him when he got stuck, as the following *talanoa* illustrates:

Tavita	*My mum makes me feel loved because when I'm stuck with something she can help me.*
Researcher	*That's super. So mum helps you when you're stuck with something. And how does she help you?*
Tavita	*Like with homework and building lego and something.*

6.5.2 Knowing I have somebody I can rely on

Having somebody that they could rely on was mentioned by six children. Tualagi felt that she could rely on her mum and dad. She said:

> my mum and dad make me feel safe all the time… they protect me and help me when I'm hurt…. or when I'm sad they make me feel better…

Mele had a similar view. She said that her mum and dad made her feel safe because they:

> …they look after me and help me… so I don't worry about things, like… you know?

Talking about feeling loved, Moana used a photo of her parents saying:

> This photo of my mum and dad is because they make me feel safe…they look after me and help me and make sure I'm okay and care for me…so it's okay… I know everything is okay… you know even if I'm sad or something like that.

Mosese said that his mum made him feel loved because she, "...helps me… she looks after me… she takes me places". Tavita said he could rely on his mum to help him when he was stuck with homework or building Lego, and to teach him. In the following *talanoa*, Tavita is talking about how the things he is learning now, will help him in the future:

Tavita	I'm learning more to cook so I can be a chef.
Researcher	Oh how great you want to be a chef?
Tavita	Yes.
Researcher	And who is helping you to learn to cook?
Tavita	My mum…. or my aunty sometimes because she's great at baking.
Researcher	And does cooking make you happy? Ohhh I can't wait to taste some of your cooking Tavita.
Tavita	I can make pancakes.
Researcher	Pancakes… yum pancakes are my favourite.

Having somebody that they could rely on was closely linked to having a trusted person that they could talk to.

6.5.3 Being able to talk to someone I trust

Seven children spoke about how being able to talk to somebody they trust was important to their wellbeing. For Tasi, he would talk to his brother when he was feeling uncertain or sad about something. Sina said she was most grateful for her family and her parents in particular because "they would like help me to get through". Knowing how better she felt when she had somebody to talk to, Sina suggested this as a way to help somebody else who was feeling sad and unhappy:

> So like we could talk to him and find out what's wrong and then try and help him.

Moana said that her family made her feel loved because she didn't have to worry about things and that when she feels uncertain:

> I talk to someone I trust… like my mum or dad…so I can let it out and not bottle it all up…then I feel better…also talking can help me understand cos sometimes I don't get why I'm feeling like that and so…talking helps.

Talking also helped Penina. Although for Penina, it was her nana who she trusted talking to, as she explains:

Penina	*I talk with my nana…she always knows what to do…and when I tell her she helps me feel better…I also talk with my friends but sometimes that's hard.*
Researcher	*Why is it hard?*
Penina	*Like if they are the ones that make me sad.*
Researcher	*Oh I get it. So when you talk to your nana that helps?*
Penina	*Yeah it helps… sometimes she tells me what to do to make it better.*
Researcher	*That's really great, Penina.*

Having a trusted person that they could talk to was highlighted by the children as something they could do when they were feeling uncertain or unsure. A second strategy, mentioned by five children, was taking "time out".

6.5.4 Taking time out

Five children said that taking "time out" from a situation that was making them feel uncertain or sad, was useful in helping them to feel better about whatever it was that made them feel that way. Children spoke of "time out" in several ways. Explaining how he would "time out" at school, Mosese said:

Mosese	*What I do when I'm feeling sad and that…whenever I'm sad, I just walk around the school thinking about what happened… alone… so I can calm down.*
Researcher	*That's a good idea. And what do you do after you've calmed down?*
Mosese	*Then I just go and say sorry or… just see what happened after that... but only after I go for a walk… and you know, take time out.*
Researcher	*That's a really great strategy Mosese.*

Tavita and Ioane liked to play video games when they were feeling uncertain, with Ioane explaining that he would go on his "... tablet cos it cheers me up… playing my games". Tualagi liked to go for walks or take a bath.

6.5.5 Living in a safe house with my special things

For some children, living in a house that could withstand earthquakes or storms (4 blocks of *talanoa*) and that was full of their special things (4 blocks of *talanoa*) also helped them not to worry. Sina, Ioane, and Moana said that living in their house made them feel safe. Describing how her house made her feel safe, Moana said:

Moana	This photo of our house. I feel safe in it cos it's strong… when we had the earthquake, our house was okay.
Researcher	That must make you feel really safe: living in a strong house?
Moana	Yeah and its warm… and my mum and dad cook nice meals so even when it's windy outside, we are safe inside.
Researcher	So safe and warm in your strong house with your family around?
Moana	Yeah.

Being surrounded by their special things was also important in making the children feel safe. Siaki was grateful for his own room saying, "It's special cos it's got my special things". Penina felt safe in her bedroom surrounded by her things. She said that she would go to her bedroom when she felt sad:

Penina	My bedroom…my bed….my toys…my dolls house…
Researcher	And that makes you feel safe?
Penina	… like it's all my things… and I feel safe in my bedroom…. with all my things… if I feel sad or something like that I go to my room with all my things… and I feel safe.

Tualagi was also grateful for her house because, "my family are always there, my mum, my dad, my sisters and brother. And my house because I like my bedroom with all my special things" (Figure 30).

Figure 30: A selection of photos illustrating feeling safe and not having to worry

Source: the Samoan children

Pulling out the key ideas from this theme of "not having to worry", children felt secure when they had people in their lives that they could depend on who looked after, cared, and protected them, as well as somebody they trusted that they could talk to. They felt safe in their houses, and having their special things around them was important if they were feeling uncertain or sad (Figure 28). Lastly, if they were feeling uncertain or sad, about half of the children had developed ways in which they took time out from the situation.

6.6 Wellbeing is about being valued: feeling included and that we belong

Talanoa relating to children feeling included and having a sense of belonging was mentioned 18 times. Most frequently mentioned was having a place in the family (7 blocks of *talanoa*) and feeling included with friends (7 blocks of *talanoa*). Belonging to a team was mentioned by four children and feeling that they had a place at school was mentioned by two.

6.6.1 Having a place in the family

Seven children spoke of belonging to their family and the sense of security that they felt from this. For example, Sina said that knowing she had a place in the family helped her feel loved and not lonely. She said that she was grateful for her family and her parents in particular because she:

> ...wouldn't be by myself [...] and they would help me to get through.

Moana also shared this view, saying that her family made her feel loved and included because:

> .. they are always around. I'm never lonely because there is always someone there… like my sisters… or my brother.

For Isaia, he spoke of feeling grateful for his family and how his family make him feel loved. He said:

> My family because whenever I'm sick they buy medicine for me and they make me feel better.

6.6.2 Feeling included with friends

Seven children spoke about how they liked to feel included by their friends. These views came through in their *talanoa* about how they would cheer someone up in school who was feeling uncertain or sad. Tualagi said:

> We could ask him if he okay and why he is sad. Then we could figure out how to help him [...] we could go up and say are you ok…or go and play with them. Just that cos then we can help him. That would make them feel a little bit happier… by including them.

Penina felt included with her friends because they

> always look out for me... they're always there… when I'm happy, sad, lonely… like all the time [...] Yeah they are funny and always make me laugh… we do silly things and it's fun…we laugh lots.

Knowing how happy she felt when she was included by her friends, Penina suggested that including others would make them feel happy. Speaking of somebody who was sad, Penina said:

> If he had friends, he would be happier. So we could try and be a friend [...] yeah, cos then he wouldn't be lonely. There was someone at school who was lonely and so we showed friendship.

Tasi, Tavita, and Mosese suggested that they could include the sad boy in the photo in their games such as PlayStation or kicking around a ball or share their Lego with him. Underpinning these suggestions was recognition by the children that they themselves liked to be included by their friends.

6.6.3 Belonging to a team

Almost all of the children belonged to a team, such as netball, rugby, soccer, dance, or gymnastics. Children felt pride in belonging to their team. Underpinning this pride was a sense of achievement associated with things like defending the goal, making the try, or shooting the goal. For example, Isaia said he liked playing rugby because:

> ...it makes me happy because… I get to run around a lot and score tries.

Tasi shared this view. Talking about soccer, he said:

> I'm learning how to play soccer. I really like playing soccer [...] I just like it. I like playing with my friends. I like scoring goals.

Mosese also enjoyed soccer saying:

> It's just that I love playing soccer and that... soccer is my favourite sport… and I love being goalie because it's my best position [...] it's about keeping the goal safe and making sure that no goals get in.

Figure 31: A selection of photos illustrating feeling valued, feeling included, and that we belong.

Source: the Samoan children

Looking at the key ideas coming out of this theme, the children believed having a place in the family, feeling included with friends, and belonging to a team was important to their wellbeing, as shown in Figure 31. Two children spoke of having a place at school, primarily in relation to hanging out with friends.

6.7   Being a good person is important to my wellbeing

Thirteen blocks of *talanoa* by nine children related to this theme: helping others (5 blocks of *talanoa*), being respectful, having integrity, being kind, and sharing (8 blocks of *talanoa*). This theme primarily arose in the *talanoa* helping somebody who was feeling uncertain or sad, and things they were learning now that they thought would be important when they became an adult.

6.7.1 Helping others

Three children spoke about the importance of helping others in five blocks of narrative. Tualagi spoke about helping people, such as including them, so that they would be happier, while Mele saw showing kindness as a way that she could help people. This sub-theme related closely to the values that children said that they were learning, which was primarily underpinned by the view that being a good person and helping others was a good thing for people to do.

6.7.2   Being respectful, having integrity, and being kind

The children highlighted the importance of values such as being respectful, having integrity, and being kind. Tualagi highlighted the importance of respect in the following *talanoa*:

Tualagi	*I'm learning respect…like how to be respectful of others. It's really important to be respectful.*
Researcher	*Respect. That's a really great skill to have. Well done you.*
Tualagi	*And like treating people how I want to be treated.*
Researcher	*That's really great Tualagi.*

Moana also spoke about learning values, saying:

> *I'm learning about integrity, honesty and compassion [...] It's really important to have those things, especially when you get older.*

For Mosese, working hard was important. He said:

> *I'm learning about working hard. I've got to work hard to be able to do things when I get older [...] Things like get a good job. I need to work hard.*

Penina recognised that being a good friend was important not only because she wanted to be treated the same way but also because it was a good thing to do. She said:

Penina	*I'm learning about how to be a good friend.*
Researcher	*That's really great. Being a good friend is important isn't it?*
Penina	*Yeah cos I like being with my friends… and if I'm a good friend, then they'll be a good friend back.*
Researcher	*What about if they are not a good friend back?*
Penina	*… it's a good thing to do… to be a good friend… to everyone.*

Mele said she was learning how to help people, saying:

> *I'm learning how to help people and how to be nice to people [...] Helping people is good to do.*

Figure 32: A selection of photos illustrating being a good person illustrated as helping younger family members, sharing their ice-cream, and helping mummy with the dishes.

Summarising Section 6.7, the children said that having values and being a good person was important to their wellbeing. The photos taken by the children in Figure 32 illustrate some of the ways which demonstrated them having values and being good people.

6.8   Chapter summary

In listening to the *talanoa* of the children, five themes emerged in relation to how they conceptualised wellbeing and what was important to their own wellbeing. The first of these themes was that children conceptualised their wellbeing as a "whole bunch of stuff, with good bits and bad bits". All of the children described wellbeing in social-emotional terms such as being loved, being cared for and protected, being helped, not feeling lonely, and spending time with loved ones. Eight children described a mental dimension to wellbeing, which came through when they spoke about not having to worry and being reassured that things are okay, as well as having somebody they trust to talk to. Six children spoke about the physical dimension of wellbeing, which they spoke of in terms of playing sport to keep fit and eating the right food to be healthy. Fewer children mentioned things that were related to the spiritual and cultural dimension of wellbeing. For example, three children mentioned church or praying while two children spoke of their cultural identity as a Samoan. The second aspect that emerged under this theme was that wellbeing comprised of both good stuff and bad stuff. Even in situations that could be perceived to be negative, children were able to see something good in it.

The second theme that came through from the children was the importance of social connections. Connecting or spending time with parents, siblings, and cousins was most frequently mentioned by the children (15 blocks of *talanoa* and all 11 children). Related to this theme was having their family around, even if they were not actively engaged in an activity together (5 blocks of *talanoa*). This referred to instances when their parents might be doing something else in the house, but they were close by. Children consistently said that the basis of their happiness - in building Lego, being on PlayStation, playing soccer or netball, helping out in the home, for example - was about spending time with their parents, their siblings, or their cousins.

The third key theme that came through from the *talanoa* – feeling secure and not having to worry – was the most frequently referred to theme across both *fono* (37 blocks of *talanoa*). The key ideas underpinning this theme were that children felt secure when they felt looked after, cared for, and protected (9 blocks of *talanoa*) and had people in their lives they could depend on (6 blocks of *talanoa*). Knowledge that they had somebody they could talk to (7 blocks of *talanoa*) and how they could take time out from situations that they were uncertain about (5 blocks of *talanoa*) helped them to not worry. The last piece to this theme was feeling secure in their house (4 blocks of *talanoa*) and being surrounded by their special things (4 blocks of *talanoa*).

The fourth theme presented in this chapter related to children feeling included and that they belong (18 blocks of *talanoa*). The three most frequent ways in which children spoke of this theme were in terms of having a place in the family (7 blocks of *talanoa*), feeling included with friends (7 blocks of *talanoa*), and belonging to a team (4 blocks of *talanoa*).

The last theme "Being a good person" (13 blocks of *talanoa*) was about helping others (5 blocks of *talanoa*), being respectful, having integrity, being kind, and sharing (8 blocks of *talanoa*). This theme primarily arose when speaking about how to help somebody who was feeling uncertain or sad about something, and things they were learning now that they thought would be important when they became an adult.

Overall, the findings indicate that when children conceptualise their wellbeing, they do so primarily in relational terms. That is, how they connect with others is important, which in turn is integral to their sense of belonging or feeling secure that they have a place in the family, on the team, and at school. Children also considered things such as showing kindness and including people, so they are not lonely, as important. Much of what underpinned the theme of feeling secure and not having to worry was about being looked after, having somebody that they can rely on and being able to talk to somebody they trust.

Having presented the findings that emerged from the standpoint of the children, Chapter 8 discusses these findings in relation to the existing literature.

CHAPTER 7
Listening to the parents' voices

O fanau a manu e fafaga i fugala'au 'ae 'o fanau a tagata e fafaga i 'upu.
The offspring of birds are fed with flower nectar,
but the children of men are nurtured with words.
- Samoan saying

7.1 Introduction

The purpose of my research is to gain a better understanding of how the Samoan diaspora conceptualise child wellbeing. In this chapter, I present the findings that emerged from the 10 individual *talanoaga* that I held with the parents of the Samoan children. It is important to understand the parents' views as they are influential in shaping the wellbeing of their children.

As noted in Chapter 5, I used *talanoa*, which is a qualitative research method that prioritises the voices of the parents, to gain their insights into how they conceptualise child wellbeing, and how they are supporting the wellbeing of their children. I prepared four broad questions to help start the *talanoaga*, but in prioritising the voices of the parents, the *talanoa* unfolded at the pace set by the parents and in a direction they chose to go. This was important to allow the parents to share their knowledge, their stories, and to frame their views in ways that were authentic to them. The result of the *talanoa* approach is a rich narrative, which I believe would not have been so rich had the parents only answered my questions. The parents shared what was important to them. In comparing the 10 *talanoaga*, there were areas where the parents held similar views and areas where their views diverged.

Four broad themes emerged from the *talanoaga* with the parents. Firstly, parents conceptualised wellbeing as *ola manaia* or the beautiful life (Section 7.2). Secondly, they had a clear picture of what the beautiful life looks like (Section 7.3). Thirdly, parents saw their role as laying the foundations and shaping their children to have a beautiful life (Section 7.4). To do this, parents were drawing on their own upbringing experiences but with some "tweaks" to raise their children. This was the fourth broad theme that emerged from the *talanoaga* (Section 7.5). Visible across each of these three or four themes is the diversity of the parents' voices, reflecting the diversity of the Samoan diaspora.

7.2 Wellbeing as *ola manaia*, the beautiful life

7.2.1 It's about their "whole being"

All of the parents spoke about wellbeing holistically, viewing it in terms of their child's whole being. In Ana's words:

> For me, it's a holistic approach… a holistic idea […] For me it's their whole being.

In Masina's opinion, wellbeing was often viewed through a health lens (*ola maloloina*). While heath was important to wellbeing, Masina saw it as only one aspect:

> *Some people say its ola maloloina but I think it's more than health. You know, health is important, it's a part of it… but there are other things too. I'm thinking like mental, emotional, ma le spirituality. Ola manaia… that's what I think when I think of wellbeing.*

Masina used *ola manaia* as a term to describe what wellbeing meant to her and translated it as "a beautiful life". To Masina, child wellbeing was about her children having a beautiful life.

All of the parents viewed child wellbeing as encompassing multiple dimensions, although there were different views of what these dimensions were. As seen above, Masina viewed wellbeing as encompassing a physical, a socio-emotional, a mental, and a spiritual dimension. This view was shared by Talia, who said:

> *Physical wellbeing, so the health and nutrition and wellness and then spiritual wellbeing, as well as understanding who they are, having strong beliefs that line up with what we believe, also emotional and mental, confidence, and identity… not being scared or being unsure of themselves. They are probably the first things... their self-worth and how they feel in the world.*

Matalena and Filipo also viewed wellbeing as comprising of these dimensions and added a cultural dimension. In Matalena's words:

> *Wellbeing to me is… it's a very broad term but in saying that I think… I think to answer your question clearly based on how I look at it as a parent, the things that are really important to me are health, education, and being in a very safe environment at home….everything that helps build my children's growth and development in terms of spiritual growth […] they are very much the foundation of what he needs for wellbeing… you know the Samoan perspective in terms of taking into account culture is very much part of his development, as well as you know developing connections to the community […] I believe they contribute to the well-being the totality of the wellbeing… it's a very holistic approach.*

Filipo conceptualised wellbeing similarly, but also added the notion of wrap around support, saying:

> *And then the other thing is that wellbeing is determined by the holistic wrap-around of looking after the mental, the social, the cultural, physical, the spiritual aspects of the child… so that's how I see child wellbeing.*

Not all parents saw wellbeing as encompassing so many dimensions. For example, Pele and Sosefina saw wellbeing primarily in terms of a physical, a mental, and a socio-emotional dimension. Sosefina said that when she and her husband migrated from Samoa, they made the intentional decision to not become involved in the church (spiritual dimension) or in the *fa'asamoa* (cultural dimension). She said:

> *No, when we came it was for one reason… to have a better life... Our thinking is that you come to New Zealand and you speak English so that you can get ahead…so that you can get a good job.*

Enoka, one of Sosefina's older children, explained his parent's decision by sharing of the financial struggles they had experienced as their parents worked hard to carve out a life for them in New Zealand. He recalled his parents saying how they didn't want their children to struggle like they had. Seeing his parents struggle motivated Enoka and his siblings to achieve. As Enoka explained:

They've built this life... it's been difficult, but they've built this life. They've pretty much shown us
a picture of what it means to struggle... and they don't want us to go down that same road [...].
My dad's always telling me, "I work six days a week, you guys can't be mucking around while
I'm working hard to make the money, otherwise it's wasted." So yeah... that's my motivation.

7.2.2 Wellbeing is a journey

Several parents viewed wellbeing as being important across the life-course of their children. Filipo, Masina, Matalena, and Pele used a life-course approach to describe the wellbeing of their children. This came through when they spoke about wellbeing being important across the whole of their children's lives. Matalena captured this life-course view as a journey, saying:

I encourage them to see that everything we do... this is not a journey that can be done alone.

Matalena said she encouraged her children to build close relationships with others within their wider *aiga*, at church, at school, and in their sports teams. Matalena saw this as other or further forms of support that her children could draw on during their journey. She said:

That's why I very much embrace being part of the community, being part of the church because
he gets the opportunities to see other young men [...] To have other role models that he can
learn from and be a part of… and that's really crucial and yeah, it's a journey.

