

Pasifika Trans-Tasman Migrant Perspectives of Well-Being in Australia and New Zealand

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Abstract

The migration of *Pasifika* across the Tasman Sea between New Zealand and Australia has noticeably increased since the 1990s. Current Trans-Tasman migration literature outlines economic and political perspectives of this migration trend, however, fails to capture the social perspectives and migrant experiences that further explain the drift. This paper highlights the importance of understanding the *Pasifika* Trans-Tasman migration process from the perspective of the *Pasifika* migrants and asks whether or not *Pasifika* well-being aims are fulfilled in the process of Trans-Tasman migration. It is only by understanding what is of core value to *Pasifika* people living in Australia and New Zealand that we can appreciate the inter-play of the factors involved in the *Pasifika* Trans-Tasman migration. Preliminary findings from research that was undertaken in 2015 is presented; the discussion focuses on the *Pasifika* migrant groups, of Tongan and Samoan descent, that have migrated between the cities of Auckland, New Zealand and Brisbane, Australia since the 1990s. Initial interviews with 40 *Pasifika* informants in Auckland and Brisbane during June to August 2015 have provided a *Pasifika* definition of ‘well-being’. *Pasifika* well-being is better understood by the Tongan informants as *moui oku lelei* and by the Samoan informants as *ola magaia*; the literal translation of these words into the English language simply mean ‘a good and happy life’, however, they are more holistic in their actual meaning to the *Pasifika* informants of this study. These authentic *Pasifika* concepts have come to the fore through the use of e-*Talanoa*, my newfound method of interviewing that has taken, *Talanoa*, a *Pasifika* research methodology online. Despite the increasing presence of *Pasifika* in both New Zealand and Australia, very little is written or recorded about the *Pasifika* Trans-Tasman migrants’ movements and how this impacts on their well-being. The significance of this paper is that it will help to end the evident silence of *Pasifika* voices in Trans-Tasman migration literature.

Key Words: *Pasifika*, Diaspora, Trans-Tasman migration, Well-being, *Talanoa* approach

Introduction

The collective term ‘*Pasifika*’ is used in this paper to refer to the Samoan and Tongan groups, that the study focuses on, who collectively use this term *Pasifika* as a shared identity of belonging to the Pacific Island nations. This paper describes the initial results from a larger, ongoing study of *Pasifika* migrants based in Auckland and Brisbane who were interviewed about their intentions or experiences of migrating to Australia, focused on their concepts of well-being. In particular, the study examined the relationship between *Pasifika* people’s well-being concepts and their motivation to migrate (or not to migrate) and expectations of their future life in Australia were examined. The *Pasifika* Trans-Tasman migration concept in the research, which is also presented here, refers specifically to the process of movement of the Tongan and Samoan *Pasifika* groups across the Tasman Sea between New Zealand and Australia. This paper highlights the importance of understanding the *Pasifika* Trans-Tasman migration process from the perspective of the *Pasifika* migrants and asks whether or not *Pasifika* well-being aims are fulfilled in the process of Trans-Tasman migration. This question is asked on the premise that it is only by acknowledging what are of core value to people, that we can appreciate the inter-play of the factors underlying their migration. The process of *Pasifika* Trans-Tasman migration can be

seen as an act of aiming to fulfil well-being goals based on what is of core value to them and their families.

