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O Le Ala I Le Pule O Le Tautua

Pacific Peoples Participation in Governance in Aotearoa New Zealand.

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Talofa lava, Mālō e lelei, Kia orana, Noa'ia, Mauri, Tālofa, Ni Sa Bula Vinaka, Fakaalofa lahi atu, Mālō ni and warm Pacific greetings.

It is with great pleasure that we launch our research report that speaks to the strengths and the value of Pacific people at governance and leadership tables. The research is a culmination of work by a dedicated team of Pacific people who all share and live a strong belief in the value of service.

The true essence of service is aptly captured by Dr. Ana Koloto, *"inherent in Pasifika thinking is the belief that an individual is born to become useful for his/her family, community and country".* This is the basic philosophical tenor shared by all who participated in this research.

This team of Pasifika leaders not only practice service to their community, Church, village, and families but are committed to building effective governance with and for Pacific people in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

This research arises out of concern for the lack of Pacific people representation on governance Boards. It is at the Board tables in community, business, and government that decisions are made that affect our Pacific people communities. When it impacts on Pacific people, then the decisions need to be made by Pacific people.

This project is an exploration of what enables and prevents Pacific people from using their leadership skills and knowledge in governance roles.

This information is being used as a platform to design a programme of work to foster those enablers and reduce the barriers.

This programme of work includes:
1. Coordinating a programme for younger Pacific people to learn about and participate in governance, and be coached and mentored by a Pasifika leader
2. Running seminars and workshops to build the skills, knowledge and confidence of Pacific people leaders to engage in effective governance practices in a Pasifika context
3. Supporting senior Pacific people leaders to coach and mentor emerging leaders
4. Building the cultural competence of mainstream boards to increase their diversity

It is my hope that this research is impactful and leads to Pacific people stepping forward with confidence into governance roles.

At LEAD we welcome any organisations or individuals who would like to partner or collaborate with us on any of these projects. You can contact us on info@lead.org.nz

Judy Matai'a

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1. Introduction

This research explores the experiences of Pacific people in Aotearoa/New Zealand in governance roles, in the private, public and not for profit (NFP) sectors. It particularly addresses the following questions;

1. What are the barriers to Pacific people in Aotearoa/New Zealand serving on a board?
2. What are the enablers to Pacific people in Aotearoa/New Zealand serving on a board?
3. Once in a governance role, what are the barriers and enablers to Pacific people staying in these roles?

Little research exists on Pasifika people's experiences as board members (Holland, R. (2012). Most available literature analyses public and private sector boards, with virtually no research covering the not for profit (NFP) sector. The literature that does exist focuses mainly on the 'brown glass ceiling', school Boards of Trustees (BOT) and sports organisations.

At times ideas about governance have been extrapolated from the literature on Pacific people in senior organisational positions as governance leadership is likely to mirror, to a greater or lesser extent, management leadership. The literature itself often conflates Pacific senior leadership and governance, not differentiating between management and governance. Nevertheless, it appears that the issues Pacific people struggle with, in attaining or remaining in board positions, are the same issues Pacific people deal with in senior management (Holland, R. (2012).

There is little literature on the involvement of Pacific people in the governance of Churches in Aotearoa/New Zealand (including Pacific people's Churches), despite Pacific communities being important to Aotearoa/New Zealand Churches (both Catholic and Protestant) and Churches being very important to Pacific communities[1]. The lack of literature is surprising given the first Pacific Church community in Aotearoa/New Zealand was formed in Auckland in 1947, at a time when there were less than 3,000 Pacific people in the country. The Church was formed to meet not only the spiritual needs of Samoans, Cook Islander, Niuean and Tokelau Islanders, but also their pastoral needs (MacPherson, C. (2018).

Some of the existing literature, although limited, conflates all Pacific people into one category, whereas in reality, different Pacific ethnic groups have different approaches to governance, for example, Samoa has the chiefly matai system. (NZ Government, n.d.) which can spill over into the Aotearoa/New Zealand governance environment.

1.1 Pacific people in Aotearoa/New Zealand

The 2018 census recorded 381,642 Pacific people living in Aotearoa/New Zealand (70,000 more than the previous census in 2013) with nearly 75% of the Pacific population being born in Aotearoa/New

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[1] In the 2013 Census, 78% of Pacific people said they were Christian (compared to 47% of the wider community). Only 16.5% of Pacific people said they had no religion, whereas 42% of Aotearoa/New Zealanders overall reported no faith. While most Pacific people continue to worship at mainstream and traditional Pacific Churches, Aotearoa/New Zealand has provided Pacific people with more choices with the 2013 census recording nearly 9% of Pacific people following the Mormon faith and 8% being Pentecostals (MacPherson, C. (2018).

Zealand (StatsNZ, 2019). Two thirds of the Pacific population live in Auckland and more than 50% of the Auckland based population lives in South Auckland (Auckland Council, 2015). The Pacific population is very young with 46% under 20 years of age (The Treasury, 2018). Pacific people in Aotearoa/New Zealand are also very diverse with 40 ethnicities represented, although the largest groups are Samoan (182,721), Tongan (82,389), and Cook Islands Maori (80,532), with a considerable percentage of Pacific peoples in Aotearoa/New Zealand having more than one ethnicity (NZ Government, n.d.; StatsNZ, 2019).

As noted above, the Pacific population is often considered as a whole and although there are some similarities between groups, there is great diversity between Pacific people in Aotearoa/New Zealand in terms of demographic characteristics, migratory experiences, and socio-cultural belief systems and practices (Auckland Council, 2015; Teaiwa & Mallon, 2005). Aotearoa/New Zealand's historical and current administrative relationships within the Pacific (Teaiwa & Mallon, 2005) coupled with the diversity within Pacific people can all affect experiences of governance.

Pacific people contribute approximately $3.1 billion to Aotearoa/New Zealand's GDP through businesses, services and organisations. The Treasury notes that GDP is a narrow measure of worth, and should include the wider economic contributions of volunteerism, work, cultural capital, spiritual wellbeing, and intergenerational considerations. This includes 27,0000 hours of volunteering annually by Pacific People (The Treasury, 2018).

1.2 Snapshot of Pacific people in governance in Aotearoa/New Zealand

Pacific people (and other ethnic minorities) have low visibility and representation on Aotearoa/New Zealand Boards in the private, public and sports sector, other than in Pacific specific organisations. Pacific people, particularly women, began to form organisations in the 1950s and Pacific sports organisations also emerged at the same time (Keil, 2018; Teevale, 2001; MacPherson, 2018). In the 1970s, Anjuman Himayat al-Islam, an early Muslim organisation was founded mainly by Indo-Fijians (Shephard, 2006). There are now more than 500 Pacific specific organisations (e.g. Churches, health, education and community development organisations) registered on the Charities Board (The Treasury, 2018), yet there is little literature focusing on how governance boards are formed or perform in these organisations (although some writers allude to dynamics on these boards. See for example Ofe-Grant (2018).

Nevertheless, a recent study of the Pacific economy in Aotearoa/New Zealand reported 1,500 Pacific employers employing 160,000 employees across a wide range of sectors but mainly in the construction industry and in the provision of professional services (The Treasury, 2018). The same study estimated that the 500 registered Pacific NFP organisations (most of which are Churches) hold assets totalling $8.3billion (The Treasury, 2018) presenting significant governance responsibilities.

Overall, there is little research regarding Pacific people's experience as Board members in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Holland, 2012). Little data on board membership in terms of ethnicity is recorded in the private or public sector (McGregor & Davis-Tana, 2017; MacLennan, McGregor, & Eaqub, Aotearoa/New Zealand Census of Women on Boards 2018, 2019), although gender differentiated data is available for Aotearoa/New Zealand state sector Boards which now near gender parity (Hawarden & Stablein, 2008). The picture in the private sector is different however. For example, only 44 companies replied to a recent survey of the NZX's top 100 companies[2] asking for

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[2] Interestingly, approximately 10 percent of Aotearoa/New Zealand's top 200 companies have their head offices based in South Auckland (MBIE, 2015) where 50% of the Pacific population lives.

information about the ethnicity of their Board members, and only 19 provided the information sought. Only one company reported having Pacific people on their Board but did not specify their ethnic background. This is against a backdrop of 631 Board members on the NZX Top 100 Boards (MacLennan, No Melting Pot in Make-up of Company Boards, 2019)[3]. The lack of information about the ethnic composition of governmental boards has prompted the first ever stocktake of membership in order to establish a baseline from which to grow. Several Cabinet Ministers note the lack of overall diversity on public sector Boards, although advocates don't want government Board appointments of ethnic minorities to be held up during the stocktaking process (Chanwai-Earle, 2018).

The 1989 educational reforms saw each Primary and Secondary school elect a Board of Trustees (BOT) from within their community. The BOT sets the school direction, governs over major issues and oversees the curriculum, personnel, finances, property and manages schools' assets. Improving educational outcomes for Maori and Pacific Island students was one of the main impetus for these reforms (Fergusson, 1998). Currently, within the school education sector, only 40% of school BOTs fairly represent the number of Pacific students enrolled in the school, although this is an increase from 26% in 1998. Secondary school BOTs represent Pacific parents more fairly than primary schools (52% vs 41%) (Ministry of Education , 2019). Nevertheless, the proportion of Pacific people on school BOT is unlikely to converge with the number of Pacific background students (Tongati'o, 2010).

In the NFP sector, Pacific peoples' participation appears to be limited to Pacific specific organisations[4] with multiple barriers to membership of Boards in other fields or sectors (Chanwai-Earle, 2018). Public Health Organisations (PHOs) are required to show that their communities, Iwi and consumers are part of their governance processes and that they are responsive to their concerns (McAvoy & Coster, General practice and the Aotearoa/New Zealand health reforms-lessons for Australia?, 2005) resulting in some PHOs having Pacific people on their boards.

Soon after the foundation of the Pacific Islanders' Congregational Church (PICC) in 1947, other Pacific Churches were formed. Within the PICC, separate ethnic groups formed their own congregations, with a representative from each in the session (the Church's governing body). Ministers for the Church were called from the Pacific Islands to provide leadership. Structural changes from the time of the PICC's formation in 1947 into the 1970s, impacted on how or if Pacific people were involved in Church governance (MacPherson, 2018)[5]. In contemporary Aotearoa/New Zealand, the way in which Pacific people are involved in Pacific Church governance is largely determined by whether or not the

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[3] Although six companies said they had Maori Board members, only one provided information about a director's Iwi. Six companies reported having Asian Directors.

[4] Treasury (2018) estimates there are approximately 500 Pacific organisations in Aotearoa/New Zealand (including Churches which make up 60% of the organisations) with a combined income of $199 million.

[5] MacPherson (2018) explains "Some people within the PICC wanted to follow a form of Christianity centred on Samoan traditions and language. In 1963 they formed a breakaway Church, the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa (CCCS) or Ekalesia Fa'apotopotoga Kerisiano Samoa (EFKS). This was a clone of the parent EFKS Church in Samoa, where many had worshipped before coming to Aotearoa/New Zealand. Conversely, the merger of the Congregational and Presbyterian Churches in 1969 – which saw the PICC become the Pacific Island Presbyterian Church (PIPC) – reflected a desire for a diverse, multi-ethnic Church. The split divided Pacific Church communities into those whose parent Church was based in the Pacific Islands and those based in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The latter included the Samoan Methodist Church, which was independent of the New Zealand Methodist Church".

Church's parent Church is in the Pacific Islands (e.g. the Samoan Congregational Christian Church). Those Churches with a Pacific Island base largely recreate the governance structures of Samoan villages where power is generally vested in men. These Church communities serve those who wish to maintain traditional values (MacPherson, 2018).

Parallel to these developments in Pacific people's Churches, some mainstream Churches have made structural changes to ensure Pacific people have more influence in the way Churches are run. For example, in 1969 the Congregational Church merged with the Presbyterian Churches to become the Pacific Island Presbyterian Church (MacPherson, 2018). Subsequently the Church established a Pacific Islanders' Synod to further the involvement of Pacific people in the Church's governance. Currently the elected moderator of the Presbyterian Synod is of Tokelau Island descent (Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, 2018).

Similarly, the New Zealand Methodist Church has four self-governing Pasifika synods, local congregational leadership and emerging Pacific people faith-based social service agencies, with their associated Boards and leadership positions, although there is no literature reflecting on how they operate. The Church elected its first female Pacific President in 2018.

The literature is also silent on whether or not the current situation of Pacific people holding senior governance positions in mainstream Aotearoa/New Zealand Churches will continue. Nor is there any literature on how newer Pacific Churches are governed.

