

The Brain Drain and Culture Paradox in Samoa



Thesis

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Abstract

This thesis has attempted to build on the experience gained through living in Samoa and working for the United Nations Development Programme. Through this experience it became clear that culture, Fa'a Samoa, is of central importance to the country and therefore this thesis has utilised a social constructivist philosophical starting point in order to explore its importance in a wider context. Samoa is one of the countries in the Pacific that has had the highest levels of migration. It has been proposed that it is often the well-educated who choose to migrate in search of further opportunities. Thus the thesis has looked to explore the way in which the brain drain, or the emigration of the well-educated members of a society, has impacted upon the robustness of Fa'a Samoa. In order to start exploring this in depth, data was gathered through a number of interviews with citizens from a variety of different employment and social backgrounds within Samoa. This data has enabled the thesis to explore the way in which citizens view the issue of brain drain and how it has affected their lives and how they see it affecting Samoa's development. Further, the brain drain phenomena has been well explored in the literature and thus this thesis utilises the views of scholars within the field of migration in the Pacific such as J. Connell, Sa'iliemanu Lilomaiava-Doktor, E. Hau'ofa and H. Lee. However, it was felt that there needed to be a third view in order to gain a broader understanding of the research area and thus the views of key donor and development partners have also be included. The knowledge for this aspect was gathered both through the work experienced gained while in Samoa, which included participation in the 3rd Annual SIDS Conference, and the research of Samoa's key development donors' databases. Another main goal of the thesis was to raise awareness of the Pacific and nations such as Samoa in order to begin the breaking down of the ideas of remoteness and isolation, which seem to have become prevalent within the international community. In doing so it is hoped to add to the literature regarding the Pacific through focusing, in part, on the role of indigenous knowledge and how this engages with the brain drain and also to bring the Pacific in general back into the global consciousness through writing about the region. It has attempted to achieve this through utilising two further theories: D. North's Theory of Institutional Change and I. Wallerstein's World Systems Theory. These two theories allowed the thesis to explore the importance of the historical precedents of the brain drain and also Samoa's current position within the world system. Through this, the thesis has been able to generate a number of potential policy recommendations principally: a policy that would allow for more freedom of expression amongst artists, a policy which allows for the creation of a knowledge hub within Samoa which will focus on the way in which indigenous knowledge can contribute to sustainable development, a policy which allows citizens official channels through which to gain access to remittances. These look to utilise the paradox between the brain drain and the robustness of Fa'a Samoa in order to help Samoa develop further.

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Introduction

This thesis has attempted to understand the impact of the high levels of brain drain out of Samoa and its impact on the ability to maintain and potentially progress Samoan culture. In order to explore this paradox the thesis will utilise both empirical data, gathered through interviews carried out in Samoa and through the author having lived there for six months working for the United Nations Development Programme, as well as qualitative data gathered through rigorous desk research. This will allow for the important views of the Samoan Government, key donor agencies and citizens to be incorporated into the findings.

One of the key findings within this was that the brain drain, which is defined as the migration of skilled individuals, has both a negative and a positive impact upon the culture and its ability to progress. On the one hand it is able to assist in breaking down the negative impact of the international mind-sets regarding the Pacific which perceive it, Samoa included, as isolated and remote. Furthermore, remittances, one of the key methods in which skilled migrants are able to assist their home country and families, are found to have both negative and positive impacts upon the culture. However, remittances and diaspora could play an important role in future development if engaged in a different method from the manner they currently are. This links in with the proposition in the thesis that the brain drain out of Samoa is not necessarily a loss because of the way in which the migrants remain connected to their family and country through traditional understandings such as malaga; which proposes that physical location and geographical distance does not mean the migrant is less a part of the family and community and therefore can still contribute. Thus both diaspora and the notion of transnationalism are key terms in this project. This thesis understands diaspora as migrants who move backward and forwards in a transnational manner between the home and host country, yet maintain a strong connection with their families and culture. In this sense the Samoan diaspora are seen as transnational migrants. However, while these are the key findings of the thesis, it is important to place them in perspective, because the thesis will also attempt to add to current literature because it seems that the Pacific and countries like Samoa are very much on the periphery of the global consciousness. It will set out to achieve this through utilising a constructivist ontological base in order to understand the importance and influence of culture and mind-sets as well as ensuring that the thesis is able to present arguments that are not hampered by ahistorical views. This will allow for the fact that while currently Samoa is a

peripheral nation, it does not mean it always has been and that it can progress in the future. The thesis has utilised two further theories to analyse the central paradox and the data gathered. World-Systems Theory has been incorporated to explore Samoa's position within the current world-system and the options for change. While, the Theory of Institutional Change, assisted in analysing the internal structures observed empirically while also reinforcing the importance of history.

However it is also important to contextualise the knowledge gathered. We live in a world that is becoming much more interconnected thanks to the ever increasing levels of technology. Today we can connect to family and friends no matter where in the world they may be. This is the same for conflict and development, we are privy to the issues that countries face, the governmental context, the situation of the public and we are able to engage with it and make a difference. In other words, we are no longer isolated polities where only the affluent members of society are able to engage with the wider world. It seems, however, that even though we have the ability to be globalised there are still a number of regions that are in many ways glossed over and the Pacific region is one of these. While the countries that surround the Pacific are generating meaningful relationships and hypothesising about the future shape of the world, countries within the Pacific face their own struggles to gain visibility, to break into the globalised world as something other than a tropical paradise (Teaiwi, 2006). In other words they have struggled to find a place at the negotiation tables. Some may disagree with this given the number of Polynesians who live in countries around the globe and how involved they are in for example sports clubs world round. Yet, ask people to place Pacific Island countries on the map and one runs into problems. However, it is within the Pacific that some of the greatest explorative sea-going journeys have taken place. It was one of the last regions to be inhabited by humans and it is also a region that is continuously growing. The volcanic nature of the region means that new lands will rise in time adding to a multitude of islands and atolls that inhabit the Pacific (Hau'ofa, 1994, p.151). Within this setting countries such as Samoa do their best to survive, to overcome their vulnerabilities to extreme weather events and to try and make the most of their position within the world-system which has become more and more peripheral even as the world becomes more globalised.

This is why it is important to study the Pacific, to ensure that the Pacific and countries like Samoa can re-instate itself in the dialogue of humanities, human development and progress. At one stage studying the Pacific was a dignified scholarly pursuit with scholars such as Margaret Mead "*breaking new ground for the [humanities] discipline by way of the Pacific*" (Teaiwi 2006, p. 72). Yet now this prestige seems to have been lost, but does this mean these

countries no longer have anything to offer the world? As T. Teaiwi, a prominent Fijian scholar, has pointedly highlighted, “*we must not stop our investigations, explorations, ruminations in Pacific studies simply because the world marketplace of knowledge does not value this region as we do. Neither must we give in to the tempting rhetoric of Pacific exceptionalism—our greatest crime would be to ghettoize ourselves*” (Teaiwi, 2006, P.83). It also brings into question what lingering notions there are of the Pacific and countries like Samoa. The fact that we have become a global society of individuals who enjoy being on land and perceive the seas as a barrier, has generated a mind-set within which nations such as Samoa and other Pacific Islands nations are seen as remote, isolated and hard to get to because of the amount of water that surrounds them and their distance from the Western powers of today.

But we must be careful in our investigations because there are institutions such as the European Society for Oceanists which “*mirrors the enduring image of the Pacific region as being constituted by small, scattered, isolated islands*” (Teaiwi, 2006, p.71). Of key importance are the issues of isolation and remoteness. In fact, these two issues were critically brought to light by the highly influential Tongan scholar E. Hau’ofa. He spoke of the way in which these ideas can become ingrained into a society and the impact they have upon the individuals within that society (Hau’ofa, 1994, p. 150-2). He did not see this as positive. However the image of isolation remains intact within the Pacific setting and it is something that has impacted upon not only the way in which individuals see themselves but also the way in which the global community sees the Pacific.

There is already a movement within Samoa, noted during the empirical research which refutes this notion, with there being a disinterest in how the outside world perceives Samoa prevalent amongst some citizens (Faoagali, 2015). The further removal of this image is of central importance and an issue that this thesis will look to explore in order to create a more positive outlook for the Pacific region, while also attempting to garner positive exposure for Samoa. The thesis has utilised a similar method to that of Hau’ofa and Teaiwi, in making use of historical and traditional knowledge, but it has attempted to take it one step further through incorporating the three theories and generating a different view of the brain drain and how it impacts upon the culture, while also generating potential policies which could make the most of the paradox. In this sense, the thesis will be adding to the literature through attempting to break down this notion of isolation and the mind-sets which perpetuate this notion. This will also work toward putting the Pacific ‘back on the map.’ Researching the Pacific, as mentioned earlier, has not been seen in the most positive light recently (Teawiri, 2006, p.71-75). Thus it can be said that the thesis simply through focusing on the Pacific, through trying to raise

awareness of the Pacific and in a way bring it back into the global context, is adding to the literature.

Within the countries of the Pacific this thesis has decided to focus on Samoa because the author lived for six months in Samoa while working for the United Nations Development Program. Samoa was the first country to gain independence within the Pacific region and one of the few countries to implement a Western style parliamentary system alongside the traditional governing system (Sefulu, 1983, p. 521). Samoa is also a country known for its stunning, palm lined beaches and relaxed attitude, a country that has produced star rugby players, influential writers and musicians alike. A country that sees itself as the heart of the Pacific and the place from where the rest of the Pacific was populated (Meleisea et al, 1987, p. 2-17).

Samoa has experienced high levels of migration and because of this Samoans are now very much global citizens. There are Samoans living not only throughout the Pacific but also in Europe, Japan, China, America, Australia and New Zealand. This portrays that Samoans have always been interested in exploring the world. Such migrants generate high levels of remittances which form an important part of families' incomes and is also an important part of the GDP and a key source of foreign exchange. However, many of these migrants are highly skilled and educated individuals who leave the country in search of better opportunities and higher salaries. Therefore while Samoa may be one of the most stable and peaceful countries in the Pacific, it still has many issues that need to be overcome. For example it has recently graduated from Least Developed Country Status to Middle Income Country Status (UNDESA, 2015), no mean feat and something that should be celebrated. However, it also places an immense pressure on the internal structures of the country as they lose privileged access to trade markets and funds. In this sense the number of migrants, especially the skilled and educated migrants, leaving the country is of serious concern for the Government, the country and its developmental path. Yet at the same time the Government relies on the remittances that the migrants send home and can thus not stop the migration levels as it would hinder the development of the country. This begs the question what is it that ensures the high levels of remittances remain. Life in overseas countries is not always as easy as it is perceived and it also incurs its own costs. It seems the answer is Fa'a Samoa, the culture or Samoan way of life. Fa'a Samoa permeates everything, every-day, from the individual to the family to the Government. Thus this thesis would like to explore the paradox between levels of brain drain and how it is affecting, or impacting upon, the robust culture given the importance of both aspects to the overall development of the country. This has led to the problem formulation:

How does the brain drain out of Samoa impact upon the robustness of Fa'a Samoa?

It is hoped that through exploring this, not only will the thesis be able to generate potential policy recommendations to make the most of this paradox, but to also break down the ideas of isolation and remoteness. The thesis will also hopefully be assisting in bringing the Pacific, in this case specifically Samoa, back into the global consciousness.

Methodology

Research Design

The main desire of this research has been to study the Pacific in order to break down not only the notions of isolation and remoteness but also to bring the Pacific back into the global consciousness. This is because the Pacific is an integral part of the globe, yet it is an area that seems to have been pushed further towards the periphery both in academic circles and also within the current world system. One of the key ways of generating the needed changes is through adjusting mind-sets, both within the Pacific and also in the wider global context regarding the Pacific. This thesis will attempt to achieve this through looking specifically at the case of Samoa. Samoa has been chosen not only because it is traditionally seen as the heart of Polynesia but also because I was privileged enough to spend six months living in Apia and working for the United Nations Development Programme there. It was during this time that I was able to gain a true appreciation of the impact and power of Fa'a Samoa, while also seeing the constant movement of people out of the country. This has led to the problem formulation, which can also be seen as the central paradox: ***How does the brain drain out of Samoa impact upon the robustness of Fa'a Samoa?***

It was thought best to approach this research through the view of social constructivism because of the importance of both culture and mind-sets. It is understood that because this research focusses on Samoa that the policy recommendations that this project will attempt to generate are specific to the country. However, it will still work towards re-introducing the Pacific in general back into the global conscious which would seem to be highly beneficial to the further development and progression of not only Samoa but also the Pacific Region.

Key Terms

Brain Drain

The term brain drain was originally coined by the British Royal Society to refer to “*the exodus of scientists and technologists from the United Kingdom to the United States and Canada in the 1950's and 1960's. Yet currently it is better known as a term which speaks to*

the migration of a nation's most skilled workers" (Gibson & McKenzie 2011, p.108). This in turn, is based on the findings that within countries there is a greater propensity for individuals with a higher level of education to migrate (Gibson & McKenzie 2011, p.109). Thus the term, for the purpose of the thesis, is defined as; the movement of skilled individuals from their country of origin which in turn places pressure on the 'home' societies developmental path. It is also important to note that this thesis will utilise the term migration often and should be read as the movement overseas of skilled individuals unless otherwise stated.

Diaspora and Transnationalism

Because of this thesis's focus on migration patterns it is important to also define the terms diaspora and transnationalism for the purposes of this work. Diaspora and transnational communities or groups are beginning to play a bigger role within the globalised world where individuals have easier access to quality and efficient transport and the crossing of state boundaries is becoming much more common and normal. The standard manner of describing diaspora is as a group of individuals or a community who maintained a close link to an imagined homeland, while living in a foreign country and who usually would not have fully assimilated themselves into the host country's culture. However this is now a changing phenomenon, because where once it had been argued that assimilation would lead to the end of diaspora because the diaspora would be transformed into the dominant culture, now it can be seen as a more multi-cultural dynamic (Faist, 2010, p.11-14).