All of the parents spoke of their responsibility in setting a strong foundation for their children and of preparing them to live a good life. Parents placed particular attention on raising children who were resilient. They viewed resilience as a strength for their children's wellbeing now as well as in the future. Malia summed up this view up when she said:

I think, they need to be stable emotionally… as a foundation of wellbeing going forward. To my mind, it's all driven from inside: mentally, I guess and emotionally and spiritually… and so that's why it's really important for me to ensure that… they are emotionally stable, and that, you know, they are happy, and content, and well supported.

Viewing child wellbeing as a journey, parents believed that what their children needed for their wellbeing would change at different stages over their lives. For example, what their children needed for their wellbeing as toddlers was different to what they needed as they became older. To highlight one example from the four who viewed wellbeing from a life-course perspective, Filipo said:

... the way in which parents are parenting their children, they're not doing the same thing now as they did when the child was a baby… as the child grows… especially from 5 to 13 and 13 to 18, the child is being influenced by so many different factors, and so many influences, and different world views.

Filipo believed that parents needed to be aware that the needs of their children were likely to change as they got older and that the support parents provided their children needed to take account of these changes. Viewing this in relation to the multi-dimensional nature of wellbeing, Filipo explained that while all the dimensions were needed for wellbeing, the importance of each dimension changed over the course of the children's lives. In Filipo's words:

Like the early years, 0 to 5, its mainly nurturing and protecting our children, that's what we're doing as parents…. we're primarily nurturing, protecting them and keeping them safe... that's our ultimate goal when I think back to my own experiences... we're not really teaching them anything spiritual apart from praying for them and taking them to church. During that time, the whole focus is protecting them and nurturing them… so the wellbeing is quite limited to that. And then from 5 until primary intermediate years, it changes… you're still nurturing and protecting them, but there are other things. One of the more common ones that comes in is... what would you call it... you start becoming an educator but also a moral compass for them. You set the moral compass because they don't have an idea so it's for you to set the moral compass… and that's huge because that impacts them a lot [...] so if the moral compass goes askew or missing, that has a huge impact.

Summarising the key ideas from Section 7.2, all of the parents viewed wellbeing as being multi-dimensional although there were diverging views as to what these dimensions were. Some of the parents spoke of wellbeing in terms of a life-course, with wellbeing viewed as a journey.

7.3 Picturing what *ola manaia* looks like

Against the backdrop of wellbeing conceptualised as *ola manaia*, I asked parents what *ola manaia* looked like to them. Only one parent replied in terms of their child going to university to get a good job. Sosefina saw a clear pathway for her son, which using her words, was about not wanting her children to "struggle financially". Sosefina said:

I want him to go to university... to finish school and then to go to university or to work fulltime. To do his sports so that he keeps healthy…cos that will help him study. We want him to do the best that he can possibly do… get some degree so that he can get a good job [...] you know we've struggled financially for as long as I can remember. We tell our kids to strive….just like we are striving with our jobs. We live week to week, with whatever money we have.

The parents of the other nine families spoke of *ola manaia as* wanting their children to be happy and emotionally stable, to be good people, to have good values, to do something meaningful and realise their passion. Ana touched on all of these four ideas when she said:

... yeah healthy and happy adults, doing something meaningful with their lives, where they feel like they're contributing to society. Definitely aspirations that they continue to hold onto the values that we've tried to instil in them, like empathy, compassion, generosity... just realising that those are really lovely qualities in the world, and that it's not all about A's and all those things. They certainly help but like [...] for me, my aspiration for her is that she... I just want her to know that she's loved, and know that she's got a place in the world...

Malia summed up the views of many parents, who spoke about wanting their children to be happy and emotionally stable, when she said:

If anything, I want them to land on their feet and not harbour any uncertainties in their lives. I want them to be stable and just… be able to land somewhere where they are content and happy… and are comfortable with who they are and who they are becoming… I want to push them as hard as I can academically, spiritually, and emotional… to a place where they can land and be independent.

Matalena shared these aspirations, and referring to the anecdotal marker that you've achieved "the migrant dream" when your children become a lawyer or doctor, said:

Look, he can become a doctor, he can choose to become anything my… my responsibility as a parent is to ensure that he has the characteristics of a fine young man. What these are to me, is that he is respectful, he loves his parents, his mum, his sister, his family, to have values... these will be unique to him as a Samoan... traits that cannot be bought, traits that no one can ever take away from him.

So regardless of who he wants to be, what he chooses to become, he will have my full support. I think what he becomes, like a doctor or whatever it is, will be really defined by his values and those are the things that are important to me: respect, love and faith… [...] Regardless of what he becomes in the future, who he becomes really matters….the person who he becomes. That's what I want to shape Emma… shaping him so he can be the best that he can be…whatever that may be.

This illustrates the second key idea that emerged as being important to having a beautiful life that is, having good values. Raising her child to have good values was more important to Matalena than raising a future doctor, which was shared by half of the parents. To use one example that came out of the *talanoaga* with Masina:

Masina:	*I think it's different. You know when I was young, it was all about go to school, get a good job. Everything was push, push, push to that. I understand that... you know our parents want the best. That's what they know for how to be the best. But when I think of my children, I want them to be settled, happy. Sometimes too much pushing for kids to succeed. If they are settled and happy, then they will succeed. You know some days, Mele comes home from school so tired. She goes straight to her room to rest. Then she comes out when she's ready. You know, it must be hard for them ah? So I let her go and when she's rested, she comes and helps with feaus.[23] She's a good help with baby... you know, tele tamaiti[24] (laughs).*
Researcher:	*They're beautiful. So your aspiration for Mele is more that she's settled and happy rather than a doctor or lawyer?*
Masina:	*Yeah... well you know, if she wants to be a lawyer or doctor (laughs). But yes, we trying to teach her to be good, work hard, serve family, be respectful, go to church... these things are good.*

The third idea parents believed was important to their children having a beautiful life was that they were good people. As Sefulu said:

Just, honestly my main thing is that he is a good person cos they are just so hard to come by these days... I guess just the way he treats other people. Likes that's my main, my main goal with him [...] My main thing would be treating people with respect and treating them the way you want to be treated.

Pele said that what was important to her and her husband was that their sons were "caring and respectful men". In a similar way to the anecdotal marker used by Matalena about achieving the migrant dream, Tomasi also commented on how raising his children to be good people was more important to him than his children becoming a lawyer or doctor. Tomasi did not want his children to go through the unnecessary pressure of a career just to "keep up appearances". Having said that, he understood why other Pasifika parents put pressure on their children to become doctors and lawyers. He thought part of that was to counter the negative labels put on Pasifika. Tomasi said:

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[23] *feaus* – errands or jobs
[24] *tele tamaiti* – plenty of children

I also know where that comes from. Trying so hard to have to prove yourself because of the way society treats people, Pasifika people over the years, you know?

The fourth idea that underpinned a beautiful life for the parents was their children doing something meaningful and doing something they were passionate about. Pele said that she and her husband were comfortable with whichever careers their children chose. What was important to them, Pele said, was that their children gave "something back to their community in whatever way that might be" and that "if they could achieve those things I would be happy as a parent". In reflecting on her own childhood, Loata felt that achievement was marked by academic success. This did not fit with who she was and Loata said she had struggled with low self-esteem because of that. Loata wanted something different for her children. She wanted them to do what they are passionate about. In Loata's words:

It's quite different now. Like you know, success to me was them finding what they're passionate about and doing it. I think that maybe my thinking may have been shaped by my own upbringing. My parents told us what they wanted us to do and it had a lot to do with, you know the fact that they had brought us to New Zealand for a better education. In their minds, success and achievement was you passed all your exams at school, did well, was an A student, passed School C and UE and all of that, and went to university and studied as a doctor, lawyer and that kind of stuff.

I was determined for them to do to find what their passion was and to do what they wanted to do... Because I just knew that's what would bring joy, and so I wanted the boys to have that joy [...] you kind of get an idea of what your kids are passionate about because its whatever lights them up... The picture of success shouldn't just be that (academic success). It should be finding out what they are passionate about and then being encouraged in that.

Table 21 pulls together *talanoa* to show how these four ideas emerged as *ola manaia*.

Table 21: Achieving ola manaia, the beautiful life

Virtue	Supporting Quote
Being a good person	Just, honestly my main thing is that he is a good person cos they are just so hard to come by these days... I guess just the way he treats other people. Likes that's my main, my main goal with him. (Sefulu)
	I personally believe that if you've got a child who can empathise and who can connect with people and feel secure. They can go on to do great things, you know. (Ana)
	I think what he becomes […] will be really defined by his values and those are the things that are important to me: respect, love and faith [...] Regardless of what he becomes in the future, who he becomes really matters... (Matalena)
	… that they do some type of service […] understanding that they need to give something back to their community in whatever way that might be. (Pele)
	When I think of my children, I want them to be settled, happy. Sometimes too much pushing for kids to succeed. If they are settled, happy, then they will succeed. (Masina)
	… but I think it's a matter of being a good person. I think that's more than a doctor or a lawyer or anything like that. Being a good person is more important. (Tomasi)
Having good values	I want them to know who they are and to be surrounded by that and have strong values. (Malia)
	My responsibility as a parent is to ensure that he has the characteristics of a fine young man. What these are to me, is that he is respectful, he loves his [family] parents, his mum, his sister, his family, to have values […] [I] remind him about respect, listening, and standing up for those that can't… (Matalena)

Virtue	Supporting Quote
	My main thing would be treating people with respect and treating the way you want to be treated. (Sefulu)
	Yeah... well you know, if she wants to be a lawyer or doctor (laughs). But yes, we trying to teach her to be good, work hard, serve family, be respectful, go to church... these things are good. (Masina)
	… just being caring and respectful men. (Pele)
Having a positive sense of self	If anything, I want them to land on their feet and not harbour any uncertainties in their lives. I want them to be stable and just… be able to land somewhere where they are content and happy… and are comfortable with who they are and who they are becoming. (Malia)
	Because if we want our children to do well, they have to be […] respectful, can work hard, *amio lelei*... (Masina)
	I just want her to know that she's loved, and that she's got a place in the world. (Ana)
	So you know it's just letting them be who they are and I guess as a parent you understand their strengths and their weaknesses, and what you need to support them, and to help them get better at. (Pele)
Doing something meaningful that they are passionate about	I was determined for them to do to find what their passion was and to do what they wanted to do... Because I just knew that's what would bring joy […] success to me was them finding what they're passionate about and doing it. (Loata)
	Yeah healthy and happy adults, doing something meaningful with their lives, where they feel like they're contributing to society. (Ana)
	That's what I want to shape Emma… shaping him so he can be the best that he can be…whatever that may be. (Matalena)
	I just want him to be ok and make his own decisions, make his own path instead of me trying to paint that for him, make it for him...I want him to be better than me. I want him to have more than what I have. (Sefulu)

To summarise Section 7.3, most of the parents spoke of *ola manaia,* the beautiful life, in terms of wanting their children to be happy and emotionally stable, to be good people, to have good values, and that their children did something meaningful and they realised their passion.

7.4   Supporting our children's *ola manaia*

7.4.1 Laying the foundation of a beautiful life

Parents spoke about their role primarily in terms of giving their children a strong foundation on which they could build a beautiful life. Filipo drew on the Samoan saying - *o fanau o le oloa mai le Atua* – as he talked about the place of children in the *fa'asamoa*. Children were viewed as a rich gift or treasure from God. Filipo said they were:

> ... the most precious thing from God. The key thing here is that it's a gift from God and that's
> the first thing that springs to mind: I've been gifted this gift, and this means I have to look after
> it. I'm a steward. A steward of this gift and that I need to bring up, tausi,[25] care, provide for this
> gift and so not only that this person is going to develop healthy, mentally sound, spiritual but
> also that its pleasing to God as my act of service.

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[25] *tausi* – to look after and to take care for

While not always viewed in stewardship terms, all of the parents firmly held the view that they were to look after, protect, teach, and support their children. These ideas came up consistently during the *talanoaga*. For example, Aleki said:

> ...it's important for us to be role models to them. Things they can learn from us sets some kind of a solid foundation. That's really important to us. That's what the scriptures says, "teach the kids while they are young, and they won't depart from it.

Explaining her role as a parent in similar terms, Matalena spoke about how she was raising her son to be a "fine young man". She said:

> It's very much what I said earlier, who he is right now is fine young man, and my role is to make a good man out of him….so he is my chance to make a good man (laughs) [...]. Regardless of what he becomes in the future, who he becomes really matters... the person who he becomes. That's what I want to shape Emma, shaping him so he can be the best that he can be... whatever that may be.

Matalena described her parenting in terms that were very intentional, saying:

> What you see is very much a product of those intentional decisions I made for them....You know, he's already eight years old but he's capable of making his own decisions and so in the next three to five years he's going to want to do his own things, make his own independent decision and that's fine but as long as I've set the basic foundations of values to help him become a fine young man… That's really important to me.

Parents were laying down the foundations of a beautiful life through their stewardship in four ways. The first way in which they were doing this was by providing for their children and ensuring that they were healthy and safe. All of the parents spoke about their role along these lines. Examples from the *talanoaga* include their children having a house that was warm, having a house that was safe, having healthy food, having warm clothes, and having things like books, electronics, and toys. Parents did not spend as much time during the *talanoaga* on these material aspects of wellbeing, as can be seen in the following *talanoa* by Masina:

> Because if we want our children to do well, they have to be healthy, they have to do well at school, and you know, it's for us as parents to provide those things so they can turn out that way…you know those things, house, food, clothes but mainly also it's about they go to church, they are respectful, can work hard, amio lelei. [26]

A second way in which parents were laying a strong foundation was by ensuring that their children had a strong sense of identity, that they felt secure in who they were and that they belonged, or as Ana framed it to know that they "have a place in the world". All parents spoke of wanting their children to feel secure about themselves and who they were. To use Malia's words:

> I want them to know who they are and to be surrounded by that...

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[26] *amio lelei* – good behaviour

For Ana, ensuring her children were secure in who they were and that they had a positive sense of self was also extremely important. She prioritised the socio-emotional wellbeing of her children. Ana saw this as also helping her children relate to others, saying:

> *I think for us we put more emphasis on their emotional and social things... rather than even their academia. I personally believe that if you've got a child who can empathise and who can connect with people and feel secure. They can go on to do great things, you know.*

Malia and her husband said that it was highly important that their children felt secure growing up in New Zealand with mixed heritage. A concern for them both was that their children were able to balance their culture within a kiwi context. Relating this back to her own experiences, Malia said:

> *I definitely think a lot about it because I think I live that life. You know, we're here in the office and next minute we're putting on that ia lavalava,[27] putting on the ie toga,[28] and serving our culture that way… I think it's really important and want to ensure that my children are well prepared to balance themselves, the cultural aspect and the environment.*

Pele did not believe that a strong sense of identity necessarily meant her children needed to be immersed in the Samoan culture. While she was raising her children to be proud of their cultural heritage, there were some aspects of the *fa'asamoa* that she was not entirely comfortable with. Pele framed it this way:

> *There are parts of the culture that I embrace but there are large parts that I really don't want him to have the stress of... living outside of your means and doing things that you can't support… I can't encourage him to do that. I can't encourage either of them from doing that… so I've really held off on some of those cultural things. I do think that they miss out… and I don't know whether it's my own baggage, but I haven't immersed them in the way that I've been told by my parents that this is the way to do it. I've really held back.*

To highlight the importance of identity, Loata used the example of how her son's primary school teacher had shortened his name so that she could pronounce it more easily. Her son had become upset, however, Loata had not said anything to the teacher because she had been brought up not to question those who were considered to be in authority. This attitude had been compounded by feeling that she had been silenced as a child, which had made her extremely shy. Had she not been so shy, Loata said that she would have told the teacher that:

> *...my boys are really shy, but they have a lot in them, and if you took the time to really know them and find out about them... you can bring the best out of them. I would say it wouldn't take much to get to know them. I would say they are Samoan boys and they may seem shy and intimidated around other kids [...] but if you encouraged them to share something about the culture that they love they would share it. I would say that (sighs)… them being quiet and not pushing themselves forward or butting into conversations, doesn't mean that they lack interest. It's a form or respect for them, cause that's how they've been taught at home. Get to know them... at the core of it all, they also have dreams, aspirations and things they are passionate about. It may be different, it doesn't make them wrong, it just makes them different.*

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[27] *ia lavalava* – sarong

[28] *ie toga* – fine mat

Loata believed that by ignoring her son's identity in this way, the teacher had made her son feel insecure about being Samoan. This, Loata said, had impacted on her son's self-worth, making him feel that he didn't fit in at school. Her son continued to feel that he "didn't belong" until he changed schools to now where he felt welcomed as a PI.[29] Loata said she was determined to raise her granddaughter differently because of her son's experiences. Like her boys, she wanted her granddaughter to be strong in her identity and know, "... that who she is and what she loves is awesome. And you know, that she doesn't have to be like the other person". Loata had managed to make a transition between parenting her children and parenting her grandchildren, in what she believed was important to their wellbeing. For example, this time around Loata had equipped herself with knowledge before meeting her granddaughter's friends, as well as her teacher and doctor.

Thirdly, parents saw laying a strong foundation as being about teaching their children life lessons and values. These two excerpts from the *talanoaga* with Iosefa and Talia capture the way in which they used different opportunities to teach their children:

Iosefa	*I guess you can't address everything all at the same time. So for example today and an old man tried to give the kids a bag of lollies...and I said no. When we walked away (I) explained why it could've been unsafe. So I was addressing safety at that point. When tomorrow I'll teach...*
Talia	*Teach them to be generous and kind*
Iosefa	*Yeah, but tomorrow it might be "stop fighting" (laughs)*
Researcher	*(laughs) So using these opportunities as teaching moments?*
Iosefa	*Yeah, these illustrations change all the time depending on the situation. And so yes, I always try and teach them about being proud of being a Samoan. As much as I can because we don't go to a Samoan church and my parents don't live here. It's really important for me...*
Talia	*So when things come up there's an opportunity to talk about things in deeper. It doesn't always happen but when it does...*

The importance of their children learning values such as commitment and being responsible also underpinned Iosefa and Talia's decision to get their children into sports, as shown in the following *talanoa*:

Talia	*Sports is important for their health as well as being part of something else.*
Iosefa	*Yeah social skills as well as part of being a team.*
Talia	*Yeah, they've been part of sports since there were four.*
Iosefa	*Like they've done rugby.*
Talia	*Swimming lessons, umm.*
Iosefa	*Touch.*
Talia	*They did season of what was that… t-ball.*
Iosefa	*T-ball.*
Talia	*Soccer, lots of stuff, netball.*

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[29] PI is a colloquial term used to refer to Pasifika. PI is an acronym for Pacific Islanders.

Iosefa	We never enrolled them into these things so that they can be an All Black one day, you know… it's about teamwork, this is how you do commitment, that on a Saturday...
Talia	You get out of bed, be responsible.

Several others spoke of their responsibility as parents to support the wellbeing of their children, and the limited timeframe of childhood in which to do so. Iosefa encapsulated this when he said:

> … we've got such a responsibility to these kids you know, and it's what you speak into their lives… so yeah, there is just this sense of responsibility, you don't have them forever right?

Matalena also highlighted this point, noting that in five or ten years' time her children might not be interested in what she had to say, and so she was making the most of the opportunities now to teach her children. Speaking about this in relation to her son, Matalena said:

> Yeah, even when I drop him to school. Like today when I dropped him off I asked him, "what would you like to achieve, how will you treat your friends"… remind him about respect, listening, and standing up for those that can't… so it's, it's you know… it's something cos I don't know whether it will never happen again, you know? Maybe five or ten years, I'll try make a conversation and he's not interested… maybe he's probably already thinking of girls, already thinking of something else (laughs).

Lastly, parents were laying the foundation for their children to have a beautiful life by linking or connecting their children into their wider *aiga* and the community, such as church, school and sports clubs, for example. Many of the parents viewed this as important to their children's sense of belonging as well as building support networks that their children could draw on, if they needed. Commenting on the importance of these connections, Malia said:

> Culturally I loved my upbringing: just learning about the Samoan culture and understating the side of the culture and understanding who I am, and I've embedded that into my children's upbringing... I want them to know who they are and to be surrounded by that and the strong values, and church, and also the community.