1.3 Why have Pacific people on Boards?

Diverse Boards can result in tangible and intangible outcomes; better organisational decision making, optimised organisational potential, greater organisational resilience and improved performance (Ministry of Women, 2019; Chanwai-Earle, 2018). As organisational change, structural change and organisational culture is driven from the strategic level, the meaningful participation of Pacific people is crucial especially for organisations where Pacific people are among the organisation's constituencies (Rose, 2014).

In pragmatic and concrete terms, an increased level of participation of Pacific peoples in governance roles in all sectors is crucial for the development of a healthy, sustainable and competitive economy, with strong independent families and communities (The Treasury, 2018). In education, the active participation by Pacific parents in planning, development and delivery of education services will help to ensure that those services are appropriate and effective for Pacific students. Pacific representation on boards of trustees is one key mechanism for such participation (Ministry of Education , 2019) However, Boards need skills and diverse thinking under the guidance of an effective Chairperson, rather than merely diverse ethnicities among board members (Lockhart, 2010; Rose, 2014).

2. Methods

One workstream of the Pacific Governance project, was a six-month research project exploring the connection between governance and leadership in the Aotearoa/New Zealand Pacific community context, given the dearth of available research on Pacific participation in governance in Aotearoa/New Zealand communities, including how many Pacific people have governance roles or what specific barriers and enablers exist to participation.

The research project was to be followed by a three-month co-design process to inform future programme delivery. The intention was for this research to build a community of Pacific leaders interested in increasing Pacific governance participation with a future focus.

2.1 Research questions

The research questions in this workstream are outlined in Appendix A and were influenced by the findings of a 2019 literature review exploring Pacific peoples' experiences of organisational governance in Aotearoa/New Zealand and issues raised during earlier governance workshops.

2.2 Literature Review

The literature review found there was little research on Pacific people's experiences as Board members. The literature that exists focuses mainly on the 'brown glass ceiling', school Boards of Trustees (BOT) and sports organisations and highlights low visibility and representation on Aotearoa/New Zealand Boards by Pacific people in the private, public and sports sector, other than in Pacific specific organisations.

Barriers to Pacific people's participation in governance positions stem from both intrinsic and systemic factors as a result of a "complex interplay of societal and organisational factors in New Zealand organisations" (Tupou, 2011).

The main barriers noted in the literature relate to stereotypes, discrimination and racism; gatekeeping by both non-Pacific and established Pacific board members and Board recruitment processes; tokenism; affective factors such as lack of interest or confidence among Pacific people; the demographics of the Pacific population in Aotearoa/New Zealand; low levels of educational attainment (although this is changing); socio-cultural traditions (including gender roles) and resource constraints.

Most of the dynamics that enable Pacific people to participate in governance roles, are the mirror image of the barriers encountered; increasing levels of educational attainment, Pacific values and concepts of leadership, family support and engagement, selection and appointment processes. Other factors enabling participation include broad social networks, stepped pathways and the presence of support, role models and mentors.

Unsurprisingly, factors experienced by Pacific people once they are on a Board are largely influenced by the barriers and enablers explored above.

2.3 Research Methods

The planned research methods were:

1. Desktop literature review
2. Focus groups of Pacific leaders
3. Interviews with identified key Pacific leaders
4. Co-creation of interventions to increase Pacific participation in governance

A partnership approach was to drive the research, the co-creation process, and the resulting interventions of this dimension.

The methods planned for this study were hit hard by the repercussions of the COVID 19 pandemic, as were the Pacific community and Pacific organisations. Face to face meetings were severely curtailed, and most interviews and focus groups were carried out via Zoom, or as webinars. These were led by a gender balanced team of five experienced Pacific leaders with extensive governance and senior management experience from different Pacific cultural backgrounds.

The final data collection methods used included:

- 5 face to face or online interviews
- 3 focus groups involving 13 people (via Zoom)
- 2 webinars focusing on Pasifika Servant Leadership with a focus on governance insights
- An online youth survey of 31 young people interested in governance

These methods embedded Pacific practices by acknowledging the spiritual dimension of work in Pacific communities through opening and closing focus groups with prayer, followed by a round of introductions. Although the interviews and focus groups were conducted in English, they were peppered with commonplace Pacific language phrases given the participants and as appropriate to the context (E.g. fa'amolemole/please, magaia fa'afetai/nice thank you). At times words from Pacific languages most adequately expressed participants' views. (A list of the words used, and an approximate contextualised translation is included as Appendix B).

2.4 Research participants

The individual and focus group research participants were initially chosen to ensure representation across various Pacific Island nations. The groups were then narrowed down to ensure a gender balance and representations of different governance experience (eg those with experience of Chairing Boards, experience of heading governance subcommittees, newer Board members) along with a cross section of experience on state boards, state-selected advisory roles, NGOs and school governance roles.

The 13 Focus group participants were aged between 30 and 65+ years of age and were divided into three groups. Half the focus group members were Samoan (including one Samoan/Rotuman) and there were two Tongans and one Tokelauan, one Niuean and one Fijian and were based in Auckland, Porirua, and Wellington City.

The individuals interviewed were very experienced Pacific leaders with extensive governance experience. Aged between their early 30s and late 50s, the four women and one man interviewed,

came from a range of Pacific heritages: Niuean/Cook Island, Fijian/Scottish/Samoan, Fijian/Palagi and two Samoans.

Most already had extensive governance experience in Aotearoa/New Zealand, several had extensive experience in their home country, and at least two have served on the Boards of Pacific based institutions or on international Boards.

Their roles included Chair on a range of Boards (local government Councils, school Boards of Trustees, national, regional and local sporting organisations, Primary Health Organisations, Pacific based organisations (including Pasifika), social and health sector organisations (violence prevention, community networks, child protection, mental health and addition), corporate Boards, family owned businesses.

The 31 young people surveyed were aged between 18 and 30+ years. They were recruited using a snowball technique through networks and social media. The main purpose of including this group was to gather a database of Pacific youth interested in governance.

Profile:

- 70% were young women and 30% young men
- 80% lived in the wider Auckland area
- About 45% of them were studying full time or part time whilst also working, 43% were in full time work, 3% worked part time and 6% were unemployed
- Nearly 60% were Samoan (19 participants), and there were six Tongan, three Fijian, two Tokelauan and one Tuvaluan involved

Nine participants reported little or no understanding of governance and only one participant reported a thorough understanding although all saw good leadership as central to governance. Despite this, nearly 50% reported being exposed to the ideas and principles of governance on a regular basis and 50% had little exposure but nearly everyone was interested in learning more about governance and would attend a workshop to increase their knowledge and understanding of governance.

2.5 Research team

The interviews, survey, focus groups and webinars were led by a gender balanced team of five experienced Pacific leaders[6] with extensive governance and senior management experience from different Pacific cultural backgrounds. The transcripts from the interviews, focus groups, youth evaluation and other online data were analysed by an experienced Pacific female researcher supported by an experienced female Palagi researcher who prepared the 2019 Literature Review.

These researchers wrote this first draft of the report, which was critiqued by the LEAD Pacific team and other LEAD Directors. Following feedback, a final report was produced.

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[6] The team included two Fijians, two Samoans and one Niuean.

3. What motivates Pacific peoples' involvement in governance in Aotearoa/New Zealand?

A number of significant values, beliefs and drivers underlie the significant contribution Pacific people are currently making to governance in Aotearoa/New Zealand based organisations. These relate to ensuring Pacific values are made tangible, ensuring history and the work of those who have gone before is respected, notions of service and servant leadership, responding to the call of a Christian faith, a belief that participation in governance is one lever for wider social change and greater equity and inclusion for Pacific people in Aotearoa/New Zealand, and taking advantage of a COVID 19 reset.

A number of these motivating factors are also enablers once people are in governance roles and are discussed further below.

3.1 Making Pacific values tangible

Participants cautioned against the perception of the Pacific community as being homogenous, without an understanding of the complexities of different Pacific cultures, social structures and hierarchies. However, they also acknowledge there are some pervasive shared ways of being across communities, especially relating to servant leadership and the importance of relationships (teu le va).

Respecting Pacific values are seen as the base for behaviour and a gift Pacific Board members can contribute that gives strength to Board members and enables them to speak out and advocate for Pacific people, particularly in a mainstream or non-Pacific setting.

Ensuring a fit between individual values, especially those rooted in Christian faith, was a major motivator and driver for initial engagement in governance for several participants. Others reflected on how they could adapt and take their indigenous frameworks into organisational governance without losing the essence of who they are, whilst balancing two world views. Collectively, bridging knowledge to governance situations is seen as an asset and strength.

> *"I think the contradictions of growing up as a New Zealand born Pasifika is kind of conflicting, and I think it's intergenerational as well. I think there's a wealth of knowledge, a wealth of experience that we can all sort of add to bridging knowledge. I think it's a collective effort through all of that."*
>
> Participant Focus Group 1

Going further for some, fulfilling family roles (e.g. derived from birth order in the family, or from being the oldest daughter of the oldest daughter) places certain obligations on Pacific people, which can be enacted through taking up governance roles when the opportunity arises.

More profoundly, one participant noted that participation in governance, and discussions about governance concepts are part of the wider discussion and understanding of where and how Pacific people fit within Aotearoa/New Zealand society.

> *"The continuing narrative of who we are as Pasifika in Western context, and how we influence where we are in the spaces too."*
>
> Participant Focus Group 1

Some participants felt that if they couldn't make their values tangible, or felt they and their values were disrespected, they had no option but to leave the Board, but do so in a respectful manner.

> "you have to navigate and decide, is it worth it? Is it worth it to, to stay in that space, but it's a lot from that experience about sexism, racism"

> Participant Focus Group 1

3.2 Honouring history and those who have gone before

Honouring and treasuring the contributions of those who have gone before them and highlighting the history of Pacific people and their contributions to Aotearoa/New Zealand, motivates some research participants. Some specifically mentioned the time of the Dawn Raids when they were young activists and have continued their work to improve the situation of Pacific people in Aotearoa/New Zealand since that time.

> "But I absolutely think that our history has played its part within this country. And I think we've got a really good infrastructure to really ignite some new change."

> Interviewee 4.

Service to the community and honouring the work started by their parents were strong drivers and motivators for several participants. Some have been involved in community organisations since they were at school, motivated by observing their parents and the community.

Even when people meet racist views, and feel marginalised, or feel they are tokenistic appointments, respect was demonstrated for those who were trailblazers and had gone before them, and concern for who will carry Pacific values if they leave, motivates some to stay in governance roles.

> "And so, I have to be very careful how I move because if I give up, then the question is who steps in that catches our faith, our values, and the shoulders of those that have gone before us."

> Participant Focus Group 1

3.3 Duty of service, servant leadership, volunteering

The concept of servant leadership was a pervasive view among participants. There is no *one* definition of servant leadership for Pacific people - what it embodies is one's knowledge that they are in leadership roles to serve, to build & add value to those around them, to be empathetic and aware of what's happening around them in order to advance the voice of those you serve.

However, some interviewed don't perceive servant leadership as a paradigm; more it is a way of being which can apply in any situation.

"Pacific servant leadership is a lived *value* that is often misunderstood by those who view leadership from an individualistic lens.

> "Servant leadership is not a paradigm, it's a way of life, a way of being and a way of serving. When it is practiced, it replaces existing frameworks by the mere fact that it is organic, fluid, and weaved through with humility and alofa. Therefore, it will be appreciated by Western paradigms and embraced by others."

> Participant Webinar 1

> "There is no *one* definition of servant leadership for Pasefika - what it embodies is one's knowledge that they are in leadership roles to serve, to build & add value to those around

*them, to be empathetic and aware of what's happening around them in order to advance the voice of those you serve. Pasefika servant leadership is a lived **value** that is often misunderstood by those who view leadership from an individualistic lens."*

Interviewee 2

Ensuring the whole community is well looked after, that the collective remains intact, and that Pacific cultures can continue to develop and grow in Aotearoa/New Zealand is an important motivator. Others feel a duty to keep "everyone's wellbeing intact", this is seen as especially important in this COVID era where many services are moving online, and Pacific people can be excluded.

"The Kainga mapopo encompass the collective wellbeing of everyone in the community, including the most vulnerable. And so, it is an intergenerational journey that we're all talking about. And the part you play, and I play in those roles are important in terms of making those changes."

Participant Focus Group 1.

Further, enacting a duty of care, and being of service to the community, motivates participants and also helps them reflect on their values and their contributions to governance debates as a way of ensuring others understand their position. Servant leadership then becomes a lens for self-reflection.

Others feel a responsibility to use their skills to contribute voluntarily to the community; "*Serving, serving community. It's drilled into us"* although how people volunteer has changed over time.