Before I proceed with the paper, it is important to 'situate myself' in the research that I am carrying out as this will in some ways influence the way these preliminary findings will be analysed and presented here. Tuhiwai Smith (2012) urges us as researchers to 'situate' ourselves within the indigenous research contexts that we study. Tuhiwai Smith advocates for the importance of being 'visible' in our positioning 'relative to our research' (2012: 461). As a *Pasifika* researcher, I agree with this notion. I am of Tongan descent, born and raised in New Zealand and I am married to a Samoan, also born and raised in New Zealand. Our family (including five children of Samoan and Tongan descent all born in New Zealand) would identify ourselves as *Pasifika*. The interest I have in the links between the well-being and migration of *Pasifika* has grown over time, while living in Auckland, from personal observations to research inquiry. From 2003 to 2015, in my role as a secondary school Geography teacher in South Auckland, I have observed the significant links between the well-being of my *Pasifika* students, their families and the transient nature of the *Pasifika* community in South Auckland. While working closely with families and students over these years, as a pastoral care leader in the school, I gained further insight into the familial networks that existed across the Tasman for many families. Over the years I witnessed the departure of several *Pasifika* students and their families from South Auckland to the urban areas of Australia (mainly Brisbane and Sydney) either on a temporary basis or permanently. My follow-up work with these families revealed that most had found success in gaining employment and opportunities, in Australia, that had been otherwise difficult to achieve in South Auckland. More recently my own journey has bolstered this interest in understanding the Trans-Tasman migration process and its links to my own family's well-being. In December 2015 my family and I made the 'big move' from Auckland to Brisbane; my family's story of migration forms part of my research observation as an 'insider' *Pasifika* Trans-Tasman migrant. During our evening *faka-famili*¹ (family time) we often talk about how things have changed between Auckland and Brisbane, the positives and the negatives. These conversations of our experiences of well-being is often wrapped up in layers of our perceptions of who we are, what we're about and what is of core value to us as *Pasifika* people, now living in Australia.

Understanding *Pasifika* Trans-Tasman migrant perceptions and experiences of well-being in Auckland, New Zealand compared to their perceptions and experiences of well-being in Brisbane, Australia is important. There are over 102,000² *Pasifika* in Queensland, Australia with the majority living in Brisbane and these numbers are being added to through the process of Trans-Tasman migration. With the steady increase of the *Pasifika* population in Brisbane, it is the hope of this research that having a better understanding of *Pasifika* migrant perceptions and experiences of well-being -- in the context of their movements between Auckland and Brisbane - - will help to inform government policies in the area of immigration, health, housing and education that are currently affecting the well-being of *Pasifika* Trans-Tasman migrants. Although current Trans-Tasman migration literature alludes to some reasons for this migration trend; Trans-Tasman literature fails to capture the perspectives and experiences of the *Pasifika* migrants themselves and how their movements relate to their well-being goals. According to Hamer '...the perspectives of Pacific people who have migrated to Australia from New Zealand themselves. Their voices need to be recorded on this subject...' (2014:94). A recent publication of 'Pacific communities in Australia', points out the 'limited research on Pacific communities within an Australia[n] context' (Ravulo 2015:6). Thus, it would be vital to consider what

discourse currently exists on the subjects of *Pasifika* diasporic movement and Trans-Tasman migration between New Zealand and Australia. This review of the available literature will provide a milieu for the dialogue and analysis of the preliminary findings of the research.

Background

The phenomena of *Pasifika* migration, 1960s-1990s, from the Pacific Islands directly to Pacific Rim countries like New Zealand, Australia and the US mainland has been well-documented (Ahlburg & Brown 1998, Bedford 2007, Brown 1998, Brown & Walker 1995, Lee 2004, Ravulo 2015), and the contemporary interaction of New Zealanders³ with Indigenous Australia has also been considered by various studies (George 2014, Hamer, 2009, Henare-Solomona 2012). The more recent occurrences seen in the 1990s onwards, of *Pasifika* migrating across the Tasman Sea from New Zealand to Australia, is a continuation of the journey taken by *Pasifika* that began with their initial movements from the Pacific Islands to New Zealand (Bedford 2007, Bedford 2009, Vause 2010). In fact, the migratory pattern of movement of *Pasifika* people, in search of better opportunities and resources has been happening for centuries (Keck & Schieder 2015).