Thus the need to explore the term transnationalism as this brings a different perspective, where diaspora has always referred to a distinct group, transnationalism refers more to a space between and a process that "*transcends international borders*" (Faist, 2010, p.13). Within transnationalism, migrants play an important role, described as crucial agents (Faist, 2010, p.14).

The Samoan context seems to incorporate both these views of migration and thus both are utilised in the thesis. Within the literature there has been an attempt to identify ideal types of diasporic and transnational communities (Dahinden, 2010, p.53) and it will be through such an ideal type that this thesis will be able to best express the culmination of both terms. The Samoan context fits very well with the second ideal type proposed by Janine Dahinden, named 'localized mobile transnational formations' (Dahinden, 2010, p.55). This ideal type is:

"characterised by more elements of mobility, although the sedentary aspects remain highly relevant. We are faced with simultaneously high levels of mobility and high levels of

local anchorage in receiving and sending countries. Migrants representing this ideal type have themselves experienced migration or may be second generation migrants. They move regularly back and forth between the new country and the place of origin: for holidays, family obligations, business and so on” (Dahinden, 2010, p.55).

In this sense they are migrants who maintain close ties with their country of origin, creating a single arena within which both the host and the sending countries feature. There is constant movement across borders while furthermore, “*these migrants participate in, and create a specific type of, transnationality by exploiting social capital....based mainly on the principle of family – or, to a lesser extent, ethnic – solidarity and reciprocity,*” (Dahinden, 2010, p.55) while they are also integrated into both the sending and host countries through networks in both nations (Dahinden, 2010, p.56). It was observed that the Samoan context fits well with this ideal type, because Samoa has vast diaspora in countries such as the USA, New Zealand and Australia. Much of this diaspora is highly assimilated yet also maintain strong links with their families and culture in the ‘homeland,’ or sending country. In this sense people of Samoan origin, for the purposes of this thesis, who live on a foreign country can be seen as both diasporic in the traditional sense due to the strong connection to and distance from the homeland, but also as transnational in that they become a part of the host country, but are still assisting their families and culture in the sending country. Therefore, though the thesis will often speak of diaspora it should be understood to include transnational qualities as well, as is proposed in the ‘localised mobile transnational formation ideal type.’

Fa’a Samoa

Both the empirical data and the literature highlight that it is Fa’a Samoa which is the main reason for the diaspora maintaining a close connection with their families and country. Fa’a Samoa, or the Samoan way of life, is an everyday living experience (Sa’iliemanu Lilomaiava-Doktor 2009a, p. 7). There are a number of crucial aspects which make up Fa’a Samoa; place of origin or i’inei, which can be understood as home or where one belongs (Sa’iliemanu Lilomaiava-Doktor 2009a, p.7); aiga or kin which is “*conceived of as tino e tasi (one body) and tot e tasi (one blood), and principles of tautua (service), fa’alavelave (obligations), alofa (love, compassion) and fa’aaloalo (respect) in kinship relations*” (Sa’iliemanu Lilomaiava-Doktor 2009a, p.7). These body and blood links are “*internally related and functionally independent*” (Sa’iliemanu Lilomaiava-Doktor 2009a, p. 7). The individual in Fa’a Samoa is first and foremost a part of the aiga. Fa’a Samoa defines relations

between family members and influences all aspects of life.

Malaga

Furthermore, there is a term within Fa'a Samoa, Malaga, which is used to describe migration. Malaga can be generally translated to mean travel or migration, but implying a movement “*back and forth*” (Sa'iliemanu Lilomaiava-Doktor 2009a, p. 9). This notion can be utilised to describe the way in which Samoans understand migration, seeing it as a “*culturally informed, historically grounded response to modernisation and globalisation*” (Sa'iliemanu Lilomaiava-Doktor 2009a, p.1).

Inspiration

The inspiration for this project came about through my recently completed internship with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Multi-Country Office in Apia, Samoa. This office works with four countries in the South Pacific: Samoa, Niue, Cook Islands and Tokelau. The office is made up of two key units: Environment and Energy (E&E) and Governance and Poverty Reduction (GPRU), and it was within the latter that I spent six months working and learning. One of the main projects that I was involved in was the Tokelau Good Governance Initiation Plan. This was a project that looked to generate an understanding of good governance planning and practices. I was tasked with drafting this project and it was through this that I gained a clearer understanding of the issues that countries in the South Pacific face. Typically they experience high levels of migration as citizens emigrate in search of better opportunities overseas. This leaves nations like Tokelau with very few inhabitants, in fact the nation only has 1400 inhabitants currently (Statistics New Zealand, 2015). This places significant pressure on the leaders of the country to govern cleverly and appropriately in order to ensure the future sustainability of the country as the domestic capacities dwindle with migration and issues such as corruption can become more prevalent.

This made me want to look more closely at the country I was then living in, Samoa. This country unfortunately does have issues with corruption and also high levels of migration. Yet, it has also just graduated from Least Developed Country (LDC) to Middle Income Country (MIC) status and this seemed to create a very interesting dynamic. Further, I was able to, through the internship, be involved with a Transformational Leadership Development Programme (TLDP). This is a methodology which teaches individuals how to become better

leaders, how to guide their workers, how to listen and how to generate positive results and create a positive and vibrant working environment. The Governance Unit was responsible for organizing these workshops and I was able to attend one of the workshops that was held with the Public Services Commission (PSC), a very powerful and influential organization within Samoan politics. The workshop was attended by the head Commissioners and the managers of PSC. Most of these managers were young, highly intelligent and educated. They were well aware of the political context and issues within the country and were very eager to learn and utilise new solutions, such as TLDP, in order to generate a brighter future for their country. They were energetic and engaged and this emphasised the Samoan context, in that while many people do leave the country, especially many of the young and educated, it seemed that there still remained many highly motivated and educated individuals within the country.

This led to a discussion with UN colleagues regarding the brain drain issue. They noted that it was a phenomenon that had been taking place over an extended period of time and that the country was doing its utmost to work with the issue (Faoagali, 2015). Such a dynamic where a country is attempting to continue along its developmental path through, in part, utilising sophisticated agencies like UNDP, but still faces issues such a lack of internal opportunities especially for youth, low salaries in general and corruption has led to my interest in the research topic. Further it seemed a very relevant opportunity to understand, or gauge, what future solutions could be found within this situation.

I was also able to gain a clearer sense of local contexts through living in the country for six months. It was an excellent opportunity to speak to various people, to understand their motives, what they thought about the country and how this challenged my views of what was happening. This was key for the thesis as it has enabled me to put events into perspective. In this sense I was able to match the theoretical with the empirical and this will hopefully enable the thesis to become much more insightful and relevant. The final source of inspiration for this project was the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Conference that was held in Apia in August 2014. The over-arching goal of the conference was to gain exposure for SIDS countries and to generate partnerships to ensure sustainable development.

As with every conference it is difficult to gauge whether it has achieved its goals. However, for me, it emphasised the fact that there are many people who are exploring new ways to look at old issues. That perhaps there are different perspectives that need to be taken into account to ensure sustainable development. It was the idea of these states being remote, being devoid of opportunities and options that seemed to permeate many of the discussions, which seemed in contrast to what was actually happening. The conference had brought together

people from all over the world, even the Administrator of UNDP, Helen Clark, and the Secretary General of the UN, Ban Ki Moon, were there. This showed that these islands are only remote when viewed through a certain lens. That what they can achieve is on par with any larger country around the globe and that in many ways living in such an island setting can actually be very beneficial. Thus the idea that there are new solutions to old problems and the issue of migration due to a lack of opportunities forms the basis for the inspiration for this thesis.

Method

The philosophical starting point for this thesis comes out of social constructivist thinking. This is based on the fact that I started as an outsider but managed to gain an insight into the Samoan society through living in the country and engaging with the culture. It was this engagement that reinforced the idea that the notions that we let govern our life are based on human relations. Culture is a human construct that we use to generate order and structure within our societies. This is particularly obvious within Samoa given the strength of the culture, Fa'a Samoa. Therefore it seemed important to utilise a theory which speaks to such social constructs and utilise it as the basis, or philosophical starting point, for the thesis.

Furthermore, one of the key issues with the brain drain is the way people view it. It seems that everyone has their own views of the impact which it has on a country, however these are also socially constructed and based on one's history and understanding of the world. Therefore it seemed an excellent opportunity to challenge some of the dominant views of the negativity of the brain drain and to add to this aspects of traditional knowledge which deal with the issues of movement and migration. Therefore the thesis will focus on the paradox between the levels of emigration of skilled individuals and the ability of the country to maintain its highly successful, robust and ingrained culture. It will look to explore this paradox through three different views.

The first is the historical view through which the current trends of migration are contextualized and a foundation for the current levels of migration explored. This will expand into a discussion of the role of Samoan society and how it is structured and what impact this has on the brain drain. It will explore angles such as personal expression, collective cohesion and look to understand what forms of structures are in place and their impact. It will explore the role of indigenous knowledge and how this has impacted upon both development and the

paradox. It will also explore the impact of the central paradox through the recent Citizen Investment Bill, proposed by the Samoan Government to alleviate the brain drain issue and to encourage growth.

The next aspect of the analysis will focus on the role of remittances. It will look to understand the dynamics that surround remittances, such as dependency structures and the actual benefits of remittances for Samoa as a whole. This will lead into an analysis of the impact that the brain drain, in terms of being able to send remittances back to Samoa, has had on the culture and whether it has changed it or whether it has assisted its progress. It will also explore the link between the brain and the muscle drain and how this impacts upon society. Due to Samoa's high levels of migration and reliance on remittances as a form of foreign exchange, scholars have labelled the country a Migration, Remittances, Aid and Bureaucracy (MIRAB) country. Such an acronym hints towards a hand-out mentality and the thesis will explore the mentality that a reliance on remittances can generate. It will also look to overcome this hand-out mentality by comparing and contrasting the options proposed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank (WB). ADB insists on further domestic economic development while WB speaks of there being a need for new solutions to be found which incorporate the Samoan diaspora in order to create further development, because Samoa have struggled to experience growth through generating an export based economy.

Thirdly the thesis will explore the notion of isolation, a term which has become more prominent recently to describe Samoa both socially and geographically. Its distance from economies of scale and the dominant countries of the western world have led people to perceive Samoa as geographically handicapped. This has begun to permeate the Samoan self-image and culture. It will explore whether migration and the strong ties that Samoan migrants feel towards their country provide a potential solution to this issue. It will also explore Samoa's current position within the capitalist world system and attempt to gauge whether or not Samoa can utilise its high levels of brain drain to take advantage of a system that may be changing towards a knowledge based system. This will allow the thesis to utilise the notion of core and periphery while exploring the central paradox and Samoa's position within such a dichotomy.

These three particular aspects were chosen because they were observed to play a central role in the Samoan context. Remittances are key because they have an important role in the literature as well as the governmental and family realms. Remittances are important to the families as it provides surplus cash which can be utilised to cover important cultural and family events such as weddings, funerals and fa'alavelave. For the government it provides a source of foreign exchange and eases the pressure on providing basic social services because the families

have access to surplus cash for things like schooling. While for scholars the importance of remittances to the country means that it features heavily within the literature and has led to the MIRAB acronym. Thus it seemed pertinent to explore the role of remittances in the paradox.

Isolation is also a key notion, firstly Samoa is not a remote country, it is surrounded by many other nations. For example one can fly to New Zealand in four hours or to American Samoa in 30 minutes. In this sense it seemed important to break down the idea of isolation because it is a notion that is not truly reflective of the situation. Secondly, this notion has begun to take a hold within the culture and it is affecting the way in which Samoans see themselves. In this sense it seemed important to break down these notions to ensure that the robustness of the culture is not encroached upon further, that the international community can gain a realistic view of Samoa and its position and the brain drain is one potential method of achieving this.

This links into the historical aspect. The history of the Pacific is very unique and specific. Its migratory nature is what has enabled the exploration and settlement of the islands around the Pacific and therefore this aspect is extremely important both in terms of explaining the current high levels of migration and also the strength of Samoan culture. It also goes to show a different view of isolation, in that for Samoans the sea is not a barrier but actually an opportunity to travel and engage with their surrounds. Through utilizing a historical perspective the project is able to better engage with the traditional knowledge of Samoa and thus also the culture. This in turn enables for a better understanding of the central paradox that is grounded in the history of the people and the region.

Within this framework, the thesis draws on qualitative and quantitative data gathered through both empirical and desk research in order to explore in depth the central paradox. The research has been divided into three main perspectives: the first being the experience of living in Samoa and the interviews conducted, the second is the views of the Samoan Government and the key donor partners, the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank and United Nations Development Program, and finally, the view of scholars both foreign and Samoan. The quantitative data, sourced from Asian Development Bank Statistical Department, the Samoan Bureau of Statistics and The Secretariat of the Pacific Community, IMF and UNFPA, will supplement the three perspectives above. The reason for wanting to utilise these views is that the thesis would like to create a number of potential policy recommendations which can assist with the brain drain and the further development of the country, given a better understanding of the precedents which have led to the current levels of migration. These methods will also give the thesis great depth and variety and enable it to explore the brain drain issue and its paradoxical relationship with maintaining a culture thoroughly.