"But what I'm finding is that as I get older, that concept of volunteering your time and the resource that you put into it, is not as fluid as probably some of the people that I grew up with."

Participant, Focus Group 2

Further change can be seen in young people's attitudes to volunteering.

"My kids are like, Why? Why do you have to do that? We don't even play netball anymore. And I say to them because it's not about you. It's about those families when they come together."

Participant, Focus Group 2

3.4 Enactment of Christian faith; acting on a calling

As well as feeling they need to enact Pacific values or volunteer, the majority of those involved in the research saw service in governance as part of a wider calling based on their Christian faith and the spiritual core that guides them. They feel they have a responsibility to use their skills and education to give back to the community. As one participant put it; *"if you are a Christian person, you know, these resources are endowed to us to use for a bigger purpose"*. Another notes *"That was one of the things God had said to me, take my admin skills and use it [sic]"*. Serving in this way provides a sense of self satisfaction and reward, rather than feeling governance contributions are a duty. *"I found that that was worthwhile, and it was also satisfying to be used by God in that sense"*.

3.5 A lever for change in the wider social ecosystem in Aotearoa/New Zealand in order to increase equality, equity, and inclusion of Pacific people in society

Some participant's motivation for involvement was to add value to 'our Pacific people' given their overall socio-economic status. For some this means making a strategic choice as to which organisations to get involved with. For several this included standing for election for school BOT's to

ensure the best interest of Pacific children at school. Others see themselves as guardians or a voice of grassroots community, people who are often not heard yet have insights into issues affecting them and other people in the community.

> "the voice of everyday people. The stay at home mums. They've got a voice too ……. So, it was important to have a space for them to kind of be a part of ……"

> Participant, Focus Group 1

For others, this belief in the need for wider social change emboldens them and gives them the courage to speak out at every opportunity against injustices and inequality.

> "It's going to take every space to really kick up a fuss, to really make noise, to really voice at all levels, to really ignite and break some of these moulds. And that's the agility that I really think will, and can really change what we're looking at within this current COVID environment."

> Participant Focus Group 1.

At the same time, being involved in governance assists participants analyse and further understand the situation of Pacific people in Aotearoa/New Zealand, so that they can be of further service to the community.

> "The importance of governance, it allows you to sort of just lift your head up and actually understand things and where people fit from a bigger picture, bird's eye view, I think, and also know where all the pieces of our community fit within the wider scope of Aotearoa/New Zealand"

> Participant Focus Group 1

Others see the mere presence of Pacific people at the governance table encourages other board members to moderate their behaviour which will ultimately lead to social change. As one interviewee put it:

> "The mere presence of a Pacific person sitting at a table, whether you spoke or not, makes a difference. The fact that people know that there's a Pacific person around that table, they would watch the language, they would watch the way that they respond to Pacific, you know, even if you didn't open your mouth at all. It's powerful and it's a presence."

> Interviewee 4

3.6 Using the opportunity a COVID 19 reset brings

Several participants predict there will be some fundamental changes in international and Aotearoa/New Zealand organisations and businesses, as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic. They see this as an opportunity for a wider reset in society, and an opportunity for Pacific people to exert influence and use of their skills.

> "It's a massive opportunity to really flip things on its head and change our stats into a more strengths-based focus division moving forward. And I think a lot of these solutions are already sitting within our community, we've got the wealth, we've got the tools, we've got the expertise, where we're in abundance, with the expertise and skills, but it is about I think, connecting and being a lot more bolder in the way that we have been."

> Participant Focus Group 1.

3.7 Personal interests as motivators

Other motivators include personal interests e.g. sports, social enterprise and also taking the opportunity to build connections and professional experience

"I just really want to step into the governance space more in here in New Zealand. Like I said, going more to mainstream and hey, you know, they're looking for brown faces and women and diversity, why don't we take the opportunity, even though we may be tokenism to that to the organisation, but at least we have a seat at the table"

Participant Focus Group 1

"I would love to have more paid roles in governance and like long term, maybe make that a full time thing. Maybe later on in life, do some as well, while I'm working, but to be become more heavily involved in governance, and especially as like a full time career later on"

Interviewee 3

4. Getting on board

Research participants with significant experience reflected on the ways in which they had initially got involved in organisational governance. Several joined Boards 'by accident or by default' by being appointed because a Pacific representative was needed, and they were known in the community. Others found they were 'thrown in' once they graduated as their education was seen as valuable, even though older people continued to tell them what to do in the role.

"No idea why I was put there, no idea what to do. But I think I was just seat warming because there are other people doing the work. Outside of it. I just got told to sit in the chairperson. So, I did that."

Participant Focus Group 1

These Board members often felt ill-prepared for their role, as discussed below in the section on barriers.

5. Enablers

Governance and being on Boards is an emerging space for Pacific people in Aotearoa/New Zealand and leaders from different communities are being encouraged to be more active in this space. Though it may seem to be unchartered waters[7], the concept of governance is not at all foreign to Pacific people. It has been part of their lives for some time now as pointed out by one of the interviewees below. In a Pacific setting, forms of governance at the community level are based on voluntary association.

"They're not aware that they may already be practicing it informally in their own home environments. Or maybe they lead the Church choir or the Church youth group that in itself is a form of governance without them knowing. And it is voluntary as well. It's like all the things that our Pacific people tend not to put on their CV's, not realising that they actually have a wealth of skills that they're under selling themself."

Interviewee 3

This section highlights some of the cultural aspects of Pacific values as discussed by the interviewees and focus group participants in the ensuing discussions around board governance.

5.1 Tautua, serving and service to Pacific people

Tautua or service is an integral value of many Pacific peoples and most of the participants identified their involvement in governance as a duty to serve. Some started as volunteers on a smaller Board in Church, community or sport. Some began active participation by default as a parent at a School attended by their children.

Service is perceived as a very intrinsic motivator for Pacific people in influential positions. Sometimes as a calling or passion, a sense of communal responsibility. One of the participants selectively chose to participate in Boards with values aligning to his personal belief system

> *"we can be effective people and … steward over the resources that God gives us"*

> Participant Focus Group 1

Another Focus Group 2 participant resonated that serving on a Board is fulfilling God given purpose, putting his abilities and skills to good use.

Being on a Board, particularly at a higher level, is a platform to voice concerns of Pacific people. To improve and increase Pacific visibility. A platform to speak for the underrepresented populace of the Pacific community. It's also an effective vehicle for change as one participant said,

> *"But I absolutely think that our history has played its part within this country. And I think we've got a really good infrastructure to really ignite some new change. It's not to say that there hasn't been change. We've been sitting waiting for that change. There've been those before us that have set that change in place, and it's about moving that momentum forward"*

> Participant Focus Group 1

Tautua is seen across the study as the underlying Pacific value that ignites action. Providing service to the Pacific community is a strength emphasised throughout this study and participating, even being

visible on governance boards is a way of serving from a position that is recognized in circles of influence.

At community level, senior members of community see their positions on Boards as a conviction to provide stewardship, mentoring or spiritual guardianship. This conviction is referred to by one participant as *fatamaa* and is linked to the value of *tautua*.

The concept of tautua as a service to community from a position of influence is captured in what one of the participants said

> *"Understanding and bringing it into a Western context, … for me, it was really important to try and maintain and hold on to that value of service... I see service…in essence, as a strength. I think often people think of the word servant, and they think weak, and like the word meek, I think it's weak, but actually, we see it … is a strength"*

> Participant Webinar 1

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6   Governance referenced by one of the participants

6.1 Maopoopo, Collectivism vs Individualism

Maopoopo is about togetherness or the gathering together of peoples or ideas of Pacific people and sheds light on the inherent principle of collectivism that is deeply ingrained in Pacific culture of shared value. One participant said "collective value is good for board governance, which is the act of thinking with others and coming to consensus"[8]. Another participant is recorded as having said

> *"we think collective and so I always think, what is it that I could… do, that can help bring that voice and that vehicle into their (palagi) environment when they say, what do you think for Pacific?"*
>
> Participant Focus Group 2

Participating in governance, particularly on mainstream boards, is an opportunity to integrate two world views. It is a platform to appreciate, represent Pacific worldviews to influence governance perspectives. There has been a track record of good initiatives[9] birthed out of integrating the Pacific worldview as exemplified by a Pacific community. The community merely present their unique perspective to negotiate assistance programs for their people.

> *"it is about finding value in our heritage and putting it to good use".*
>
> Participant Focus Group 1

Pacific thinking and thoughts provide diversity *"What I … have seen, …. of late is … they yearning for different thoughts, … but actually they want diversity of thought"*

Pacific presence and or representation is a means to showcase the Pacific way of doing things that are practical. It's a way of embedding Pacific values in the area of governance and governing systems of Aotearoa/New Zealand as Pacific people make Aotearoa/New Zealand their home.

> *"…it's up to me to provide the Pacific perspective on a system that's clearly not in line, one that doesn't even value our approach, so that's challenging".*
>
> Participant Focus Group 2

Despite the challenges they face participants share the view that being there to provide a Pacific lens is critical

> *"…to frame what we need to go forward …. is how we flip that to bring a holistic indigenous model that will encompass our wellbeing ... so it's sustainable. It has stewardship because it's based on the principle of aroha and alofa. The Kainga mapopo encompass the collective wellbeing of everyone …, including the most vulnerable. And so it is an inter-generational journey …"*
>
> Focus Group 1

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[8] Interviewee 2
[9] Pacific Proud, Strong Family & School Program. Even buying lands collectively. Focus Group 1

Pacific people in Aotearoa/New Zealand have the benefit of both worlds by virtue of being born to Pacific parent(s) in Aotearoa/New Zealand or in the Pacific islands and growing up in a multicultural society like Aotearoa/New Zealand. Having dual identities is both an advantage and a challenge to cultural preservation as acknowledged by those interviewed as well as the focus group discussions. Possessing both values of individualism and collectivism can be conflicting and confusing; however it is an opportunity to have both perspectives integrated and used in the emerging space of governance. Having a foot in both worlds puts Aotearoa/New Zealand born Pacific Islanders in a position to harmonise cultural differences. Being mindful of their cultural heritage, future Pacific Ambassadors can explore exponential benefits in the emerging space without diluting cultural competency.

Another participant highlighted the importance of cultural trade-offs as another strength that Pacific people have and can bring to the table of Board governance. One participant said "*it's as much the other side learning from us than a one-way transaction, letting them know that as Pasifika people we bring a different view*". There is systematic racism and the idea of tokenism as recalled by participants; however the Pacific-ness in them helped them overcome and focus on the bigger picture.

> *"And by having a token Pacific, when that person doesn't fit that mould, you have to pick your battles. And for some of our people who may not have those elements, and resilience, they give up. But some time is actually teaching me more because as I'm teaching myself, I'm moving into a space that I've not been before being comfortable in my Pacific in my Tokelauan, but I'm actually weaving my indigenous Pacific mind in those mainstream organisation and that is not easy"*
>
> Participant Focus Group 1

Resilience has enabled those on governance Boards, to press on despite the challenges, to make something out of it. They have built and expanded their peripheral perspective, skills and knowledge on their journey. A particular female participant said that the challenges enabled her to build a strong community governing system as she spoke passionately of her ability to adapt to the system,

> "give me a house and I turned it into a community centre".
>
> Participant Focus Group 1

6.2 Relationship and Network (le va)

Le Va literally refers to "space" in the Samoan vernacular and is a derivative of the Samoan value of *Fa'aaloalo* that highlights the significance of respect. Respect takes many forms and shapes in the wider Pacific context but is a common underlying theme shared by all the participants. This section starts with *le va* as the basis of the Pacific network or relationship. The proper appropriation of this space is what holds the community together. It's about knowing your place in society and how you relate to others and the substance of society. More importantly it's about trusting and respecting that space which is the building block of the network. The community is seen as a social web that silhouettes Pacific leaders. While much has been said of *le va* and the use of its metaphor as a cultural enabler it is not void of criticism.

This network is very important to Pacific people and for most of the participants it is how they were able to get on to governance boards marking the beginning of their governance career:

> *"Because what I found, too, is …, that's how a lot of these people I found have gotten on to boards. It's because of who they know"*
>
> Interviewee 3

They were called in by their network to represent the community. However what one culture refers to as network and the strength of family and service can be deemed in a Western context as favouritism and or nepotism.

Nepotism is a situation where conflicting interests, at times accidental, impairs one's propensity to act neutrally. From a Western perspective of good governance this can't be encouraged but from a Pacific perspective, this social web is a tower of refuge and source of empowerment. Help is always available whenever you need it. The knowledge of an existing support network encourages people to move and take action knowing that the family connection is a strong bond.