Besides this in-built *Pasifika* desire to explore and to migrate within *Pasifika*, countries like New Zealand and Australia beckon those *Pasifika* in search of opportunities. For instance, the aging demographic structure of Australia⁴ leaves the country encouraging an increase in the migration of working sector age groups to sustain the economic needs of the country. This demographic need in association with the broadening of Australia's immigration policies since the mid-1970s has led to new groups of migrants arriving from all parts of the world, including the noticeable increase in the numbers of *Pasifika* arriving from New Zealand since the 1990s. Both the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the New Zealand Statistics department report high concentrations of *Pasifika* peoples residing in Auckland and Brisbane. In fact, Auckland is home to 179,300 *Pasifika*, which is 67% of New Zealand's total *Pasifika* population (Bedford, 2009: 39). Similarly, Queensland is home to the largest cluster of *Pasifika* in Australia, with a total of 102,320 *Pasifika* residing in the state, and 61% of this *Pasifika* population concentrated in the Brisbane area. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS, 2014) recorded an increased growth rate in Brisbane's population compared to other capital cities in Australia. Between 2012 and 2013, the population of Greater Brisbane increased by 45,100 people, which is more than half of the overall increase in population in Queensland during this time. The research acknowledges that historically the greatest concentration of Samoan and Tongan *Pasifika* groups in Australia are in the state of New South Wales (Ravulo 2015:5)⁵, however, the decision to study the Samoan and Tongan *Pasifika* groups migrating to the state of Queensland was based on the observations of key informants of the increased influx of Samoan and Tongan families from other states in Australia, including New South Wales, into Queensland. Further to this, the New Zealand based documentary series 'Second Migration of Pacific People' by *Tagata Pasifika*⁶ identifies Brisbane, Queensland as the new "land of milk and honey" for Auckland *Pasifika* seeking improved lifestyles across the Tasman Sea in Australia.

There is a wealth of literature outlining the political and economic views behind the Trans-Tasman movement of *Pasifika*. Haig (2010) provides an economic focused report of the New Zealand diaspora (including *Pasifika*) working across the 'ditch' in Australia since the 1970s (Bedford 2004), and Ho, Hugo and Bedford (2003) have carried out quantitative work based on the movements of New Zealanders (including *Pasifika*) to Australia before and after

Australia's social security policy in 2001. Hamer (2014) examines the history of policy changes in both New Zealand and Australia towards the *Pasifika* people and the challenges placed on their migratory movements across the Tasman. These changes in policy are linked to the public and media concern for the increased immigration of *Pasifika* (Bedford 2004). Bedford (2009) emphasises the negative stereotyping of *Pasifika* in New Zealand contexts, with the usual focus on social and economic disparity; Ravulo (2015) equally acknowledges that previous research on *Pasifika* in Australian contexts is often limited to a focus on *Pasifika* over-representation in anti-social behaviour and crime. In both New Zealand and Australia, there are debates about *Pasifika* participation in the national sports arena (namely rugby union and rugby league). Surveys have been carried out in New South Wales in the 1990s considering the economic behaviour of Tongan and Samoan households, including the remittance of goods and money to their Pacific Island nations of Tonga and Samoa. Overall, the literature continues to analyse *Pasifika* without considering their underlying reasons for their economic behaviour or their perspectives on the Trans-Tasman migration from New Zealand to Australia.

According to Hamer (2014) there is an evident 'silence' in the literature that considers the *Pasifika* diasporic communities in both New Zealand and Australia, specifically that the 'voices' and the 'perspectives of Pacific people who have migrated to Australia from New Zealand themselves' has yet to be captured and documented in the literature (Hamer 2014:94). The narratives of the *Pasifika* Trans-Tasman migrants in the study support this idea of moving between Auckland and Brisbane in the hope of a better life (Hamer 2009, Lee 2003, McGavin 2014). A better life is best understood as the progress of well-being made as a desired outcome or result of their move. This often looks like individualistic 'betterment' at first glance, with improved employment opportunities, home ownership and a good education, but in fact it is a more holistic improvement for the well-being of the entire family. For instance, it is not uncommon for individuals or families living in a 'better off' situation in Australia and earning extra income (above living expenses) to send the 'extra' funds back to parents or siblings back in New Zealand or to their Pacific homelands. Remittance often returns 'home' to family in the form of clothing, food items or can be goods or building materials for the family home.

Pasifika well-being is better understood by the Tongan informants as *moui oku lelei* and by the Samoan informants as *ola magaia*; the literal translation of these words into the English language simply mean 'a good and happy life', however, they are more holistic in their actual meaning to the *Pasifika* informants of this study. The holistic understanding of *moui 'oku lelei*; *ola magaia* that has surfaced in the research reveal that the betterment of the family has a significant influence on the well-being and decisions of the individual to migrate across the Tasman.