Filipo talked of how connecting his children into the *aiga* and the Samoan community reflected how children were raised in Samoa, that is, by their parents and their extended *aiga* within the setting of the *nu'u*. Translating this to a Wellington setting, Filipo said that even where children were being raised by a single parent, they could draw on support from their *aiga*, their church, and the Samoan community. Any stigma attached to having a child out of wedlock or outside of marriage tended to be, in his view, outweighed by children being viewed in the *fa'asamoa* as rich gifts or treasures from God. As such, Filipo saw the role of parents, the extended *aiga*, the church, and the community, to take care of, to look after, and to protect this rich gift, as a pleasing act of service to God. Matalena agreed strongly with Filipo, saying that this support was the "…beauty of being in a very connected community and environment". Matalena was encouraging her children to be part of the wider *aiga* and the Samoan community. Part of this was because as a single parent, Matalena wanted her son to have positive male role models in the community. She said:

> I'm building my son to be someone that I know who will grow up to be a respectful man. It's very important to me. We have open conversations… I encourage him very much and again he

really doesn't have a choice… he doesn't have a choice because there's only me…. and that in
some ways worries me because is it enough? That's why I very much embrace being part of
the community, being part of the church because he gets the opportunities to see other young
men [...] To have other role models that he can learn from and be a part of… and that's really
crucial and yeah, it's a journey.

To summarise this section, there were four key ways how parents were laying the foundations for a beautiful life. These were providing for them; ensuring that their children felt secure and that they felt they had a place in the world; teaching their children life lessons and values; and they were connecting their children into the wider *aiga* and community networks.

7.5   Parenting that is the "same, same but different"

A common feature across all 10 *talanoaga* was that parents were parenting their children based on their own upbringing experiences, but with "tweaks". As Malia put it:

I still have it in me what my mother would say, her values and morals, but at the time same time,
acknowledging the slight tweak.

Before discussing the "tweaks", parents would preface their views by saying, "like mum and dad did a fantastic job but..." (Ana) or "I'm not saying that mum was a bad mum or anything but…" (Sefulu). They recognised that their own parents had done the best for them. In summarising this recognition, Matalena said:

When I think back, my mum was the best mum she could be, based on the circumstances she
had, and I believe the same too. I'm trying to be the best mum that I can be, based on the
realistic: what I know, what I have, the surroundings around me. I try to not pass judgement on
anyone, cos I know what it's like, yeah.

Some parents questioned the way in which they had been raised. To draw on Pele's *talanoa* as an example:

It's not to say that I'm critical of the way that my parents raised me, but I am in some aspects,
you know? Generally I think I had a loving upbringing and my parents did what they thought
was best for me, but there are some things that my mother would say to me that I would not
dare say to my children, you know? I would just not say it to them. Sometimes I sit there and
think back and think, how the hell could they say that to me? (laughs)... what were they
thinking?

Pele felt that her mother's expectations about raising children had changed. Her mother's expectations of parenting had increased, now that Pele and her sister were bringing up their own children. To give an example, Pele spoke of her mother telling her sister that she should help her children with their homework:

So my sister rings me, and you know she's quite upset. She says, "You know, I feel like that
mum doesn't understand me. I'm working really hard. I'm doing the best that I can the kids are
fine, but I always feel like she's always criticising the way that I'm raising them". I say to her, "Do
you ever remember mum sitting down and doing homework with you?" She's like, "No". I say,
"No, so just take it with a grain of salt" (laughs).

The reasons parents tweaked their parenting approach fell into two broad categories, which were: 1) they felt disadvantaged as an adult by some aspect of their upbringing; and 2) they adapted their parenting to take into account the changing New Zealand context. In the next

part of this section, I present *talanoa* from the parents in support of these two reasons, as well as the ways in which the parents were tweaking their parenting approaches.

7.5.1 Why parents were adapting their parenting approaches

Many of the parents said that they were tweaking or adapting their parenting approach because they felt that there was a gap in the way their own parents had brought them up. The most frequently mentioned gap or complaint by parents was that they felt "silenced" as children. For example, Malia said that being raised in a "strong Samoan" family meant she was not encouraged to share her opinion. Malia felt that being silenced as a child had impacted her own ability to share her view comfortably at work. This was something she did not want her children to experience. In her own words:

> *I guess just looking and comparing to my upbringing, I want it to be slightly different and to be…*
> *I don't know, [for them] to be more independent and to be able to have a viewpoint. It's*
> *important for them to express how they feel. Whether they are happy, sad, not sure, confused...*
> *being able to open up about anything […] for my kids I don't want that for them. I want them to*
> *be able to express themselves, freely, right or wrong... but you know to have an opinion.*

Loata also spoke about growing up in a household where she was not encouraged to share her view. She felt that this had made her extremely shy.

The second most common reason parents were adapting their parenting approaches was to take into account the New Zealand context, as highlighted in the following *talanoaga* with Malia:

Malia	So it… so I guess, you know those kind of things…I still have it in me what my mother would say, her values and morals, but at the time same time, acknowledging the slight tweak…I think it's important for me…you know, to adapt to the environment and well as the time that we are in now…if I restrict her from having those experiences and you know opportunities, I guess….I might be sort of denying her something that she might really enjoy or something that might help her as an individual, as well as her own wellbeing […]
Researcher	So if I'm hearing you right, there are things from your parents that you are still doing and tweaking other parts to adapt to the environment?
Malia	Yeah…it's about keeping some parts but at the same time being really clear about what's going around them. I guess allowing my children to explore that but also ensuring that I prepare them.
Researcher	Yeah, I see.
Malia	You know, making them aware of what they need to be aware of, that there are boundaries to everything and that they just need to know what these are... I think the environment will continue to evolve and if I continue to protect them from that and keep them from understanding that, I think I'm doing more harm than good.

Many of the parents referred to the "disconnect" between the old ways in Samoa and the new ways in New Zealand. Commenting on how this impacted on her parenting approach, Masina who had migrated to New Zealand with her family the year before, said:

In many ways it's the same but in some ways... it's different. So yes. You know, like I was saying, I was never asked what I feel when I was young. But now we have to, we have to, to make sure they are settled. When they're this age (points to toddler), it's ok but when they get bigger, it's good to talk. So yes, it's different but it's good. You know, we have to bring the children up the best we can. That's another thing, you know in Samoa there are plenty of aiga to help out. But here, there's only us and we have to do it by ourselves.

Masina felt she had to adapt aspects of her parenting to fit the New Zealand context, for example, asking her daughter for her opinions. While this was new to the way she and her husband parented, Masina recognised that there was value in doing this. She said:

I'm trying because the teacher asks us "What does Mele say on this?" and we laugh because we don't know, we didn't ask (laughs)… I was never asked when I was young, so it's different, you know. So we try to ask Mele what she thinks about this, what she thinks about that. At first, it's hard, you know it feels funny to ask… but I can see it's a good thing. You know, Leilani,[30] well she encourage us to talk to the kids, ask the kids, listen to what they have to say, and so that's what we trying to do. Like I said, it's hard in the beginning but we getting used to it.

Another parent referred to the "disconnect between the old ways and the new" when sharing about the suicide of two young people close to his family. He wondered whether the suicides were a signal that the family ties were breaking down. While I had not raised youth suicide as a question, parents in three separate *talanoaga* spoke of their fears about it. One said that the high rates of youth suicide had influenced her parenting, in that she now actively encouraged her children to talk to her and her husband. A third parent spoke of her fears as she and her husband tried to help their daughter through the suicide of Tasileta, a young girl close to the family. She spoke of her daughter's devastation and of waking multiple times during the night to check that her daughter was all right. Influenced by this, she too had adapted her parenting approach to make sure that her children felt comfortable to share their views and she encouraged them to do so. She had also become a strong advocate of mental health services in the Pasifika community. In her own words, this mother said she prioritised making

... sure that we can talk or hear so that it's not just a thing that they are dictated to. I still believe that parents still need to guide. Don't get me wrong, I'm not thinking that the kids have the right to do anything that want but I mean in terms of just hearing them out... it's better than being silenced. It's a huge thing not being heard. It was a huge thing for Tasileta. She wasn't actually able to express herself... to the right people. It had a huge impact, a huge impact on her mental health. So that's one of my values, as a parent in terms of their wellbeing is actually trying to hear them out.

7.5.2 How parents were adapting their parenting approaches

Parents were tweaking or adapting their parenting approaches in a number of ways. For many of the parents, this included intentionally "creating the space" so that their children felt comfortable to talk to them and to share their views. Loata was creating the space by taking every opportunity to build strong relationships with her children so they felt comfortable talking to her about any topic. She said:

I believe you have to first of all to have a really good relationship with your child. I've got to go back to my own upbringing. It's definitely come from there. My parents were not the type of

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[30] Leilani is a person in the community who had helped Masina and her family settle into Wellington.

parents if I was going through something. When I had my first boyfriend I hid it from them and when I had my first broken heart I couldn't go to them I couldn't talk to them. So my learning comes from my own upbringing. My thing is that, have a relationship with your kids that is open and honest, and be the type of mum or dad that your kids know they can come to no matter what is going in their lives. I think an important part of this is for a parent to be open like that.

For Loata, the first step in creating this space was about getting rid of her own fears so that she could talk openly with her children about anything. Talking of her older son, Loata said:

His first heartbreak... I was the first person he went to. He was a grown man and he cried on my lap [...] The reason I say it's important that children come to you…you can literally give them advice. Your heart as a mother you just want your son to heal your daughter to heal. You're going to give them the very best advice. Even if it's hard. You just want to hold them. Honestly, Emma you know prayer is huge, you know… so that for me that's really important for your child to come to you.

Ana shared many of these views. Influenced by feeling "silenced" as a child, Ana said she and her husband were making sure that their children felt comfortable to share their views, which they would take into account. Ana said:

I still believe that parents still need to guide. Don't get me wrong, I'm not thinking that the kids have the rights to do anything that want. I mean in terms of just hearing them out and coming to some sort of place… like even it's like discussing a punishment, it's still better… rather than being silenced. It's a huge thing… not being heard.

Ana felt that doing this also helped her children to feel valued. Speaking of her daughter, Ana said:

I just want her to know that she's loved, and know that she's got a place in the world...

Malia echoed Ana's view when she said that she was tweaking her parenting to value what her children viewed as important, meaningful, and useful. Malia felt that being able to make her own decisions had not been viewed as meaningful or useful by her own parents. In raising her children, Malia said that she was trying to "step back and sort of, see this from a different perspective and allow her to, you know... be able to learn these things on her own. I can only prepare her so much." She said:

I guess for me… I think that I'm applying a different approach to parenting from my parents… although in saying that, at times I see my mother in me yeah… and you know, and then I guess it's certain things that she's instilled in me, and I want to instil the same values in my children… but there are certain things that I want to expand on as a parent that… where perhaps they weren't perceived by my parents as useful or perhaps meaningful at the time?

Reflecting on how she was raised, Matalena felt that her parents did not value the same things as she did. She said:

When I think of my time you know when I was young... I never had those conversation with my parents about what you want to be. My mum was busy doing cooking and other things but to actually sit down and have that kind of intentional conversation and dialogue well… I believe that I've learnt from my time when I was young and now I can see how I can add onto that, onto what I already know from the time I was young. I'm not doing anything any different from any other parent. Basically, I'm just building on what I already know…

A further way in which parents were adapting their parenting approach was by getting to know their children as individuals. Two parents spoke about doing this. Pele said:

> So you know it's just letting them be who they are and I guess as a parent you understand
> their strengths and their weaknesses, and what you need to support them, and to help them
> get better at.

Pele said doing this was important in helping her children feel valued, as well as ensuring that they received the right support from her and her husband. For Ana and Tomasi, getting to know their children as individuals was one of the reasons Ana chose to be a stay-at-home-mum. Tomasi said:

> From the get go, our parenting… what we've decided is that we solely base it on our kids'
> wellbeing and not on us. Having a fulltime parent at home was intentional.

Tomasi and Ana recognised the financial cost of having a fulltime parent at home, but still believed that it was the right decision so that they could create their home to be a safe haven for their children. Ana said that their "decision as a couple to really put the kids at the forefront" was also partly influenced by being a young mum and the negative stereotyping that came with that. Ana said:

> Yeah, it was really frowned upon... I had all sorts of people saying all sorts of stuff. I had to
> make that choice then, that for my little baby, for my child's wellbeing, I was going to dedicate at
> least the first three years to being a mum, to being a teacher, a guide. So wellbeing... we've
> always thought that the first years are most crucial in terms of them feeling loved, and secured,
> and so that also their needs are met.

To summarise this section, many of the parents recognised that if they were going to be successful in laying the foundations for their children to have *ola manaia*, they needed to adapt their parenting approach from the way they had been parented. Underpinning this recognition was the view by most parents that they needed to adapt to take into account the changing New Zealand context, and for some parents, that they had been disadvantaged as an adult by some aspect of their upbringing.

7.6   Chapter summary

This chapter presented the four broad themes that emerged from the *talanoaga* with parents. Firstly, parents conceptualised child wellbeing as *ola manaia* or the beautiful life. All of the parents saw *ola manaia* as a holistic concept that was multi-dimensional. The views of parents diverged in terms of the dimensions included in child wellbeing. Most parents saw child wellbeing as comprising physical, socio-emotional, mental, spiritual, and cultural dimensions. Several parents viewed child wellbeing through a life-course perspective, with one conceptualising wellbeing as a journey that lasted the entirety of her child's lifetime.

The second theme that emerged was how parents pictured *ola manaia*, the beautiful life. Most of the parents saw this in terms of their children: being happy and emotionally stable; having good values; being good people; and doing something meaningful and realising their passion. Only one parent viewed wellbeing and success in terms of her child going to university to secure a good job.

The third theme was that parents were supporting their children by laying the foundation so they could have a beautiful life. Integral to their child's wellbeing was ensuring that their children had a strong sense of identity and positive sense of self. There were varied views amongst the parents about how best to support their child's sense of identity and positive sense of self. Several parents touched on wellbeing as wrapping support around their children. Generally, laying the foundation for their children to have a beautiful life was by looking after their children; teaching their children life lessons and values; and encouraging their children to make links or to connect with other people in their wider *aiga*, and the community such as church, school and/or in their sports teams.

The last theme to emerge as a common feature across the 10 *talanoaga* was parents tweaking or adapting the ways in which they had been brought up to raise their own children. The common rationale for this was because of a gap they perceived in the way they had been parented, and to reflect the changing New Zealand context. The main ways in which parents adapted their parenting approaches were "creating the space" for their children to talk and to feel listed to; building relationships with each of their children and getting to know them individually within the family; and trying to understand from their children what was important to them.

CHAPTER 8
Placing the children's voices in context

So be sure when you step, Step with care and great tact.
And remember that life's A Great Balancing Act.
Dr Seuss - Oh, The Places You'll Go

8.1 Introduction

The central question in this thesis asks how the Samoan diaspora conceptualise child wellbeing. The substantial academic and policy interest in child wellbeing stems from recognition that the wellbeing of children is critical to sustainable development, and that every child has the right to wellbeing. A review of the literature identified the limited research that currently exists from the perspective of children, from the 'other' perspective, and from a holistic multisectoral perspective. Little is known about how Pasifika conceptualise their wellbeing. Taking an ethnic-specific focus on the Samoan diaspora, the findings offer some important insights into child wellbeing from the lens of the children themselves.

This research is the first to explore child wellbeing through the eyes of Samoan children using photovoice and *talanoa*. In contrast to previous research, these findings highlight that the Samoan children are able to define what wellbeing means to them. Their definition of wellbeing as a "bunch of stuff that has good bits and bad bits" both supports and extends the literature, as does the inclusion of cultural and spiritual dimensions to their wellbeing. Dr Seuss' verse about life being a balancing act, in a sense, captures how the Samoan children conceptualised their wellbeing. They saw wellbeing as a balancing of these good bits and bad bits. Further, in identifying what was important to their wellbeing, relationships and social connections stood out as prominent. The emphasis that children placed on being a good person, helping others, and using their values adds a fresh perspective to the child wellbeing literature.

In this chapter, I will first consider the definition of wellbeing developed by the Samoan children against the existing child wellbeing literature (Section 8.2). I will then examine the extent to which the four factors identified by the children as being important to their wellbeing - social connections; not having to worry; feeling valued, included and that they belong; and being a good person – support and/or extend the literature on child wellbeing (Section 8.3). Where it exists, I place emphasis on child wellbeing literature that is from the standpoint of children themselves. The final section of this chapter looks at the significance of these findings (Section 8.4).

8.2 Defining wellbeing

The Samoan children's ability to define their wellbeing in a way that resonates with children, adds new knowledge to the literature. Overwhelmingly, wellbeing tends to be defined in terms of its dimensions or domains (Dodge, et al., 2012). In their analysis of child wellbeing literature, Amerijckx and Humblet (2014) found that 78 percent of publications focused on the determinants of child wellbeing, and only three percent were theoretical papers that discussed the concept itself. Many of the definitions offered in Section 2.4 conceptualise

child wellbeing through a description of its dimensions or domains (see: the *Australian Child Wellbeing Project*, Redmond, et al., 2016; *Every Child Matters*, DoE, 2003; Fattore, et al., 2007; *Getting it Right for Every Child*, Scottish Government, 2012; the UNICEF Report Card, 2013; the *Wellbeing Monitor*, Welsh Government, 2015). New Zealand's draft *Child Wellbeing Strategy* also does not offer a definition of wellbeing but states that wellbeing will be achieved when all children and young people: are loved, nurtured, and safe; have what they need; belong, contribute, and are valued; are happy and healthy; and are learning and developing (DPMC, 2018). In its submission to the draft *Child Wellbeing Strategy*, the OCC (2018, p. 19) proposed the following definition:

> Child well-being is where all children have the resources and support that is required for them to develop and thrive, are able to enjoy their rights, achieve their full potential and participate as equal members of New Zealand society. Child well-being is inseparable from family and whānau well-being.

The way in which the Samoan children defined their wellbeing as "a bunch of stuff, with goods and bad bits" supports existing literature in two ways. Firstly, in defining wellbeing being about "a bunch of stuff", children viewed it as a holistic concept. They saw their wellbeing as a 'whole' rather than as separate dimensions. This finding supports the argument that research on child wellbeing needs to be contextualised because it is shaped by the social and cultural contexts in which it is located (Amerijckx & Humblet, 2013; Ben-Arieh, 2007; Camfield, et al., 2010; Manderson, 2005; Woodhouse, 2004). Much of the literature is through a western lens, which may not reflect the beliefs and values of 'other' worldviews (Ben-Arieh, 2001; 2007; Ben-Arieh, et al., 2014; Manolom & Promphakping, 2015; Saith & Wazair, 2010). This research focussed on children from a predominately collectivist culture, which Joshanloo (2014, p. 482) says "tend to regard the self as a small part of the collective and the cosmos".

There is no literature on child wellbeing from the perspective of Samoan children living in New Zealand. Further, children are not visible in any of the current conceptual models grounded in a Samoan worldview (Table 8). However, this finding supports the literature that is from the perspective of adults in the Samoan diaspora, such as considering the 'whole self' (Faleolo, 2016; Taule'ale'ausumai, 1990; Tui Atua, 2005) as well as the *Pacific Conceptions of Wellbeing*, where wellbeing is defined as a "holistic concept that presupposes wellness in all the relationships in which the self is involved – it cannot exist in isolation" (Tamasese, et al., 2010, p. 154). Conceptually, this finding supports the way in which the *Fonofale* (Pulotu-Endermann, 1995) and the *Uputaua* (Seiuli, 2012) depict a holistic view of wellbeing through use of a *fale*. The Samoan children in my research did not conceptualise their wellbeing in the form of a *fale* but used other imagery such as a seesaw, a treehouse, a flower, an x-box, and an ipad. As noted earlier, the Samoan children spoke of their wellbeing in terms of people, activities, places, and things. They only began using terms such as physical, socio-emotional, mental, cultural, and spiritual, after I used these terms in my report-back of the preliminary findings.