> *… when I tap in to ...the networks. Like, if I need somebody from the Solomon Island to give us perspective on what's happening there. I know, like five people off the top of my head, I can contact this person. So, you know… it's like, your networks, or it's your net worth"*

> Interviewee 1

Pacific networks thrive on the wealth of social capital and the concept of voluntary service. It can be seen as scaffolding for governing systems or pathways for Pacific people in this space. participants shared the same thoughts around the concept of *"…… it takes a village or Island to raise up a child".* "*…there's a network behind me that I could utilize to bring a Pacific perspective*" said one participant. So *le va* as a shared space whether literal or figurative can also be seen as a social transaction based on the Pacific value of reciprocity and sharing.

Nurturing is where the older members take younger ones under their wings, providing guidance, transferring wisdom, skills and knowledge of survival. While it may not be as explicit as it sounds, tutoring or nurturing is a natural quality of a loving parent or elder. In the Pacific culture this quality is inherent in elders as it stems from more than 2800 years of oral tradition.

This principled act is evident and practiced by Pacific people in the area of Board governance in Aotearoa/New Zealand. As mentioned earlier, the participants' governance career began on a recommendation and a support of their network.

> *"…it's a pathway to get … there because some of these people are quite inaccessible and obviously busy. So, you know, you have to have a way to build these relationships".*

> Participant Focus Group 1

6.3 Changing the narratives

The emergence of this governance space is a positive development for Pacific people living in Aotearoa/New Zealand according to the participants in the study. Complimentary to *tautua,* it can be a platform or forum to voice matters that directly or indirectly affect Pacific communities.

> *"… I absolutely think that our history has played its part within this country. And I think we've got a really good infrastructure to really ignite some new change. It's not to say that there hasn't been changed. We've been sitting within that change. They've been those before us that I've set that change in place, and it's about moving that momentum forward"*

> Participant Focus Group 1

On another note, the engagement of Pacific people in governance was proposed as a way to influence perceptions and stereotypes. Participating at Board level addresses the status quo. A way of bridging the gap, changing the narratives about community, showing a different side of Pacific people. It is about validating presence not merely representing.

> *"But I guess the only way we can make a change and their mind-set is for us to be in there and show them a different side of Pasifika that's not just about what TVNZ …. negative statistics*

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say but ., when they see that, you know, actually we're successful, smart, …. on to it people as well …".

Participant Focus Group 1

Having a seat at the governance table is a challenge to Pacific people as shared by most of the participants. The perception that Pacific people don't know anything and won't be able to participate in discussion, is a deterrent in this space. These stereotypes undermine the capability of Pacific individuals but some participants refer to the familiar saying "If you are not at the table, you are on the menu". A simple saying that motivates most to strive for better or higher perspective.

6.4 Exposure and Experiences

There was a clear distinction between the focus group participants and the individual interviewees who were not only prominent community members but had distinguished positions and a history of sitting on higher levels of Board governance. This section details their stories. One message that is clearly inherent among the group discussions and the interviews is that exposure is empowering and improves confidence in participation.

A Focus Group 1 participant said her objective in being a member on these Boards was to gain exposure and elevate her perception to see things from a holistic viewpoint. Another participant from the same group said that he was interested in and motivated by the opportunity to learn new things *"So … what has actually helped me continue to stay on board is, I actually love engaging with new stuff"*

Across all the focus groups, others entered the governance space because they are confident to be there to contribute to governance in Aotearoa/New Zealand. They have the skillset, experiences and exposure and feel purposeful to provide insights as they see fit.

"I would, how do you call it like a camel, you know, weasel myself into a board if I saw that, there were gaps that needed to be addressed. And so that's how I've managed to stay on board because they could see that I was genuine".

Participant Focus Group 3

Three of the interviewees entered governance as they were passionate about Pacific governance and wanted to showcase good values that represent a side of their community that perhaps is unknown to other members on the board.
Overcoming the language barrier, understanding the systems in operation and knowing yourself are some of the factors that informed their choices to establish their careers in the governance sphere.

This is confirmed by one participant saying

"being able to speak English, but also try and bridge the language … first of all, knowing and understanding how these structures are in place. But I think also, …, what qualities are, what qualifications or what things do I need to be able to get there and having that support around me to be able to get there. I think that's two things that come to my mind for me."

Participant Focus Group 3

Another interviewee felt it is important for a Pacific individual to know his or her exact abilities, their worth of contribution. It's about "*Knowing who you are, what you are, where your journey starts, is important*". She continued saying that engaging in that sphere is a journey of self-reflection *"has to do with the degree of confidence to have your voice and like you say, you were shoulder tapped for a reason, you're shoulder tapped, because you are different. You come with a different thought process, and that's fine. You have to be comfortable knowing that*". Being recommended or appointed to that level of governance boosts your confidence and aligns your path to purpose.

6. Barriers to membership

Despite some perceived progress in having Pacific leaders in key governance roles in community organisations, some large NGOs, and to a limited extent Local Government, the participants were clear that community members are still coming up against the same intractable issues. Barriers are perceived as being intrinsic to Pacific people and extrinsic within existing systems, practices and attitudes and these impact on Pacific people's participation in governance. As one participant notes:

> *"Some of these hindrances are systemic, some are organisational, some are personal relationships, and many are what is up for the time and moment. Environmentally and politically, these are big factors along with our determinants that sometimes slow things down, and the issues will come up again in years later*."

Participant Webinar 1

Some identified barriers cut across both the extrinsic and intrinsic environments, however their dynamics and the suggested ways of dealing with them differ. Barriers were both overt or more hidden within systems and processes which have differential impacts on different groups of people. Finally, some barriers are the mirror image of the enablers discussed above.

6.1 Extrinsic Barriers

6.1.1 Stereotypes, discrimination and racism

Institutional racism, casual racism and the impact of conscious and unconscious bias are identified as very real and painful experiences and major barriers for Pacific people attaining governance roles, especially in non-Pacific organisations. The fear of encountering these dynamics is noted as a deterrent to some.

Also noted was how appointment of Pacific people can be stymied if a board has a conscious bias towards someone they want to appoint, who looks like them, especially when they don't know the Pacific person applying for a position.

The participants reiterated the pervasive belief on mainstream boards that all Pacific people think alike or are unaware or lack knowledge of the breadth of nations, the complexities of different Pacific cultures, social structures and hierarchies. They often experience a belief that there is one Pacific point of view and this is exacerbated when existing board members expect one member to be able to represent or know the views of the wider Pacific community, when it is a struggle to know or be confident enough to represent one ethnic or national community.

6.1.2 Mainstream Boards' lack of awareness, knowledge and attitudes

The experienced Pacific Board members articulated a rich understanding of servant leadership, holding it as a way of life and of being, rather than a leadership style. Given this, they believe this is also possible within a Western paradigm, however the challenge or barrier some have faced is how to communicate this to others so that everyone is "on the same page".

It was identified that the situation is slowly changing as more mainstream boards realise they benefit from diversity or are being pressured to be more diverse in order to remain relevant. However, getting some Boards to recognise their need for diversity was seen as a barrier in itself. This raises questions about how to influence a board with little or no Pacific representation to then appoint the right Pacific person to ensure participation in decision making that will lead to social change.

Learning about governance approaches and ideas was seen as needing to be two way. Mainstream Boards need to understand that Pacific issues or matters are the responsibility of the Board as a whole,

not just individual Pacific members. It is also felt they also need to learn there are other ways of looking and thinking about the world which can be useful for decision making.

> *"It's as much the other side learning from us than a one-way transaction, like, not just conforming to what is the standard expectation, but letting them know that as Pasifika people we bring a different view."*

> Interviewee 3

Being on a diverse Board was new for some mainstream Board members (as it was for Pacific people when they joined a Board). Participants experienced that once Pacific people start to raise different points of view, Boards realise they hadn't encountered these views before and are unsure how to respond or appear to feel threatened.

> *"It's almost like.. it's as much new for them as it is for me joining the Board. That … not only is there like a visibly different person, but they are kind of raising points that they perhaps hadn't considered before, which is already a win.*

> Interviewee 3

Furthermore, these viewpoints were seen as not always appreciated by other Board members where racism (overt, casual and institutional) and stereotyping blinds them to a different or wider perspective.

> *"And of course, we're not on an equal level field level part. So then we're even less seen in it. We're just all in one. That's my other challenge is trying to find how to put a Pacific mark in there."*

> Interviewee 3

Following on from this, it was shared that confident Pacific people can be seen as a challenge if they confront an entrenched mainstream board.

> *"You know, if you're the voice or the strong voice for, for Pacific people. And you confront people, and you challenge people around things that you feel need to be in place. There's already perception about the kind of person or the personality you are around some of those people around the table. And so they don't see it as a strength, they'll see it as oh my gosh she's just a pain in the neck and you really, really, really don't want to have her. So those are some of the challenges that when you start to be the, I don't want to say, an activist of some kind or people see you in that that light, so I know she's she's big trouble you know you put her on this table, it's just, she's gonna wreak havoc. But you know you're really trying to push your own people, or your own community at the forefront and it's not seen in the same light as you see it."*

> Interviewee 4

It was discussed how often organisational boards tend to develop programmes or processes that are designed for a generalised view of the population, without considering their differential impact or accessibility to particular groups, in this case Pacific people. Consequently, the participants note Pacific people on these Boards carry a heavy load of responsibility in terms of putting forward a Pacific perspective and can struggle in finding a way to do this so that it registers or has an impact.

> *"it's up to me to provide the Pacific perspective on a system that's clearly not in line and doesn't even value our approach, so that's challenging"*

> Participant Focus Group 2

6.1.3 Gate keeping

The research identifies a nuanced theme on gatekeeping to the entrance of governance positions as a result of dynamics within Pacific peoples' communities. Some of these are indirect, such as not being

part of known networks and therefore automatically being out of contention. In addition it was seen that there is a need to attend institutional courses which can confer a 'badge' of readiness and are perceived as the main way of entering mainstream and corporate Boards. However, it was noted these training courses are not always considered appropriate and are expensive and therefore outside the realm of possibilities for some aspirants, as discussed below.

Several participants commented on the way in which older Pacific people who have been on particular Boards for many years act as gatekeepers, happy with the status quo and are resistant to younger people joining these bodies, often citing socio-cultural traditions as their reason. When challenged, it was felt these older leaders could become 'toxic'.

Particular concerns were raised when these older leaders hold positions on Boards but are not perceived to be doing anything to further the position of the Pacific community or act positively for change. It was seen that at times these dynamics are reflective of intra community politics and/or attitudes of one Pacific ethnicity to another and at other times, older people see younger people as a threat, or are fearful their lack of knowledge in certain areas will expose them to younger people who have more formal education and knowledge. It was shared that dealing with these issues is sensitive and needs careful contextualised analysis of "status, players and issues' and to be then dealt with honestly and with respect. It was raised that this issue is not confined to Pacific leaders, but how it is dealt with is different.

However, this is not universal among older leaders as several interviewees were quite reflective about the need to move aside themselves and let others take their roles.

6.2.5 Tokenism

Tokenistic appointments are observed and experienced as disrespectful by many of the participants. Some feel their appointments or recruitment was a tokenistic checkbox event when organisations felt they needed to have some brown faces on the Board. Those with experience felt it is important that the right person is appointed, not just someone an organisation picked to meet some target or because they think they will just "go with the flow".

> *"My colleague and I are both Pacific Leaders and find we are tokenised for our colour to tick Maori and Pasifika representation on platforms as the voice of those brown populations. We find this tedious and disrespectful. To date we're unable to articulate these barriers to the organisation we work for; it's challenging and tokenistic."*
>
> *"I didn't feel like I had a voice. I was sort of like there just because of who and what I look like."*
>
> *"what they were looking for was tokenistic diversity hire. The expectation was that there would be somebody who will just be quiet and go with the flow."*
>
> Interviewee 3

These dynamics were identified as frustrating and ultimately silencing if the person appointed doesn't fit the mould or have the resilience to decide which battles to pick. At times participants felt they had a tokenistic appointment, and their voices are silenced or dismissed as Pacific community

concerns, which are seen as a fraction of the issues being addressed given the relatively small population base. The result of this is that this group of appointees can give up.

> *"it's just to be the tokenistic brown person, so you can see all voices are represented. And then you get shot down time and time again, by people who think your issues are small in comparison, but I found that there was a lot of time that you had to fight just for small things to be heard. And it became draining, so draining."*

> Interviewee 1

The senior leaders were particularly mindful that they can encourage youth representatives on boards who then feel out of place and as if they are there by default because of their age.

Some, however, believe tokenistic appointments can act as a motivating force.