Methodology

In April 2015, a preliminary 'scoping' study was undertaken with key *Pasifika* informants in Auckland and Brisbane to scope their ideas of well-being and Trans-Tasman migration. This process assisted in defining which *Pasifika* groups migrating to Queensland would be the main focus of the study. After considering the availability and accessibility of particular informants belonging to certain *Pasifika* groups in both Auckland and Brisbane, the decision was made to work with the researcher networks that existed or had been gained within the Samoan and Tongan communities in both Auckland and Brisbane. The study was to concentrate on the Trans-Tasman migration of *Pasifika* with Samoan and Tongan descent. This

decision was made to achieve an in-depth level of inquiry that would have not been possible as an ‘outsider’ of other *Pasifika* communities. As a Tongan, married to a Samoan, carrying a Samoan surname the researcher has been accepted more readily by informants and networks in the study because of the relationships that existed and have been strengthened through regular contact.

This preliminary study was followed by the initial interviews with 40 *Pasifika* informants in Auckland and Brisbane during June to August 2015. The interviews for this research focused on the Samoan and Tongan migrant populations that had migrated from Auckland to Brisbane. However, within the initial stages of data collection, it became evident that there were variations in the stages of migration from Auckland to Brisbane that the study needed to take into consideration. Therefore, four categorical movements belonging to the *Pasifika* Trans-Tasman groups of migrants in the study have been identified: A category informants are those planning to migrate to Brisbane from Auckland (pending), B category informants are those that have already migrated to Brisbane from Auckland, C category informants are those that are in ‘transit’ between Auckland and Brisbane via another city in New Zealand⁷ or Australia, and D category informants are those that have decided to return to Auckland from Brisbane.

For the purpose of capturing *Pasifika* voices on their own experiences and perceptions of well-being within the contexts of Auckland and Brisbane, it was important for the research to collect the dialogue of the *Pasifika* Trans-Tasman migrants in a culturally responsive way (Brown 2012, Denzin, Lincoln & Tuhiwai Smith 2008, Smith 1999). According to Vaioleti (2003), a *Pasifika* researcher, the ‘two-way’ interviewing process of *talanoa* is a culturally responsive way of interviewing in *Pasifika* contexts. Vaioleti defines *talanoa* as a ‘conversation, a talk, an exchange of ideas or thinking, whether formal or informal...and interacting without a rigid framework’ (2003:16). According to Havea (2010) *talanoa* ‘opens sacred texts and traditional values...is inviting and permissive, not just to the learned readers but also to all participants who engage one another’ (2010:14). Latu (2009) suggests that the only way we can ‘dig deep’ into the ‘warehouses’ and ‘libraries’ of understanding that is within the hearts and minds of *Pasifika* people is through *talanoa*. Thus, *talanoa* is an approach that creates a *va* or relationship between the informant and researcher that creates a free-flowing dialogue well-suited to the focus of this study with *Pasifika* migrants. *Talanoa* has been widely accepted as an approach of gathering in-depth qualitative data across a range of disciplines within several Melanesian and Polynesian academic circles (Halapua 2007, Latu 2009, Otsuka 2006, Prescott 2008, Qalo 2004, Vaioleti 2003, Vaka‘uta 2009). The downside of using the traditional method of face-to-face *talanoa* is the actual hours required to have an ongoing and free-flowing dialogue with each informant and the need to schedule meeting times that suit the informant and researcher availability.