The empirical knowledge was gained through living in Samoa. This forms the key aspect of the project as it has allowed the project to be closely in-tune with the feelings and understandings of the country that cannot be gained through literature alone. The second part of the empirical research is the interviews that were completed in Samoa. Five interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner, made up of pre-prepared open questions, with various individuals from the different strata of Samoan society in an attempt to capture the feeling of the country as a whole and create a broader perspective. This approach allowed for a more open, yet focussed, discussion regarding the central paradox. I setup the interviews with three of the candidates, before being introduced to the final two by one of the previous interviewees. The interviews gave first-hand, qualitative, accounts of the brain drain, the issues that it poses, or the opportunities that it creates and allowed for a deeper understanding of its impact upon the culture. They form an integral part of the research and have allowed the thesis to gain an understanding of the issue from a variety of viewpoints that will enable the project to reach potentially more robust conclusions.

Firstly, I was privileged enough to be able to speak to a Matai, or high chief, and his wife whom I came to know during my stay in Samoa. Tuiafutea Olsen ‘Tuioli’ Va’afusuaga is a matai in the village of Faleaseéla on the south coast of the island of Upolu. He was born and raised in New Zealand to Samoan parents. His father was a Matai of the same village, but had chosen to take his family to New Zealand to give them more opportunities. Mr Va’afusuaga was a brilliant sportsman representing Samoa at both rugby league and cricket. His wife Jane Va’afusuaga, is of New Zealand and Scottish heritage. She is a teacher and this is what first brought her to Samoa. She has been in Samoa for approximately 20 years now and has taught at various schools in both Apia and Faleaseéla. However they are now currently involved in an eco-tourism venture. This venture offers tourists a great insight into village life, but more importantly it generates jobs for local villagers. This is something that they are working extremely hard on expanding so that they are able to create even more jobs for the village.

Victor Vaauli, is a young Samoan working for the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) as a Youth Volunteer. He is based at the UNDP Office in Apia where I also worked and it was here that I had the pleasure of meeting Mr Vaauli. He is currently studying while working for the UN. He has lived his whole life in Samoa and was able to give a clear picture of how it was for youth within the country, why they emigrate, where they emigrate to, and the reasons why some people stay in the country.

Susan Faoagali, was a colleague from UNDP. Ms Faoagali is the Human Rights and Gender expert and she assisted in identifying two other individuals who would be excellent to

speak to about this subject, including herself. Ms Faoagali is of Samoan heritage, but has studied in both New Zealand and Australia. She has completed her PhD and has worked for various UN agencies including UNICEF. Her son lives in Australia as does her mother, though she also has family in New Zealand. Ms Faoagali was able to offer an excellent insight into Samoan life and common trends within Samoan society. She was highly informative when it came to Samoa migration patterns and offered an insight into issues such as Samoan education and how difficult life is in Samoa for vulnerable people.

The two individuals that she connected me with were Vanya Taule'alo and Lena Rivers. Ms Taule'alo is a New Zealander by birth but has spent many years in Samoa and is married to one of the Public Service Commissioners. She is a prominent artist within the Pacific, while also pursuing business ventures within Samoa. She has taught for many years at the National University of Samoa and currently runs her own gallery, while often writing as a guest for the local newspaper, the Samoa Observer. She was an excellent person to speak to on the matter of the brain drain given her background and knowledge of the arts and how arts effect a society. She had very interesting views on Samoan society given its conservative nature and the difficulty that individuals feel in expressing themselves through the arts because of this overarching conservatism. Ms. Lena Rivers is a local Samoan business woman. She left Samoa temporarily to take her children to New Zealand to allow them to have a higher quality of education. Her experiences there and upon returning to Samoa have given this thesis much knowledge within this area. She was an excellent candidate to interview given the fact that she had chosen to take her children overseas for their education to ensure a brighter future for them and this is something that was identified as key to the brain drain issue. The transcribed interviews can be found in Appendix A.

The thesis has also utilised rigorous desk research on the topic. There is much excellent literature on the topic from researchers, both within Samoa and from foreign experts. The views of the Samoan Government were gauged through such desk based research. It will allow the paradox to be thoroughly explored in terms of gaining an understanding of what academics and political leaders think about the issues and what they believe needs to happen. The qualitative knowledge gathered here has also allowed for a broader understanding of migration patterns, traditional knowledge and the views of the international community regarding Samoa. The view of the donors will also be gauged through such research, though much of the knowledge of donor's engagement in Samoa was also gained through working for UNDP Samoa.

The original literature that influenced this thesis was 'Our Sea of Islands' by Epeli Hau'ofa. This essay speaks of the fact that Pacific countries are first and foremost not isolated

or remote. That the Pacific is a highly vibrant region with many countries close together who share one strong trait and that is a connection to the ocean. In realising this, Hau'ofa is attempting to reverse the notion of small scattered islands in a vast ocean, to one where the ocean is seen in its traditional light as a means for connection and travel and not as an impediment. His concern is with the way in which such outside influences are becoming a part of the cultures within the region and is trying to change these dynamics to ensure the livelihood of the region. To show that the region has a proud history, a strong history and that all the nations within the region can easily advance from where they are today, to achieve sustainability and a positive view of self. Hau'ofa also pinpointed the importance of history, to understand the migratory nature of the region and that this movement meant that the region was never seen as isolated before Western ideologies took hold (Hau'ofa, 1994, 151-3). Linked into this is the work of Sa'iliemanu Lilomaiava-Doktor who speaks of the need to incorporate traditional knowledge into the development discussion, that to understand the particular context within Samoa that traditional knowledge must not only be included, but play an integral role as well (Lilomaiava-Doktor, 2009). It was this work, matched with that of Carrillo (Carrillo, 2006), that has allowed this thesis to explore the brain drain out of Samoa and how it impacts upon the culture through the view of the culture itself and the many structures and ideologies that the culture has in place to deal with the migration that has been a part of Samoa since the beginning. The book 'Lagaga: A Short History of Western Samoa' by Malama Meleisea has also assisted in giving great insight into Fa'a Samoa. It has helped to explore the historical side of Samoa, its ideologies and stories. It has provided important knowledge of the precedents for the current levels of brain drain through the fact that the Pacific region was not static, people were constantly moving between the islands for trade, conquest and out of pure interest (Meleisea, 1987a). This contrasts with Connell's work which provided much insight into the more recent views on the Samoa brain drain. Connell has argued for the notion that the brain drain only really took off in the 1960's when labour was sought in developed countries such as New Zealand (Connell, 2003). Further, Connell speaks of the importance of remittances to Samoa, through exploring the Migration, Remittance, Aid and Bureaucracy (MIRAB) country that Samoa has been labelled as. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) views were also important to this thesis. ADB believe that there is a need to remove the reliance on remittances through strengthening the domestic economy and producing opportunities and growth through this (Asian Development Bank 2015, p. 276). Yet this stands in contrast to what the World Bank speaks of in their report, 'Well-being from Work in the Pacific Island Countries.' Here they highlight the notion that Samoa has struggled to generate growth using the previous model

and so there is a need for a new method which includes the diaspora to a higher degree and other capacities in order to generate growth (World Bank, 2014). This alternative view links in more closely with the traditional knowledge and the methods that are utilised by Samoan families, such as the grooming and sending of one individual in order to generate remittances.

The quantitative data, gathered in the form of statistics, was sourced through the desk research. The statistics have been able to portray the loss which the brain drain is incurring upon the country and how it is effecting development and value adding in the key sectors of tourism, agriculture and industry. It has also been utilised to portray the importance of remittances to Samoa's economy and families.

Choice of Theories

The thesis has then analysed the data gathered, through three theories in order to explore the central paradox thoroughly. The first theory utilised was that of social constructivism, or constructivism for short. Constructivism forms the philosophical basis for this project, it allows for the idea that humans and the relationships that they build and their ideologies and actions have a distinct effect on the development of a country. This is important because Samoa is a developing country and has a very strong culture. However, it also has very high levels of migration and thus both their culture and their development path is challenged by the loss of its brightest talent. This paradox is the central aspect of the thesis and it would seem that it is important to understand the role of humans and their relationships and ideologies and how both affect the migration levels and the ability to maintain a culture, because both entities are socially constructed. Through this it will enable the reader an understanding of the impacts of certain mind-sets and how this also changes the way in which people think and act.

However, one of the issues with constructivism is that it does not usually “*produce specific predictions about political outcomes...[nor does it provide] substantive explanations or predictions of political behavior until coupled with a more specific understanding of who the relevant actors are, what they want, and what the content of social structures might be*” (Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001, p.393). Thus it seemed pertinent to include added theories. As has been highlighted, culture plays a crucial role within Samoa, but it was also observed empirically that history and the current world system impact heavily upon the country. Therefore it seemed important to utilise theories that place an emphasis on culture, history and the ability of countries to change in order to fully explore the central paradox. To this end

Douglass North's theory of Theory of Institutional Change and Immanuel Wallerstein's World-System Theory have been chosen.

North's theory, in particular his views on Path Dependency and the importance of having a knowledge of the historical context in order to understand the current dynamics, have enabled this thesis to explore the historical precedents that have affected the current levels of migration. Furthermore, North's ideas about the role of institutions and structures and how their nature can determine the adaptability and progressiveness of a culture, will enable this project to analyse the institutions of Samoan culture and the way in which the brain drain has assisted, or hindered cultural progression.

The third theory that has been utilised is World-Systems Theory as described by Wallerstein. This will allow the project to engage in a discussion as to which nations are actually core-like countries and how the terms remoteness and isolation have maintained dependency structures. Importantly it purports that the world system can change and that the nations with the ideal internal structures can take advantage of this. Given that knowledge has become much more important in today's world, means that Samoa may be able to change their position given the fact that they are already exporting high levels of brains and have the structures in place to take advantage of this. Furthermore it will allow the project to incorporate the Samoa legends, which speak to the notion that Samoa is the centre of Polynesia, that it was from Samoa that the rest of Polynesia was explored and populated, again building on the discussion of core and periphery.

Limitations

One of the first limitations of this thesis is that it has not looked closely at internal migration and the impact that this is having on the country. It is very true that urbanisation is having a drastic impact on the culture of Samoa as young people move to urban areas in search of work, or new opportunities because they are not necessarily satisfied with rural life. However the opportunities are not always there leading to a large amount of unemployment and thus social struggle. People become less attached to their families and villages and can begin to lose the security and support that such structures offer. This impacts on the culture heavily and many of the young unemployed citizens will certainly look for ways to migrate in order to find employment. While the importance of internal migration is understood, especially given that some scholars have highlighted that much international migration is preceded by

internal or rural-urban migration (Connell, 2003. p.56). For the purposes of this thesis the urbanisation trend is not explored thoroughly because the brain drain in the Samoan case seems to become a central issue when skilled individuals actually leave the country. However the thesis recognises the importance of the urbanization trends within Samoa and sees it as an excellent opportunity for future research.

This thesis does not explore fully the notion of return migration either. Return migration is an important aspect when looking at the impact of brain drain, especially if the return migration levels are very low. However it was felt in the Samoan case that given the strength of the culture and the family ties which are constantly maintained by migrants meant that it was this connection that was of more importance than how many people actually returned. Furthermore it has been suggested that some countries can actually benefit more from the remittances which a migrant sends instead of them having stayed or returned to their home country (Vargos-Silva, 2015).

It would have also been advantageous to carry out more interviews while in Samoa. For example, to have been able to interview an individual who works for the government would have added a new and interesting dynamic to this thesis. However it could not come to pass due to visa and time issues. Yet five interviews were able to be carried out and these interviews are of extreme importance to the thesis. Further, given the variety between the interviewees the breadth of the knowledge and insight gained from the interviews means that there is a solid base from which to work.

Theories

Social Constructivism

“Constructivism is about human consciousness and its role in international life” (Ruggie as quoted by Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001, p. 392).

Social Constructivism, or constructivism in short, is a relatively new theory which has entered into the field of international relations. However, it has now become firmly established in the field and has generated much interesting and informative debate (Adler, 2013, p.112). Constructivism’s basic ontological starting point depicts the, *“social world as intersubjectively and collectively meaningful structures and process”* (Adler, 2013, p. 121). It focuses on the fact that the social world is not something out there (Jackson & Sorensen, 2006, p.164), but something humans are integral in creating and interpreting. In other words *“[c]onstructivists focus on the role of ideas, norms, knowledge, culture, and argument in politics, stressing in particular the role of collectively held or [‘]intersubjective[’] ideas and understandings on social life”* (Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001, p. 392). It also places an emphasis on the idea that human interaction is shaped by ideational factors and not merely material factors, and that the shared beliefs construct the identities and interests of purposive actors (Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001, p.391). This encourages us to understand the way in which *“actors are socially constructed”* (Wendt, 1999a, p.7). The key notion is that it is humans and their relationships, identities and collective understandings creating the platform through which state action can be understood. Thus one of constructivism’s key tenets is that *“the identities and interests of purposive actors are constructed by these shared ideas rather than given by nature”* (Wendt, 1999a, p.1). In this sense it proposes that material resources only gain a meaning for humans and their actions through the *“structure of shared knowledge in which they are embedded”* (Adler, 2012, p.121). Such knowledge is explained as social facts. These are facts that are only intelligible through human interaction and agreement. Such social facts depend on *“the attachment of collective knowledge to physical reality,”* (Adler, 2013, p.121) with such collective knowledge being generated through discourse and collective understanding (Adler, 2013, p.121). *“Understanding how social facts change and the ways these influence politics is the major concern of constructivist analysis”* (Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001, p.393). Social facts can be things like money, sovereignty and rights (Finnemore & Sikkink 2001, p.393). Thus it

is said that constructivists view the building blocks of international reality as being both material and ideational and that the ideational is based on the collective intentionality, yet are not independent of time and place (Ruggie, 1998, p.879). Thus, “*history is not an evolving external process that is independent of human thought and ideas*” (Jackson & Sorensen 2006, p.164-5).