> *"I will take that tokenism, and I will drive it for everything that I've got. So, I bring tokenism to me. I'm happy to take it, because I will utilise that space. So I don't take it and think, oh you know I just feel like I'm just here umm. No, you will hear my voice, and I'll be at the table and I will ride that tokenism to as far as I can take it. So, yeah, hands up to tokenism I'll take it."*

> Interviewee 4

Others saw tokenistic appointments as an opportunity to at least get a seat at the table and open the space for those who follow. However, it was noted that if unsuccessful, they can feed the unconscious bias and racism seemingly inherent in some boards.

> *"Okay, we've got to hang in there, got to learn and then make sure that we prepare the next person that comes in."*

> Interviewee 1

6.2 Intrinsic Barriers

6.2.1 Understanding and knowledge of what governance is and how to get appointed

An understanding of what governance is, is fundamental to Pacific people's success on boards, however some participants believe that Pacific people lack knowledge of governance ideas and principles, or think the whole concept is a Palagi structure. Going further, it was felt they are unaware that the skills and roles they are already playing are relevant and useful governance skills (as discussed above). It was thought community members undervalue their skills and/or don't include key skills on their CV as they think these are not relevant, and just 'what they do', or the knowledge and approach from the sector they work in is not relevant to other boards.

> *"maybe they lead the Church choir or the Church youth group that in itself is a form of governance without them knowing. And it is voluntary as well. It's like all the things that our Pacific people tend not to put on their CV's, not realising that they actually have a wealth of skills that they're under selling themselves."*

> Interviewee 3

Participant's discussions of leadership, management and governance, shows a clear understanding of how these roles intersect and overlap. However, most participants don't see this generalised within Pacific people. They think the majority of community members see governance as part of the Palagi

world and often struggle to understand mainstream structures, leaving them apprehensive about stepping into these spaces.

> *"There is a lot of fear in terms of it's not just because we [speak] English is a second language, but it's because of the lack of understanding of Palagi structures and things that are done. It gives us the fear to step into that. And we run ourselves down, we are not good enough for that or that kind of thing."*

> Participant Focus Group 3

The youth survey also showed a low level of understanding and knowledge of governance concepts although the young people surveyed were largely aware that they encountered ideas and principles of governance on a regular basis. To get appointed, it was identified that aspirants need to be aware of opportunities and this is often hard to find out, especially for younger people.

Even when governance roles are understood, the transition from management to governance was seen as being difficult. As one participant put it; "you're no longer the doer, but the thinker". Some research participants report knowing Pacific Board members (especially on community organisation Boards) who have struggled with this understanding and try to "micromanage everything that's on the ground".

Commonly noted was that once in a governance position, Board members need to learn how Boards function and operate in order to have an influence. It was seen that how to ask effective questions when you are new to governance is part of this learning process.

6.2.2 Recruitment processes

The biggest barriers to Board membership identified were met by those with little or no previous experience. It was identified that once people have some governance experience they develop some understanding of wider governance responsibilities and are often then appointed to a subsequent Board as organisations are always looking for people with experience.

As noted in the section on enablers to participate in governance roles, selection is often by election or shoulder tapping. However, not knowing enough about the needs and work of organisations that board members are being recruited to, or not fully understanding their governance role was seen as a barrier. It was felt that others are reticent to put themselves forward and wait to be invited, which is not likely to happen in a competitive environment.

Others recount being thrown into positions by accident or by default, and then floundering and out of their depth. This knocked confidence and acted as a deterrent to future participation. One example of this also illustrates the issue of tokenism discussed in 5.2.5

> *"I got a degree, all of a sudden everybody wants to listen in, so I sort of got thrown into a chair person. That's how I sort of landed and governance. No idea why I was put there, no idea what to do. But I think I was just seat warming because there are other people doing the work. Outside of it. I just got told to sit in as the chairperson. So I did that."*

> Participant Focus Group 1

It was seen that informal, network-based appointment processes seem to work well for smaller, community or sports organisations, however another layer of systemic barriers exist for Pacific people gaining seats in larger corporates or Crown Agencies.

6.2.4 Individualism vs collectivism; finding the balance

It was identified by the participants that Pacific people who are appointed because of their individuality and see their role as being based on their personality rather than considering themselves as part of a wider network or collective which can support them, can struggle in their role. It is thought this can be intensified if other board members have views of how individuals should behave when they are representing a wider collective. It was noted there is a real strength in having this engrained collective awareness over individuality and one can argue you are there to represent the people not for yourself.

6.2.6 Humility and lack of confidence

Several research participants note that Pacific people can be humble and lack self-belief; they think they're inferior to others who know more than them, or immediately think of all the things they don't know and how this can disqualify them.

This deficit model can lead to Pacific people having a lack of confidence to put themselves forward and a fear of being undervalued, or to speak up once they're on board. One participant noted that this is especially the case among members of smaller Pacific communities.. When coupled with the fear of racism, this is reported as devastating.

It was discussed how those with less governance experience can feel overwhelmed and not worthy of their appointment for a number of reasons including lack of knowledge.

> *"It was much for me learning about proper processes, how meetings are structured, how they chaired, how there's an agenda and a format, learning about asking for and reading up on organisations constitutions."*
>
> Interviewee 3

This lack of knowledge and procedures resulted in them feeling they didn't have the confidence to speak up with a Pacific voice. The feeling of responsibility is seen as too great, especially when other sociocultural factors such as age and language come into play. Some report missing an opportunity to speak because of a lack of confidence, and finding they'd missed a chance: *"I just needed to let things go, and the time has passed to interject".*

Even for those with strong skills, relevant to governance positions, participants feel reticent in pushing themselves forward even though they are keen to take up governance roles.

> *"Given that we understand that many of us as Pasifika, are often we, we won't go forward and put ourselves forward but are often waiting for those opportunities."*
>
> Interviewee 2

Finally, in terms of confidence, the expectations of Board members were seen as being very high, and several participants commented that they don't feel self-assured representing their own ethnic/national community, let alone being the sole voice of the wider Pacific community.

The affective factors discussed above were felt keenly by those lacking experience or knowledge, particularly in certain areas of board operations which are often not considered, or what people have not been exposed to. Finances and funding are areas mentioned specifically by several participants, even experienced ones.

Others were appointed without knowledge and skill and are 'just thrown in the deep end' as Boards regularly assume that appointees know what's expected of them and have an understanding of

well. This then becomes a vicious circle of people not being appointed to Boards because they lack experience or don't feel confident, meaning they don't get the opportunity to learn through experience.

6.2.7 Accessing support

A supportive mentoring relationship was identified as of great assistance to newer Board members. However, actually finding an appropriate mentor to help people on their journey was identified as a barrier in itself.

6.2.8 Demographics

The Pacific population in Aotearoa/New Zealand is very young, with a median age of just over 22 years (compared with the national median age of 38 years). The question was raised of how to get Pacific youth onto Boards and ensure they are well supported (formally and informally) so that they have a voice and can be effective in a governance role, especially given their low knowledge base and levels of awareness, even amongst those with governance aspirations (as revealed by the youth survey).

6.2.9 Socio-cultural traditions and views

As noted before, barriers to governance, particularly on Pacific community Boards, were identified as coming from inside the Pacific community as well as the external factors discussed above. It was seen that traditional community structures and traditions can impede people's participation. Pacific communities tend to be hierarchical and often leadership is ascribed by status and position in a family or in a community which was seen as detrimental to ensuring people with a balance of skills and cultural knowledge participate in organisational governance. It was discussed that these internal dynamics are not insurmountable for those with cultural knowledge, but they can be particularly difficult to navigate and can lead to people deferring to rather than challenging traditional protocols.

It was identified that many Board appointments are made through shoulder tapping; however, others required an expression of interest. Feelings of humility were seen as acting as a deterrent when people have to put their hands up for selection. In addition, they can be worried that their name will be 'out there' and they will be talked about negatively in the community, especially as *'the tall poppy syndrome is even worse in the Pacific.'* Unrealistically high expectations of community members on boards can then add another performance barrier.

Several participants reported being bullied or deliberately undermined by Pacific colleagues on Boards.

Gender dynamics are also seen as central to these socio-cultural issues. Young women are spoken over, feel they are unable to speak or shamed for speaking out because this is viewed as inappropriate, or they fear what other community members will think of them. It was noted that women on mainstream Boards, including experienced members, can also feel overwhelmed when there are prominent male members sitting alongside them. They can also lack the confidence to put themselves forward in the first instance.

These dynamics create frustration and a dilemma even for experienced Board members who question how they handle challenging some older Pacific governors when an important part of Pacific culture is respecting elders and/or those older than themselves.

> *"But we also have to make sure that we don't get lost in there because of us trying to be too respectful. So knowing when to challenge, certain decisions and also being selective of the*

battles don't go in guns blazing all the time, you know, trying to, you have to have a level of understanding, trying to understand things from another person's perspective."

Interviewee 1

"People can talk for ages and ages and then they repeat themselves over and over and over again . . . you can watch the body language of others and know they're getting frustrated."

Interviewee 5

Lack of knowledge and understanding of governance roles within the wider Pacific community was seen as opening Board members up to wide criticism from other community members. One particular cause of this is a community view that governance roles must attract substantial financial gain, and subsequently community members think individuals take up the roles for payment.

"What are they doing there? Oh, because there's plenty of funding there that's why they wanna go on the Board."

Interviewee 5

Others lament that there are not more paid governance roles available to Pacific people so that they can focus their career in this direction.

While socio-cultural traditions can also be seen through ways of working. Pacific ways allow more debate and enable people to put forward different perspectives for discussion; this takes time but gets to greater depth. Mainstream Boards are seen as "moving at a pace and skimming along the top and never going deeper". This can mean Pacific people don't get their voice heard as discussions have moved on.

6.2.10 Resource constraints

It was identified that some Pacific people aspiring to Board membership are motivated by the idea of financial gain, only to find 'there's not much in it' and given the pressures they are under, they choose not to participate in governance.

6.2.11 Affordability and suitability of available training opportunities

It was identified that one way of overcoming a lack of knowledge and experience in governance is through attending training courses. Several participants mentioned the Institute of Directors (IOD) training courses which can give people a 'badge of experience' and qualification and also gives access to the portfolio of IOD board vacancies. However, these courses are considered very expensive and beyond the reach of most aspirants, especially as most serve on voluntary boards and must meet the cost of courses themselves.

Additionally, available training courses were seen as not necessarily the most appropriate courses given their monocultural view. While it was seen there is some perceived change in attitudes to the value of diversity in some Boards, the major training programmes are still considered hegemonic and based on western governance models, heavily biased towards for-profit Boards and not aligned to Pacific values and aspirations.

"the …. courses that I took, I really felt like they just wanted us to think like the Palagis, you know, it was telling us how to think like them behave like them to be to be kind of successful, like them, there wasn't really the kind of understanding about collectivism."

Interviewee 2

"future training needs to include Pacific systems and approaches. We have our own systems and approaches to governance, especially in terms of consensus decision making"

Interviewee 1

6.2.12 Multiple accountabilities

Juggling multiple responsibilities and roles was seen as a common issue across all research participants. From time to time even the most experienced Board members find they need to balance their commitments to family, Church and their governance roles, and at times pull back and invest in their foundational family roles. Experienced Board members highlight the importance of ideally having "peace and harmony in family relationships, before entering into any project outside of the family". (Webinar 1)

"if you're given a calling you accept it, with gratefulness because to serve the community is that it's a great thing. But once again, you've got to look after yourself, serve your family and everything else will fall into place."

Interviewee 1

However, taking up a governance role was seen as creating sacrifices or Board members not being able to completely fulfil their filial duties. Nevertheless, older parents are often proud of their children's achievements, even when they don't fully understand them.

"navigating all of that and to be a good daughter, trying to be good citizens. And then miss out on some other stuff."

Interviewee 1

"unfortunately it's finding the time to actually do a lot of those things because I do prefer to keep within my community and help our own people, because we are a smaller population in Auckland in Aotearoa really."

Interviewee 5

Experienced Board members find themselves spread too thinly and are asked to sit on too many Boards. Honing back and focusing on those that are most important personally ensures people serve with integrity. Others need to find a balance between their participation in governance roles and their professional positions, or have to convince their employers that being appointed to a governance or advisory Board position which requires them to attend during business hours, is a valid way of also contributing to their place of employment.

It was seen that the first Pacific people appointed to an organisation's Board, or those who are seen in broad leadership positions, feel the weight of not only their responsibilities to a specific governance role, but a general responsibility to the wider Pacific community as trailblazers. As one interviewee put it,

"Blazing, blazing the trail and opening doors and pulling others behind you."
Interviewee 5

7. Pathways forward

The research reveals a number of different pathways forward and practical suggestions to increase Pacific people's participation in different sections of the community, and on different types of Boards.