Interviews with participants were carried out using two methods: face to face *talanoa* with informants who preferred this mode of communication, and a unique and novel form of *talanoa* using online forums that removed the inconvenience of time and location. What I term e-*Talanoa* was in direct response to the request of the *Pasifika* informants in both Auckland and Brisbane; e-*talanoa* is more suitable to their normal way of communicating online with their family and friends. According to Latu (2009), it is important to base *talanoa* in an environment which is conducive to good discussions, as *talanoa* is aided by an environment where the participants feel comfortable. This methodological development provided the flexibility and ease for informants to participate; the benefit of e-*Talanoa* is that the research took place in and around the ‘realities’ and daily lives of the informants. Several of the e-*Talanoa* took place with

informants while they tended to their chores or while waiting for a train. In essence the informants were in control of their time to respond to prompts throughout the interviews. Although a handful of face-to-face meetings were carried out with informants who preferred this mode of communication, several of the interviews occurred over dispersed hours, or a number of days, online via Facebook private message conversation or by email ‘volley’ conversation. Both modes of *Talanoa* and *e-Talanoa* interviewing provided valuable insight into the views held by *Pasifika* Trans-Tasman migrants about their well-being and experiences of well-being in Auckland and/or Brisbane. However, *e-Talanoa* gave informants more time to contemplate their response before having to write it (in messenger or email).

An open Community Page: *Pasifika* Trans-Tasman Migration was set up on the Facebook forum in early-June 2015, once ethical clearance was given for the research to utilise this online forum. The community webpage was also given approval by the Facebook administration team after the initial set-up. By mid-June 2015, a post was put on the webpage calling for any interested *Pasifika* participants for the study. An online version of the information required to be provided to participants was included in the post. Likely participants were advised of the criteria that needed to be met in order to participate in the study. Several interested participants that didn’t meet the criteria shared the post on their own Facebook page with other members of their family and communities. The benefit of this online ‘snowballing’ technique is the time that was saved by the functionality of the already established Facebook forum. Participants were invited to private message the researcher with details of their preferred mode of interview (face-to-face, email or Facebook private inbox/ messenger). Once contact was made with the participant, the information sheet and consent form was shared with them and their response was noted and on receipt of consent, *talanoa* meeting time and place was arranged or the *e-Talanoa* commenced.

Preliminary Findings

Initial analysis entailed typing up of face-to-face *talanoa* scripts, sharing these with the informants for their perusal; often this allowed informants to either add to or delete something they had said. A similar process occurred with the *e-Talanoa*, whereby the ready-typed dialogue available on the volley of emails or inbox messages on Facebook was copied and pasted to their scripts, and shared with informants for their perusal. This feedback/feedforward process usually happened shortly after the interview to allow each informant to verify their words and meanings that had been captured. This part of the analysis promotes a reciprocal trustworthiness (Glesne & Peshkin 1992). The second stage of analysis used tables, matrices and mind-maps to make further meaning of the information per participant, using their profile information such as where they were born, their age, their gender, whether they had any children, and when they migrated. This leads to the third stage of analysis that considers patterns and emerging themes across participants, within their categories (A, B, C, D as discussed earlier in the methodology) and across the categories.

What has emerged across the interviews in both Auckland and Brisbane was a shared *Pasifika* outlook that ‘well-being’ meant more than just tangible outcomes or improvements in the life of an individual. Pilot interviews conducted in April, 2015 indicated that the term ‘well-being’ was best understood as ‘a good and happy life’. Thus, in the 40 interviews, the term ‘well-being’ was used alongside the phrases ‘a good life’ or ‘a happy life’ which proved beneficial to removing the barrier in *talanoa* using an academic term like ‘well-being’ (most of the *Pasifika* informants were familiar with the term, however, the term ‘well-being’ did not always generate

free-flowing dialogue). The replacement of ‘well-being’ with the phrase ‘a good and happy life’ allowed the freedom of informants to use their own concepts with this same meaning. The Tongan concept of *moui ‘oku lelei* and the Samoan concept of *ola magaia* are direct translations of the phrase ‘a good and happy life’. These translations were shared by the informants themselves when discussing their holistic notions of *moui ‘oku lelei; ola magaia*. The preliminary findings from the interviews revealed that *Pasifika* Trans-Tasman migrants define their well-being beyond just a state of physical or emotional health, but include a spiritual dimension, and there is a significance placed on their familial connections as key to their well-being in both Auckland and Brisbane. The following excerpts of *Talanoa* present these holistic perceptions of well-being:

Ina⁸, is a second-generation *Pasifika* woman of Samoan descent, who is Brisbane-based having moved from Auckland in 2015. At the time, of the e-*Talanoa*, Ina had been living in Brisbane less than 12 months. This excerpt was taken from the e-*Talanoa* carried out on the Facebook private messenger forum, and was Ina’s response to the prompt concerning her understanding of a ‘good and happy life’:

“...having the simple necessities in life to at least be comfortable. Healthy family relationships, being well connected to family. Being physically healthy, able to still do physical activity to feel good and eating well. Being spiritually healthy too, having that intimate relationship with God. Mentally stable too which I guess ties in with the other three. If one area is lacking, it can affect the others.”