This idea of balance underpins the second way in which the findings from my research reinforce the existing literature. In defining wellbeing as comprising of "good bits and bad bits", the Samoan children understood that good things happen as well as things that made them feel upset, sad, angry, and/or uncertain. Further, they were able to see something

positive even in situations that they perceived to be negative. For example, three children spoke about somebody close to them who had died. Each of these children were able to identify a good bit and bad bit about it. Recognising that wellbeing has both good bits and bad bits is consistent with Fattore, et al.'s (2007, p. 17) research, which found that while wellbeing was "typically viewed as positive feeling states such as happiness, excitement and peacefulness or calm, some children include being able to integrate anger and sadness into their lives, as part of well-being". Integrating these contrasting elements of wellbeing was essentially how children conceptualised resilience (Fattore, et al., 2007). Resilience was not a word that the Samoan children used, but they were able to describe the notion of resilience during the *talanoaga*. They spoke about resilience in their *talanoa,* about wellbeing having a "good bits as well as the bad bits", as well as what they would do when they felt uncertain, or sad, or angry about something. Samoan children are applying resilience to their lives by talking to somebody they trust (seven children) or by taking time out (five children). Further, six children said they did not have to worry because of the knowledge that they had somebody that they could rely on.

There is no current model on child wellbeing that captures the views of Samoan children. So based on key elements of the children's drawings and *talanoa*, Figure 33 offers an illustration of wellbeing from the standpoint of Samoan children, which brings together these ideas of wholeness, balance, and resilience. Conceptualised as a seesaw, wellbeing is achieved when the "good bits and the bad bits" are balanced. A seesaw is a concept that children can easily identify with. The dynamic nature of wellbeing is captured in the seesaw always in motion, moving up and down. The children's holistic view of wellbeing is captured by the apps on the seesaw: depicting physical, socio-emotional, mental, cultural, and spiritual dimensions. The use of apps acknowledges the children's modernity as shown when they expressed their preference for using smart phones over disposable cameras, and by several children conceptualising wellbeing in their drawings as an ipad with apps, apps on a television screen, and an x-box. Containing these apps within a box picks up on the children's understanding of wellbeing as a holistic concept. These key ideas support Dodge, et al.'s (2012) definition of wellbeing in which they propose wellbeing to be the balance between an individual's resource pool and the challenges they face (Figure 12). That is, an individual achieves wellbeing when they have the psychological, social, and physical resources they need to meet a particular psychological, social, and physical challenge. In a similar way, the "good bits" of the Samoan children's definition could be viewed as resources, and the "bad bits" as the challenges. The final idea underlying Figure 33 is that of family and community depicted by the seesaw being in a park.

Figure 33: Wellbeing - a balance of good bits and bad bits

Source: Dunlop-Bennett (2018) *artwork by Piata Bennett

8.3 The stuff that is important to our wellbeing

In terms of what is important to their wellbeing, four themes emerged from the Samoan children's *talanoa*: 1) social connections, 2) not having to worry, 3) feeling valued, included and that they belong, and 4) being a good person. Across these four themes, the important of relationships stood at as paramount. As noted in Section 6.2, 87 of the 97 blocks of *talanoa* across these four themes were about relationships and connecting with family and friends (Table 23). That the Samoan children saw their wellbeing primarily in relational terms is consistent with the literature on the Samoan diaspora living in New Zealand (Faleolo, 2016; Pulotu-Endermann, 1995; Seiuli, 2012; Tamasese, et al., 1997; Taule'aleausumai, 1990; Tui Atua, 2005).

8.3.1 Placing these findings within the research literature

When placed in the wider context of global studies on child wellbeing from the standpoint of children, this finding extends Manning-Morton's (2014) research in London that prioritised 'relationships-mummy', as shown in Figure 8. The Samoan children prioritised relationships but this included not only their mothers but also their fathers, siblings, grandparents, aunties and uncles, and cousins. Again, this could reflect of the communal Samoan worldview, which prioritises the 'collective good'. Viewing the *aiga* more broadly than the nuclear family is consistent with the findings from the *Australian Child Wellbeing Project*, in which children perceived to be outside of 'mainstream' Australia, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait children, as well as those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, also viewed family in broad terms (Skattebol, et al., 2013). Children from these two groups in *The Australian Child Wellbeing Project* also prioritised family as the most important domain for their wellbeing.

The priority the Samoan children placed on social connections also supports the findings from Fattore, et al.'s (2007) research in New South Wales. Working with 126 children aged 8 to 15 years, their research identified 'important relationships' and 'emotional life' as the fundamental elements underpinning children's understanding of wellbeing. The priority the Samoan children placed on social connections is similar to Miliffe's (2014) research with 81 children, aged 9 to 11 years, in the South Island. She found that relationships was a main theme but not as important to the children as leisure activities. Miliffe (2014, p. 71) writes, "The central importance of interest to the well-being of children in middle childhood is supported by Chen (2011) who reported that 90% of the narratives from children in middle school pertained first and foremost to leisure activities, followed by relationships and then achievement".

To enable an easy comparison, I have used the conceptual frameworks developed by Fattore, et al. (2009) and Miliffe (2014) to plot the findings that emerged from my research. This conceptual framework is an adult conceptualisation of the findings that emerged from the voices of the Samoan children. To briefly explain Fattore, et al.'s (2009) conceptual model, the fundamental elements encompass the key themes or domains because they underpin and are integral to these domains. The domains are illustrated as interlocking circles to show that they are separate overarching themes but that there are linkages between them. Placed around the outside of the large circle are other things that the children

mentioned as being important to their wellbeing. These minor themes or dimensions reflect what Fattore, et al. (2009) call the more conventional aspects of wellbeing.

Looking at Figure 34, the three domains that Fattore, et al. (2009) identified as being important to children's wellbeing were 'safety and security', 'self and identity', and 'agency'. Miliffe (2014) identified 'relationships', 'emotional health', and 'interests', while the Samoan children in my research said that 'not having to worry', 'being a good person', and 'feeling valued' were important to their wellbeing. There are similarities between the 'not having to worry' domain in my research and Fattore, et al.'s (2009) 'security' domain, in that children spoke of having the protection of parents, living in a safe place, and having trusted people around them. The children in Fattore, et al.'s (2009) research saw their parents as primarily responsible for keeping them safe in terms providing them:

> …a sense of being cared for, combined with trust that parents will provide protection; and the practical things that parents do to keep children safe (such as making the household physically secure; teaching safe behaviours; and making sure that children don't place themselves in unsafe situations or do unsafe things (Fattore, et al., 2009, p. 66).

These align to the key factors that the Samoan children mentioned in my research. One difference, however is that the children in Fattore, et al.'s (2009) research also perceived security in global terms such as war and terrorism.

Fattore, et al.'s (2009) second domain the 'positive sense of self' and Miliffe's (2014) of 'emotional health' combine aspects of the 'being a good person' and 'feeling valued' themes that emerged from my research. I portray these as separate domains because of the importance the Samoan children placed on them during the *talanoaga*. Similar to the findings in Fattore, et al.'s (2009) research, the *talanoa* of the Samoan children indicated that they have feelings of self-worth, a sense of self-integrity, and actively respond to external influences that shape their self-worth and self-integrity. Miliffe's (2014, p. 44) description of emotional health as "positive thoughts, emotions and self-esteem", is also reinforced by the findings from my research. Fattore, et al.'s (2009, p. 64) third domain is 'agency', which they describe as the capacity of children to be able to "… make choices in everyday situations and influence everyday occurrences at home and at school". Having 'agency'- or 'agency and autonomy' as it was broadened to in a subsequent publication (Fattore et al., 2016) - did not emerge as a key feature in the *talanoaga* with the Samoan children.

In addition to these domains, there were a number of dimensions that were of less prominence in the *talanoa*. Fattore, et al. (2009) identified six such dimensions while seven dimensions emerged from my *talanoaga* with the Samoan children. Looking at the two sets of dimensions, there is overlap in three dimensions ('activities', 'physical environment', and 'physical health'), and a partial overlap in one dimension ('material and economic resources'). Fattore, et al.'s (2009) dimensions of 'social responsibility' and 'adversity' do feature in my research but they do so as a higher-level domain of 'being a good person' and 'not having to worry'. This is similar for the 'values' and 'safety' dimensions identified by Miliffe (2014), which feature in my research as their higher-level domains. I found overlap in Miliffe's (2014) 'accomplishment' dimension with my 'achieving' one. My research also identified two further

dimensions not covered by Fattore, et al. (2007, 2009) or Miliffe (2014), which are the dimensions of 'cultural identity', and 'spirituality'. Looking at the seven dimensions in turn:

1. *Activities*: Samoan children reported they enjoyed activities such as sports, dance, building Lego, playing cards, cooking, and doing PlayStation. Underlying this enjoyment was spending time with family and friends. Fattore, et al. (2009) found that activities provided children with the opportunity to experience fun, freedom from the constraints of rules and routine, and develop competence.

2. *Achieving*: Samoan children spoke of how achieving and learning was important to their wellbeing. Whether it was learning their times-tables, shooting the goal, or scoring the try, the *talanoa* of the Samoan children indicated feelings of mastery and competence (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Ryff, 1989). In a similar way, children in Miliffe's (2014) research perceived 'accomplishment' as doing well. Fattore, et al. (2009) identified competence as part of their 'activities' dimension.

3. *Material resources:* There was a partial alignment on this dimension, in that Samoan children spoke of material resources in terms of living in a safe house and having a bedroom full of their special things such as toys, books, and electronics. Where the findings differed was that the children in Fattore, et al.'s (2009) research highlighted money as being important for them to participate in activities and to buy things. They also described their own experiences of relative poverty in terms of going without something and the emotional costs associated with this, such as labelling, shame, and exclusion. The Samoan children did not mention money or refer to going without.

4. *Physical environment*: Like the children in Fattore, et al.'s (2009) research, the Samoan children spoke of nature and being outdoors, which primarily came through their *talanoa* as spending time with family (e.g. on a hike, at the beach) and friends (e.g. on the rugby field, on the soccer pitch, on the netball court).

5. *Physical health*: Most of the Samoan children spoke about the need to be healthy, which they described in terms of being fit and eating well. In addition to their *talanoa*, children took photos of themselves playing sports, going on hikes, being outdoors, eating healthy food, and taking vitamins. Children in Fattore, et al.'s (2009) research spoke about the constraints of doing physical exercise such as a lack of safe places in the community. This did not come up in my research.

6. *Cultural identity*: In my research, children spoke of how being Samoan was important to their wellbeing and that it made them feel confident as well as *talanoa* about visiting Samoa and enjoying listening to their parents and/or grandparents stories about Samoa. This did not factor in Fattore, et al.'s (2009) or Miliffe's (2014) research.

7. *Spirituality*: While in the Samoan worldview spirituality is perceived to be broader than the Christian faith, in this research, the children interpreted it as church. Nine of the 11 children went to church with their families, and there were three specific references to praying and going to church. Again, this did not feature in Fattore, et al.'s (2009) or Miliffe's (2014) research.
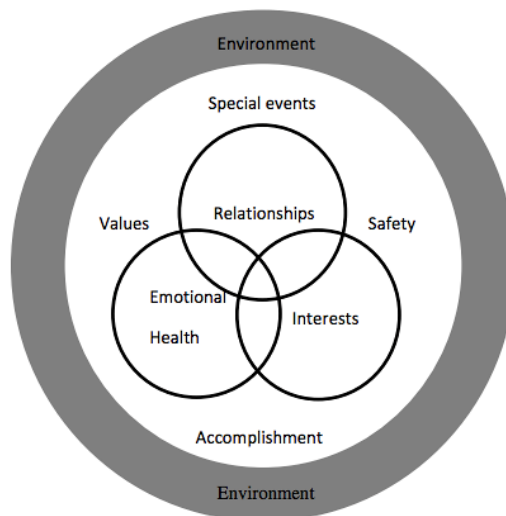
Figure 34: Placing the findings from my research alongside Fattore, et al. (2009) and Miliffe (2014)
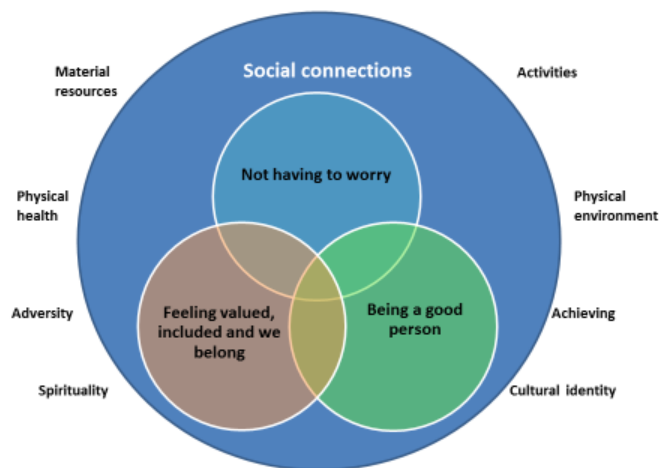
Source: Dunlop-Bennett (2018)
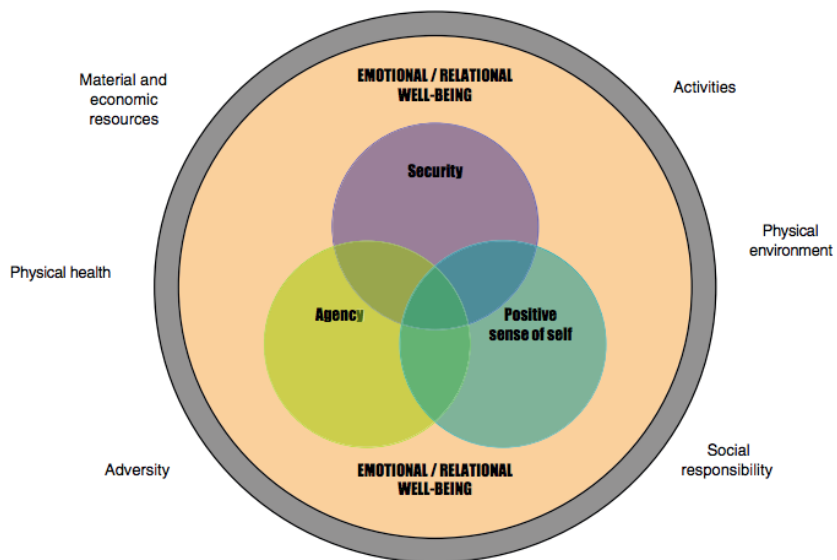
Source: Fattore, et al., (2009)

Source: Miliffe (2014)

The key differences between my research and that of Fattore, et al. (2007) and Miliffe (2014) is that the Samoan children included culture and spirituality. They did not perceive security in global terms; agency, autonomy, and money did not feature as proximately; and they did not mention any constraints to doing physical exercise. These differences could reflect the difference in the ages of the research groups. My research partnered with 8-year-old Samoan children, while Fattore, et al. (2007) focussed on 8-to-15 year olds, of which only two children were 8 years old. Miliffe (2014) worked with 9-to-11 year olds.

It could also reflect differences in methods used with the children. For example, Miliffe (2014) carried out group-setting discussions using an adjusted version of Fattore, et al.'s (2007) interview guide and used a Developmental Assets questionnaire. Fattore et al.'s (2016) questions focussed on the things that made the children feel good using drawings. I used group-setting discussions guided by the photos that the children took about what made them feel 'happy, safe, and loved'. Some children in my research also opted to draw pictures.

Thirdly, the differences in findings could reflect the cultural differences between the three sets of children. Both Fattore, et al. and Miliffe drew on children from the general population while my research focused exclusively on children who identified as Samoan. Placing my findings within a cultural context, as mentioned earlier the traditional cultural Samoan view of children is one where they are not encouraged to share their views but to listen unquestioning to those in authority (Meleisea & Schoeffel, 1998; Schoeffel, et al., 1996). This view, that Samoan children will sit and listen unquestioning to those in authority, is one reason given for the comparatively lower levels of educational achievement of Pasifika children in New Zealand, where its education system encourages children to question and discuss different viewpoints (Anae, et al., 2010; Coxon, Anae, Mara, Samu, & Finau, 2001; Dunlop, 1981; Fairbairn-Dunlop, 2015; Ferguson, et al., 2008; Nakhid, 2002; Nakhid, et al., 2007; Rimoni, 2016). This could be an area for further research.

8.3.2 Placing these findings within the policy literature

The findings that came out of the *talanoa* with the Samoan children extend the policy literature in New Zealand. In its school voices survey with intermediate students, the OCC (2015) found that their 'connections with people' made them happy. While this theme result is similar to what the Samoan children reported, the difference is that a little over two thirds of the intermediate students said that they were really happy when hanging out with friends, and almost a third said they were really happy when they were with family. The reverse was found in my research where the Samoan children spoke of spending time with family three times more frequently than hanging with their friends (Figure 22). This difference could reflect the OCC engaging with mixed ethnicity children at intermediate school (11 to 13 years), while my research took an ethnic-specific focus on Samoan children at primary school (8 years). It could also reflect cultural differences. For example, as noted in Chapter 4, the generalised view of children in the Samoan culture is that they will study hard at school, come home straight after school so they are available to help out in the house, and listen to and obey their elders (Cowley-Malcolm, et al., 2009; Meleisea & Schoeffel, 1998; Pereira, 2012; Schoeffel, et al., 1996;). Against this cultural backdrop, there is a tendency for the *aiga* to be prioritised over friends.

Looking at other research that includes the voices of children and young people such as that of the OCC (2018b), there are some shared findings, as shown in Table 22. The OCC (2018b) found that good relationships were important and made mention of these relationships in the nuclear family as well as wider *whānau* contexts. They also found that children and young people valued being safe, they had a strong focus on values, and viewed cultural identity as important.

Table 22: Placing the findings from my research alongside the OCC's research

Dunlop-Bennett (2018)	OCC (2018b)
Connecting with loved ones is important to my wellbeing	Good relationships are important in all aspects of children's lives. Relationships with parents and the wider *whānau* are highly valued, and that relationships with peers are often of crucial importance.
Wellbeing is feeling secure and not having to worry	Children value safety in their personal environments, such as freedom from bullying at school and being able to live in warm, dry, spacious homes.
Important to my wellbeing is feeling valued: that I'm included and I belong	Giving and receiving love, friendship, understanding and respect is extremely important. Children are proud of their heritage as New Zealanders and many - from all ethnicities - consider *te reo Māori* to be a *taonga.* New Zealand.
Being a good person is important to my wellbeing	Children have a strong focus on values. Fairness and equality are re-occurring themes

Source: Dunlop-Bennett (2018) and OCC (2018b)

The OCC's (2018a) research also looked at barriers to wellbeing, which the children and young people identified as including insecure housing, inadequate income, low-quality employment, poor physical and mental health, family dysfunction and violence. Further, children and young people were aware of the way that economic stress, insecure or poor-quality jobs, and poor housing put their parents into positions where family relationships could be affected. The Samoan children in my research did not mention barriers, although they did *talanoa* about their material wellbeing in terms of living in a safe house, living in a warm house, and having nice meals. The OCC (2018a) also found that children and young people saw unfairness as incompatible with wellbeing, and they did not like being stereotyped or seeing others stereotyped. The Samoan children in my research did not talk about unfairness or stereotypes, but they did identify how they did not like to be left out, and knowing what this felt like, they tried to be inclusive of others.

8.4 The significance of these findings

Referring back to the research gap identified at the beginning of this thesis - the paucity of literature from the holistic view, the 'other' view, and the child view - the significance of this research is that it contributes new knowledge in each of these three areas, including:

- The Samoan children were able to conceptualise the complexity of wellbeing in a definition that makes sense to them. They defined wellbeing as "a bunch of stuff with good bits and bad bits".

- In defining their wellbeing in this way, the Samoan children understood the concept to be holistic and comprised of multiple things. Further, they understood that wellbeing was a balancing of the "good bits and bad bits".

- Building on these ideas that came through the *talanoaga* as well as their drawings, the seesaw provides a conceptual model of how the Samoan children understand their wellbeing. The strengths of this model are that children can easily identify with the seesaw imagery, it conveys their ideas in a simple way, and it lends itself to being applied to children outside of the Samoan diaspora.

- Comparing these findings against child wellbeing research in Australia (Fattore, et al., 2009) and New Zealand (Miliffe, 2014), highlighted that there are universal features of child wellbeing such as the importance of connecting and building relationships with other people, of having a positive sense of self, and the security that comes from being cared for and looked after. Two areas of difference that stood out as unique to the wellbeing of Samoan children were the importance of the cultural and spiritual dimensions. This difference was also visible in the policy literature that exists in New Zealand on child wellbeing

- While the importance of cultural and spiritual dimensions to the wellbeing of Samoan children did not feature in Fattore, et al.'s (2009) and Miliffe's (2014) research, it is in line with the literature that exists on the Samoan diaspora in New Zealand.