7.1 Encouraging people to take opportunities and develop

All acknowledge the number of Pacific people in governance needs to be increased. Experienced Board members see they have a responsibility to encourage others to join Boards, perhaps starting with Boards in smaller community organisations in order to develop confidence to speak up, an understanding of governance and gain experience so they can move onto larger Boards, or Boards in different sectors.

Part of this work could well involve working with older people so that they begin to trust younger people. They see the value of including younger people who have been encouraged to get an education and can therefore straddle both worlds, yet ironically are excluded because their education threatens their elders. Older people need support to let go of some roles, and relinquish their gatekeeping positions, while at the same time preserving their roles as cultural stewards, guardians of consensus decision making and repositories of cultural knowledge.

7.2 Using the opportunities and challenge of COVID

COVID 19 presents a great opportunity to reshuffle, shift and remodel thinking. The evident need for leaders skilled in working in ambiguous and complex environments provides opportunity for individuals who might otherwise not have opportunity to participate in decision making. As communities respond to and make sense of the pandemic and post pandemic world they will be seeking support and guidance from those who are confident and strategic in this context.

In addition we have seen Pacific communities gaining profile in the government response to the pandemic. As mainstream society has been confronted with the need to address inequities and barriers for Pacific people, Pacific leaders have stepped in to provide representation and leadership to ensure Pacific people receive the support they need and are able to work in responding to the pandemic in a contextually appropriate way.

7.3 Developing mentoring

Mentors are seen as key to individual governance journeys. Furthering the work of the Ministry of Pacific Peoples to include the establishment of a Pacific governance mentoring network for Pacific by Pacific, appears key. In the meantime, a start could be made by identifying a small pool of current Pacific governors and encouraging them to mentor others.

There is no firm position on whether or not mentors should be Pacific people or not. It is felt that people who are not from a Pacific background can provide different insights and help mentees gain a broader world view, so that they can see where they can make the most influence through enacting their Pacific values.

What is key, is the nature of the relationship that is built between mentor and mentee, finding someone who is trusted, approachable and available to the mentee. Leadership New Zealand was identified as providing an entry point for some for these relationships.

7.4 Training and ongoing support

There is considerable scope to build on existing governance training programmes at all levels, and supplement them with more appropriate programmes tailored to the need of Pacific people and

which builds on the individual and collective cultural capital of participants and explores how to bring this to the Board table.

There is an opportunity to use existing networks and Pacific course alumni, to have a conversation or influence current governance training providers to address racism and adapt courses to acknowledge cultural diversity and world views.

Support for participation is seen as needed given current fee levels for high level courses are out of reach for most Pacific people even when they aspire to attend. This leads them to postpone training year on year.

There is also a need for new, perhaps shorter courses provided by other organisations with expertise in Pacific participation in governance for those at all levels of the organisation. The courses provided by LEAD were identified as successfully meeting this need.

Not only those who are aiming for appointments on corporate Boards or to government appointments were identified as needing training. Bringing together those who are already on community organisational Boards for a programme that enables them to develop an understanding of governance and Board operations would add to the work of their organisations and also serve as an investment in the future. As part of a programme, attendees should be encouraged to share what they've learned with others on their Board.

Suggested training content includes:

- Governance principles and roles
- Strategic thinking and strategic analysis
- The role of the Chair given their role in setting the culture and tone at the Board table and support for those aspiring to Chair Boards.
- Dealing with conflicts of interest
- Understanding financial reports

This sort of ongoing support for Board members at all levels of organisation is seen as an investment in Pacific people's involvement in governance in the future, and in the wellbeing of the Pacific community as a whole. A breadth of approaches will also build a network or a body of governance allies, who can support each other on boards in the future.

Whatever approach is taken, there needs to be a range of courses available in order to provide different options and pathways to governance to meet Pacific people's aspirations. Some want to gain seats on corporate Boards, others aspire to be appointed to the Boards of Crown entities, whilst others aspire to contribute by working at a community level.

7.5 Opportunities for open discussion and development of a network

While access to affordable and appropriate governance courses and training is needed at all levels, it is also important that spaces are created where Pacific people can be together to share and talk openly about governance issues. This would enable people to learn from each other without fear of feeling ignorant and in a way which helps bridge worlds in a safe way. It would also provide a place to celebrate community members' appointments to boards of all kinds.

Practically, over time a network would be built through which governance opportunities could be circulated. Given the importance of the concept of collectivism, and the importance of networks to leaders engaged in governance, encouraging people to be involved in various networks and to value them, is seen as a strong support for Board members.

At a more strategic level there needs to be a strategic intra Pacific conversation within a network of which Boards are most important for the appointment of Pacific representatives.

> *"Let's start having a collective conversation to identify the Boards that we most need to influence because of the impact their decisions have on our Pacific people. Examples for me are District Health Boards (because they have a strong influence), broadcasting, and media organisations (mainstream and Pacific), tertiary institutions"*

Participant Webinar 3

7.6 Building on the interest of young people

The research revealed a body of young people with an interest in governance and aspirations for further involvement. This interest augurs well for the future however given the current knowledge base this group will require customised training, mentorship and exposure to opportunities, possibly leveraged through the networks of more experienced Pacific leaders.

7.7 Increased number of Pacific people in positions of influence

When governance is seen as part of the wider push for greater recognition of Pacific people in all aspects of Aotearoa/New Zealand society, more levers for change can develop. For example, an increase in the number of Pacific people in government and quasi government agencies (e.g. the New Zealand School Trustees Association), can lead to more Pacific people being recommended for governance roles, or as appointees to advisory committees in these areas and sectors.

> *"We are underrepresented and the shift to more presence at key decision-making levels is a work in progress and will take time unfortunately. We need to build that capability and capacity urgently*!"

Participant Webinar 2

8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix A: Research Questions

Focus group questions

How did you get involved in governance?

What types of Boards have you been on?

How has your experience of governance been?

What has helped you most in getting on Boards?

When on a Board, what has helped you most in staying?

What do you see as barriers to Pacific people taking on governance roles?

One on one interview questions

Please share your leadership journey – how you got involved in governance, which Boards you have been on?

What has your experience of governance been like?

What has helped you most in getting on Boards?

When on a Board, what has helped you most in staying?

What have been your biggest barriers to being on a Board?

What do you see as barriers to Pacific people generally taking on governance roles?

What are your personal plans/aspirations as a leader, including your involvement in governance? What are you going to need to achieve this?

8.2 Appendix B: Pacific terms and concepts used in this report and in the research interviews

Term/phrase	Approximate English equivalent in context
Aiga mata	Face of the family
Fa'aaloalo	Giving respect
Faamaualalo.	Humble; humility
Fa'amolemole	Please
Fa'atamā	Fatherly presence. A guide or steward
Faifeau	Minister or Reverend in the Church
Fakafetai lahi lele	Thank you or very good
Kainga maopo'opo	Family that is united, strong network or collective
Magaia fa'afetai	Good or nice thank you
Meaalofa	Gift/koha
Teu le vā	Caring, cherishing, keeping relationships intact
Autalavou	Youth/youthful

8.3 Appendix C: Literature search

Pacific Peoples Experiences of Organisational Governance in Aotearoa/New Zealand

Sue Elliott

For LEAD Centre for Not for Profit Leadership

January 2020

Contents

Abbreviations

BOT	Board of Trustees
DHB	District Health Board
MOE	Ministry of Education
MPP	Ministry of Pacific Peoples
NFP	Not for Profit
PHO	Public Health Organisation
PICC	Pacific Islanders' Congregational Church

This literature review considers the experiences of Pacific people in Aotearoa/New Zealand in governance roles, in the private, public and not for profit (NFP) sectors. It particularly addresses the following questions;

- What are the barriers to Pacific people in Aotearoa/New Zealand serving on a board?
- What are the enablers to Pacific people in Aotearoa/New Zealand serving on a board?

Once in a governance role, what are the barriers and enablers to Pacific people staying in these roles?

1. Introduction

This review is informed by a range of sources including Masters, and PhD theses, academic articles, organisational and media reports covering the private, public and NGO sectors. To ensure currency as far as possible, it utilises material published in the last 15 years although other material is used if it is particularly relevant to the topic. The review is limited, however, by the dearth of research on Pacific people's experiences as Board members (Holland, 2012). Most available literature analyses public and private sector Boards, with virtually no research covering the not for profit (NFP) sector. The literature that does exist focuses mainly on the 'brown glass ceiling', school Boards of Trustees (BOT) and sports organisations.

At times, ideas about governance have been extrapolated from the literature on Pacific people in senior organisational positions as governance leadership is likely to mirror to a greater or lesser extent management leadership. The literature itself often conflates Pacific senior leadership and governance, not differentiating between management and governance. Nevertheless, it appears that the issues Pacific people struggle with in attaining or remaining in board positions are the same issues Pacific people deal with in senior management (Holland, 2012).

There is little literature on the involvement of Pacific people in the governance of Churches in Aotearoa/New Zealand (including Pacific people's Churches), despite Pacific communities being important to Aotearoa/New Zealand Churches (both Catholic and Protestant) and Churches being very important to Pacific communities[10]. The lack of literature is surprising given the first Pacific Church community in Aotearoa/New Zealand was formed in Auckland in 1947, at a time when there were less than 3,000 Pacific people in the country. The Church was formed to meet not only the spiritual needs of Samoans, Cook Islander, Niuean and Tokelau Islanders, but also their pastoral needs (MacPherson, 2018).

Some of the existing literature, although limited, conflates all Pacific people into one category, whereas in reality, different Pacific ethnic groups have different approaches to governance, for example, Samoa has the chiefly matai system. (NZ Government, n.d.) which can spill over into the Aotearoa/New Zealand governance environment.

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[10] In the 2013 Census, 78% of Pacific people said they were Christian (compared to 47% of the wider community). Only 16.5% of Pacific people said they had no religion, whereas 42% of New Zealanders overall reported no faith. While most Pacific people continue to worship at mainstream and traditional Pacific Churches, Aotearoa/New Zealand has provided Pacific people with more choices with the 2013 census recording nearly 9% of Pacific people following the Mormon faith and 8% being Pentecostals (MacPherson, 2018).

2. Barriers to Board Membership

Barriers to Pacific peoples' participation in governance positions stem from both intrinsic and systemic factors as result of a "complex interplay of societal and organisational factors in New Zealand organisations" (Tupou, 2011).

The main barriers noted in the literature relate to stereotypes, discrimination and racism; gatekeeping by both non Pacific and established Pacific board members and Board recruitment processes; tokenism; affective factors such as lack of interest or confidence among Pacific people; the demographics of the Pacific population in Aotearoa/New Zealand; low levels of educational attainment (although this is changing); socio-cultural traditions (including gender roles) and resource constraints.

2.1 Stereotypes, discrimination and racism

How Pacific people are perceived is a strong determinant of whether or not they are selected or included on Boards. Flowing from this position, stereotypes of Pacific people, often perpetuated through the media, lead to discriminatory practices (Mesui, 2019), and unconscious bias, meaning Pacific people are less likely to be appointed to governance roles. Institutional racism is a major barrier to the progress of Pacific people in their career path (Cardno & Auva'a, 2010; Chanwai-Earle, 2018). Negative stereotyping and perceiving Pacific people narrowly, results in the perception that there are not suitable Pacific people available for governance roles. There is also a perception that being White is still the prototype of a business leader in New Zealand (Holland, 2012).

Racism, stereotyping and discrimination on behalf of mainstream organisations also acts as a barrier to inclusion in governance roles (Tupou, 2011; Chanwai-Earle, 2018). Racial stereotyping (reinforced by the media) appears to be another barrier to inclusion in Boards (outside of Pacific organisations). Pacific people do not look like what a Board member should look like. For women, gender stereotypes are also compounded by the stigma of women's historical roles. Stereotypes can also result in women Board members being asked to complete menial tasks outside their role, thereby under utilising their skills and knowledge (Mesui, 2019).

2.2 Gatekeeping and Board recruitment processes

In global terms, the Aotearoa/New Zealand private sector is small and tight knit, with a relatively small pool of directors (Hawarden & Stablein, 2008) whose names reappear as Board members of various companies. Establishment, gatekeeping and entrenched power (within and outside the Pacific community) appear to be major barriers to Pacific people's appointment to Boards (Chanwai-Earle, 2018; Holland, 2012). Recruitment processes to Boards in Aotearoa/New Zealand are often casual and based on shoulder tapping or peer referral, with existing Board members approaching people similar to themselves. This presents issues in terms of the management of conflicts of interest. In the private sector, Directors are often filled through one of seven executive search companies, which hold their own databases. The state sector holds a number of overlapping databases, with more prospective Board members listed than board places available but can only put forward recommendations if approached to do so. In addition, many candidates lack previous Board experience leading to a Catch-22 situation as people usually need Board experience to gain Board membership (Hawarden & Stablein, 2008).