Social facts play an important role in exploring the central paradox. For example, the global community has generated certain views of the Pacific, but these are socially constructed, thus this thesis will be able to explore the potential of changing such constructs and understand how this may impact upon the robustness of the culture. Furthermore, it will allow the thesis to portray the fact that the culture has changed and developed over time, has been influenced by various individuals and communities before it was shaped into what we know it as today. It will also continue to develop based on the way in which the individuals within the societal structures act and what the dominant ideologies of a future time may be. This will allow the thesis to explore whether or not the brain drain is negating this progression.

Culture can be seen as a cultural fact, it is only intelligible through human interaction, discourse and collective understanding. Thus, “[a]ctors acquire identities relatively stable role specific understandings of and expectations about self by participating in such collective meaning” (Wendt, 1999b, p.81). It will allow the thesis to explore the way in which notions such as isolation and remoteness have begun to become a part of the collective understanding and thus the culture and the impact that this could have on the central paradox. Further, the goal is to view states individually and understand how their identities and interests have been socially constructed (Ruggie, 1998, p.879). It has been argued by constructivists that states have identities and interests and that these are shaped by the international forces which are the norms that are “*embedded in international society*” (Jackson & Sorensen, 2006, p. 169). However, while this is the case at the systemic level, others have argued that national identities and interests are shaped by domestic values and ideologies. That the culture and identity of the general public have a distinct effect on the policies and global ambitions of states (Jackson & Sorensen, 2006, p 170-71). In this view both culture and identity play an extremely important role. This will allow the thesis to explore the way in which the brain drain is impacting upon, or changing, the internal dynamics and what impact this has upon the robustness of the culture. It has also allowed the thesis to explore the way in which the domestic ideologies have impacted upon the decisions that the policy makers and leaders generate.

World-Systems Theory

I. Wallerstein utilises a historical and sociological as well as economic point of departure for his World Systems Theory. This fits well with the Samoan context in terms of the strength of the Samoan culture and the fact that this thesis places a strong emphasis on the role of history in explaining the current levels of migration and its impact upon the culture. The World-Systems Theory describes a society that has “*boundaries, structures, member groups, rules of legitimation and coherence*” (Wallerstein, 2011, p.347). The system is populated with different interest groups who are constantly attempting to re-mould the system to suit their best interests (Wallerstein, 2011, p.347), yet even though there is such a battle for domination, no single entity is ever able to gain the centre indefinitely. However, neither are polities constantly battling each other as they also rely on each other. In other words it is an interdependent system within which two or more polities rely on each other for goods, services and protection (Goldfrank in Martinez-Vel, 2001, p.3).

While the overall system does not change, the nature and the make-up of the system can and does, even minute to minute (Wallerstein, 2006, p.22). In this sense the system is constantly evolving and cyclical. The current system is a capitalist system through which entities are integrated through the market rather than a political centre (Martinez-Vel 2001, p.3), with this capitalist system beginning in the 16th Century (Wallerstein, 2006, p.23-25). Such a capitalist system is based on generating financial gains at the lowest possible cost and has led to much outsourcing or ‘runaway factory’ tactics (Wallerstein, 2006, p.81). Thus it can be said that system is a global, multi-cultural and territorial division of labour in which “*the production and exchange of basic goods and raw materials is necessary for the everyday life of its inhabitants*” (Wallerstein as quoted in Martinez-Vel, 2001, p.4). Such a division of labour has led to the existence of two interdependent regions the core and the periphery. This relationship is structural and features a strict hierarchy and power dynamic. Core countries are involved in capital intensive production while the periphery is mainly based on labour intensive production (Martinez-Vel, 2001, p.4). The periphery produces the raw material which the core adds value to and is able to sell, thus making a profit. The core countries dominate and exploit the peripheral countries and thus peripheral countries are structurally constrained “*to experience a kind of development that reproduces their subordinate status*” (Martinez-Vel, 2001, p.4). Furthermore, the core countries maintain their power through the domination of the economic, political and cultural life on a global scale (Subramaniam, 2015, p.4). To clarify this

further, the peripheral countries “*are subject to the core’s development and expansionist policies and practices because they lack an internal dynamic that would allow for acting as an independent and autonomous entity within the world-system*” (Subramaniam, 2015, p.4). The differing strengths is important as it allows for an unequal exchange where the core countries are able to generate a flow of surplus to the core (Subramaniam, 2015, p.4). This in turn leads to an accumulation of capital within the core and assists with maintaining the power structures. Between these two regions exists a buffer zone made up of semi-peripheral countries who share both production methods. Such countries can be former core countries which are declining or former peripheral countries which are rising.

However, as was mentioned earlier, no country is able to remain within the core indefinitely and there is constant movement within the system based on changes to the nature of the system. When a change occurs, for example the harnessing of steam power or Information Technology (IT) in the modern world, the countries which have the ideal internal structures to suit the change are able to take advantage of the change and thus move from their current position. Wallerstein gives the example of the Dutch who had the necessary internal structures to take advantage of the system when it first changed to a capitalist system and were thus able to become the first hegemon of that system (Halsall, 1997). In this sense countries are able to change their position within the system if they are able to generate the correct internal structures to fully exploit the changing system.

The thesis will link in with the idea that countries can move between the layers based on their internal structures and how these allow a nation to take advantage of any changes within the system. This is of particular importance when one takes into account the paradox between the brain drain and the maintenance of culture. This is because for Samoa to take advantage of any changes within the system they will need to have the internal structures in place which will assist them to do so. However, due to the brain drain many of the skilled individuals have left the country and this poses an issue to the development of internal structures. The theory will allow for a deeper exploration of what the ideal internal structures are and through this will enable the project to generate potential policy recommendations which will look to create positive development and overcome issues that arise out of the paradox. Furthermore, the theory will enable the thesis to explore to what extent the high levels of migration and the way in which they are utilising the surrounding region portrays Samoa as more of a core-like country within the Pacific region. This will allow for a broader view of the Pacific context as it incorporates the traditional histories regarding Samoa’s position within the Pacific region.

Core: Core countries are involved in capital intensive production which increases the flow of surplus to the core. They also have the ideal internal structures with which to take advantage of the current system such as a strong government and a well-functioning bureaucracy (Halsall, 1997). America is an excellent example of a current core country.

Semi-Periphery: “*Semi-peripheral states acts as a buffer zone between core and periphery*” (Martinez-Vel, 2001, p.4). They have relatively good internal dynamics though they do not function optimally which halts not only their ability to move into the core but also threatens their position in the semi-periphery. New Zealand is a good example of a semi-periphery country.

Periphery: The periphery has the least well-functioning internal dynamics and is constantly exploited by core countries. They are not able to add value and mainly provide raw materials to core countries (Halsall, 1997). Papua New Guinea is a prime example of a peripheral country.

Theory of Institutional Change

The theory of institutional change as proposed by Douglass North is also based on the notion that history matters. This is because the “*present and the future are connected to the past by the continuity of a society’s institutions*” (North, 1990, p.vii). North focusses on institutions, how these change over time and how they affect the development of a country and society. Institutions can be seen as the rules of the game, or “*the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction*” (North, 1990, p.3). Institutions provide structure, stability and reduce uncertainty within everyday life, while changes within the institutions shape the way in which a society evolves over time (North, 1990, p.3-6). While institutions form the rules of the game, organisations are the players. Humans form themselves into organisations such as unions, social bodies or political parties, with these groups of individuals being “*bound by some common purpose to achieve objectives*” (North, 1990, p.5). Organisations are one of the key actors effecting institutional change through attempting to achieve their goals. They take advantage of the opportunities that the institutional framework provides, which can unfortunately also lead to corruption and bribery practices within a society if it is to the advantage of certain organisations.

Individuals within organisations, can also impact upon institutional change as they partake in wealth maximising behaviour (North, 1990, p.73, 78). Individuals make use of two

types of knowledge, communicable and tacit, in order to generate maximising behaviour. Communicable knowledge is that which is passed from one person to another (North, 1990, p.74). While tacit knowledge is acquired through practise and can only “*be partially communicated*” (North, 1990, p.74). In other words tacit knowledge is gained through a ‘learning by doing’ model. An individual will utilise these two forms of knowledge in order to maximise their opportunities, this will influence the organisation they are associated with and in turn the characteristics of the institutions (North, 1990, p.80). Yet there is another aspect to be taken into account when trying to understand the characteristics of an institution. This is based on the willingness of a society to gain knowledge of either form. All societies face problems and it is a society that “*permits the maximum generation of trials will be most likely to solve problems through time*” (North, 1990, p.81) with North calling this adaptive efficiency. In this sense the better shaped a society’s institutions are towards generating a willingness to acquire knowledge through creative, though potentially risky, behaviour will determine a country’s ability to create dynamic growth and development. Thus the incentives for such behaviour should be encouraged within a society to assist a country find alternative solutions to the multitude of problems it constantly faces (North, 1990, p.81). This can go some way to explaining why Samoa has not experienced rapid growth in recent times and also links to the central paradox, in that Samoa has high levels of brain drain and thus the knowledge or individuals who may be best equipped to undertake risky behaviour are not in the country and this means that the country and the culture face stagnation.

Societies are also impacted upon by formal and informal constraints. Such constraints impact upon a country’s developmental course and whether they stagnate or grow dynamically because should these constraints not be present then every society would reach a maximum level of efficiency. Informal constraints are constraints that are shaped by the culture and the history of a society. They are constraints that a society places on themselves to govern human interaction and to ensure stability. Informal constraints play an important role within the Samoan society given the strength of Fa’a Samoa and how it defines individual’s lives. North speaks of the fact that it is the culture, or informal constraints, which impact upon the way in which an individual processes and makes use of information (North, 1990, p.37).

Formal constraints, on the other hand, can be seen as laws, policies or written constitutions. These differ from the informal constraints which are steeped in traditional knowledge, but are also designed to provide stability to society and reduce transaction costs (North, 1990, p.46). Formal rules can be seen as extensions of informal rules in that for example laws are still based on cultural norms and understandings (North, 1990, p.36-53). Informal

constraints change very slowly over time while formal constraints can change very rapidly. Societies can also change the way they view an issue and will, through this change of mind-set, also slowly begin to change the informal constraints which surround the issue (North, 1990, p. 84-86). Thus, “[p]erceptions are derived from the mental constructs of the players“ (North, 1993, p.1).

Within a society, stability is key and is generated through a complex combination of both the formal and informal constraints, which are nested in a hierarchy “*where each level is more costly to change than the previous one*” (North, 1990, p.83). Individuals are still the key agents of change and they will change the hierarchy should they see it as beneficial to themselves even though this may affect the stability of the system. There are two other methods through which institutional change can occur and this is through either a relative price change or a change in preference. A relative price change can lead to a major change within the structure of the hierarchy to ensure that the gains of the change can be properly maximised. Such changes can include the changes to the cost of information or the labour to capital ratio (North, 1990, p.84). The second method through which a change can occur is through a change of preferences. Such changes are much more abstract and can, for example, be a change in the nature of the family structure (North, 1990, p.84).

Finally, North’s notion of path dependency plays an important role within the thesis. Path dependency explains that countries travel along a certain path and that this path is incrementally adjusted over time. The source for this incremental adjustment is “*the gains to be obtained by organisations and their entrepreneurs from acquiring skills, knowledge, and information that will enhance their objectives*” (North, 1990, p.112). In other words the path that a country has travelled is based upon the specific contexts within the country and the way in which organisations have engaged with the context. As North describes; “*path dependence would entail an account of the political, economic, and judicial systems of each society as a web of interconnected formal rules and informal constraints that together made up the institutional matrix and led the economies down different paths*” (North, 1990, p.115).

Thus having a thorough understanding of the historical context of a particular country not only allows for an understanding as to why it is dynamic or stagnant, but also why certain organisations have become more important than others in that country’s current setting. It is also a model that allows for the role of social norms and gives credit to their role in the direction a country has developed (North, 1990, p.118-129). This not only links into constructivist thinking but is also important to the Samoan context because it allows the impact of past events, historical settings and cultural traditions to portray why, for example, the current levels of

migration are as high as they are.

Background

The Samoan archipelago is a group of volcanic mountain tops which were formed millions of years ago. There are two island groups with Savai'i and Upolu the two main islands in the Western group. Namu, Nu'utele, Apolima, Manono, Nu'ulua and Nu'usafe'e are small islands that are also part of this group. This group of islands is what is known today as Samoa. To the east, approximately forty kilometres, lies the islands of Tutuila and Aunu'u, the two main islands of what is now known as American Samoa. American Samoa is also made up of the Manu'a island group, which consists of Ta'u, Olosega and Ofu. Two smaller atolls, Rose Island and Swains Island, complete the territory of American Samoa (Meleisea, 1987a, p.1-2). The hot and humid climate encourages plant growth and the Samoan islands are covered in lush green bush.

Samoans have two main legends that speak of their history, how the land was created and how the people came to be, with there being a strong feeling that Samoans originated in Samoa (Meleisea, 1987a, p.2). Both legends speak of the great god Tagaloa, who is the creator of all things. It was Tagaloa who brought the islands out of the ocean, who created man and animal and exonerated chiefly titles and privileges.¹ The legends vary in certain degrees, but do not contradict each other. This is because it is an oral tradition and the stories are always told in a manner which suits or elevates the speaker (Meleisea, 1987a, p.10, 31-33). Early religion within Samoa was based on the worship of many Gods. Samoans believed that gods affected human action and were of two types. The first is Atua, of non-human origin, and the second was Aitu which are of human origin. The Atua were the original gods, while the Aitu were half human, half god (Meleisea, 1987a, p.35-6). However, Christianity is now the main religion and fulfils a very important role within Samoan society. The main religious denominations seem to be the various Protestant strains, though there is a freedom of religion law within Samoa and everything from Mormon churches to a Baha'i temple can be found in the country.