Sala is a second-generation *Pasifika* woman of Samoan descent, who moved to Brisbane from Auckland in 2011. This excerpt was taken from the e-*Talanoa* carried out via email, and was Sala’s response to the prompt concerning her perceptions on ‘a good and happy life’ and defining well-being:

“Well-being is being physically, emotionally and spiritually well. A happy family... and when you see progress, happiness and love...life is complete...I want to achieve a healthier lifestyle, I want to stop doing things that only can provide temporary happiness. I want a better relationship with the Lord and have spiritual strength. From a materialistic point of view I want to see the world and experience other lifestyles...Less stress will make my life a good and happy life, putting my mind at ease...I have to constantly remind myself of the things I cannot control and put this into perspective.”

Familial and community interactions are important factors in the decision-making when *Pasifika* Trans-Tasman migrants plan a move from Auckland to Brisbane. The ability to stay connected to both nuclei and extended family, as well as attend a place of worship are as important if not more so, than the proximity to employment opportunities. Note, that for most of the *Pasifika* migrant informants, family includes both the nuclei and the extended families. These connection points are significant in providing sustenance for many of the Trans-Tasman informants in both Auckland and Brisbane. It must also be noted that for a couple of the informants, they had decided to leave Auckland or Brisbane as a result of their extended family overstepping boundaries in their relationships in the home. However, once away from their families, there was a desire to remain in contact. The following excerpts show the significance that family and connections have on decisions to migrate and to maintain well-being:

Aisea, is a first-generation *Pasifika* man of Tongan descent, who is Auckland-based. At the time of the *talanoa* captured here, Aisea, was visiting his daughter in Logan, Brisbane. This excerpt was from a face-to-face conversation, with Aisea, and was a response to the prompt

concerning his understanding of 'well-being'. Note that Aisea preferred to use the term well-being in his response, but also explains his holistic understanding of the term:

"I can have a level of my well-being in New Zealand, and a level in Brisbane. There is a choice to make about moving to Brisbane from New Zealand. That's why I came from Tonga to New Zealand, I can tell you that my well-being for the last 40 years in New Zealand...compared to Tonga is much better, the longer I live in New Zealand, the more I remember Tonga for these reasons...in Tonga it was very hard for me to provide financially for my family. But, in New Zealand, in regards to my well-being, I could easily have a house and enough money to educate my children. Another aspect of well-being is freedom and having an intimate relationship with my children and wife. In Tonga, I stayed in the bush all day and all night to make something to provide for my family, so less fellowship with the family; the family has got to be number one. In New Zealand, I have this as part of my well-being. In Auckland, I have the time and money to be with the family."

Sione is a second-generation *Pasifika* man of Tongan descent, who is in transit between Auckland and Brisbane, and at the time of the *e-Talanoa* was based in Perth. He had moved there with his family from Auckland for a job in the mines. This excerpt was taken from the *e-Talanoa* carried out on the Facebook private messenger forum, and was Sione's response to the prompt concerning his understanding of a 'good and happy life':

"Being physically and mentally healthy...being able to have quality time and being content with lifestyle that is healthy...happy with family life. Spending time with my family. Staying true to God, and my family. Being able to spend my time doing what really matters to me. To be around to meet my grandchildren and to be able to retire from working full-time before I turn 50."