There are several areas where this research moves beyond the context of the existing literature and makes an original contribution to the discussion of child wellbeing. Firstly, my research extends the current literature by offering a definition of child wellbeing from the perspective of Samoan children living in the diaspora. Samoan children defined wellbeing as a "bunch of stuff that has good bits and bad bits". It is well established in the literature that child wellbeing is predominately defined through a description of its dimensions. Guided by the voices of the Samoan children, my research illustrated that they were able to define wellbeing as well as describe the things that they considered to be important to their wellbeing. This new knowledge adds to the body of global literature on child wellbeing and reinforces the socio-cultural perspective that recognises the diversity that exists in the experiences of children around the world.

Secondly, defining child wellbeing through the lens of Samoan children also contributes new knowledge to the New Zealand literature, with specific reference to the *Child Wellbeing Strategy* currently being developed. This definition, and how the Samoan children conceptualised wellbeing as a seesaw, is broad enough to "enable people to describe wellbeing in a way that fits with their culture, values, and priorities" (DPMC, 2018c, p. 8). Recognising that there are multiple pathways to wellbeing, the application of the five dimensions are universal. For example, while the children in my research viewed the cultural dimension in terms of their Samoan identity and heritage, other children in New Zealand can

use their own cultural identity and heritage whether this be Asian, European, Māori, Pasifika, or a mix of these. The same can be said for spirituality, which extends beyond Christianity.

Thirdly, my research contributes to the recommendation made by Poulton, et al. (2018) for research that operationalises the global concept of wellbeing and its multiple determinants. Research of this nature will help support a multi-agency response to child wellbeing. The Samoan children in my research have developed a holistic definition of wellbeing, which could lend itself to a multi-agency response to support child wellbeing.

Lastly, knowledge of how Samoan children conceptualise their wellbeing and what they consider to be important to their wellbeing has significance for the Samoan diaspora in New Zealand. While the scope of this research was localised to Samoan children living in Wellington, findings could be relevant to Samoan children living in other parts of New Zealand. There could also be relevance to the wider Pasifika community. In listening to the views of the Samoan children, the four factors that emerged as being important to their wellbeing were: 1) connecting with loved ones, particularly family; 2) not having to worry; 3) feeling valued, included, and that they belong; and 4) being good people. Of these four themes, connecting with loved ones was particularly important and using Fattore, et al.'s (2009) term, was the fundamental element.

8.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter considered the findings that emerged from partnering with 11 Samoan children against the existing literature on child wellbeing. In response to the research questions, the key findings included that:

1. Children defined wellbeing as "a bunch of stuff, with both good bits and bad bits". Wellbeing is achieved when these good bits and bad bits are balanced. Based on this definition, a model that conceptualised wellbeing as a seesaw is proposed. The strengths of using a seesaw are that children can easily identify with this imagery, it conveys their ideas in a simple way, it is relevant to Samoan children associated with this research, and it could have resonance with other children outside of the Samoan diaspora.

2. Children said that connecting with loved ones; not having to worry; feeling valued, included, and that they belong; and being good people were important to their wellbeing.

These findings add to the global and national literature on child wellbeing. Through the lens of 8-year-old Samoan children, this research adds new knowledge to the child wellbeing literature from the child view, from the 'other view', and from a holistic multisectoral view.

CHAPTER 9
Placing the parent's voices in context

E fofo e le alamea le alamea
The alamea (crown-of-thorns starfish) will heal its own doing
- Samoan saying

9.1 Introduction

It is a long held Samoan belief that if you get stung by the spikes of the *alamea*, you should turn it over and put its spongy-like feet on the area you were stung. By doing this, the *alamea* will absorb the poison and heal its own doing. This Samoan saying is often used to refer to how the solutions for our issues lie within our own communities. To develop effective solutions, we need to ask 'those that know'. Through one-on-one *talanoaga* with parents, I asked them how they conceptualised the wellbeing of their children, and how they were supporting their children's wellbeing.

The findings that emerged from the *talanoaga* were that firstly, parents conceptualised the wellbeing of their children as *ola manaia*, the beautiful life. Secondly, parents were supporting the wellbeing of their children by laying the foundations for their children to have a beautiful life, and adapting their parenting approaches to do this.

This chapter places these findings within the existing literature and in doing so, highlights where these findings support knowledge about child wellbeing and where they add new knowledge. The first part of this chapter discusses how parents conceptualise their child's wellbeing (Section 9.2) and then how they support this (Section 9.3). The final part of this chapter looks at how the parents' knowledge could be applied to what policy and programming (Section 9.4).

9.2 Child wellbeing through the lens of the parents

9.2.1 Conceptualising wellbeing as ola manaia, the beautiful life

Parents conceptualised child wellbeing as *ola manaia*, which was translated as 'the beautiful life'. In other translations, this is referred to as 'a good and happy life.[31] Conceptualising wellbeing in this way has resonance with Aristotle's (2000/ n.d.) notion of *eudaimonia*, which is translated as happiness, the flourishing life, or the good life.

In conceptualising wellbeing as 'the beautiful life', parents were cognisant that different people will have different views about what makes for a beautiful life, and that this may occur not only between *aiga,* but also amongst *aiga*. While cognisant of this, when I reviewed the transcripts of the 10 separate *talanoaga* four things consistently stood out for parents. All of the parents, except one, spoke of wellbeing or *ola manaia* in terms of their child being a good

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[31] Faleolo (2016) uses the term *ola magaia* in her study of how Samoan migrants to New Zealand and Australia perceive wellbeing. In *Gagana Samoa* the 'na' and 'ga' sounds are used in similar ways so *ola magaia* and *ola manaia* are the same term.

person, having strong values, having a positive sense of self, and doing something meaningful that they were passionate about (Table 22).

The view that the beautiful life is achieved through being a good person, having values, having a positive sense of self, and realising their passion appear to align with Aristotle's (2000/ n.d.) notion of *eudaimonia*. That is, the ultimate goal of a person's life is achieved by being of good moral character, leading a virtuous life (having virtues of courage, generosity, justice, friendship, and citizenship), and realising one's potential as a human being. As argued in Chapter 2, Aristotle's ideas underpin much of contemporary thinking on wellbeing, happiness, the good life, personal flourishing, and what individuals believe constitutes having a quality of life (Camfield, et al., 2010; Kahneman, 1999).

Considered in light of contemporary thinking on wellbeing, viewing wellbeing as *ola manaia* broadly supports the work of Seligman (2002) who views the good life as one in which an individual pursues involvement, uses their strengths and talents to achieve something of meaning, and feels positive about life. It can be found at the higher level of Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs and also aligns with Ryff's (1989) model of psychological wellbeing, in particular the aspects of self-acceptance, personal growth, having a purpose in life, and positive relationships. Parents wanting their children to do something meaningful, that they were passionate about and to realise their potential aligns with Roger's (1961) actualisation theory in which wellbeing is achieved when we actualise our potential; Sen's (1989) capabilities approach, which at its core is about individuals having the freedom to achieve; and the competence component of Ryan and Deci's (2000) self-determination theory.

That all of the parents, except one, viewed *ola manaia* in these terms adds new knowledge to the literature on the Samoan diaspora living in New Zealand. Much of the earlier migration literature highlighted economic development and related social development motives, such as education and an obligation to the collective wellbeing of the *aiga* and *nu'u* back in Samoa, as the dominant factors driving the migration from Samoa (Anae, 2001; Connell, 2003; Fairbairn, 1961; Faleolo, 2016; Pitt & Macpherson, 1974; Taufa, 2003). The anecdotal marker of 'success' for these early migrants was that their children become doctors or lawyers. The findings from this research shows that there has been a shift in thinking. For example, one parent said that raising a fine young man with values was more important to her than raising a future doctor. Another parent reinforced this saying that, even if the wider *aiga* viewed 'success' in other ways, she would continue to prioritise raising her children to be emotionally stable, to be good people, and to have good values. Her husband reinforced this by saying that he did not want his children to go through the unnecessary pressure of a career just to "keep up appearances". This contrast could reflect that with 65.5 percent of its population born in New Zealand (Statistics NZ, 2014a), the Samoan diaspora is no longer considered a migrant people.

9.2.2 *Ola manaia as a multi-dimensional concept*

Parents conceptualised wellbeing as a multi-dimensional concept, which cannot be viewed in isolation but must be considered as a whole. Viewing wellbeing as multi-dimensional is consistent with the global literature (Andrews, et al., 2002; Ben-Arieh & Frønes, 2007; Manning-Morton, 2014; Statham & Chase, 2010; Yarcheski, et al., 1994). It is also consistent with research in New Zealand highlighting the importance of a multi-dimensional worldview to

Samoans (Faleolo, 2016; Pulotu-Endermann, 1995; Seuli, 2012; Tamasese, et al., 1997; Taule'aleausumai, 1990; Tui Atua, 2005) and Pasifika more broadly (Kupa, 2009; Tu'itahi, 2007).

While all of the parents conceptualised wellbeing as a multi-dimensional concept, there were differences amongst the parents as to which dimensions held more importance. Most parents spoke of wellbeing as comprising five dimensions: physical, socio-emotional, mental, spiritual, and cultural dimensions. Placing this finding in the global context, the value placed on spirituality and cultural heritage has resonance with other indigenous peoples, such as First Nations communities in Canada (Ruiz-Casares, 2014), Aboriginal communities in Australia (Peile, 1997) and Māori (Durie, 1995; 2006). Conceptualising wellbeing as the totality of these five dimensions supports other research carried out by the Samoan diaspora in New Zealand such as Tamasese, et al. (2005) that reinforced the Samoan concept of self in which the 'whole self' cannot be divided, but needs to be considered in its whole totality. This can be seen visually in the *Fonofale* (Pulotu-Endermann, 1995).

A few parents viewed the spiritual and cultural dimensions as being of less importance. This difference in viewpoints could reflect the divergence that exists within the Samoan diaspora influenced by factors such as ethnicity, gender, social class, education, and their lived experiences (Anae, 1997; Crichton-Hill, 2001; Henderson, 2016; Pala'amo, 2017). It could also reflect the different ways in which the early Samoan migrants settled in New Zealand. While many of the early migrants from Samoa recreated and adapted the *fa'asamoa* onto the New Zealand landscape, some chose to assimilate with the cultural norms of the *fa'apalagi* the dominant culture (Anae, 1998; Kallen, 1982; Meleisia & Schoeffel, 1998; Pitt & Macpherson, 1974; Taule'ale'asumai, 1990; Tiatia, 1998). This finding is similar to other research on diasporic peoples, such as Chinese, Filipino, and Vietnamese migrants to Australia, where Leung, et al. (2006) found that the variations in the way they perceived and supported the wellbeing of their adolescent children were due to their migration circumstances, their cultural differences, and level of cultural community support.

To weave together the key ideas of this, parents conceptualised child wellbeing as *ola manaia* or the beautiful life, which is similar to Aristotle's (2000/ n.d.) notion of the good life. In terms of what made for a beautiful life, parents most consistently spoke of their child being a good person, having good values, having a positive sense of self, and doing something meaningful that they were passionate about. While this finding has resonance with much of the global psychological wellbeing literature, it adds new knowledge to the diaspora literature. Wellbeing as a multi-dimensional concept, the second idea that was discussed in Section 9.2, supports existing literature on child wellbeing, while the varied views as to what these dimensions are highlights the divergence that exists within the Samoan diaspora.

9.3 Supporting the *ola manaia* of their children

To support the wellbeing of their children, parents were laying the foundations so that their children could have a beautiful life and adapting the way in which they were raised, to do so. This section looks at both of these findings in relation to the existing literature.

9.3.1 Laying the foundations for a beautiful life

The high value that parents placed on their children was clear in all of the *talanoaga.* This reinforces the view of children that they are precious treasures bestowed upon their family, captured in the Samoan saying '*o au o matua fanau'* (Anae, et al., 2000; Schoeffel, 1979). The Hon Fiame Naomi Mataafa draws on this Samoan saying in her introductory remarks in the *National Strategy for Children of Samoa* (MWCSD, 2010):

> O au o matua fanau. This Samoan adage captures the preciousness of children as blessings bestowed upon parents, communities and nations. They are to be cared for and nurtured in an environment where their self-esteem, and sense of destiny are secure (MWCSD, 2010, p.1).

Children viewed as precious treasures starts long before they are conceived as illustrated in the customary practices such as the *tapu* status of the foetus, and the protection given by the *faatosaga* (Tui Atua, 2005; Va'a, 2009). With the overlay of Christianity onto the *fa'asamoa* from the 1830s, the two have become so intertwined that Christianity is often viewed as if it were always an integral part of the *fa'asamoa* (Anae, 1998; Meleisia, 1987; Nokise, 1989; Taule'ale'ausumai 1990). This has seen a recast of children's value through a Christian lens, where children are viewed as a precious treasure from God, with parenting being framed as stewardship. That is, parents are to look after their children, protect them, and provide for them as a pleasing act of service to God.

This could also signal the diverging views that exist within the Samoan diaspora about pregnancy outside of marriage. As explained by one parent, any stigma attached to having a child out of marriage was outweighed by the Samoan worldview that children are precious treasures from God. Another parent spoke of the stigma she felt being an unwed mother and to her mind, the incompatibility of this with the gift of having a child. In the Samoan worldview, children are viewed as a continuation of their parent's *gafa* or lineage (Anae, et al., 2000; Le Tagaloa, 2000; Schoeffel, 1979). Every child, regardless of the circumstances surrounding their conception, has an identity or a *fa'asinomaga*, through which they are entitled the rights of a *suli* or heir (Le Tagaloa, 2000; Va'a, 2009). This finding highlights the conflicting views about pregnancy outside of marriage. Often, it is positioned as controversial for Pasifika communities because it touches on deeply-held religious convictions and cultural ideas around sex, it is linked with disadvantage, and framed as a social problem (Breheny, 2006; Taufua, 2015). Many of the parents in this research offered another perspective: a perspective where all children are viewed as precious treasures, and that parents are to *tausi* them, and not to allow anything to happen to them that disrupts the *va tapuia*.

Looking after their children, protecting them, and providing for them supports the existing literature about maintaining the *va* and not doing anything that would disrupt the *va tapuia* (Bush & Masoe, 2009; Capstick, et al., 2009). Parents were doing this through several ways. Firstly, parents were providing their children with the material aspects of wellbeing such as a warm home, healthy meals, clothes, and other belongings such as toys, electronics, and books. Secondly, parents were shaping their children and helping them find their place in the world. Encouraging their children to have a view and to be comfortable in sharing it was seen as an important part of helping their children feel valued, loved, happy, and emotionally

stable. It was also important to building and strengthening the resilience of their children. Thirdly, they were teaching their children values such as commitment, love, kindness, looking out for each other, and respect. Lastly, parents were connecting their children into wider *aiga* and community networks. This was important in terms of building their child's sense of identity as well as being another source of practical support.

These four key ways in which parents are laying the foundation for their children to have a beautiful life align with the wellbeing domains of the draft *Child Wellbeing Strategy* (DPMC, 2018). The five wellbeing domains are that children and young people; 1) are loved, nurture, and safe; 2) have what they need; 3) belong, contribute, and are valued; 4) are happy and healthy; and 5) are learning and developing. In addition, the idea of wellbeing being a journey fits in with an ecological view of children (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Further, parents viewed these wider *aiga* and community networks as important in terms of supporting their children's wellbeing, which matches the desired outcome for the 'belong, contribute, and are valued' wellbeing domain of the draft *Child Wellbeing Strategy* (DPMC, 2018).

9.3.2 Adapting their parenting approaches

To lay the foundation for their children to have a beautiful life, parents were building on their own upbringing but 'tweaking' it. They were adapting their parenting approaches to address what they perceived as gaps in the way they were brought up as well as to reflect the changing context. To draw on an example that illustrates these 'tweaks': the first of these was that parents were intentionally creating space so that their children could discuss their views. As noted earlier, traditionally *amio lelei* or good behaviour was shown through conduct such as children studying hard at school; coming home straight after school so they were available to help with household chores such as taking care of younger siblings or running errands for their elders; and listening to and obeying their elders. In terms of family discussion, children were not encouraged to voice their views or to disagree with their parents but to listen to their parents' instructions and to obey (Cowley-Malcolm, et al., 2009; Meleisia & Schoeffel, 1998; Pereira, 2012; Schoeffel, et al., 1996). All of the parents in this research related to this type of upbringing and while they understood why they were brought up this way, they did not want this for their own children. They did not want their children to feel silenced. Integral to shaping their children and helping them find to their place in the world involved listening to them. Put another way, not only were parents encouraging their children to share their views, they were also intentionally creating space so that this could happen. This was a consistent theme that came out from the *talanoaga* of all parents: those who had arrived to New Zealand over the past year to those who were New Zealand-born. This finding supports and builds on the *Talanoa ile i'a,* which prioritises the voices of those who 'know, live and breathe' the phenomena creating opportunities for alternative perspectives to be heard (Faleolo, 2013). It also aligns with the *Fonofale*, in which Pulotu-Endermann (1995) argues that the individual, the family, and cultural values sit within and are influenced by the wider context, which is not static but changes over time in relation to context and the environment.

Building resilience was important for all of the families and particularly so for the three families who had been impacted by youth suicide. While not a research question, the prevalence of youth suicide came up in three separate *talanoaga*. For the parents of these

three families, they questioned whether this signalled a disconnect between the old ways (the *fa'asamoa*) and the new (the *fa'apalagi*). Addressing this perceived disconnect seemed to underpin much of the *talanoa* around wanting their children to be resilient, to be emotionally stable, to have a voice and to be heard, and to land of their feet. Not only was this about strengthening their children's resilience, but it was also about equipping them to be able to make informed decisions. For those parents who had grown up in New Zealand, they knew what it was like to navigate between multiple worlds - *fa'asamoa* in the home and *fa'apalagi* at school – and feeling 'neither here nor there'. Navigating between multiple worlds and balancing different worldviews has been described as living a life of in-betweeness (Taumoefolau, 2013), being an edgewalker (Tupuola, 2004), and living the life of a chameleon (Tiatia, 1998). Most of the parents in this research positioned multiple worldviews as a strength. That is, parents wanted their children to move fluidly and seamlessly between the *fa'asamoa* and the *fa'apalagi,* and they were supporting their children to do this. In a sense, it reframes the 'neither here nor there' to one of being 'both here and there' that blends the best of both cultures (Fairbairn, 2009; Mackley-Crump, 2012; Mila-Schaaf 2010). In doing so, parents were making decisions about the utility of the *fa'asamoa*: taking forward some parts of it, tweaking other parts in line with the shifting New Zealand landscape, and leaving some parts behind. Pele captured this when talking about her son and the *fa'asamoa*:

> *There are parts of the culture that I embrace but there are large parts that I really don't want him to have the stress of... living outside of your means and doing things that you can't support... I can't encourage him to do that... so I've really held off on some of those cultural things... I haven't immersed them in the way that I've been told by my parents that this is the way to do it. I've really held back.*

To summarise Section 9.3, parents saw their role primarily as shaping their children to be the best that they could be and helping their children find their place in the world. The ways in which parents were doing this included teaching their children values and life lessons; equipping them to be able to make informed decisions; connecting them into community networks; prioritising things that are important to them as a family; creating a safe and secure home for them; making sure that their children feel loved and valued; and encouraging them to voice their views. Parents were adapting their parenting approaches to address what they perceived to be gaps in the way they were brought up as well as to reflect the changing context. The phrase 'same, same, but different' encapsulated the views of many of the parents, when they discussed how they were tweaking their parenting approach. A key way in which parents were tweaking their parenting approaches was by intentionally creating the space for their children to voice their views. This was viewed as integral to helping their children feel valued, loved, happy, and emotionally stable as well as building their resilience.

Having considered the findings that emerged from the *talanoaga* with parents in relation to the broader literature, Section 9.4 looks at how the parents' knowledge could be used to inform research, policy, and service delivery in New Zealand.