The scientific version of events is based on archaeological research, linguistics and biology (Meleisea, 1987a, p. 11-13). Pre-historians believe that earliest settlers in the Pacific arrived 40,000 years ago from, or through, South East Asia (Meleisea, 1987a, p. 13). However,

¹ Please refer to Meleisea (1987a) p. 2-10 for a retelling of the legends.

it was roughly 10,000 years ago that a new group of humans moved from South East Asia and into the islands of Vanuatu, New Caledonia, New Guinea and the Solomons. *“Prehistorians have found evidence in these Melanesian islands which suggest that animals, such as the dog and the pig, and plants such as taro, were brought into the Pacific 10,000 to 20,000 years ago”* (Meleisea, 1987a, p. 13). These settlers are associated with the Austronesian group of languages, *“the largest related group of languages in the world”* (Meleisea 1987a, p.13). The movement of the Austronesian languages into the central and south west Pacific is often associated with the movement of the Lapita culture. The Lapita culture has a very distinctive pottery and fragments of such pottery have been found through-out the Pacific. Current Polynesian people, pre-historians will argue, are almost certainly direct descendants of this culture (Meleisea 1987a, p.13-18). They were seen as a group of *“highly mobile...sea borne colonists and explorers, who expanded very rapidly through-out Melanesia in the mid-late second millennium B.C., and into Polynesia”* (Bellwood as quoted in Meleisea ,1987a, p. 15). It is unclear whether the Lapita people first settled in Tonga or Samoa, however Samoan is known as the centre of Polynesia. From here it is said that Polynesians settlers spread to Tahiti, Hawai’i, New Zealand and Easter Island (Meleisea 1987a, p. 17). It is important to note the seafaring, explorative nature of these early settlers. They travelled many hundreds of kilometres to small islands with great skill and assurance. It also shows that there has been a steady migration around the Pacific from the early times, through South East Asia, into Samoa and then spreading out into the Pacific.

Samoa itself appears to have been occupied in approximately 1,000 B.C., based on archaeological discoveries of fragments of Lapita pottery in Mulifanua on Upolu. Samoa seems also to have had a rather stable population over the last 3000 years. First estimates recorded, by early missionaries in the 1830’s, were thought to be below 50,000. There have been many different opinions as to why there was such a small and relatively stable population size over the last 2,000 years (Meleisea, 1987a, p.24-25). It would seem that the answer might lie in the traditions of the Samoan people. For one they had an understanding of the abundant resources that were of a limited variety that their land offered them. Therefore controlling the population was one way to ensure sustainability and longevity. This was observed by early missionaries who said it was uncommon to see a mother with more than four children (Meleisea, 1987a, p.25). This kept the population at a stable rate. Samoans were also said to be very happy and satisfied people. There was a vast abundance of food given the great natural characteristics of the islands. Further everyone had access to the land and could utilise it to ensure that people were rarely hungry. In fact, in many reports, scowling or unhappy faces were also very hard to

come by, thus portraying that Samoans had reached a very comfortable and abundant way of life by the early 19th Century (Meleisea, 1987a, p. 26).

Samoan life has always revolved around the village and a strict village hierarchy. The Samoan word for village is nu'u and nu'u are made up of aiga or families. Aiga is a widespread term that includes extended family and can also be termed extended kin-group. A number of nu'u who join together, form a district or itu malo. However nu'u are more than just a settlement. They are a group of aiga who share a common history which is summarised in a fa'alupega which gives the village its identity. The fa'alupega is a form of traditional greeting which explains the highest matai titles and set out the rank of each title within the village thus creating a constitution as such (Meleisea, 1987a, p.27-28). Land was very important to the village and was divided into three aspects; plantation, settlement and village land. All villages had access to the land for hunting, fishing and gathering (Meleisea, 1987a, p. 26-27). The nu'u also have a very strict governance system. This system was based around the council of matai's or fono, "*which made decisions on all matters beyond the scope of individual aiga*" (Meleisea, 1987b, p. 7). The fono is responsible for organising a great deal of communal work such as hunting, fishing, war and clearing of land. However, within the aiga, it is the matai who will decide the distribution of land amongst the families. Matai, or chief, is a term that can be translated to mean consecrated or set apart (Meleisea, 1987b, p. 7). There are also the aumaga, or untitled men, who carried out most of the labour such as hunting and fishing. Though this was usually done in coordination with the matai as only very highly ranked matai would not work the land. There are also the aualuma, made up of all the women and girls. The aualuma hold great status within the nu'u, with it being common for a high ranking maiden walk at the head of a war party. They were also responsible for the weaving of fine mats and the welcoming and entertaining of guests (Meleisea, 1987b, p.7). Matai serve as the head of the aiga and have authority and dignity. The rank of a title belongs to the title and not the holder but all matai titles hold much mana, both in historical and modern times. To take on a matai title or to be given a matai title is a huge honour and privilege. But it also comes with responsibilities. A matai can gain future titles through good deeds and hard work though a title can also be let slip through the opposite. The matai system within the village is all encompassing and powerful and the decisions that they make in the fono are final.

The political division within Samoa is also based on the nu'u. Before 1900 each village was autonomous and thus different governance systems were current within the different nu'u. Districts could also change if different villages went to war or had a disagreement and would join another district (Meleisea, 1987a, p.29). Samoa is known for its divisions. These divisions

can be created through war or through the will of a paramount matai. Some divisions also come from traditions. For example Upolu was divided between the sons of Pili, who was the son of Tagalo-a-lagi (Meleisea, 1987a, p.29).

While it is difficult to define ancient trade and relations networks within the Pacific, they were certainly present and very prominent. Not only were the trade networks a clear example of how skilful the navigators of this time were, but it also shows the explorative and inquisitive nature of the Pacific peoples. Basalt adzes were one item which was part of early inter-island trade. One example of Samoan adze trade, has shown the movement of adzes to the Southern Cook Islands 1600km away. This:

“call[s] into question the assumption of isolation once any given island group had been discovered and settled by Polynesian voyagers. Indeed, ... results lend considerable support to the view that regular long-distance voyaging between distant archipelagos was common throughout much of Polynesia” (Weisler & Kirch, 1996, p. 1384).

Further, some would argue that Polynesians even reached South America in order to trade. While this is a contentious issue, even though Thor Heyerdahl attempted to prove otherwise, there is evidence to suggest that some form of contact was made with South American Indians by Polynesian explorers (Meleisea, 1987a, p.18). Though this is still a contentious issue and the overwhelming evidence based on linguistics and archaeological evidence shows the strong connection to South East Asia, the fact that Polynesians had most likely travelled to South America shows the knowledge and commitment to explore. It also goes to show that the colonisation of the Pacific was not accidental, that it was well planned and intentional. This pre-colonial view of the Pacific region can be described, *“as a ‘sea of islands’ within which people moved freely and frequently, created social networks, traded and exchanged goods, and at times engaged in conflict and attempted to exert dominance over one another”* (Lee, 2009, p. 7). This view, proposed by E. Hau’ofa, *“suggests a Pacific model of migration and transnationalism in which the ocean connects migrants to their homelands and is not regarded as a hindrance to their ongoing, enduring ties”* (Hau’ofa in Lee, 2009, p. 7).

This migratory nature did not phase out during post-colonial times. In fact, with the coming of the colonial powers and their modern technologies, Pacific Islanders were able to travel further afield and settle beyond the Pacific (Lee, 2009, p. 7). The new larger European vessels allowed for Polynesian’s to reach the port towns of Sydney in Australia and Auckland in New Zealand and this began the early connections between these countries. There were a number of reasons for this early movement and by the mid–19th century a labour trade had emerged, which enabled Islanders to travel to countries such as Australia to work in the sugar

plantations (Lee, 2009, p. 7). However, while some of this movement was voluntary “*as people sought new ways to access the goods and money that were rapidly transforming their home economies, [the other aspect was] the notorious ‘blackbirding’ in which people were taken against their will*” (Lee, 2009, p.7). Colonialism also initiated a changing of the view of the Pacific, where once the Pacific Ocean was seen as a connection between the early migrants, or travellers/explorers, and their homeland, now the ocean was seen as vast and dividing and the islands which populated the open tracts of sea as small and isolated (Lee, 2009, p. 7).

Post World War II saw a very interesting period in Samoan history. To begin with Samoa became the first independent state in the Pacific, moving away from New Zealand sovereignty in 1962. It was also the period that the need for workers in countries such as New Zealand, Australia and the USA opened up pathways for Pacific migrants. New Zealand, especially, experienced rapid growth in the agricultural and industrial sectors during the 1950’s and thus they sought to actively recruit labour from Pacific Island countries, including Samoa. The colonial ties increased the number of migrants meaning that the period could be seen as a time of significant migration (Lee, 2009, p. 8). Samoa and New Zealand have a long history in terms of migration through ‘work permit schemes.’ From the 1970’s New Zealand introduced the Samoa Quota which allowed 1100 Samoans to migrate each year. This has had fluctuating success in terms of filling the quota, with some years it being full and others not. New Zealand also tried a visa free entry scheme in the late 1980’s but the sheer number of migrants who utilised this, with the figures doubling those of the previous five year period, meant that the scheme was halted after only a number of months (Lee, 2009, p. 10). From the late 1980’s onwards New Zealand began to focus on allowing only skilled migrants into the country. This can be seen as the first post-modern form of brain drain. While in historical times the travel and exploration of expert navigators and warriors could be seen as an early form of brain drain, now the demand for skilled rather than un-skilled labour could be seen as the new form of brain drain affecting Samoa. Currently Samoans access New Zealand through either the quota system or the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) Scheme. There were also high numbers of ‘overstayers’ in New Zealand and although the New Zealand Government worked hard to reduce these numbers, some have eventually been offered citizenship (Lee, 2009, p. 10). This portrays the key form of migration from Samoa in the colonial and post-colonial times. However, Samoans have also, to a lesser degree, migrated to Australia and the USA. Originally it was very difficult for Pacific Islanders to migrate to Australia, however recently many have utilised the Trans-Tasman Travel Arrangement, which allows for individuals with New Zealand citizenship to access, work and live in Australia (Lee, 2009, p. 11). This stepped

migration is also prevalent within the migration of Samoans to the USA. Here American Samoa and Hawai'i are utilised as stepping stones for gaining access to mainland USA (Lee, 2009, p.11-12). Currently Samoans make up the largest portion of Pacific Islanders living in the USA today (Lee, 2009, p. 12).

However, what is becoming prevalent within this migration is the demand from the host country for skilled labour. New Zealand was the first to push for this but other countries have begun to follow suit. This has placed a distinct pressure on Samoa itself. The brain drain is realised as an issue in almost all sectors of Samoan society and even aid agencies perceive the high levels of migration, and especially skilled migration, an issue that is having a marked effect on Samoa's ability to develop further (Asian Development Bank 2012; Faoagali 2015; Lealaiauloto Aigaletaulealea F. Tauafiafi, 2015).

Currently the Samoan population sits at an estimated 193,483 with 157,527 of those citizens living rurally (SBS, 2015). The average population growth rate over "*the most recent intercensal period (2001-06) averaged 0.3 percent*" (UNFPA, 2013). Such low population growth is due to the high levels of emigration, with emigration offsetting "*85 percent of [the] natural increase, thus acting as a 'safety valve' for population growth.*" (UNFPA, 2013) The net emigration rate is -1.7 percent per year (UNFPA, 2013).

As this background goes to show, migration, movement and travel has always been a part of the Samoan history and in many ways their culture as well. From early exploration colonisation and trade, through to the temporary workers schemes and quota systems, Samoan people have constantly been moving not only around the Pacific but also further afield. This has led to what some scholars have termed a 'new Pacific triangle' to "*describe the population that stretches beyond the Pacific to North America, New Zealand and Australia*" (Lee, 2009, p. 12). However, what is important to note amongst this constant migration is the fact that the migrants themselves, whether they are temporary or permanent have always maintained very strong links to their homeland, i.e. Samoa (Lee, 2009, p. 13). This transnational nature of the Samoan people is a point that will be taken up in further detail throughout the analysis, but here allows an initial insight into the way in which migration has impacted upon the Samoan culture.

Analysis

Part 1: How the Brain Drain came to be in Samoa and the Paradox it Created with the need to Maintain the Culture

In order to gain a complete understanding of the brain drain issue and its impact upon cultural maintenance within Samoa today, it is important to explore the preceding factors that have led to the current issue. Though some have argued that the brain drain within Samoa is a relatively new phenomena, not becoming fully fledged before the 1960's and 70's (Connell, 2003, p.55), the precedents for such migration have been around for many centuries as the Background section portrays. It is important to review the historical precedents because the structures that a culture generates define its ability to develop and progress (North, 1997, p. 3). Such structures are defined by past knowledge and experiences and therefore it is very important to understand the historical context within which the brain drain occurs. Furthermore, within the Samoan context the indigenous views, knowledge and experiences have largely been over looked by modern scholars. Yet these structures play an integral role in understanding the brain drain (Sa'iliemanu Lilomaiava-Doktor, 2009a, p.1). Douglass North spoke of this in his theory of path dependence. Path dependence entails an “*account of the political, economic, and judicial systems of each society as a web of interconnected formal rules and informal constraints that together made up the institutional matrix and led the economies down different paths*” (North, 1990, p. 115).