Sala had moved to Brisbane from Auckland in 2011 after some uncomfortable living arrangements in her extended family's homes in Auckland. However, family remains at the core of her definition of well-being. This excerpt was taken from the *e-Talanoa* carried out via email:

"I struggled to provide a decent home (in Auckland). We lived in my Dad's garage, then we lived in a two bedroom home as small as a matchbox, which was robbed twice, and then we lived with my in-laws who were great but overpowering. I had no say with my children as the grandparents had too much of a strong influence on my children. Please note that the grandparents had the best of intentions, and we love them dearly. I also wanted to move somewhere warmer, and I have been to Melbourne and Sydney and didn't like it there. Perth is also too expensive with the cost of living. So, I chose to move here to Brisbane with my children...we are missing family all the time in Brisbane."

Lopeti, is a first-generation *Pasifika* man of Tongan descent, who is Brisbane-based. At the time of the *talanoa* captured here, Lopeti, had been living and working in Brisbane since 1999. This excerpt was from a face-to-face conversation, with Lopeti and his wife Hepisipa, in their own home in Logan, and Lopeti is commenting on his understanding of *moui oku lelei*:

"moui oku lelei is all the general benefits someone has in their life, and its everything that we must share. With regards to our Christian faith and spiritual life, it's having that inner peace. It's a peace that covers our spiritual and material realms, it covers both of these. By finding the right resources that we need according to the things...we need for living...our material needs...our

spiritual needs as well....In the area of employment and opportunity of work, there are plenty of opportunities in Australia. Making the most of these opportunities as well as the resources that we have here in Australia, in order to work towards a better life here. Having the opportunities shouldn't mean losing our 'balance' in life. In life, we have available to us the answers we need to every question that arises. Having the knowledge that is required in life will allow us to work with the resources available to us. The wisdom to use the resources available to us in Australia without being affected by it."

What is highlighted in the interviews is the existing link between a hope for better employment and the desire to improve living standards for both nuclei and extended families. Therefore, although well-being aims such as 'getting a better pay' or 'better job opportunities' are seemingly individualistic well-being aims, these are means to providing for and maintaining 'familial' connections that are very important to the *Pasifika* Trans-Tasman migrant well-being. The majority of informants interviewed voiced their desire to have positive relationships and spend more quality time with their family (with both nuclei and extended families). This is indicative of the fact that *Pasifika* Trans-Tasman migrants seek 'a good and happy life' that involves positive 'familial' connections that are significant to their well-being in both Auckland and Brisbane.

When informants were asked to consider the fulfilment of their well-being aims in Auckland and/or Brisbane, what emerged was an interesting list of advantages and disadvantages affecting their well-being. Views that Auckland lacked job opportunities and had expensive living costs, particularly a high cost of housing, were repeated by all 40 informants. However, what Auckland provided in family and *Pasifika* community support could not be matched in Brisbane. What Brisbane does provide is the fulfilment of the 'hope' for better job opportunities, more money to improve living standards for the family (both nuclear and extended), and a lifestyle that provides more quality time with the family. An interesting finding in the Brisbane-based interviews with informants, who had moved to Brisbane in the last five to ten years, was their ownership of a home. These informants shared their experiences of having their own home in Brisbane. For these particular informants, owning a home and having the income to afford this asset has meant a further fulfilment of improved living standards for their children and their extended families.

Conclusion

It would be fair to say that the 'voices' of the *Pasifika* Trans-Tasman migrants captured in the *Talanoa* outlined in this paper has helped to provide important dialogue to remedy the previous 'silence' of *Pasifika* diaspora in the Trans-Tasman literature. However, it would be important to continue with further analysis of the interviews, as well as carry out further in-depth interviews with informants over the next year. Further quantitative data analysis, including perception and location-based experience surveys with Auckland-based *Pasifika* (collected in March, 2016) and Brisbane-based *Pasifika* (collected in September, 2016) will add valuable understanding to the *Talanoa* dialogue captured already. There is the possibility that the completion of surveys may in fact challenge the findings presented in this paper.

However, based on the current available information collected, there is substantial confirmation of a 'hope' that exists in Brisbane for Auckland-based *Pasifika* Trans-Tasman migrants seeking the fulfilment of *moui lelei; ola magaia*, 'a good and happy life'. What is

significant about these *Pasifika* perceptions of well-being is that social transformation and social mobility is not a ‘solo’ act. The aim of ‘betterment’ in the mind of a *Pasifika* Trans-Tasman migrant is a process whereby transformation and improvement overflows from the individual to the family.