In organisations where Board positions are advertised, the channels used to promote them can influence whether Pacific people will apply. Using media channels that Pacific people are familiar

with can increase the chance of Pacific peoples' involvement and provides exposure to the community (Holland, 2012).

First Past the Post voting systems can work against Pacific people's election to Boards. For example, once the single transferable voting system was introduced to District Health Board (DHB) elections, the number of Maori and Pacific peoples elected to Boards increased (Barnet & Clayden, 2007). DHBs are governed by up to 11 members. Seven members are elected, and the Minister of Health appoints up to four members to each Board, and the Board's Chair and Deputy Chair (Ministry of Health, 2019) however there appears to be a lack of transparency at a Ministerial level as to how appointments are made (Barnet & Clayden, 2007).

Cultural traditions can also mean Pacific people don't put themselves forward for leadership positions; rather they are chosen by elders or leadership is based on lineage and community status, which differs from the situation where an individual applies for a position and needs to explain what strengths they have which would support the organisation's governance (O'Connor, 2018; Holland, 2012). Similarly, while not directly linked to organisational governance, but still relevant to the idea of Pacific people in leadership positions, a study questioning why there aren't more Pacific nurses in leadership highlighted a difference between Western values, whereby an individual will put themselves forward for leadership roles compared to Pacific people who are chosen for these roles (O'Connor, 2018).

However, there are indications that with increasing educational achievements, and more New Zealand born Pacific people gaining higher levels of education, this is changing (Holland, 2012). Similarly, more conservative Pacific Churches have faced challenges, often from New Zealand born members, because their structures are no longer appropriate to New Zealand life. As younger New Zealand educated people increasingly influence Churches, some traditional governance approaches are changing (MacPherson, 2018).

On another level, the increasing emergence of Pacific people in leadership roles, especially younger people, may be opposed by older Pacific people already in governance positions (Holland, 2012); i.e. the entrenched power of some Pacific people themselves creates a gatekeeping dynamic.

2.3 Tokenism

A number of studies report tokenistic approaches to filling governance roles where Pacific people's ethnicity is recognised so that the organisation can appear inclusive in order to satisfy others (Mesui, 2019; Holland, 2012; Chanwai-Earle, 2018). This presents a double-edged sword for prospective Board members. Do they refuse membership because they consider it tokenistic, or do they accept a position as a foot in the door in the hope this will bring about change and further opportunities in the future (Holland, 2012).

Even when Pacific people are appointed to Boards, their presence can be tokenistic when they are underutilised, or only seen as useful in relation to Pacific issues (Chanwai-Earle, 2018; Holland, 2012). Conversely, overreliance on a single Pacific person on a Board can result in the Pacific person having to take all the responsibility for relating to the Pacific community/constituency and other Board members absolving themselves of any responsibility in this regard. Further, other Board members may rely on that individual to be the cultural conscience for the Board as opposed to all members taking responsibility (Ministry of Education, 2013).

2.4 Affective factors; Lack of interest and lack of confidence

Cultural values continue to shape the parameters of the Pacific people's sense of urgency and possibility (The Treasury, 2018). The perception that Pacific people lack confidence in terms of putting themselves forward has been noted as a factor in Pacific people gaining governance roles in sports organisations (Holland, 2012). In a study of Pacific people as Principals in Aotearoa/New Zealand schools, found a lack of confidence was one factor involved (Cardno & Auva'a, 2010). In the early 2000s, a MOE survey reported low numbers of Pacific people standing as candidates in BOT elections, leading to questions as to why Pacific parents were not interested in BOT roles (Tongati'o, 2010). This could be because of a reluctance to put themselves forward, although it could be that Pacific people are socially excluded for a range of reasons or do not see how their involvement is relevant to their values and outcomes (Holland, 2012) for Pacific children.

In the Aotearoa/New Zealand context, historically Pacific women lacking confidence in themselves to take on leadership roles, has been put forward as a reason for them not taking up leadership positions, (Tupou, 2011), with women being surprised if they meet a Pacific woman as a Board member (Mesui, 2019).

2.5 Demographics

Board membership, particularly school BOT membership, may also be influenced by demographics. The 2013 Census showed that "for every 10 school aged Pacific children (5-19 years old) there are 9 Pacific adults aged 25 to 49. In comparison there are 17 non-Pacific adults for every 10 non-Pacific children" (Ministry of Education , 2019).

In the private sector, Board membership is sometimes seen as an end of career option (Hawarden & Stablein, 2008), similarly, Pacific people largely view governance as somewhat boring and something older people pursue after many years of community service (Holland, 2012).

2.6 Low levels of formal education

Some postulate that Pacific peoples' lower educational levels in comparison with other Aotearoa/New Zealanders[11] also exclude them from consideration for senior organisational roles, including governance roles (Ministry of Education , 2019; Tupou, 2011) as they have not acquired the requisite skills (Holland, 2012). A lack of English language skills can mean it is unrealistic for Pacific Island parents to join school BOT or other governance Boards (Tongati'o, 2010) especially for those who have migrated to Aotearoa/New Zealand. Self-perception of inadequate communication skills also appears to be a factor for this group (Holland, 2012).

A lack of skilled people can have a direct impact on Pacific people's organisations, including Churches which often face challenges in financial and strategic planning (The Treasury, 2018). However, increased educational achievement among younger people is seen as critical to increased opportunities (The Treasury, 2018). Ironically, Pacific people, particularly women, with higher levels of education are most likely among ethnic minorities and migrants to face discrimination in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Daldy, Poot, & Roskruge, 2013).

2.7 Socio-cultural traditions

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[11] Nevertheless, adjusted for age, Pacific peoples' participation in tertiary education is on the same level as the national average (Pasifika Proud, 2017).

Whilst cultural values can be seen as strong enablers of Pacific people in governance, the literature also provides comments on how these can also be a barrier (Holland, 2012; Prescott & Hooper, 2015; Ofe-Grant, 2018).

Unconscious bias is a major barrier to women in governance in general (Tupou, 2011). Similarly, in Pacific societies traditionally, men took formal leadership roles (Tupou, 2011); this is believed to have a flow-on effect into Aotearoa/New Zealand organisations.

Gender relations within Pacific cultures whereby men assume greater status than women no matter their position within the organisation, can be a barrier to Pacific women joining Boards. Ofe-Grant (2018) gives several examples of this in her study of the 'brown glass ceiling"; men can expect women to humble themselves by not speaking against men and giving them the superior voice during meetings. This can lead to women avoiding situations where this might occur. This is ironic given that Pacific women in Aotearoa/New Zealand have formed organisations and put governance structures in place since the mid-1950s (Keil, 2018). In a school BOT situation, if a Board is predominantly (Samoan) male, women can avoid membership as they know their opinions will not be asked for or heard thereby diminishing their status.

Family, Church and cultural expectations of Pacific women mean they must fulfil many roles and can have little time for additional leadership and governance roles (Holland, 2012; O'Connor, 2018).

In the business sector, traditional Pacific Island values and culture are seen by some as incompatible with separating management and governance functions as highlighted in the following example.

> A formal governance structure that necessarily separates owners from managers is a model foreign to Tongan traditional society. Tongan business owners tend to regard their business as more than a financial asset and means of income as an extension of their family network and a signal of their social status. As such, the owner is regarded as the most powerful person in the business. This chief-like attitude frustrates the formal adoption of governance, where the board of directors potentially sets the strategic direction for the CEO (who in many cases is the owner)

> (Prescott & Hooper, 2015).

2.8 Resource constraints

Financial and time constraints can limit Pacific people's participation in governance. This is particularly so for young people (Holland, 2012), and women who typically have family and Church commitments which come ahead of governance roles (Teevale, 2001; O'Connor, 2018).

There is limited literature on Pacific owned businesses in Aotearoa/New Zealand; and what is published focuses on Tongan and Samoan businesses. Most Pacific businesses are small and have few, if any employees (more than 50% have no employees and 24% have between one and five employees) (Pasifika Proud, 2017). This provides particular challenges to governance. For example, small Tongan businesses often cannot afford the costs of formal business structures and rely on family or from time to time professional advice from friends (Prescott S. M., 2009); thereby limiting opportunities for those wanting or able to take up governance positions.

4. Enablers to Board Membership

Some of the dynamics that enable Pacific people to participate in governance roles, are the mirror image of the barriers discussed above including; increasing levels of educational attainment, Pacific values and concepts of leadership, family support and engagement, selection and appointment processes. Other factors enabling participation include broad social networks, stepped pathways and the presence of support, role models and mentors.

6.1 Increasing levels of educational attainment

Leadership and good governance have been noted as crucial to successful Pacific organisations. Skilled Board members who are well qualified and experienced as well as committed to understanding communities are considered key to organisational success (Rose, 2014). Thus, increasing levels of educational achievement overall and for individuals gaining a higher qualification, opens up more opportunities for younger people as generational changes occur (Mesui, 2019; Holland, 2012).

3.2 Pacific values and concepts of leadership

Pacific Island values provide both an incentive and enabler to Board membership. The concept of commitment, service, and giving back to the community, provides a strong basis for becoming part of a governance team especially given the role of governance in ensuring collective achievement (Holland, 2012). For example, the Samoan concept of *tautua* is connected to acts of honour which manifest integrity, love and respect for the community so that the interests of the collective can be promoted, and the spiritual flow of *va* will be harmonious. Thus, the concept of *tautua* widens the Western concept of service to incorporate a spiritual dimension. Board membership is one way in which *tautua* can be demonstrated (Ofe-Grant, 2018), but individuals must first show they are loyal and involved in service (Holland, 2012).

3.3 Social networks

Social networks, especially through the Church, appear to be a major way in which Pacific people are identified and then appointed to governance positions (Prescott S. M., 2009). Christian faith is also seen as a guide to senior organisational positions (Cardno & Auva'a, 2010). Participating in community activities, especially sports, enables young Pacific people to learn about leadership from a young age. Pacific businesses also report recruiting Board members through their networks; especially Church networks (Holland, 2012).

3.4 Structured Pathways

In general, there are a lack of structured pathways to Board membership for Pacific people (Holland, 2012) despite several approaches to increasing the representation of Pacific people in governance roles being evident in both the state and NFP sectors. Little information is available regarding the private sector.

The Ministry of Pacific People (MPP) is one of several government agencies that operates a Board nominations service. However, more people are registered as interested than there are positions available. In its advice to applicants, MPP advises applicants that a Boards appointment process is lengthy and highly competitive and there is no guarantee that applicants will be appointed to a governance position (Ministry of Pacific Peoples, n.d.).

Some commentators see experience on school BOTs or NFP Boards provides a stepping stone to Local Government (Pacific people getting more involved in Civic Governance, 2013) and the MPP

recommends private sector Board aspirants get governance experience by joining NFP boards (Ministry of Pacific Peoples, n.d.), yet there are few structures which help Pacific people progress to more complex governance roles (Holland, 2012; Chanwai-Earle, 2018) Conversely some people are promoted to governance positions without the experience or skills (Holland, 2012).

Attendance at governance training is also seen to enhance chances of Pacific people gaining governance positions. Holland (2012) recommends Pacific people to be the facilitators of training as they then simultaneously act as role models and mentors. Gender is also important here to ensure interpersonal comfort. Further, governance programmes should be developed based on the notions of service and community as these can act as strong motivators for Pacific people.

Governance internships could be an alternative to training, allowing for structured learning in a controlled environment providing a low risk approach (Holland, 2012).

3.5 Family support and engagement

E le tu Fa'amauga se tagata

We represent family in all that we do

Samoan Proverb (Solomon-Tanoai, 2019)

In sports, one of the main routes to Board membership is through family engagement. Young people progressively gain leadership skills and experience through captaining sports teams and through service to their clubs. This raises their profile and provides a way for them to illustrate commitment to the organisation. Having the support of family, or having elders identify and support those showing leadership potential, provides support to individuals, but also casts them in preordained roles (Holland, 2012; Teevale, 2001). Having the support of family members, either to become part of an organisation (Holland, 2012), or to share family and domestic duties (Mesui, 2019) also enables Pacific people to join and remain in governance positions.

3.6 Selection and appointment systems

To further increase Pacific peoples participation, organisations need to establish policies and act on practices addressing the need for Board membership to reflect New Zealand society or that of their constituents (Holland, 2012). In response to the low levels of Pacific people being on Boards, some organisations have quotas, or positions reserved for Pacific representatives[12].