Therefore, within Samoa, current migration trends have precedents that can be found within the history and by exploring the migration patterns which populated Samoa and the Pacific an interesting foundation for current trends can be found. As explained in the Background, their history is one of planned migration, travel and exploration (Meleisea, 1987a, p. 15). Samoans are some of the world's greatest explorers and they travelled and traded as well as settled throughout the Pacific. These journeys were not accidental, with the early explorers deliberately migrating between the island nations (Parsonson, 1962, p.21). Further, there is a strong feeling in Samoa that Samoans originate from Samoa. Samoan legends speak

of the notion that Samoa is the ‘Heart of Polynesia’ from where individuals travelled and settled surrounding island groups (Meleisea, 1987a, p. 2, 17). This goes to show that, no matter which way one perceives the history of the Pacific, and the Samoan people specifically, that migration, travel, exploration, and trade has been a key part of their history. That they were by no means a static people and that the ocean and great distances were no barrier. North would argue that it is very important to understand these aspects of history as it enables an ability to contextualise current trends, to give them a background and meaning. In this sense, today's levels of migration and the mind-sets of current citizens have a platform within the history. This became clear during my interviews where it was mentioned that there is an urge to travel in the Samoan psyche (Faoagali 2015; Rivers 2015).

To further emphasise the importance of path dependency in explaining current trends, one must also take into account the culture and the fact that Samoans have a differing understanding of home and abroad. To understand this aspect it is important to gain a sense of the strength of Fa’a Samoa. As was described in the Key Terms, Fa’a Samoa is an all-encompassing and everyday living experience which guides not only individual lives but also families and communities (Sa’iliemanu Lilomaiava-Doktor, 2009a, p.7). What is important here is the connection between kin, the sense of duty and the need to provide for one’s family or aiga. This understanding of the local context is often overlooked in current discussions regarding migration within the Pacific where the indigenous view is not always utilised (Sa’iliemanu Lilomaiava-Doktor, 2009a, p.3). There are a number of crucial aspects which make up Fa’a Samoa; place of origin or i’inei, aiga or kin which is “*conceived of as tino e tasi (one body) and tot e tasi (one blood), and principles of tautua (service), fa’alavelave (obligations), alofa (love, compassion) and fa’aaloalo (respect) in kinship relations*” (Sa’iliemanu Lilomaiava-Doktor, 2009a, p.7). These concepts create an environment where, although the home is a key source of identification in Fa’a Samoa, Samoan migrants do not live in two worlds with no singular home because they “*remain firmly rooted in their identification with their place of origin*” (Sa’iliemanu Lilomaiava-Doktor, 2009a, p. 7). These body and blood links are “*internally related and functionally independent*” (Sa’iliemanu Lilomaiava-Doktor, 2009a, p. 7). Furthermore, there is a key term from within Samoan culture, Malaga, which assists in giving a background to the brain drain issue. Malaga is generally translated to mean travel or migration, but it also implying a movement “*back and forth*” (Sa’iliemanu Lilomaiava-Doktor, 2009a, p. 9). This notion can be utilised to describe the way in which Samoans understand migration, seeing it as a “*culturally informed, historically grounded response to modernisation and globalisation*” (Sa’iliemanu Lilomaiava-Doktor,

2009a, p.1). To clarify this point further:

“Malaga metaphorically represents the different places Samoans live without inserting them into dichotomies such as rural/urban, Samoa/America or Samoa/New Zealand. Malaga situates individuals in the realm of their aiga. Irrespective of location, those who move are not perceived as [individuals of no worlds but of two world and thus] being simultaneously involved both i’ineai (home, local) and fafo (overseas, abroad)” (Sa’iliemanu Lilomaiava-Doktor, 2009a, p. 12).

What becomes clear here is that neither home nor overseas are static, the two, in terms of i’ineai and fafo, meet and overlap within the diaspora. This indicates that the disruption that the term brain drain is often used to imply, in the Samoan context is missing (Sa’iliemanu Lilomaiava-Doktor 2009a, p. 1). This is an important notion in terms of the history and utilising it to explain the current trends of migration. It can be interpreted to mean that though Samoans may travel overseas in search of better opportunities, they do so while maintaining a connection to their wider family group or aiga and through this to their village and community and thus their country as well. Therefore it can be said that *“Aiga need population movement for economic, social and cultural development; [while] migrants need spiritual and emotional nourishment themselves”* (Sa’iliemanu Lilomaiava-Doktor, 2009b).

It has also been contended that the Samoan brain drain phenomena needs to be renamed. One potential option is to rename it ‘Malo le Falouga,’ or *travel to serve* (Carrillo, 2006). This is because even though people migrate they are actually trying to better the future possibilities of their family, or to generate an income which can support the family or aiga back home. This shows a different view of the brain drain to what it can become associated with. Rather than brain drain creating uprootedness, isolation and disruption and a cutting off from one’s culture or country it is intended to cause the opposite (Sa’iliemanu Lilomaiava-Doktor, 2009a, p. 1). What it implies instead is that there is constant contact between the migrant and the family, ensuring that there is little sense of loss or distance, because they inhabit the same space through their aiga. Taking such an indigenous view of the situation, helps also to contextualise the issue of the brain drain, in today’s world. This scholarly view is backed up by the empirical data gathered in that one of the key reasons that was given for leaving was to serve the family and ensure the livelihood of the families (Vaauli, 2015). This shows that utilising a path dependence approach allows for a different take on the brain drain story. Within Samoa the desire to serve the family and the sense of duty matched with the knowledge that location and movement are merely a method of dealing with modernisation and globalisation, gives more meaning to current trends. Thus it becomes clear that within Fa’a Samoa the individual is first

and foremost an important part of the aiga, no matter where they may currently reside. Further, the development of the aiga is of central importance, such developments can include spiritual, economic or social development (Sa'iliemanu Lilomaiava-Doktor 2009a, p. 8). Within these spheres a migrant can actually assist in the aiga's development, regardless of where they are located.

In this sense, even though there may be a strong pattern of brain drain out of Samoa, the fact that the individual who does migrate retains their identity and knowledge of self through this strong cultural connection means that the culture is able to be maintained through the migrant individual. They can assist in the development of their aiga or communities and families and through this they can assist in the avoidance of a degradation of their culture. Thus, through exploring the history of Samoa utilising path dependence, one is able to gain a clearer understanding as to the on-going importance of migration within the Samoan context. Through the indigenous views such as malaga it becomes clear that the migratory nature of Samoa is not something that is a new phenomenon. That travel and exploration have been a part of the society from the beginning, whether one chooses to believe in the legends or the modern historical tales. That in the Samoan case, the foundation for the brain drain in some ways comes directly from the culture itself. The culture has fostered the migration, but has ensured that there are structures in place through which to take advantage of such migration.

Given the importance to the culture of the Samoan brain drain, it seems pertinent to explore the robustness of Samoan culture and how adaptable it is to change. D. North places an emphasis on the institutions within a country, and how they are structured and what impact this has on a culture's ability to progress (North, 1990, p. 3). Samoa does have a very robust culture, given that they are "*fully in control of both their land and their political future*" (Tavana, 2002, p. 22). Further, Samoa has progressed through colonialism and yet still maintained the traditional system of Government, grafting into it the Westminster system (Sefulu, 1983, p. 521).² Thus one could say that the cultural institutions that are in place are most certainly beneficial to the maintenance of the culture.

However, though this view of the culture is very positive there are some very important issues that the culture will need to overcome in the near future. According to North, a society is best able to develop further through encouraging risk taking behaviour in order to gain both

² There are differing views regarding the impact of the twin governing system on the culture. Please see Meleisea (2005) for an excellent argument regarding this. The key point for this thesis is that the culture has survived colonialism and has had the initiative and robustness to try and mould both governing systems together in an attempt to get the best of both ideologies.

tacit and communicable knowledge. Such behaviour enables a society, or culture, to find ideal solutions to overcome the issues that they come to face (North, 1990, p. 80-81). One of the more effective ways of promoting such behaviour is through the arts. The arts, self-expression and a critical view allow for open discussions regarding issues that societies face and the generation of ideas for ways to overcome those issues. It demands people to think outside the square and to engage critically with their surrounds. Influential Samoan novelist, Albert Wendt, expressed this view when saying, “[w]e should write our own histories in order to be free of those histories written about us” (Wendt as quoted in Sharrad, 2002, p.110). Yet, what became clearer during the interviews was that it would seem that this aspect of Samoan society is often being repressed currently. Most of the famous novelists and artists reside outside of the country because they cannot complete the work they would like within the country (Taule’alo, 2015). This can be viewed as a form of brain drain in that the skilled critical thinkers are not based in the country. They can influence it from afar as is the case with Wendt, who has dedicated his life to re-portraying Samoa and the Pacific in a non-colonial light (Sharrad, 2002, p.109). However, the structures that have been created, the institutions as North would call them, within the country seem not to be generating this open and critical thinking which would be of huge benefit to the country. Instead, it was pointed out that currently there is a lack of ability to express oneself and thus many artists reside overseas (Taule’alo, 2015). The interviews also highlighted that it was not only the artists who have been pushed to migrate due to the constrictiveness. Individuals, who may have no desire to relocate, are pushed to because of the nature of the village structure (Taule’alo, 2015). Such migration deprives the village of a source of innovation, labour and potential progression and when matched with the already high levels of migration can have a negative impact. While the village structure has been an excellent method for preserving the culture, generating a more open structure, which promotes a willingness to acquire new knowledge through potentially risky behaviour and having institutions that allow for critical thinking, deliberation and self-expression, could create an environment and a culture that would be able to tackle future problems just as well, if not better than, the way in which Samoa has been able to maintain their culture in the past. However if the current conservatism remains, it can be hypothesised that further migration will take place as people tire of the intimate and strict culture and this will only add to the current brain drain and thus perpetuate current developmental issues. This portrays one of the negative aspects of the brain drain and its impact upon cultural maintenance. While in the first instance the culture is able to utilise the brain drain to better the aiga’s future, if the culture does not begin to open up and allow for self-criticism and self-reflection then it will push more people into migrating

and this form of brain drain will have a negative impact upon the culture.

Samoan culture is also challenged by the brain drain because when many of the skilled individuals have left the country it means there is room for foreign workers to enter the country to fill the vacated positions. This becomes important for the Samoan culture and its ability to decide upon its own path into the future, especially when one takes into account constructivist thinking which argues that dominant ideologies adjust and adapt to the changing times and individuals within those changes (Jackson & Sorensen, 2006, p.168-9). This is becoming more of an issue recently with the Government of Samoa wanting to introduce a Citizen Investment Bill, which basically dictates that an individual of a foreign country willing to invest four million tala into Samoa can become a citizen and will be able to own land (Tupufia, 2014). This has led to some very serious debate within Samoa. The Government does not actually own much free hold land as most of the land is communally owned by the villages. According to Samoan legends this land was divided and distributed to the people by the Gods. Thus the land holds the mana of the village, while also having a mana of its own. The only way that the land could change hands was through it being given as a gift by the Matai of the village to another or through conquest (Meleisea, 1987a, p. 29). Furthermore because Samoa is not the most sizeable country, land and the ownership of land becomes even more important. Given the importance of land within the historical and social context of Samoan culture it is very understandable that the general public are very concerned by the actions of their Government in offering land for a mere sum of money. In 2014 the Bill was in its second reading in the House and has even been opposed by members of the governing party who want to introduce the Bill (Lealaiauloto Aigaletaulealea F. Tauafiafi, 2015).

The Government argues that it is a method through which potential investors can come into the country and be able to access the needed resources, for example land, allowing for start-up business ventures which will be of benefit to not only the citizens but also the country as a whole. In this sense one can understand that the Government is trying to identify ways in which to attract foreign investors into the country in order to increase their economy and decrease the movement of skilled individuals through the creation of internal opportunities and thus lessen the brain drain issue. To this end the Prime Minister has spoken of the need for further employment opportunities within the country to ensure that there are enough jobs for graduate students (Lealaiauloto Aigaletaulealea F. Tauafiafi, 2015). The Prime Minister is also concerned with the lack of capacity within the country currently and so by enticing foreign investment this may be one way to build up the capacity within the country (Lealaiauloto Aigaletaulealea F. Tauafiafi, 2015).

This is of concern for the Government because while this thesis argues that there is a historical basis which portrays the migratory patterns which have pre-empted the current trends, out-migration still has a distinct impact on development (Gibson & McKenzie, 2011, p.107-8). Within development today, human capital plays an important role in terms of generating growth and being a key base for policies as shown through the focus that is placed on education and health (Croix et al, 2014, p.2). However, small island states are said to have higher on average emigration rates than other developing countries (Croix et al, 2014, p.4) and Samoa has one of the highest levels of brain drain at 73% (Croix et al, 2014, p. 13). Furthermore, smallness is said to increase the propensity to migrate (Croix et al, 2014, p.2). This is imperative because if places like Samoa did not experience such high levels of migration they would actually have a higher ratio of skilled workers than many high income countries (Croix et al, 2014, p. 13) and given the importance of human capital in development this is a key problem. This issue is exacerbated further by the notion that through globalisation much of the human capital moves towards the richer countries and makes it more difficult for poorer countries to retain their human capital. Thus making the rich countries richer and leaving the poorer countries to continue to struggle (Croix et al, 2014, p.2). This portrays a very difficult situation for Samoa, as they are a small nation who have high levels of emigration and thus struggle to maintain their human capital which will enable them to progress and develop.