So, to answer the question of whether or not *Pasifika* well-being aims are fulfilled in the process of Trans-Tasman migration, we need to understand how *Pasifika* define ‘well-being’ and how their holistic notion of *moui oku lelei; ola magaia* relates to their individual as well as familial decision-making, which in turn influences their spatial movements and well-being patterns in both Auckland and Brisbane.



Image 1: This photograph was taken by the researcher of the researcher’s son standing at the signpost indicating the direction of Samoa and Tonga cultural stage performances at the 2015 *Pasifika* event. The significance of this photograph is that the image represents the focus of the research *Pasifika* groups belonging to Samoa and Tonga. This picture is also of personal significance to the researcher’s family as her children are of both Tongan and Samoan descent. Note the many *Pasifika* cultures represented in this photograph. At this annual *Pasifika* event, many stage areas are set up for the performances celebrating *Pasifika* cultures in Auckland. Photo taken during the 2015 *Pasifika* event held in Manukau City, South Auckland, New Zealand. 14/03/2015. Photographer: Ruth (Lute) Faleolo. Used with permission.

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Notes:

¹ *Faka-famili* is a time (usually in the evening) set aside for members in the family to 'catch up' and talk about the day, discuss any matters arising, have a shared prayer time, Bible reading and discuss truths or values from our cultures and faith. This practice has been passed on from previous generations as part of family life, in the Pacific Islands and New Zealand, and is something that is continued in Australia to pass on cultural values and Christian principles.

² Ravulo (2015) recorded that the "majority of Pacific communities reside along the east coast of Australia... with largest cohort living in Queensland, followed by New South Wales and Victoria." (2015:4) The 5 largest Pacific people groups in Australia are Samoan, Tongan, Fijian, Maori and Cook Islanders residing in New South Wales and Queensland. As recorded by Ravulo, based on the 2011 Census figures (Australian Bureau of Statistics), the total *Pasifika* population in Queensland is 102,320, followed by New South Wales with 92,028. The total *Pasifika* population in Australian states and territories is 279,228.

³ 'New Zealanders' has been used within this context to mean either Maori New Zealanders, or Pacific Islanders coming to Australia from New Zealand. For many Pacific Islanders who were born in New Zealand, or who have become New Zealand citizens during the process of their residency in New Zealand, their nationality is 'New Zealand' on their New Zealand passports. In the context of this sentence, the researcher acknowledges that research undertaken by George (2014), Hamer (2009) and Henare-Solomona (2012), considers the movements of both Maori and Pacific Islanders from New Zealand, as New Zealanders, in Australia.

⁴ Ageing population structures in both New Zealand and Australia have resulted from 'below replacement' levels of fertility combined with declining mortality and increasing life expectancy, particularly for the ageing baby boom generation. This structure affects the economic progress of countries like Australia that causes a reliance on a workforce that is drawn from neighbouring countries like New Zealand. Both New Zealand and Australia share a similar issue with their ageing population structures, which has led to the development of policies allowing Pacific Island people into both Australia and New Zealand since the 1960s. The Trans-Tasman Travel Arrangement came into effect in 1973 as an informal agreement between Australia and New Zealand s, to allow the citizens of each country to live and work freely in either country. This arrangement has changed through the years (1981, 1994, 2001, 2009, and more recently in 2016, with the incentive of economic production in exchange for an Australia citizenship).

⁵ Based on the 2011 Census figures, 'the largest Samoan, Tongan and Fijian community reside in New South Wales; with the largest group of Maori and Cook Islanders residing in Queensland' (Ravulo 2015:5).

⁶ *Tagata Pasifika* is a Pacific news and current affairs show produced in New Zealand.

⁷ Category C informants, in 'transit' between Auckland and Brisbane became evident when speaking with informants, who were normally residing in Auckland, and had temporarily taken up temporary employment opportunities in Christchurch or Perth while saving up for enough funds to move to Brisbane permanently.

⁸ Ina and other names used in the research are pseudonyms from either Samoan or Tongan origin. The use of pseudonyms is to protect the identity of the informants in the study.