9.4 Applying the parents' knowledge

Being mindful "about the negative consequences of clutter and why we should avoid it" (Tui Atua, 2005, p. 61), my preference from the outset of this research and for much of it, was to look at how the findings could be aligned to current conceptual models. This is where it became challenging: none of the current conceptual models captured the breadth of the parent's *talanoa*. For example, the idea of wellbeing as a multidimensional concept is captured in the *Fonofale* (Pulotu-Endermann, 1995) and the *Uputaua* (Seuli, 2013). The idea that wellbeing is a journey can be seen in a number of conceptual models underpinning Pasifika and Māori approaches to health and education. For example in health, Kupa (2002) uses a single-hulled *paopao* to illustrate how Tokelauans view health; Pitama (2007) uses a *waka* to guide clinical assessment and intervention with Māori clients and *whanau* accessing mental health services; and Currey (2017) uses a canoe to illustrate organisational sustainability in the mental health sector. In education, Nakhid, et al. (2007) use a twin-hulled *vaka* and the stars to represent the experiences of Pasifika tertiary students while Si'ilata (2014) uses a twin-hulled canoe *va'a tele* to show how Pasifika learners need to balance the languages, literacies, and cultures of their home, with those of their school. The idea that balancing the *fa'apalagi* and the *fa'asamoa* is needed is illustrated in the use of the *va'a tele* (Si'ilata, 2014) as well as the *Fonofale* (Pulotu-Endermann, 1995) and the *Uputaua* (Seuli, 2013). While aspects of the parent's *talanoa* can be seen in many models, there is no model that captures the breadth of their *talanoa*.

Against this backdrop, I looked at ways in which I could capture the breadth of the parent's *talanoa* when they spoke of their child's wellbeing. In looking across the many images that underpin our conceptual models, I selected the use of *va'a tele* or a twin-hulled canoe. In using the *va'a tele*, it is important to note - that in line with the Samoan saying '*e faalogo mulimai ia muamua,* those who come later should listen to those who came before them' – this model builds on the cultural ideas of our people that are owned by our people. Van Manen (1990, p. 46) argues that the "question of knowledge always refers us back to our world, to our lives, to who we are". *Va'a*, *vaka*, or *waka* analogy have been used in a number of Samoan, as well as other Pacific Māori models, as shown in Figure 35 which places three of these models - *Te Vaka Atafaga* (Kupa, 2002), the *Va'a Tele* (Si'ilata, 2014), and a Pacific Conceptual Framework for Organisational Sustainability (Currey, 2017) – beside each other. That so many Pasifika researchers anchor their models within a *va'a*, *vaka*, or *waka* analogy reinforces the strength of this imagery for Pasifika.

Twin-hulled canoe can be found across the Pacific such as Samoa (*va'a tele*), the Cook Islands (*vaka-katea*), Fiji (*drua*), Hawaii (*wa'a-kaulua)*, and Tonga (*tongiaki).* In Samoa, the *va'a tele* were used from the early 700s until replaced by western-style ships following colonisation in the early 1800s (Taonui, 2005). The *va'a tele* was used for deep sea voyaging as it had greater stability, speed, and capacity than a single-hulled canoe (Turner, 1884). The *va'a tele* was large "consisting of two canoes, lashed together with crossbars amid ships, having the thatched shed, or cabin built upon a stage that projected over the stern and being sufficiently large enough to carry two *va'a alo*, or small fishing-canoes on deck as required" (Haddon & Hornell, 1936, p. 241). It could carry up to 200 people plus cargo and travel up to 250 kilometres a day (Taonui, 2005). Such was its speed that settlers

noted how the *va'a tele* sailed around them "with the same ease as if we had been at anchor" (Parsonson, 1962).
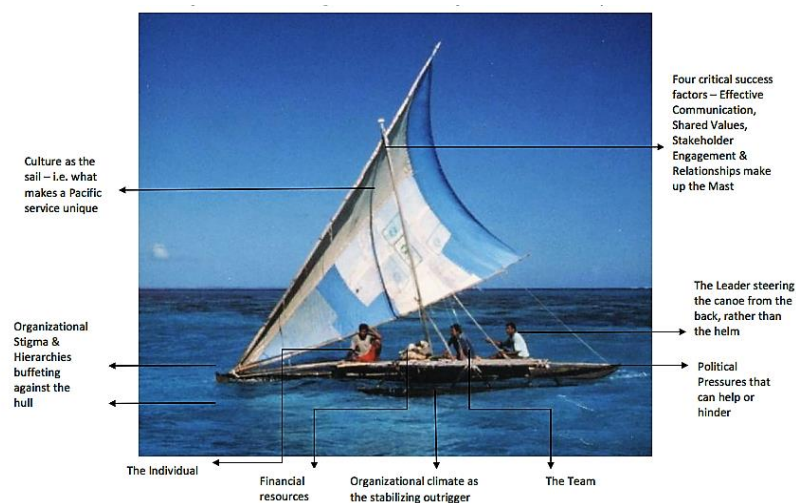
Figure 35: Pasifika models drawing on canoe imagery
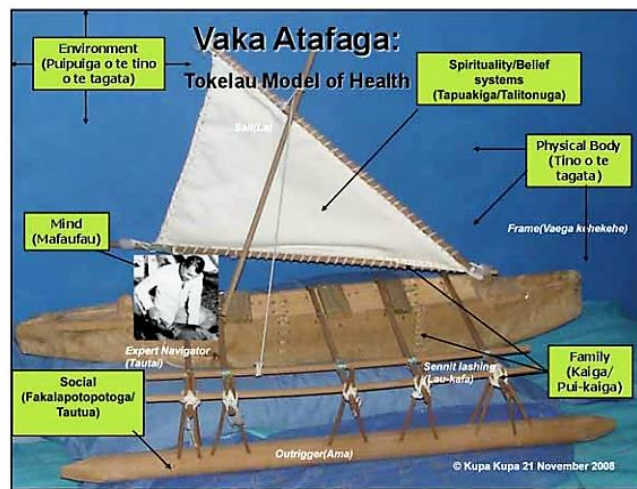
Te Vaka Atafaga: Kupa (2002)
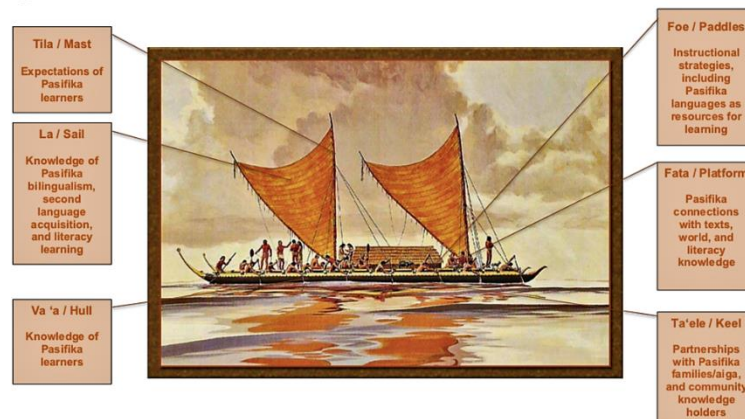
Va'a Tele: Si'ilata (2015)

A Pacific conceptual framework: Currey (2017)

Using the *va'a tele* as the imagery to illustrate the parent's conceptualisation of a holistic approach to wellbeing, the twin hulls are critical to stabilising and balancing the movements of the *va'a tele* during its journey. The twin hulls represent the balancing of the *fa'asamoa* and the *fa'apalagi*. Both hulls are needed, and both are as equally important as each other. To ensure a safe journey, both hulls must work in unity, and it is the same for wellbeing: the *fa'asamoa* and the *fa'apalagi* are both necessary and there is wellbeing when there is equilibrium between the two. The idea of the Samoan diaspora balancing multiple worlds is well documented in the literature (Anae, 1998; Anae, et al., 2010; Coxon, et al., 2001; Fairbairn-Dunlop, 2013; Ferguson, et al., 2008; Mackley-Crump, 2012; Macpherson, 1984; Taule'ale'ausumai, 1990; Taumoefolau, 2013; Tiatia, 1998; Tupuola, 2004). Fairbairn Dunlop (2015, p. 2) talks of this balancing between the *fa'asamoa* and the *fa'apalagi* as the "bringing together and interplay of traditional and modern knowledge to create the new knowledges that students and communities need if we are to shape with confidence the futures we want for our children and our children's children". The idea of bringing together the best from both worlds resonated with many of the parents who spoke about tweaking their parenting approach to incorporate aspects of both the *fa'asamoa* and the *fa'apalagi.*

Connecting the twin hulls are the cross-beams, which are important to maintain the stability of the *va'a tele.* There are similar to the *pou* that hold up the *fale* in the *Fonofale* (Pulotu-Endermann, 1995) and the *Uputaua* (Seuli, 2013) models. All of the *pou* are needed, the inference being that if any are missing or become weak, the entire structure will collapse. All of the parents conceptualised wellbeing as a multi-dimensional concept comprising of physical, socio-emotional, and mental dimensions, which in Samoan are *ola fa'aletino* (physical wellbeing), *ola fa'aleloto* (social wellbeing)*, ola fa'alemafaufau* (psychological wellbeing) and *ola fa'alelagona* (emotional wellbeing). These dimensions make up the cross-beams in the middle of the *va'a tele,* where the navigator (*tautai)* usually works from. The spiritual (*ola fa'aleagaga)* and cultural (*ola aganu'u)* dimensions, where some parents placed lesser importance on, are located on the front cross-beam and the back cross-beam.

Several of the parents couched their child's wellbeing in a life-course approach, with one parent speaking of wellbeing as a journey that continues across their child's whole life. In taking this life-course approach to wellbeing, these parents noted that particular dimensions would be more important at certain times than others. During the journey (*malaga)*, the *tautai* moves up and down the *va'a tele* at different times to ensure that they journey safely to their destination. In the same way, an individual may place more emphasis on a particular dimension at different times. Over the individual's lifetime however, all of the dimensions are needed for their wellbeing.

The *va'a tele* is used in the *Ola Manaia* model to refer to an individual's wellbeing. As noted earlier, previous research with the Samoan diaspora in New Zealand has found that an individual only has meaning in relation to others (Tamasese, et al., 1997; 2005); further, that a Samoan individual does not stand alone but is grounded in the family (Pulotu-Endermann, 1995). Many of the parents took an ecological view of child wellbeing in that they viewed the wellbeing of their children in relation to their *aiga* and their wider community such as church and school. They were actively connecting their children to these wider family and community networks; this finding is captured by the *va'a tele* journeying together in community.

Figure 36: Ola manaia

OLA MANAIA

(THE BEAUTIFUL LIFE)

Source: Dunlop-Bennett (2018) * artwork by Stephen Boggs

The *malaga* symbolises the changing context. As the *va'a tele* make their long journeys across life, the landscape changes. That we are influenced by the wider context, which is not static but change over time, is also an integral part of the *Fonofale* (Pulotu-Endermann, 1995) as is documented by Anae (1998), Crichton-Hill (2001), Henderson (2016), and Pala'amo, (2017). Parents in this research were cognisant that what makes a beautiful life is prone to change and they were adapting their parenting approaches so that they could support the wellbeing of their children against the backdrop of a shifting landscape. If wellbeing is viewed as a journey, then standing still against a shifting landscape is not a viable option.

Figure 36 shows the *va'a tele* as it makes a journey across the sea. Individuals have to navigate the waves, which at times are rough and at other times calm. The waves represent the challenges that individuals face over their life: sometimes rough and then at other times, things settle down and life is calmer. Parents spoke of building the resilience of their children so that they were prepared for life's challenges. This is the purpose of the masts, which are positioned to take advantage of the wind to cut through the waves. Sometimes, only one mast is needed when the waters are calm, while at other times both masts are needed. Symbolising *ola malosi* or strength, this is true when navigating life. To navigate through life's challenges, the individual may need to draw on all of their strength or from both masts. The inference is that everyone has strength that they can draw from to meet and get through their challenges. Again, the importance of the twin hulls in balancing the *va'a tele* is visible in providing the equilibrium needed to navigate successfully through challenges and to maintain wellbeing.

9.5   The significance of these findings

To look at how the parents' findings addresses the research gap identified at the beginning of this thesis, primarily the lack of knowledge from the 'other' view, this section highlights the significance of these findings. Placing the parents' findings within the context of existing literature, this research adds new knowledge in the following ways:

- Parents conceptualised the wellbeing of their children as *ola manaia* or the beautiful life, with *ola manaia* comprising multiple components. While all parents viewed physical, socio-emotional, and mental components as integral to wellbeing, there was less agreement about the importance cultural and spiritual components. This finding supports the divergence within the Samoan diaspora and adds another view to the existing literature in terms of the components that make up child wellbeing.

- Parents pictured wellbeing, *ola manaia*, or the beautiful life being achieved through their child being a good person, having values, having a positive sense of self, and doing something meaningful that they were passionate about. This finding adds new knowledge about the Samoan diaspora living in New Zealand. Much of the earlier migration literature highlights economic development and related social development motives, such as education and an obligation to the collective wellbeing of the *aiga* and *nu'u* as the dominant factors driving the migration from Samoa (Anae, 2001; Connell, 2003; Fairbairn, 1961; Faleolo, 2016; Pitt & Macpherson, 1974; Taufa, 2003). The anecdotal marker of 'success' of their children becoming doctors or

lawyers did not bear out in this research. Only one of ten Samoan families spoke of child wellbeing in terms of their children going to university to get a 'good' job. This contrast could reflect that with 65.5 percent of its population born in New Zealand (Statistics NZ, 2014a), the Samoan diaspora is no longer considered a migrant people. It could also reflect the shifting landscape in New Zealand and the shifts in context over time.

- Parents reinforced the view that children are 'precious treasures', with many of the parents referencing this to the Samoan worldview and/or to Christianity that has become intertwined with the *fa'asamoa*. Drawing on these cultural and spiritual references, every child is viewed as a 'precious treasure' from when they are conceived, and that regardless of the circumstances surrounding their conception, has a *fa'asinomaga* (Tui Atua, 2005a; Va'a, 2009). These references frame parenting are stewardship. The finding adds another view, in which pregnancy outside of marriage is positioned as controversial for Pasifika communities because it touches on deeply held religious convictions and cultural ideas around sex, it is linked with disadvantage, and framed as a social problem (Breheny & Stephens, 2010; Taufua, 2015).

- Parents in this research were providing stewardship – framed as laying the foundations for their children to have a beautiful life - were through: 1) providing their children with the material aspects of wellbeing such as a warm home, healthy meals, clothes, and other belongings such as toys, electronics, and books; 2) shaping their children and helping them find their place in the world; 3) teaching their children values such as commitment, love, kindness, looking out for each other, respect; and 4) connecting their children into wider *aiga* and community networks. To lay the foundation for their children to have a beautiful life, parents were 'tweaking' their parenting approach. They were doing this in response to what they perceived to be gaps in the way they had been raised, as well as to reflect the changing context. For many, they were balancing the *fa'asamoa* with the *fa'apalagi* to parent in a way that was relevant to raising children in Wellington today. There were different views across the ten parents as to how this interplay of the *fa'asamoa* with the *fa'apalagi* occurred. For some parents, it was more couched within the *fa'asamoa* while for others, it was more *fa'apalagi*-based.

- Building on these ideas that came through the *talanoaga*, a conceptual model underpinned by a *va'a tele*, a double-hulled canoe. This conceptualisation of child wellbeing brought together the ideas of: life being a journey, raising their children to be resilience and to navigate the highs and lows of life, the multiple dimensions of wellbeing, journeying together in community, parenting that draws on the *fa'asamoa* and the *fa'apalagi,* and the dynamism of wellbeing in that it changes over the life-course of their children and over time in relation to changes in the New Zealand context. The strengths of this model are that it is interdisciplinary and so has utility in conceptualising wellbeing as a multisectoral concept as well as sectoral relevance. Further, it builds on the *va'a, waka*, and *vaka* imagery that has resonance for the Samoan diaspora, and more broadly Pasifika.

Guided by the voices from 'those that know', the findings from this research both support and extend the existing literature on child wellbeing and the Samoan diaspora living in New Zealand. In some areas, these findings contrast existing literature, which could reflect the diversity that exists within the Samoan diaspora as well as the changes in the broader context.

9.6   Chapter summary

The primary focus of Chapter 9 was to consider the findings that emerged from the *talanoaga* with parents in light of the broader literature that exists. Aligning the key findings that emerged from the *talanoaga* with parents to the two research questions posed at the beginning of this thesis: 1) parents conceptualised wellbeing as conceptualised as *ola manaia*, the beautiful life; and 2) they were supporting the wellbeing of their children by shaping them and helping them to find their place in the world. To account for the changes in the *fa'asamoa* as well as the broader contexts, parents were adapting their parenting approaches. Visible throughout this chapter is the varied views about the wellbeing of their children, which speaks to the diverse realities of the Samoan diaspora living in Wellington. By considering these findings in relation to the broader literature, it is clear that the knowledge shared by the parents reinforces and supports existing literature, and in other parts adds new knowledge about child wellbeing, the Samoan diaspora in New Zealand, and parenting approaches.

To avoid adding to the 'clutter' (Tui Atua, 2005b), the *Ola Manaia* model builds on many sectoral models anchored in a Samoan worldview, to offer a holistic view of wellbeing. This is an interdisciplinary view that picks up on previous work in education, health, and social work. It draws on the analogy of the *va'a tele, vaka,* or *waka,* which is used frequently by Pasifika and Māori researchers. Use of the Samoan *va'a tele* draws on imagery that emerged out of the *talanoaga* about wellbeing being a journey; raising their children to navigate fluidly between the *fa'asamoa* and the *fa'apalagi*; helping their children to build their resilience so that they can navigate life's challenges; and balancing the multiple dimensions that make up wellbeing. Having considering these findings in relation to the broader literature, Chapter 10 concludes with some thoughts as to how these findings could be relevant to research, the development of services to improve child wellbeing, as well as to the Samoan diaspora.

CHAPTER 10
Weaving it all together – o le faaiuga

Tofa fetala'i ma tofa saili
The wisdom gained through balancing old and new, and the constant search for truth
Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese (2011)

Oh the things you can find
If you don't stay behind
You'll miss the best things
If you keep your eyes shut
Dr Seuss – On Beyond Zebra

10.1 Introduction

Strategies to understand and ensure child wellbeing have gained significant momentum in New Zealand in recent years, as evidenced by initiatives such as the *Child Poverty Reduction Bill* (2018) and the draft *Child Wellbeing Strategy* (DPMC, 2018a, 2018b, 2018c). These and other child-focussed policies indicate growing recognition that the child wellbeing agenda must be reframed to give priority to the voices of children. In this vein, the main aim of this research was to capture and document children's voices because they are the experts of their experiences; their knowledge brings a vital dimension to the pool of knowledge from which creative solutions can be generated; and children have a right to be involved in decisions which influence their lives now and in the future. Related to this, was to capture the culturally inflected voices of Samoan children and how they conceptualise and experience wellbeing. Notably, this 'cultural' perspective has been largely missing in national and global child wellbeing studies.

Whilst focussing on the experiences of children, this Pasifika ethnic specific research recognises that children cannot be studied in isolation and so *talanoaga* were carried out with their parents as well. Importantly, the knowledge shared in both *talanoa* added another layer of rich data about the interplay of traditional and modern ways in the diaspora experience of child wellbeing ideals and practice. This research brought together the perspectives shared by the Samoan children (*i'a*) and their parents (*pii ama*) with the national (*la'au*) and global (*mauga*) perspectives, to form this baseline picture about how child wellbeing is conceptualised in these Samoan diasporic families. In bringing together these four perspectives, this research adds new knowledge and understanding to the child wellbeing discussion. This is the first New Zealand research on child wellbeing to prioritise the voices of Samoan children and their parents, and to research these voices through the lens of a Samoan holistic worldview. The findings from this research capture a particular moment in time and place, through the eyes of this group of people.

The first part of this chapter provides a brief overview of this research and research questions (Section 10.2) before presenting the key findings in response to the research questions (Section 10.3). The next part of this chapter discusses the research contribution to the New Zealand and global knowledge base (Section 10.4) followed by some recommendations for further research (Section 10.5).