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[12] The following examples illustrate this approach:

- The Ministry of Health NGO Health & Disability Network Council ensures that the sector engages at a high-level with the Ministry of Health is made up of 13 elected representatives in 6 categories, including two representing Pacific Health Non-profit. The Pacific representatives have extensive NGO management and governance experience (Ministry of Health NGO Health & Disability Network). Public Health Organisations (PHO) also have a form of community governance with representatives from providers (usually GPS) and the consumers. One large South Island PHO has one Pacific community representative, alongside two Maori community representatives, two Territorial Authority representatives and four members representing consumers and community (McAvoy & Coster, General Practice and the New Zealand health reforms- Lessons from Australia?, 2005)
- The 2009-2012 Pasifika Education Plan set a target of the proportion of Pacific Trustees on a school board being at least the same as the proportion of Pacific students at a school (NZ Government, n.d.)
- Netball NZ has a Maori and Pacific member of the Advisory Board, one of whom also chairs the board (Holland, 2012).

In the health sector, Pacific people's representation appears to be by selection or election via electoral groups and as with other sectors (Holland, 2012), there are concerns this can be tokenistic. However, if the underlying systems in organisations are not changed to ensure they are inclusive or welcoming, quotas can merely mask the status quo (Chanwai-Earle, 2018), leading some to advocate for targets rather than quotas.

3.7 Support, role models and mentors

Having a mentor, often over a period of years, is also an enabler to gaining and continuing in governance roles (Tongati'o, 2010; Gooder, 2016; Holland, 2012). Having a mentor can also provide a connection and broaden networks with other strategic people who can support ongoing development and opportunities helping to overcome negative racial stereotypes (Ofe-Grant, 2018). Mentors can also demonstrate how to get into governance positions and allow Pacific people to learn from their experiences (Mesui, 2019). Thoughts appear to be divided as to who makes the best mentor for Pacific people. Some advocate for mentors to be Pacific people themselves (Holland, 2012) whereas others cite examples of Pacific women being successfully mentored by Palagi men (Chanwai-Earle, 2018; Mesui, 2019).

Having or being a role model for others is also considered to be an enabler for Pacific Island people (de Vries, 2009). When Pacific people do succeed in gaining senior leadership roles, other community members feel proud which can provide direction to others (Holland, 2012). Conversely, a lack of role models, as has been noted above or patrons can be detrimental to achieving senior organisational positions (Cardno & Auva'a, 2010; Holland, 2012).

Another enabler to governance membership in the business sector, is the requirement for businesses to have a separate management and governance structure to highlight financial and operational accountability especially in order to receive government funding (Prescott & Hooper, 2015; Prescott S. M., 2009)[13] This prompts businesses to recruit from within their networks. Similarly, in the NFP sector, the requirement to have a governance structure in order to register as a Charity, is an impetus for some to recruit Pacific people as Board members, especially in organisations providing service to the Pacific population or in faith-based organisations.

5. Staying in the role

Unsurprisingly, factors experienced by Pacific people once they are on a board are largely influenced by the barriers and enablers explored above.

4.1 Family

In the wider Pacific community, (in the NFP sector at least) service is strongly entwined with the concept of responsibility to the wider family. Therefore, capacity building within the community sector needs to recognise the family-based structures and the specific needs of Pacific Island organisations (Cayley, 2008).

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[13] However, the same author is critical of government funding initiatives aimed at Pacific owned businesses, believing they are based on overseas models and don't understand the needs of Pacific owned businesses, nor the diversity within the Pacific community (Gooder, 2016).

4.2 Tokenism and racism

Pacific people meet racism not only in recruitment processes, but internally within their Boards if they are members, and can also face discrimination when representing their Board in meeting external stakeholders. There are examples in the literature of Pacific people being seen as out of place, mistaken as caterers, or service engineers when visiting Government agencies on behalf of their Boards (Ofe-Grant, 2018). In the sports sector Holland (2018) reports many involved in sports governance have had limited interaction with Pacific culture, resulting in Pacific Board members feeling they are treated with suspicion or looked askance at.

Habit, history and tradition coupled with institutional racism creates systems which denigrate Pacific people. This can result in them struggling for acceptance by other Board members and being given governance tasks or roles of little importance, or tasks that only relate directly to Pacific people because of preconceived ideas about their skills and interests (Holland, 2012).

Comment on tokenism in appointments to senior levels in organisations has been prevalent in organisational literature since the 1990s (Mesui, 2019). Perceptions of an organisation's motivation for appointing Pacific people to governance (and senior management) positions can determine their experience as Board members. An organisation that only makes appointments to meet a quota and thereby appear inclusive, can leave Pacific people feeling marginalised, taken advantage of and their appointment tokenistic. This can result in Pacific people on Boards having no real power and unable to make changes or influence major decisions within organisations (Mesui, 2019). Furthermore, it can lead to diminished self-esteem and an under-utilisation of Pacific people's skills. There are also concerns about the legitimacy of tokenistic appointments as appointees are not fully accountable to their stakeholders (Holland, 2012).

Tokenism is also linked to institutional racism (Mesui, 2019). As noted above, Pacific Board members can feel they are not trusted by other Board members. This can particularly be the case for the first Pacific member on a Board (Holland, 2012).

Other coping mechanisms used by Pacific people to ensure they are successful in governance (and senior management) roles are self-efficacy in being able to rise above racism and difficulty, self-belief and a wish to leave an enduring legacy (Ofe-Grant, 2018).

4.3 Culture

Being strong in their culture can enhance Pacific people's confidence in themselves when taking on senior organisational roles (Ofe-Grant, 2018) and Pacific people's cultural values can greatly enable them as Board members, but the literature suggests that some cultural attributes can act as barriers to full participation in governance roles (Holland, 2012).

For example, for Pacific people on school BOTs, cultural norms can be in tension with the need for BOTs to act as the employer and appraiser of the Principal, resulting in Principals going unchallenged. Furthermore, Pacific Island member's deference towards professional staff and respect for status are in tension with their governance role and this can be coupled with a reluctance to ask questions of those in positions of respect or asking for advice for fear of losing face (Robinson, Ward, & Timperley, 2003; Tupou, 2011).

Ofe-Grant (2008) explains further that Fa'aaloalo (respect) is a key aspect of Samoan culture. The way in which an individual behaves towards anyone of status is a mark of respect. Younger people are reticent or simply won't give advice to those who are older than them as this would be disrespectful and shameful. This can prove problematic in the context of Board discussions, and lead to misunderstandings as to Pacific people's capabilities and skills. The silence of Pacific people on Boards who listen to others as a way of being humble and not showing off can be interpreted as them not having an opinion or not being prepared to put in effort (Holland, 2012).

Among Pacific people, there can also be difficult power dynamics where Pacific men exert power and control over Pacific women. In a Board situation this can mean women are unlikely to challenge men, or men will talk over women, leading to women not putting themselves forward to positions where this can occur. Coupled with the Western bias on Boards, this can mean Pacific women aren't heard in debates, leaving them feeling undermined (Ofe-Grant, 2018) .

Pacific people in governance (and senior management) roles often feel they have to work harder than others to make a meaningful contribution, prove their worth and value and to be accepted, especially when they were the only Pacific person in on a Board (Holland, 2012; Ofe-Grant, 2018; Mesui, 2019).

Consensus is often cited as an important Pacific value in organisational leadership (Holland, 2012), although the form this takes can vary between cultures. This form of decision making is often perceived as time consuming, and at odds with Western ways of working (Robinson & Robinson, 2005).

In the business sector, cultural influences on Pacific owned businesses, such as traditional gift giving and the need for business owners to retain their social status and meet personal social obligations, can leave businesses financially vulnerable, and act as a disincentive to Pacific people joining these Boards (Prescott & Hooper, 2015).

4.4 Dual Accountability

Pacific people who are members of Boards can feel they have dual accountabilities; to their community and to the organisation. This has not been explored widely in the literature, but Pacific participants in a study of governance of DHBs were less likely to report feeling accountable principally to the Minister of Health than they were to their community (Barnet & Clayden, 2007). From an organisational perspective, PHOs have expressed concerns about the tension between "the business imperative of running a viable not-for-profit organisation and involving communities in governance and decision-making processes" because of the increased costs involved and the potential of community Board members to influence decisions on how medical practices are run (Neuwelt, et al., 2005)

4.5 A lack of effective voice

A sole Pacific member can feel isolated and an outsider on a Board (Holland, 2012). A lack of voice on

in the school setting, BOT often has only one elected or co-opted Pacific background representative member. If there is only one Pacific person on the BOT, it is challenging for that voice to be heard (even when one person on the BOT is a fair representation of the proportion of students at the school (NZ Government, n.d.; Ministry of Education, 2013).

6. Conclusion

Published research on the experiences of Pacific people in Aotearoa/New Zealand in governance roles, in the private, and public sectors is thin, and virtually non-existent on not for profit (NFP) organisations, (apart from a few studies on sport organisations and Churches). Nevertheless, factors affecting the private and public sector are likely to be mirrored to some extent in the NFP sector. There is some literature on the experience of Pacific people in senior management roles, and it is highly likely that factors influencing management leadership will also influence governance leadership.

This lack of literature makes it difficult to come to definite conclusions as to the barriers and enablers for Pacific people joining Boards or the experiences of Pacific people once they are in governance positions. However, although far more research is needed and warranted on the experiences of Pacific people in Aotearoa/New Zealand in governance roles, there are several emergent issues in the literature.

Pacific people (and other ethnic minorities) have low visibility and representation on Aotearoa/New Zealand Boards in the private, public and sports sector, other than in Pacific specific organisations, which began to be formed in the 1940s and 1950s. This is despite the Pacific economy being of a significant size, and more than 500 Pacific organisations registered with Charities Services holding assets of $8.3billion, presenting significant governance responsibilities.

Despite little being known about the ethnicity of members of private and public sector boards, the literature shows some Pacific people are members of the boards of PHOS, DHBs, school BOTs and mainstream Churches. Little is known about newly emerging Pacific people's Churches however, although some established Pacific Churches have made changes as New Zealand born members demand they become more relevant to contemporary Aotearoa/New Zealand society.

Nevertheless, it is important to have Pacific people on Boards, as diverse Boards can result in tangible and intangible outcomes; better organisational decision making, optimised organisational potential, greater organisational resilience and improved performance (including of children at school if Pacific parents are on BOTs).

Barriers to Pacific people's participation in governance positions stem from both intrinsic and systemic factors reflecting the relationship between societal and organisational issues in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The main barriers noted in the literature relate to stereotypes, discrimination and racism; gatekeeping by both non Pacific and established Pacific Board members and Board recruitment processes; tokenism; affective factors such as lack of interest or confidence among Pacific people; the demographics of the Pacific population in Aotearoa/New Zealand; low levels of educational attainment (although this is changing); socio-cultural traditions (including traditional gender roles whereby women are perceived to have lower status than men) and resource constraints. Taken together, these are a formidable block to Pacific people.

Some of the dynamics that enable Pacific people to participate in governance roles, are the mirror image of the barriers discussed above including; the increasing levels of educational attainment among younger Pacific people, Pacific values and concepts of leadership which support the collective role of governance, family support and engagement, selection and appointment processes. Other factors enabling participation include Pacific people's broad social networks, the creation of stepped

pathways to governance roles and the presence of support, role models and mentors.

Pacific community, service (in the NFP sector at least) is strongly entwined with the concept of responsibility to the wider family.

However Pacific people can encounter racism at several levels internally within their Boards and can also face discrimination when representing their Board in meeting external stakeholders. Institutional racism results in Pacific people struggling for acceptance by other Board members and being given governance tasks or roles of little importance, or tasks that only relate directly to Pacific people because of preconceived ideas about their skills and interests.

Measures to increase Pacific people's representation on Boards can have mixed results. The introduction of quotas or tokenistic appointments so that organisations appear inclusive, can result in marginalisation and feelings of exploitation and diminished self-esteem. Consequently, Pacific people can have no real power and are unable to make changes or influence major decisions within organisations.

Some Pacific Board members, however, are able to rise above racism and difficulty through being strong in their culture, self-confidence and self-belief and a wish to leave an enduring legacy. On the flip side, consensus, which is often cited as an important Pacific value, can be viewed as time consuming by Western orientated boards, and Pacific members can be silenced through isolation or being the only member of a Board. Pacific Board members can also be torn by dual accountabilities; to their community and family on one hand, and the organisation's wellbeing on the other.

However, there is still much more research needed before definitive conclusions can be drawn on the experiences of Pacific people in organisational governance in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

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