With this in mind it becomes much clearer why the Government would want to introduce policies such as the Citizen Investment Bill, in order to ensure that the country is able to maintain some of their home-grown human capital and thus in turn be able to utilise this capital in order to further develop the country. The Government, realising this predicament, is attempting to deal with the drain of human capital as best they can and to generate growth within the country, but this places pressure on the culture. This is because, according to constructivism, should immigrants who become powerful and influential business people and own land will most likely begin to change the direction of the country and thus the culture. The issue with the changing of the internal dynamics in this manner is that it can change the path that Samoa is travelling along as it could now be influenced by individuals who have external motives and are not necessarily completely immersed in Samoan culture. In this case, the brain drain has a negative impact on the protection of the Samoan culture, the reason being that many of the young, educated and innovative individuals are overseas. This means that the country is deprived of individuals who have the knowledge of the global market and Fa'a Samoa and who could thus create business opportunities that are both progressive and culturally sensitive. In other words, it is such individuals who would best be able to take advantage of the knowledge

and expertise which foreigners can bring into a country and still ensure cultural robustness. Yet as it stands now, there are openings for powerful foreign investors to enter Samoa and become key actors within society and thus influence the internal dynamics to suit their external motives, rather than the Samoan culture's motives.

It is also realised that while the Bill has obvious effects on cultural dynamics so will a lack of growth. A stagnating country will have a negative impact upon the culture and can extend dependency patterns and reduce vibrancy. So while the current domestic mind-set would see this Bill as a having the potential to be damaging to the Samoan culture, if it is not introduced the country will risk not being able to retain their young graduates who can provide the culturally sensitive and progressive knowledge within the workforce that will help drive the economy and make use of the external expertise. Added to this is the notion that Samoans do like to travel, to explore and to live overseas, means that if the individuals who graduate within Samoa and don't want to travel, may have to anyway because there are no employment opportunities. Should this Bill be able to reduce the brain drain out of Samoa then it would indeed be very beneficial to the country and the culture. This is a clear view of the paradox between the brain drain and the affect it has on the culture of the sending country. On the one hand there are attempts as with the above mentioned Bill, to create opportunities domestically which will enable young graduates to remain in Samoa. This will further enable the country to benefit from having people who have both the education and the cultural knowledge to generate culturally sensitive progression. However it also means that Samoa will have to face a potential change to their culture should foreign business people become influential citizens and own land and thus begin to change the internal dynamics of the country which will in turn impact upon the culture.

As this section portrays the brain drain is having both a positive and negative effect on the culture. In the first case the brain drain can be seen as a way to assist with the development of the aiga and the village. It also portrays the indigenous view of distance and the fact that individuals are not separated from their homeland and families by geographical distance because they are connected through malaga. While on the other hand, the brain drain is leaving Samoa bereft of skilled individuals who can assist in progressing the culture through critically engaging with it and portraying this through the arts. The government is trying to assist as best they can with this, yet their most recent method, the Citizen Investment Bill, leaves the culture vulnerable to the influence of foreign business people which can mean that the cultural path will be influenced by external and not necessarily fully assimilated views. However, the fact that Fa'a Samoa is encouraging the brain drain and utilises it for the betterment of the aiga is

an excellent positive step towards further development.

Part 2: The Role of Remittances in the Central Paradox

Remittances are another aspect that has had both a positive and a negative impact on both sides of the central paradox. Remittances play an extremely important role within Samoa and its economy. In fact, Samoa is one of the countries that is seen as most reliant on remittances sent from their migrant populations overseas (Connell, 2003, p. 66) and it has been proposed that the economy may collapse if the flows of remittances decreased or stopped (Lee, 2009, p. 19). Thus, migration has played a very important role in the socio-economic development of Samoa, because the remittances they generate have been key in generating GDP growth and creating foreign exchange. This can be seen through the fact that migrant remittances contributed 19.7% of GDP in 2013 (World Bank V, 2015). Remittance incomes increased annually at a rate of 12.4% between 1997 and 2005 (UNFPA, 2013) amounting to USD 106.2 million in 2005 (IMF, 2015, p.12, table 1), thus portraying their importance to the country. Remittances have also proved a more reliable income source than exports, aid and tourism (Connell, 2015b, p. 175). This notion becomes critical when one takes into account the idea that, while Samoa has a very high level of migration and is one of the countries which is most reliant on the remittances generated (Connell, 2015b, p.123), these migrations levels appear to be slowly plateauing (Connell, 2003, p. 62). This can be seen through the current net migration which, according to the World Bank statistical department stands at 12,690 for the period 2010-2014 (World Bank II, 2015). This is down on the previous period of 2005-2009, where migration stood at 15,371 (World Bank III, 2015), however, this level has been consistent in the previous periods (World Bank IV, 2015). Added to this is the observation that remittances can also decay over time (Brown, 1998, p. 110-113). This creates an interesting issue for Samoa. Within the Pacific region it appears that remittances have not decayed markedly, though this could be because there is a lack of data available on the topic. What has been found, however, is that there is a higher propensity of temporary migrants to remit high levels of cash, while long term migrants also remit, it is usually not to the same level. Further, if a direct family member is still in the sending country then migrants' remittances tend to remain high while if most of the direct family of the migrant has also moved to the host country then the remittance levels become less (Brown, 1998, p. 112-113). Overall, *“the general consensus tends to be that remittances could be maintained for some time if current migration levels are sustained or increased, but even that will not guarantee an indefinite flow of remittances to the islands”* (Lee, 2009, p.22).

Given the importance of remittances to Samoa and its economy it has been proposed that Samoa is a MIRAB country. This analysis proposes that Samoa is heavily reliant on remittances from their migrants, hand-outs from aid agencies and utilising the country's bureaucracy as the main source of employment, thus the term: Migration, Remittance, Aid and Bureaucracy (MIRAB) country (Connell, 2003, p. 62; see also Bertram & Watters, 1986; Hau'ofa, 1994, p. 150; Bertram, 2006). To this end the Samoan Government has generated policies which perpetuate the migratory patterns in order to ensure that the remittance flows remain intact (Connolly, 2015b, p. 122). This can be seen through the way in which the Government has tried to alleviate the lack of job opportunities in Samoa through seasonal workers schemes to New Zealand and Australia (Moustafa et al, 2012, p. 35). Further, a reliance on remittances creates dependence and hinders the expansion of the local economy (Lee, 2009, p. 20). This is because individuals become too reliant on remittances and do not invest in local infrastructure (Connell & Brown, 1995, p. 20-22), thus reinforcing the need for hand-outs and remittances. Added to this is the fact that, it has been proposed that the brain drain out of the country also enables a muscle drain. This is because once migrants have become settled in another country it makes it easier for less skilled relations to relocate to the new country as well because of the familial ties and relative security of the educated migrant (Gibson & McKenzie, 2011, p. 114-116). This means that the work force at home is lessened both in terms of skilled individuals and also non-skilled individuals and can stand in the way of progression at home within key sectors such as tourism and agriculture (Moustafa et al, 2012, p 34-35). While it can be argued that such muscle migrants do contribute to the sending country through the remittances which they send back to their families it does impact negatively on the culture. This is because it in many ways perpetuates a hand out mentality that the MIRAB state hints towards. This portrays the negative impact of the brain drain on the maintenance of culture in that it can create a hand-out mentality and can disrupt the growth of the economy through a lack of investment. This places further pressure upon the families and they turn to remittances in order to cover their living expenses, which merely perpetuates the cycle. Such domestic values are of key importance according to constructivist thinking. This is because domestic values influence policy makers and their decisions (Jackson & Sorensen, 2006, p 170-172). Because of the domestic notions of relying on remittances and the hand out mentality the Government perpetuates the notion through their policies as can be seen through the focus on seasonal workers schemes, mentioned above. Thus the Government is not necessarily interested in dabbling with the high levels of migration because of the remittances that they generate (Connolly, 2015b, p. 122). One can see that in this instance the brain drain is having

a negative impact on Samoa's ability to develop and to remove the hand out mentality from the culture.

However, the Government has attempted, in connection with its key development partners, to overcome this reliance on remittances. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has proposed an export based economy based on a strengthened domestic market will enable Samoa to overcome the hand out mentality and a reliance on remittances.

“The domestic private sector needs to play a greater role in the economies of the South Pacific to quell high economic volatility stemming from the outsized influence of such external factors as tourism, remittances, and development partners’ spending on infrastructure. Entrepreneurship, private investment, and private sector jobs are integral to achieving sustainable economic growth and reducing poverty” (Asian Development Bank, 2015, p. 276).

This standard method of development has yet to achieve overly positive results (Maiava & King, 2007, p. 87) and is therefore pressuring the culture through the high levels of skilled migration due to the lack of opportunities locally. However, it seems the Samoan Government is set on following this developmental philosophy. This could be because Samoa has recently graduated from Least Developed Country (LDC) status to Middle Income Country (MIC) status (UNDESA, 2015). This is a very positive change for the country and shows that progression is being made, however it also poses issues for the country. For example they will no longer receive privileged access to trade markets and thus will need to place a strong emphasis on strengthening local economic institutions to ensure the country is able to generate income from exports without privileged access to foreign markets. To this end the Government is actually working hard to create possibilities internally. One of the ways in which they are attempting to generate employment and attract investors is through the Small Business Enterprise Centre (SBEC). SBEC is a Samoan organisation with strong ties to both New Zealand and Australia. The organisation's key function is to assist small businesses to grow, achieve viability, efficiency and identify niche markets (SBEC, 2014). It has been identified that there is a niche market which Samoa can fulfil within the Pacific as there is a high demand for Samoan products in both New Zealand and Australia given the size of the Samoan diaspora in those countries. The issue is that there is the demand but not the consistency in the supply nor the quantity that is needed in order to take full advantage of this demand. To overcome this, youth could be employed in the supply chain in order to ensure that all the production and manufacturing of the product is performed in Samoa and thus they can gain from the employment created, rather than having the process take place overseas. Further the Government has implemented, in conjunction with UNDP, the Enhanced Integrated

Framework (EIF). The EIF “*helps least-developed countries (LDCs) play a more active role in the global trading system. The programme has a wider goal of promoting economic growth and sustainable development and helping to lift more people out of poverty*” (WTO, 2015).

Initiatives such as these would assist in changing the current levels of value adding within the key sectors of agriculture and industry. According to the ADB ‘Basic Statistics 2014,’ the value added to the annual real growth rates by the Agricultural sector was -3.0, while the Industry sector stood at -4.5, with only the Service sector showing any positive trends with a value adding ratio of 1.8 (Asian Development Bank, 2014. p. 6). In theory this would assist with the reduction of forced migration as people would not have to look overseas for opportunities, not only because of the lack of opportunities locally, but also because most of those opportunities are in the highly insecure informal sector (World Bank I, 2014, p. 3-5).

The brain drain is one issue that stands in the way of generating such economic institutions as many of the capable individuals move overseas. The contradiction here is that the government wants to create strong internal economic institutions in order to solidify their position as an MIC country. Yet they are also interested in the continuation of receiving high levels of remittances as it not only boosts their foreign exchange reserves, but it also benefits the individual families within the country and thus assist the Government perform one of its key roles that being ensuring the welfare of their citizens and the maintenance of Samoan culture. Reducing the reliance on remittances and allowing for them to form a crucial but less influential form of income for the families, will enable families to take advantage of remittances to build a robust culture rather than be solely reliant on them. More specifically it would assist in reducing the hand-out mentality.

However while this standard method of development has been proposed to off-set the reliance on remittances, the World Bank has surprisingly pursued a different ideology to encourage growth within Samoa. The World Bank recently published the report ‘*Well-being from Work in the Pacific Island Countries,*’ in which they spoke of the idea that Samoa would struggle to compete or even make use of an export-based economy and that there was a need to change the focus within the country in order to generate progression (World Bank I, 2014, p. 1-2). The report spoke of the need for Samoa to focus instead on the migratory patterns that are so prominent and understand how these could be more beneficial to the country (World Bank I, 2014, p. 11-23). They do not recommend stopping export generation completely, because initiatives such as SBEC’s would add value to the important agriculture and industry sectors, but to rely less on its ability to create growth and to instead focus on other natural capacities. This becomes very important for Samoa and the paradox that is at the core of thesis,

because it allows for the diaspora and migration to play an integral role in the development of the country and such development will assist with overcoming the reliance on remittances and the hand-out mentality.

This can be seen through the case at the grassroots level. Here it became evident through the interviews that families have already begun to implement methods to ensure that the migration levels remain intact so as to benefit from the remittances which can be sent home (Va'afusuaga, 2015). This is because remittances form an important part of the household's available cash. It enables families to cover school fees, church donations, home building and fa'alavelave costs (Lee, 2009, p. 20). This has become further ingrained within the culture as it is now common for families to groom a certain individual to be sent overseas in order to benefit their families in the long run (Lee, 2009, p. 19; Va'afusuaga, 2015) In other words, a majority of "*migration from the Pacific was shaped by the collective decision making of family units in order to maximise benefits to the whole group*" (Lee, 2009, p. 19). This form of purposeful brain drain has an interesting impact upon the culture especially as lifestyle expectations change in the modernising world. Such changes in lifestyle have also impacted on the demand for money from the migrants (Lee, 2009, p. 22). This portrays an interesting dynamic within the family context when looking at how the culture is maintained in the face of high emigration levels, because currently it is a family decision. In this case the brain drain is not seen as a negative, in fact it is seen as a crucial aspect of the family and its survival. Thus the brain drain is able to support the culture at 'home' through their levels of remittances that they have been groomed to produce.