10.2 This research

The purpose of this research was to increase knowledge and understanding of Samoan children's experiences of wellbeing and to bring this knowledge into the national and global child wellbeing policy and programming discussions. Notably the Pasifika cultural voice has been missing in child wellbeing discussions, which have tended to adopt a 'one size fits all' approach. This is despite the fact that 49 percent of the Pasifika population is under 18 years old; 13 percent of all children in New Zealand under the age of 18 years are Pasifika; and that Pasifika is projected to comprise 10 percent of New Zealand's population by 2026 (MPP, 2016; OCC, 2016; Statistics NZ, 2014b).[32] The two research questions were:

1   How do Samoan children and their parents conceptualise child wellbeing?

2   How are Samoan parents supporting the wellbeing of their children?

I designed the research approach, guided by four key points. Firstly, this research privileged the voices of children because they are the experts on their experiences, and focussed on Pasifika children because, as noted, this cultural voice has been missing in child wellbeing research and debate. Secondly, in recognition of the diversity of nationalities, cultures, and languages commonly classified together as Pasifika, my research took an ethnic-specific focus. Hence, this is a Samoan case study of child wellbeing and participants drawn from the Samoan diaspora in three locations in Wellington: central Wellington, Porirua, and the Hutt. The third key point that guided the research approach was that in order to increase understanding of the Samoan experience, this exploratory study was qualitative (their stories) and through a Samoan lens so as to capture the holistic nature of the Samoan worldview and the multidimensional nature of child wellbeing, hence the use of the *Talanoa ile i'a* (Faleolo, 2009). The last point was that because children cannot be viewed in isolation, this research partnered with 8-year-old Samoan children (which is the upper-age range of early childhood development) and their parents. The starting position of my research was that if it is to be relevant, meaningful, and of value, it needs to ask 'those that know, live, and breathe the phenomenon'.

The research paradigm – the ontology, epistemology, research methodology, and methods – for this exploratory research was encapsulated within a Samoan worldview, as detailed in Chapter 5. The ontological underpinning of this research was relativism, the epistemology was interpretive, and the research methodology was guided by Interpretive Phenomenology Analysis (IPA). I selected *Talanoa ile i'a* (Faleolo, 2009) as my research approach because this created the cultural space for the Samoan children and their parents to share their views in their own ways. *Talanoa ile i'a* argues that four perspectives are necessary to gain a full picture of any phenomena. For my research, the fish were represented by the 8-year-old children, the people in the canoe were their parents, and the perspectives of the people in the tree and those at the top of the mountain were provided in the literature reviews presented in Chapters 2, 3, and 4. *Talanoaga* were carried out with the children and with their parents, and the children's *talanoa* were spurred by their photos of what made them feel 'happy, safe, and loved'. The findings from the Samoan children's *talanoa* shared at the *fono* were presented in Chapter 6 and the findings from their parent's *talanoaga* in Chapter 7. I

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[32] This is based on information from the 2013 Census. Information from the 2018 Census was not available in time to be included in this thesis.

used IPA to interpret the data gathered in the parents' individual *talanoaga* but adapted the IPA process for the children. This was to account for the group-level interactions between children during the *fono* and so that I could get a sense of the individual child's views. Adapting the IPA enabled me to balance the voices of the individual fish within the school of fish. The re-telling of these stories shared by these Samoan diasporic families was from my own sense-making stance as a Samoan parent also living in Wellington.

10.3 Research conclusions

This chapter brings together the perspectives of the Samoan children and their parents, against the backdrop of the New Zealand and global contexts. The findings that emerged from the Samoan children and their parents have been discussed separately in Chapter 8 and Chapter 9. As noted, the beauty and strength of the *talanoa* is that the conversations follow the research partner's views about what they hold to be important to them and their lives. While I am presenting these conclusions as they relate to the two research questions, this is for ease of the discussion only. In reality, the *talanoa* from the Samoan children moved between the two questions, as did their parent's, showing the relationship and interrelatedness of the two questions.

10.3.1 Research Question One: Conceptualising child wellbeing

The responses from the Samoan children and their parents featured a mix of conceptualising child wellbeing as well as giving examples of what they saw as important to wellbeing. In this section, I present how they conceptualised child wellbeing first, followed by examples of wellbeing practices, which added understanding and meaning to the concept.

10.3.1a) Defining wellbeing

The Samoan children talked about their wellbeing as "a bunch of stuff, with good bits and bad bits". The "bunch of stuff' related to being loved, being cared for and protected, being helped, not feeling lonely, and spending time with loved ones (social-emotional wellbeing); not having to worry and having somebody that they trusted who they could talk to (mental wellbeing); playing sport to keep fit and eating good food (physical wellbeing); and to a lesser degree church and praying (spiritual wellbeing) and their identity as a Samoan (cultural dimension). The ways children talked about "good bits and bad bits" indicated that they saw wellbeing as a balancing of positive and negative aspects. Although they did not use the word resilience, they were in essence describing this characteristic. Children conceptualised their wellbeing as a seesaw, which brought together the idea of balance. That they conceptualised the seesaw as being in a park suggested to me there was also a relational aspect to wellbeing. The importance that children placed on this relational aspect was reinforced in their *talanoa*: 87 of the 97 blocks of *talanoa* about what was important to their wellbeing related to connecting with people and building relationships (see Table 19). Children placed high importance to connecting with their family, and to a lesser degree, their friends. This point likely relates back to their age.

Like their children, parents described child wellbeing as a holistic concept comprising physical, socio-emotional, mental, spiritual, and cultural components. In seeking to define child wellbeing, one parent used the Samoan words *ola manaia* (a beautiful life). This nicely

rounded view was echoed in English by many of the other parents. Importantly almost all parents used the term resilience and stated that resilience was the central factor and pathway to wellbeing for their children now, and in the future. They also understood wellbeing to be a dynamic concept that would change over the life-course of their children's lives and in relation to changes in the New Zealand context. Parents believed relationships were central to child wellbeing and that wellbeing would be achieved by parents journeying together with their children, their *aiga*, and more broadly the community. The canoe imagery was used to describe this wellbeing journey, which would require a balancing of the *fa'asamoa* and the *fa'apalagi*, while the waves stood for the life challenges their children would face. Parents stressed their intention and hopes that they were teaching their children to be resilient and equipping them with the knowledge and skills to navigate these waves.

10.3.1b) What is important to achieving ola manaia?

Four themes emerged in the children's *talanoa* about what was important to their wellbeing. These were: 1) social connections or relationships, particularly with family; 2) feeling secure and free from worry; 3) feeling valued and included and that they belonged; and 4) being a good person with good values. Taken together, it can be said that these Samoan children conceptualised their wellbeing primarily in relational terms, which in turn were integral to their sense of identity and belonging. Children also saw things like, showing kindness and including people so they were not lonely, as important. Much of what underpinned the theme of feeling secure and not having to worry was about being looked after, having somebody that they could rely on, and being able to talk to somebody they trusted.

As noted, unlike the Australian children in the research by Fattore, et al. (2007), these Samoan children did not indicate autonomy, agency, and having money as main factors in their wellbeing. Nor did the Australian research or Miliffe's (2014) research with 9-11-year old children in New Zealand feature the spiritual and cultural dimensions, as noted by the Samoan children (see Figure 34 for my adaptation of the Fattore, et al. model). These differences, which warrant further study, could reflect the influence of culture or perhaps methodological differences in the research approaches.

When parents' responses are placed alongside those of the children's, many shared understandings were identified (see Tables 19 and 20); for example, the importance of being good people and having good values such as kindness, empathy, respect, and integrity. There was also a fine congruence between the children's view that associated wellbeing with having someone they trusted and could rely on in their lives and the priority parents said they were trying to give to listening to their children and encouraging their children to share their views and concerns. Building relationships with their children, and connecting them into the wider *aiga* and the community support networks, was important to these parents.

10.3.2 Research Question Two: Supporting the wellbeing of their children

In talking about how they were supporting the wellbeing of their children, several parents drew attention to the Samoan saying *o fanau o le oloa mai le Atua*: that their children were precious treasures and their role was to be stewards of these gifts from God. Most of the parents believed their primary role was to set the strong foundation, which would enable their children to build a beautiful life. In the first place, this strong foundation was set by providing

for their children and ensuring they were healthy and safe. Secondly, by ensuring their children had a strong sense of identity and belonging. Thirdly, by teaching their children values and life lessons including how to make informed decisions and fourthly by connecting their children into the wider *aiga* and community networks.

Parents noted that to lay these firm foundations for a beautiful life, they were 'tweaking' the way they had been raised and their parenting approach in response to the New Zealand context. The phrase 'same, same, but different' encapsulated the way these parents described their parenting practises in New Zealand. A major change was in their relationships with their children and their priority to 'create the space' for their children to share their views and to have their views heard. Parents saw this as integral to ensuring their children felt valued, loved, happy, and emotionally stable as well as building their resilience, much of which contrasted with their own experiences of childhood. Notably, one parent said that on migrating to New Zealand, she and her husband had made the deliberate decision not to participate in church or *fa'asamoa*. Of high interest also was that this was the family that placed importance on employment as a major factor in their child's wellbeing. As noted, other parents spoke of adapting the *fa'asamoa* in line with the changing times. More in-depth research is necessary to explore the strength or prevalence of this challenge to the *fa'asamoa* ideals in other Samoan diaspora families.

Children took great pride in sharing their views of how they supported their own wellbeing. These included eating healthy food, playing sport to keep fit, being a good friend, learning things now to help them with their jobs in the future, and praying. If they felt sad, angry, or uncertain about something, the children said they had learnt to discuss their concerns with somebody they trusted and/or would take 'time out' from the situation.

10.4 The significance of this research

Concepts and practices of child wellbeing are learnt and shaped within particular social and cultural contexts, which themselves are being reshaped by time and place as so eloquently described by Pulotu-Endermann in the *Fonofale* model (1995). This research is an invaluable first step in understanding how Samoan children and their parents conceptualise child wellbeing. As such, it is a major contribution to the community, national, and global knowledge base of child wellbeing in a number of ways.

10.4.1 The children and their parents

This research with the Samoan diaspora has demonstrated that when given the opportunity, children have a view and are capable, interested, and eager to share their experiences and aspirations. For example, these children talked about and defined their wellbeing in ways that made sense to them and were meaningful to them. These children held a holistic and all-embracing concept of child wellbeing and viewed this in relational terms, rather than in terms of material goods. These children's beliefs were echoed in those of the parents, which, with the exception of one, rated being good people and making a meaningful contribution to the community more highly than their children 'having a job'. These culturally-inflected views are an invaluable contribution to the New Zealand and global knowledge base of child wellbeing and to the pool of ideas from which creative policies and programmes can be designed. These findings portray a different experience of child wellbeing for these families: one that

may be primarily influenced by the *fa'asamoa*, but also influenced by the interplay of the *fa'asamoa* and the *fa'apalagi* cultural values and ideals which is taking place in New Zealand. All parents held high expectations for the wellbeing of their children, viewing children as a gift from God to be guided and protected. To achieve this, parents said they were intentionally 'tweaking' the ways they had been raised so as to increase their children's resilience to the changing landscape and to changing times. As noted, as part of this 'tweaking' process, one of the ten parents had intentionally made the decision not to follow the *fa'asamoa* or attend church in New Zealand. These changing parenting ideals and practices across generations highlighted in this study also align with the Berry acculturation model (2006).

The benefits to children in being invited to share their views, to have their views listened to, and to see their views clearly in the findings are immeasurable. The Samoan children were engaged in this research process and keen to participate in *talanoaga* at the *fono*. They felt valued in being asked for their views, and for those children that attended the joint-*fono*, they could see that their voices had been heard. I have confidence that in the almost one year timeline of this 'fieldwork', the 11 Samoan children grew confidence as shown in their joy in engaging with each other, the eagerness to share their views in the *talanoa*, and the way in which they were happy to see each other in the feedback *fono*. All of these things have a positive impact on self-esteem and sense of wellbeing (Lansdown, 1994).

For the parents, several of them made the comment that they had never really stopped to reflect about how they were raising their children. To use one example, at the end of *talanoaga,* Malia said:

> *I just want to make the comment… it's not a natural thing for me as a mother to reflect on these things. This has been really useful…you've enabled me to verbalise my actions as a mum…why I've made certain decisions…it's not every day that I get to reflect on this.*

While parents may have felt that they had never really stopped to reflect, it was clear to me from the *talanoaga* that they were taking intentional decisions to support the wellbeing of their children, and lay the foundations for them to have a beautiful life.

10.4.2 Transforming the child wellbeing agenda

Notably the cultural voices identified in this research have been missing in much of the child wellbeing research and debate, which has tended to assume a universal child wellbeing experience and in turn universal solutions. These Samoan voices have the potential to transform the national and global child wellbeing agenda. The findings from this research also increase the likelihood of tailoring child wellbeing programmes in a way that has relevance and meaning to the Samoan diaspora, and Pasifika more broadly. This point has additional urgency given that the population profile of Pasifika, as noted earlier. Pasifika children of today are the leaders of the future: ensuring their wellbeing is vital, not only to the quality of life of Pasifika children, their families, and communities, but also to the national wellbeing of New Zealand. Building knowledge and understanding about how a diasporic community of Pasifika children and their parents conceptualise wellbeing, must start by asking 'those that know'.

This exploratory research also responds to the recommendation by Poulton, et al. (2018) for studies that operationalise the global concept of wellbeing and its multiple determinants, so as to support a multi-agency response to child wellbeing. That recommendation is particularly important to Pasifika, given the indicators that the Pasifika population has not kept pace with the general population across key social and economic development indicators. These findings offer valuable insights to the framing of the *Child Wellbeing Strategy* (DPMC, 2018); to the Ministry of Pacific Peoples in its work to strengthen the wellbeing of Pacific peoples; and for consideration by Treasury as part of its *Pasifika Living Standards Framework*. These research findings can also valuably inform individual sectoral responses to child wellbeing such as the recent nationwide *Kōrero Mātauranga Education Conversation* (MoE, 2018) where wellbeing was one of the most frequently mentioned themes (Hancock, 2018).

10.4.3 Significance to the Samoan diaspora

This research has generated new knowledge and insights about the wellbeing of Samoan children, through the lens of the Samoan diaspora. I believe the Samoan families who partnered in this research reflect some of the diversity and the multiple faces of New Zealand's Samoan diaspora. Although this research was carried out in Wellington, the findings will no doubt have wider relevance and will challenge and provoke further thinking for the Samoan diaspora in other parts of New Zealand as well as other Pasifika peoples and migrant communities. This research supports a counter-narrative to the generalised view about child wellbeing and parenting practices in the Samoan diaspora. For the Samoan diaspora, the knowledge generated in this research will increase understanding about how child wellbeing can be achieved against a shifting landscape. In addition, by participating in this research it is hoped that this may generate a more robust interest by the Samoan diaspora and Pasifika more broadly, in participating in national policy-making.

10.4.4 Significance of the research process

Three points mark the significance of the research process. These are that the process undertaken in my research reinforced the strength of: 1) asking 'those that know', 2) combining Samoan and Western research approaches; and 3) drawing on the wisdom and knowledge of the Samoan diaspora throughout the whole process. Looking at the first point, this research has demonstrated that if research is to be meaningful, relevant and of value, it must include the voices of 'those that know, live, and breathe the phenomena'. Research with children is often described as being difficult, with children positioned as 'incapable' of clearly articulating their view. As noted earlier, the 8-year-old Samoan children were highly capable of forming and articulating their views very clearly. The research reinforced that, when given the opportunity, children are able to clearly articulate their views and offer knowledge about their wellbeing, and that the can make a valuable contribution to issues that affect them. By using a model grounded in a Samoan worldview, such as *Talanoa ile i'a* (Faleolo, 2009), Samoan children can be positioned as the authority on issues that involve them and to contribute to the generation of 'new' knowledge.

Secondly, deciding on my research design and approach was not an easy task, because while my research process needed to be culturally and age appropriate to the Samoan worldview, I knew that it also had to be flexible enough to understand and take account of the

interplay of the specific (Samoan) and generic (Western) influences – the *fa'asamoa* and the *fa'apalagi* - which marked the daily life experiences of New Zealand's Samoan community. Designing my research approach required ongoing review, testing, and rethinking of the literature such as the literature on Pasifika, Samoa, global theorising and research about children and wellbeing, customary child raising ideology and practice amongst other ethnic minority diaspora groups, together with a range of recommended texts outlining how research with children should be carried out.

Drawing on both Samoan and Western research methodologies helped me decide on an iterative research process which was informed by: a) the cultural concept and practice of *talanoa* and, b) the *Talanoa ile i'a*, a multi-layered approach that recognises and gives prominence to the children's voice. The children's group *fono* drew on the communal knowledge construction and validating processes, which underpin the consensus decision-making processes of Samoa's *fono o matai* (council of chiefs). To use IPA in a way that aligned with this Samoan consensus decision-making process, I adapted it. This enabled me to draw out the individual voice of each fish from the school of fish.

As other research on Pasifika peoples living in New Zealand has shown, this research reinforced the value of *talanoa* (Vaioleti, 2007) as a tool to facilitate an exchange of ideas in a culturally valid way. When I reflected on the strengths and limitations of the research paradigm (see Chapter 5), the outcome from the *talanoaga* with parents was a narrative that was richer than if they had only answered my questions. For the Samoan children, the combination of capturing what wellbeing meant to them through photos and then using these photos as a prompt to guide their *talanoa* helped them to provide their insights in a much deeper way. The Samoan children said that taking photos and talking about what made them feel 'happy, safe, and loved' was fun. Being at ease and comfortable with the research process also helped the children share their views on sensitive issues such as feeling left out, feeling uncertain, and/or feeling sad. To use one example to illustrate, I did not have a prepared question about death; this topic was introduced into the *talanoaga* by the children themselves.

Thirdly, in order to carry out this research in a rigorous and culturally ethical way, I established close relationships with people from the Samoan diaspora including parents, community members, children, and people involved in education and child development. I drew on the collective wisdom and knowledge of these people at all stages of this research, from pre-design through to data interpretation. These partners were my sounding board over the three years of my doctoral journey, and were important in ensuring that my research remained culturally and ethically sound. To use one example here to illustrate, I piloted my data collection methods with two 8-year-old Samoan children to ensure that they were culturally appropriate and child-friendly. I wanted to know whether photographs would engender robust conversations with children. Their response was that it would be more interesting and meaningful if they could drive this process. That is, if they could think about what made them feel 'safe, happy, and loved' and then take their own photos to illustrate this. The two 8-year-old Samoan children also indicated their preference to use smart phone technology rather than disposable cameras. In response to this feedback, I adapted my data collection methods. Seeking the views of the Samoan children strengthened the research

methods. The same is true of the other examples where I sought the views of Samoan community leaders and teachers' views during the design phase.

10.4.5 Models that capture wellbeing – through their eyes

Two models were developed that capture the voices of the Samoan children and their parents. The Samoan children conceptualised their wellbeing as a seesaw in a park (see Figure 33) and from the *talanoaga* with the parents, their views are captured by the *Ola Manaia* model, that is depicted by the *va'a tele* (see Figure 36). Of interest, is that while the parent's *talanoa* pointed to imagery grounded within a Samoan worldview, the children conceptualised their wellbeing using imagery that reflects their life in Wellington.

Both of these models are detailed in the discussion chapters, but to briefly summarise them here: the seesaw captures the Samoan children defining their wellbeing as "a bunch of stuff, with good bits and bad bits". Wellbeing is achieved when there is balance between the "good bits and the bad bits". This idea illustrates resilience. The children captured the relational aspect of wellbeing by positioning the seesaw in a park; in other words, the seesaw (a child) is surrounded by their parents, sisters and brothers, grandparents, aunties and uncles, cousins, and friends. The strengths of this model are that children can easily identify with the seesaw imagery, it conveys their ideas in a simple way, and with its universal appeal it could apply more widely to other children outside of the Samoan diaspora.

The ideas of resilience and the relational aspect of wellbeing are also captured in the *Ola Manaia* model. The waves signify life's challenges, and parents were laying the foundation in what they hoped would equip their children with the knowledge and skills to navigate these waves. This was the resilience piece of the *Ola Manaia* model. The *va'a tele* traveling in a group signified journeying together in community. Parents were cognisant that wellbeing required a balancing of the *fa'asamoa* and the *fa'apalagi*, which is depicted by the balancing of the *va'a tele*'s twin hull. The last key idea of the *Ola Manaia* model is viewing wellbeing as a journey over the whole life of their child and the shift in landscape over this journey. This signifies shifts over time. The strengths of the *Ola Manaia* model is that the key ideas underpinning this could have resonance with other peoples of Pasifika. Further, it captures child wellbeing in an interdisciplinary and multisectoral way.

10.5 Going forward: research recommendations

There are four recommendations for further research, which are presented in this section. To note, these recommendations are not presented by way of priority:

1   This research focused on the Samoan children and their parents living in Wellington. It was not intended that this research speak for the 'whole' Samoan diaspora, but to offer some insights about the wellbeing of Samoan children. Adapting and applying this research approach in other Samoan communities in New Zealand would add to this knowledge base. There is also scope for this research approach to be adapted for use in child wellbeing research in other Pacific communities.

2   Many of the parents spoke of raising their children within the *fa'asamoa* but adapting it to today's landscape and one parent spoke of an intentional decision not to participate

in church or *fa'asamoa* activities. More in-depth research to explore the strength or prevalence of this challenge to *fa'asamoa* ideals and behaviours in Samoan diaspora families is needed.

3   The children's views of wellbeing being found in this Samoan study are different in a number of ways from findings in Fattore, et al.'s (2007) study in Australia and Miliffe's (2014) study in the South Island of New Zealand. While these differences could reflect cultural differences, age differences in the child sample, and/or methodological differences, further in-depth study would be valuable.

4   Through listening to the voices of the Samoan children and their parents, two conceptual models of wellbeing were developed: 1) a seesaw in a park, and 2) a group of *va'a tele* journeying together in community. An area of further research could be to test the utility of these two conceptual models, with the wider Samoan diaspora.

10.6 A last thought

This research provides a first step in understanding how Samoan children and their parents conceptualise child wellbeing. With the concept of child wellbeing being prone to shifts over time, we may need to rethink this particular conceptualisation of child wellbeing in the future. As captured in Tui Atua's words at the beginning of this chapter, our wisdom is gained through the constant balancing of old and new, and the constant search for truth. Our search for wisdom needs to continue because, drawing on Dr Seuss' words, we will miss the best things, if we keep our eyes shut.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Pasifika in the media - a selection of headlines

Maori, Pacific offenders high on three-strikes watch
3 Dec, 2012 5:30am

stuff

Kids victims of 'brown underclass'
23:56, Sep 01 2011

Racism blights NZ schools
Māori and Pasifika heads of primary schools regularly face racism at work with some discrimination coming from government agencies, according to a new survey.

Concerns over persistent UE disparity for Māori & Pasifika
Thursday, 13 April 2017, 9:48 am

Pasifika rate of hospital stays on rise
29 May, 2015 5:00am

Pasifika, Māori put in seclusion at double the rates of Pākehā
Hannah Martin · 10:55, Jun 12 2018

Struggles continue for Pasifika youth
22 Sep, 2016 5:00am

Students tell of racism in study of how they view the education system
Jessica Long · 05:00, Jan 31 2018

NCEA: The only brown kid in the room
26 Sep, 2016 5:00am

Porirua's Pasifika children suffering high levels of tooth decay
JARED NICOLL
Last updated 18:42, May 3 2017

Study: Pacific youth more at risk of suicide than any other group
HANNAH MARTIN · 02:00, Apr 28 2017

Crowded housing highest among Pacific peoples
15 May 2018, 11:00am

Housing crisis: Pasifika hit hard by shortage
18 Dec, 2014 5:00am

Māori/Pasifika school leaders experience racial discrimination, survey finds
23 Jun, 2018 6:00am

Half of all New Zealand Pacific teenagers living in poverty, study claims
SHANE COWLISHAW
Last updated 16:37, July 18 2016

Desperate Saitu family share story of child poverty in South Auckland
17 Aug, 2016 9:27pm

Appendix B: The provision, protection, and participation rights of the UNCRC

The provision, protection, and participation rights of the UNCRC are as follows:

1) ***Children have the right to the provision of services and resources:*** The UNCRC states that every child has the right to develop "to the maximum extent possible" (Article 6). This is unpacked in later articles, which read that every child has the right to enjoy "the highest attainable standard of health" (Article 24); the right to education and to free primary education (Article 28); the right to education that develops "the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential" (Article 29); to right to enjoy their culture, practice their religion, and use their language (Article 29); the right to benefit from social security (Article 25); and the right to enjoy rest, leisure, play and recreation (Article 31). State Parties are urged to "recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development" (Article 27) and to provide appropriate assistance to parents and legal guardians to help them bring up their children (Article 18 and Article 27).

2) ***Children have the right to protection:*** The UNCRC states that every child has the right to live in a society without discrimination of any kind and that states parties will ensure that "the child is protected against all forms of discrimination" (Article 2); that "the best interests of the child shall be the primary consideration" (Article 3); that there is respect for a child's cultural identity, language and values (Article 29 and Article 30); and that every child has the right to be safe from economic exploitation (Article 32), substance abuse (Article 33), and physical and sexual abuse (Article 34).

3) ***Children have the right to participate and to be heard:*** The UNCRC affords every child the right to express their views freely on all matters affecting them, and that these views should be considered (Article 12). Further guidance of what this means is provided by the UN General Assembly (UN, 2009, p.x) where it urges states parties to:

> Assure that children are given the opportunity to be heard on all matters affecting them, without discrimination on any grounds, by adopting and/or continuing to implement regulations and arrangements that provide for and encourage, as appropriate, children's participation in all settings, including within the family, in school and in their communities, and that are firmly anchored in laws and institutional codes and that are regularly evaluated with regard to their effectiveness.

Article 12, together with Articles 13 to 16 - which gives every child the right to right to freedom of expression (Article 13), to have this view respected by the state (Article 14), and freedom of association (Article 16) - recognises the child as an active agent in the exercise of his or her rights. Recognition of the child as an active agent with the right to engage is broadly conceptualised as 'participation' (Lansdown, 1994).

Appendix C: Cultural values and the influence on wellbeing

Function	Individualistic	Collectivistic
To care, nurture, and support	Parents support children until they are adults	Parents support children throughout their lives
	Support is expected from children, but there is little obligation for reciprocity	There is an obligation of reciprocity of support among family members
	Support is both emotional and instrumental and is often expected to diminish after children have reached maturity	A greater value is placed on practical support in comparison to emotional support, and this support is often expected to extend into adulthood
	Support networks tend to be small and localised	Support networks tend to be large and span across geographic and kinship borders
	Extended families are often not included in support network	Extended families are integral to support networks
To manage resources	Economic resources are provided by the proximal family network	Economic resources are provided by the larger family network
	Over the life course individuals become self-sufficient	Over the life course reciprocal economic ties remain between family members
	Economic ties tend to be distinct from community and social relationships	Economic ties to the community and to the diaspora are strong
	Economic resources and security are seen as a component of personal pride	Economic resources and security are a component of collective pride where resources are used for the wellbeing of the family and wider community
To provide socialisation and guidance	Values are communicated through socialisation by parents and the wider society (e.g. school, media)	Values are communicated by extended family and community networks, and these may be compromised by values from the wider society
	The concept of family or collective identity is constrained to a small group, and tends to be de-emphasised in comparison to personal identity	The concept of a collective identity (family, ethnic, religious) is broad and collective identity tends to be prioritised in comparison to personal identity
	The individual is ultimately responsible for their life decisions	The collective family unit is responsible for important life decisions
Identify and sense of belonging	Self is defined as distinct, but embedded within the family	Self is defined as embedded within the collective family and wider community
	Focus is on the individual and their unique characteristics	Focus is on the collective and wellbeing for all members, not solely for individual family members
	Promotion of independent thought and action as well as accountability and responsibility	Promotion of obligations, respect, face saving and accountability to the collective
	The degree to which an individual prioritises their relationships is flexible and fluid	Relationships are prioritised over the wants and needs of the individual

Appendix D: New Zealand's ratification of the UNCRC

The New Zealand government ratified the 54 articles of the UNCRC with three reservations:

1. *Reservation 1: Children unlawfully in New Zealand*: Nothing in this Convention shall affect the right of the Government of New Zealand to continue to distinguish as it considers appropriate in its law and practice between persons according to the nature of their authority to be in New Zealand including but not limited to their entitlement to benefits and other protections described in the Convention, and the government of New Zealand reserves the right to interpret and apply the Convention accordingly (United Nations, 2017).

2. *Reservation 2: Employment protections for children*: The Government of New Zealand considers that the rights of child provided for in article 32 (1) are adequately protected by existing law. It therefore reserves the right not to legislate further or to take additional measures as may be envisaged in article 32 (2) (United Nations, 2017).

3. Reservation 3: Age mixing in prison and other custodial units: The Government of New Zealand reserves the right not to apply article 37 (c) in circumstances where the shortage of suitable facilities made the mixing of juveniles and adults unavoidable; and further reserves the right not to apply article 37 (c) where the interests of other juveniles in an establishment require the removal of a particular juvenile offender or where mixing is considered to be of benefit to the persons concerned (United Nations, 2017).

In addition to the 54 Articles detailed in Chapter 2, the UNCRC also contains three optional protocols. Of these optional protocols, New Zealand ratified the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography, and the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict. It did not ratify the third Optional Protocol on communication of complaints, which allows children to make individual complaints about breaches of their rights under the Convention.

Appendix E: Information flyer overviewing my research

RESEARCH PARTNERS

Through their eyes: A Samoan perspective on child well-being

Fa'atalofa atu i le paia ma le mamalu. Malo le soifua maua ma le lagi e mama.

I am a doctoral student interested in the wellbeing of Samoan children and their families. Taking the view that "Nothing matters more to Pacific people than the health, well-being and future success of our children" (NZCYES, 2008), I would like to: a) learn from Samoan parents about the aspirations that they have for their children and how these are supported in the family, community, and by government; and b) understand from our children what makes them feel happy, safe and loved.

THIS STUDY IS LOOKING FOR:

- Samoan parents
- Who have an 8-year old child
- Live in Wellington, Porirua or the Hutt

This study involves *talanoa* with a parent as well as asking your 8-year old child to take photos of what makes them feel happy, safe and loved. There is a small *mealofa* for your involvement.

If you're interested in sharing your thoughts please contact:

EMMA DUNLOP-BENNETT

MOB: **EMAIL:**

Research: Samoan child wellbeing
Please call Emma Dunlop-Bennett
Phone:
Email:
Faafetai tele lava

Research: Samoan child wellbeing
Please call Emma Dunlop-Bennett
Phone:
Email:
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Research: Samoan child wellbeing
Please call Emma Dunlop-Bennett

Appendix F: Information sheet for the parents

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Through their eyes - A Samoan perspective on child well-being

Fa'atalofa atu i le paia ma le mamalu. Malo le soifua maua ma le lagi e mama.

Thank you for considering being a part of this research. This research is being carried out as part of Emma Dunlop-Bennett's doctoral study. This information sheet provides an outline of what this research is about. This **Participation Information Sheet** sets out the importance of this study, what your participation would involve, and what will happen to the information that you provide. Please read it before deciding whether or not to participate. We will go through this information with you and answer any questions you may have.

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to sign the **Consent Form** on the last page of this document. You will be given a copy of both the Participant Information Sheet and the Consent Form to keep. *Fa'afetai tele lava.*

What is the purpose of the study?

"Nothing matters more to Pacific people than the health, well-being and future success of our children. Our community's future is inextricably linked to their health and success" (NZCYES, 2008).

Child wellbeing has been recognised as one of the smartest investments that a country can make. Investing in children from an early age lays the foundations for better outcomes in education, health, and economic productivity, and can mitigate the negative effects of poverty.

While the importance of investing child wellbeing is well recognised, the question of how to define it remains unanswered. This is largely because child wellbeing is influenced by culture and context. That is where this research sits: understanding - from the perspective of Samoan families living in Wellington - what child wellbeing means to them. Taking a strengths-based approach, this research will look at the aspirations that parents have for their children, and how these aspirations have been supported by the family, community, and government.

Participation in this research:

This research draws on the *Talanoa ile i'a* approach, in which all perspectives – *i'a* (children), *pii ama* (canoe), *la'au* (health, education and social service providers) and *mauga* (policy) – are needed to form a complete picture.

This research is looking for:

- Samoan parents who have an 8 year old child and live in Wellington; and

- Samoan children who are 8 years old and live in Wellington

If you and your family agree to take part in this research:

1)   You will be asked to take part in a *talanoaga* or discussion with the researcher to share your thoughts about what child wellbeing means to you and how the wellbeing of your child has been supported. The interview will take between one and two hours.

          When the *talanoaga* with all parents have been finished, you will be invited to a *fono*, in which the preliminary findings will be presented back to research partners. The *fono* will help ensure that the preliminary findings reflect the *talanoaga* as well as provide an opportunity to collectively discuss these preliminary findings.

2)   Your 8 year old child will be asked to take photos of what makes them feel safe, happy, and loved. This could include photos of family and friends, school and after-school activities (such as sports, creative arts, and culture groups), and church.

          Once the photos have been printed, they will be used to guide a conversation between the researcher and your child about what the images mean to them. You can be present during this conversation. Please note that these photos will <u>not</u> be reprinted in any presentation or publication.

Drawing on the voices of our Samoan parents and their children, this research hopes to define child wellbeing that is culturally valid and reflects our identity and our cultural assets.

How the information will be collected:

This research takes the starting position that we want the best for our children. The questions are open ended in that they have not been determined in advance. Instead they will be guided by what you share. The general line of questioning will include what does the wellbeing of your child mean to you and how is their wellbeing supported in the home, community, and more broadly through services such as health and education.

There are no right or wrong answers. The researcher is only interested in your thoughts.

As the actual questions will be determined through the *talanoaga*, the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee has approved of the general areas to be explored but not been able to review the exact questions that will be asked.

The interviews will be taped on a digital recorder so that the researcher can refer back to the information that you have provided. This will help ensure that your voice is reflected accurately.

Please note that this research may touch on personal information about your family such as ethnicity, composition, education, and income. If any of the questions make you feel uncomfortable, you can tell the researcher that you would prefer not to answer that particular question(s). You can also withdraw from the research at any stage.

How your information will be used:

Please note that the information you give the researcher <u>will not</u> be circulated. Only the researcher and her supervisor will have access to these taped interviews. Personal identifying information recorded on a digital recorder will be destroyed at the conclusion of the research.

Any raw data - on which the results of the research depend - will be retained in secure storage for at least five years.

Further, you <u>will not</u> be personally identified in the thesis. If you agree to participate, your information will be treated as confidential.

The results of the research available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) and may be published, but every attempt will be made to preserve your anonymity. Prior to submitting the thesis, the researcher will invite you to participate in a *fono* so that you can feedback on the preliminary findings.

As a small token of appreciation, you will be given a $50 voucher and your child a $25 voucher at the end.

Fa'afetai tele lava for your interest in participating in this research. If you have any questions about this research - either now or in the future - please contact either:

Fa'afetai tele lava ma ia manuia.

Appendix G: Parent's consent form

CONSENT FORM

Please tick to indicate you consent to the following

I have read the Participant Information Sheet and I understand what the study is about.	Yes ☐	No ☐
I am satisfied with the answers I have been given regarding the study.	Yes ☐	No ☐
I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.	Yes ☐	No ☐
I understand that my participation in the study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw from it at any time.	Yes ☐	No ☐
I consent to the interview being recorded on a digital recorder so that the researcher can refer back to information that I give.	Yes ☐	No ☐
I understand that my participation in this study is confidential and that no material that could identify me personally will be used in any reports on this study.	Yes ☐	No ☐
I understand that personal information about me will be destroyed at the end of the study and that any raw data on which the results of the study depend, will be retained in secure storage for at least 5 years.	Yes ☐	No ☐
I understand that this study involves an open-questioning technique. This means that while the general line of questioning is about my views on the wellbeing of my child and how this is supported by the family, community and social services such as health and education. If the line of questioning develops in such a way that I feel uncomfortable, I can decline to answer.	Yes ☐	No ☐
The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but every attempt will be made to preserve my anonymity.	Yes ☐	No ☐

Declaration by participant: I consent for to take part in this study.

Participant's name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix H: Parent's consent form for their children to participate

CONSENT FORM (SAMOAN PARENTS/GUARDIANS)

Please tick to indicate you consent to the following

I have read the Participant Information Sheet and I understand what the study is about and am satisfied with the answers I have been given regarding the study.	Yes ☐	No ☐
I understand that my child's participation in the study is entirely voluntary and that my child can withdraw from it at any time.	Yes ☐	No ☐
I understand that my child will be given a reference number - which will be used throughout the research - to preserve their anonymity.	Yes ☐	No ☐
I understand that my child's participation in this study is confidential and that no material that could identify my child personally will be used in any reports on this study.	Yes ☐	No ☐
I understand that my child will be asked to discuss the photos that s/he has taken with the researcher. I am able to be present during that discussion.	Yes ☐	No ☐
I consent to this discussion on the photos to being recorded on a digital recorder.	Yes ☐	No ☐
I understand that any personal information about my child will be destroyed at the end of the study and that any raw data on which the results of the study depend, will be retained in secure storage for at least 5 years.	Yes ☐	No ☐
I understand my child will be asked to take photos of what makes them feel happy, safe and loved. In the event that my child feels hesitant or uncomfortable s/he may withdraw from the study.	Yes ☐	No ☐
I understand that the photos my child takes will be used as raw data only. They will not be reprinted in presentation or publication.	Yes ☐	No ☐

Declaration by parent/guardian: I consent for my child to take part in this study.

Parent/Guardian name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix I: Information sheet for the children

INFORMATION SHEET

Through their eyes - A Samoan perspective on child wellbeing.

Thank you for thinking about being a part of this study. This information sheet provides some information of what this study is about. Please read it - with your parents - before deciding whether or not you want to take part. Thanks heaps.

The aim of this study:

This study is about child wellbeing of Samoan children living in Wellington. The aim of this study is to understand from you what makes children feel happy, safe and loved.

Participation in this study:

This study is looking for Samoan children who are 8 years old. If you agree to take part, Emma will ask you to take photos of what makes you feel happy, safe and loved. This might include photos of your family and friends, what you do at school, and what you do after school. It's really up to you.

When the photos are printed, I will ask you about your photos. This will take about 20 minutes. Your parents will be close by. The photos will only be used get an idea of what makes you feel happy, safe and loved.

Please remember that at any time, you can tell Emma or your parents that you don't want to be a part of the study. It's ok.

Faafetai. Thank you.

Emma.

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research, you can ask your parents to contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph +643 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you and your parents raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.

Appendix J: Children's consent form

Te Whare Wānanga o Otāgo
NEW ZEALAND

CONSENT FORM (CHILDREN)

Please tick to indicate you consent to the following

I have been told about this study and understand what it is about.	Yes ☐	No ☐
All my questions have been answered in a way that makes sense.	Yes ☐	No ☐
I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary (its what I want to do). I do not have to take part if I don't want to. I can stop taking part at any time and don't have to give a reason.	Yes ☐	No ☐
Anytime I want to stop, that's ok.	Yes ☐	No ☐
Emma will record me on a digital recorder so that she can remember what I say, but the recording will be erased after the study has ended.	Yes ☐	No ☐
The photos that I take will be used to talk to Emma about what makes me feel happy, safe and loved.	Yes ☐	No ☐
If I don't want to answer some of the questions, that's fine.	Yes ☐	No ☐
If I have any worries or if I have any other questions, then I can talk about these with Emma or my parent.	Yes ☐	No ☐
The paper and computer file with my answers will only be seen by Emma and the people she is working with. They will keep whatever I say private.	Yes ☐	No ☐
I will receive a small gift as thanks for helping with this study	Yes ☐	No ☐
Emma will write up the results from this study for their University work. My name will not be on anything that Emma writes up about this study.	Yes ☐	No ☐

Declaration by participant: I agree to take part in this study

Participant's name: _____

Date: _____

Appendix K: Letter to the children

Through their eyes: A Samoan perspective on child well-being

Thanks Tualagi for helping out my study. I really appreciate it.

It would be great if you could take 10 photos of what makes you feel *happy, safe* and *loved.*

These photos can be of anyone, any place, and anything.... its your choice.

Once you've taken the photos, your family will email them to me at xxxxx@gmail.com.

On Saturday 19 August, we've got some cool things planned at the Indoor Grand Prix like Go-Karting, Laser-Tag, and Mini-Golf. Over lunch, we can have a group chat about your photos. You won't be alone – there will be about 4 other kids...like you. Your parents can come also if they want.

Thanks again Tualagi for helping me out. I really appreciate it.

Emma