Such strong family structures have assisted in maintaining a relatively low number of poor in Samoa. Both the ADB and the Secretariat for the Pacific Community estimate that currently 26.9% of people live below the basic needs poverty marker of USD 1.25 a day adjusted for purchase power parity. (Secretariat for the Pacific Community, no date; Asian Development Bank, 2014, p.2). This is because, "*traditional Samoan society, as with Pacific societies generally, embraces caring for, and sharing with, the extended family*" (SBS & UNDP Pacific Centre, 2010, p.11). However, in order to care for the wider family, many individuals rely on remittances and this can lead to an inclination where some are also less interested in employment because remittances are readily available (Taule'alo, 2015). Further, migrants who do leave are not always able to generate high levels of remittances because the country they move to also has living costs which they must cover. In fact they can be under immense pressure to maintain their immediate families' existence within the host country while also supporting the family at 'home' with remittances (Lee, 2009, p. 22). In this case while the

culture has been able to ensure itself through the grooming of individuals who provide remittances and thus maintain the culture, it can also extend the hand-out mentality.

In this sense, remittances have both a negative and a positive impact on both sides of the paradox. It has generated a hand-out mentality. While on the other hand it has also assisted the culture in terms of creating surplus cash that can be utilised for schooling and important cultural events. Therefore it is difficult to define whether remittances have had a more positive or negative impact on the central paradox. However, given that there seems to be a growing opportunity for migrants to play a key role in the Samoa's development, as highlighted by the World Bank, and the fact that remittances have enabled cultural maintenance in the past, it would seem that the levels of brain drain could have a positive impact upon cultural robustness in the future.

Part 3: Isolation, Remoteness and the Relationship between the Core and the Periphery

Samoa's history stands in contrast to the notions of isolation and remoteness. It would seem that they had a clear understanding of their natural resources and managed it appropriately (Meleisea, 1987a, p. 26).

“The Polynesians, with their expertise in fishing and farming, were able to develop healthy, stable communities on islands with limited resources. Resource management and conservation were essential on such islands, since overexploitation could result in damage to or permanent loss of resources. Malama ‘aina, caring for the land, was a key value for survival. At their best, Polynesian societies found a balance between human needs and limited resources” (Kawaharada, 2011).

In terms of trade, it has been found that there were trade links between Hawai'i and Tahiti (Hansford, 2007), a journey of approximately 4,000km. This portrays the fact that the Samoan people adapted, made use of the knowledge they gained from their travels and trade ventures and were developing strongly, with location and size not being perceived as a hindrance based on their ability to adapt to it and in many ways live sustainably. In this non-Western perspective the sea was not seen as a barrier, but as a means of connection, as a place of opportunity and not as an entity that limited opportunities. Furthermore, with regards to well-being and the potential to enjoy a good life, it was said of Samoa by early sailors and explorers that it was a place where people seemed highly content, that they had actually reached a very comfortable level of existence before the Europeans arrived (Meleisea, 1987a, p. 26). In more recent times, studying the Pacific region was a prestigious scholarly pursuit and was widely recognised for its *“contributions to the advancement of human knowledge”* (Teaiwi, 2006, p. 72-73).

However, now it would seem that this connection has been lost, that the Pacific has now been somewhat relegated to the periphery of the academic world. It has even been said that there are many academics who only study the Pacific because it offers them *“some colour and entertainment”* (Teaiwi, 2006, p. 72). This matches with the stages that the Pacific has passed through depicted by Hau'ofa, with it being said the region is now in a stage of *“neocolonial dependency”* (Hau'ofa, 2005, p. 34). This peripheral status has further been perpetuated in today's capitalist, Westernised and globalised world. In this system, countries such as Samoa are not only *“marginalization in the global economy [but this position] is*

exacerbated by their geographical handicaps, including small size, remoteness and their isolation from major international markets” (OHRLLS, 2012, p.3). The world is developing on the Pacific Rim with influential countries such as the United States and regions such as South East Asia generating positive trade relationships providing the drive for further growth. However the Pacific, the centre of this region, seems to be more and more left behind (Hau’ofa, 2005, p. 34). Thus these notions of isolation, remoteness and neo-colonial dependence have some very interesting consequences for both the nation and its culture. This can be seen through the notion that both the ideas of isolation and remoteness are creeping into the Samoan psyche and if this notion is left un-opposed, will have a distinct impact on the culture within Samoa (Hau’ofa, 1994, p. 148-9,151). It has become:

“a belittling view that has been unwittingly propagated mostly by social scientists who have sincere concern for the welfare of Pacific peoples. According to this view, the small island states and territories of the Pacific, that is, all of Polynesia and Micronesia, are much too small, too poorly endowed with resources, and too isolated from the centres of economic growth for their inhabitants ever to be able to rise above their present condition of dependence on the largesse of wealthy nations” (Hau’ofa 1994, p. 150).

Unfortunately it is not only the social scientists who have perpetuated this view of the Pacific, with donors also using similar rhetoric when talking about issues within Samoa. For example the Asian Development Bank spoke of the possibility for *“[t]he smallest Pacific island economies [to] overcome economic growth challenges related to isolation and low populations by expanding economic links and using technology to build connections”* (Asian Development Bank, 2012). Yet it is important to keep in mind that these views are socially constructed in the Western capitalist understanding of the world and development and that within Samoa, regardless of the millions of dollars that have been spent on projects to develop exactly such an economy, has always struggled to generate an economy of scale (Maiava & King, 2007, p.87). Furthermore, this notion can be found in tourist guidebooks. For example, Lonely Planet extends this image explaining to potential tourists that *“this is a very remote part of the world!”* (McLachlan et al., 2012, p. 238). Thus nations like Samoa are labelled as isolated and remote even though this does not portray the complete picture. The fact that both these views are encroaching on the domestic ideology is of key importance when exploring the issue through constructivism, given the importance it places on internal structures and the influence they have on decision making (Jackson & Sorensen, 2006, p. 170-172). In other words, if the Samoan population perceives themselves as isolated and dependent on larger countries then this will impact upon the policy makers and the decisions they make as these decisions will

reflect the domestic ideologies.

The whole idea of smallness, remoteness and isolation have become so prevalent within the current culture that it was the key focus of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Conference, which was held in Apia in August 2014. I was lucky enough to attend this conference as part of UNDP Samoa and believe it was a powerful, successful and excellent conference, which allowed for much needed positive exposure for these island nations. It not only portrayed their issues and gave them the opportunity to discuss options for future assistance and partnerships which would be of huge benefits to the countries, but it also showed the unity and determination within both the Pacific and the Caribbean to survive and to ensure the viability of each and every SIDS. A key focus of the conference was to build sustainable partnerships that would enable future sustainable development. Yet its basic premise was that the Pacific and Caribbean countries involved are geographically handicapped. This has further propagated the notions of isolation and remoteness and in many ways ingrained it within the Samoan society. This is of serious concern because if current trends are not countered with opposing and more constructive views then it will “*inflict a lasting damage on people’s image of themselves, and on their ability to act with relative autonomy in the endeavours to survive reasonably well within an international system*” (Hau'ofa, 1994, p. 149-150). In this sense one could say that the ideas of remoteness, isolation and an inability to rise above the current state (Hau'ofa, 1994, p. 150) are becoming a part of the mind-sets of the policy makers who were in turn influenced by the domestic ideology that have become prevalent. In this sense the Samoan culture is being encroached upon by Western terminology and ideologies, which can be said are not benefitting the people of Samoa and merely maintains the current dependency structures.

However, aspects of the current situation stand in stark contrast to these dominant ideologies. In fact, Samoans enjoy relatively high standards of living and connectivity to the world around them. This can be seen through the fact that most if not all citizens have mobile phones, access to satellite television and a national newspaper, the Samoa Observer, which expertly reports constantly on both domestic and international affairs. In this sense Samoans are very well informed and up to date. Furthermore, there are several direct flights a week to and from New Zealand and Australia, with there also being direct flights to and from Fiji, Hawai’i and American Samoa and a ferry service that runs regularly to Tokelau and American Samoa. This connectivity and awareness links in with the historical overview of the region.

Though one should not romanticise history too much, it provides an interesting insight into potential solutions to breaking down the mid-sets of isolation and remoteness both

nationally and internationally. Currently such notions are also becoming more prevalent as an understanding that the “*resources of Samoans.....are no longer confined to their national boundaries. They are located wherever these people are living permanently or otherwise. [This is as it was before] the age of western imperialism*” (Hau'ofa, 1994, p. 156). This portrays the link to the historical context but adds to it through modern influences and this is where the high levels of migration out of Samoa can assist with the re-creation of a positive mind-set and view of the culture. To begin with, the fact that Samoans can travel and work in countries close by such as New Zealand, Australia and Fiji, with relative ease, belies the idea that Samoa is isolated. Also the SIDS Conference further belied the notion simply through the number of countries and agencies who attended the conference, as it portrayed that in today's world places like Samoa are not actually that remote or isolated. In this sense migration is helping to break down the ideas of isolation and remoteness through their participation in the wider region and as global citizens who maintain strong ties to their homeland.

Secondly, if Samoa is able to move away from these notions of isolation and remoteness they may be able to also change their position within the current world-system. Samoa and other Pacific countries have always been expected to follow the Western development model, of “*developing light industry and exporting agricultural crops*” (Maiava & King 2007, p. 87). Furthermore, development within these nations, Samoa included, has always seemed to involve some form of external expertise which offers the answers that the islands adhere to (Maiava & King 2007, p. 84-85). But within Samoa this is changing. The knowledge gathered through the interviews portrays, amongst some members of society, a dis-interest in the way in which Samoa is perceived by the outside world and more of an interest in generating internal solutions for the people who live in Samoa to better their situation (Faoagali, 2015). Such views are important, because they can begin to break down the notions of isolation and remoteness and promotes thinking along different lines in order to avoid a damaging infliction on people's image of themselves (Hau'ofa, 1994, p. 151-2). It can also open Samoa up to a new method of development. However, if the Samoa Government continues with their export based policies they are in many ways still attempting to appease the standard development methodology of the dominant Western cultures within the world today (Maiava & King, 2007, p. 87). This will in turn merely perpetuate the dependency structures which the ideas of isolation and remoteness assist in maintaining.

However, it is important to also have a positive perception in the international community as this can begin to break down negative constructs such as isolation and remoteness at the international level. In this sense the brain drain can again be of assistance.

For instance it can assist with this new domestic dynamic through allowing Samoan citizens to communicate with family members overseas to gauge new methods to advance Samoa while it can also assist in generating a positive and realistic views of Samoa internationally through the number of well-educated and well-spoken individuals who live overseas and ensure that it can move beyond the realm of 'colour and entertainment.' Furthermore, it has been argued that Samoa, with its high levels of migration, has been able to become one of the most prosperous and peaceful countries in the Pacific (Maiava, King, 2007, p. 88).

This goes to show that the brain drain can actually have a positive influence on the culture within Samoa as it can assist in breaking down the prevailing Western stereotypes of remoteness and isolation which have permeated the culture. If they are able to continue doing so then, in turn, it may influence the mind-sets within Samoa and begin to change the domestic dynamics and in time those of the policy makers. Further, through enabling peacefulness, the brain drain is able to assist in building a stronger and more positive culture within the country.

Wallerstein has predicted that there will be a change within the world-system in the near future (Wallerstein, 1999, p.1). Such a change, or move away from the current modern capitalist system, is already being hinted at by the growing importance of knowledge and many countries search for a knowledge based economy (SciDev.Net, 2015). World-system theory dictates that countries' domestic structures will determine if they are able to take advantage of a change in the system. In other words the country which has the ideal internal structures that suit the system change will be able to progress from their current position, be it semi-periphery or periphery (Halsall, 1997). Thus having a positive domestic dynamic is of key importance. This is important for Samoa because they have not succeeded in generating an export economy of note due to what the western world has perceived as their isolated and remote geographical position. However, in a knowledge based economy, knowledge flows are of key importance and within knowledge flows there is an emphasis "*on the role of social rather than geographic distance as a determinant of knowledge flow patterns*" (WIPO, 2014, p. 13). This is of central importance to Samoa and Samoan culture, because it is very effective at exporting brains and therefore knowledge, while still maintaining strong cultural ties. With knowledge becoming much more important and with diaspora being one of the most effective methods to generate social relationships "*between high-income and lower-income nations*" (WIPO, 2014, p. 13), the brain drain and the migration it incurs is able to assist in the shaping of knowledge movement between such regions (WIPO 2014, p. 13). Added to this the fact that geographical distance plays less of a role, thus Samoa could find itself moving towards the semi-periphery based on the internal structures it is already establishing. In other words, Samoa's levels of

brain drain mean they are already heavily contributing to the knowledge based economy and would thus be well positioned to take advantage of the changing system hinted at by the growing importance of knowledge.

This has an interesting impact upon the culture. In the first place it is already a strength of Samoan culture that migrants want to maintain their connections to Samoa. This became clear in the interviews that were carried out, where many of them who had moved overseas had always thought of Samoa as home and had longed to return (Rivers, 2015). It is Fa'a Samoa which ensures that migrants continue to remain connected to the homeland. This is the essence that gives the country core-like qualities, similar to what England was for the colonists and Rome was for the legions. This would mean that Samoa could benefit even further from a system shift towards a knowledge based economy in that they have the ideal domestic structure which already produces high levels of brain exportation and the strength of culture that ensures that the migrants maintain a strong connection with the homeland.

Thus Samoa can be seen as central to their own sphere. Instead of viewing Samoa as isolated and remote, this thesis would argue that Samoa could actually be seen as a core country within its region. While it may not be a core country in the Western capitalist system, due to its inability to generate an economy of scale (Maiava & King, 2007, p.87), if one is to look at a more regional level, Samoa is perfectly poised to take advantage of a system shift based on their export of brains. Thus one could say that Samoa has core-like qualities in a regional context.

To shift the mind-set of the population to follow such a trend would be of huge benefit to the country for a number of reasons. For one it would mean that they no longer need to compare themselves with other countries and always be looking for ways to enter into the global capitalist market. They would instead explore what they are doing well internally, view the options that they have in their surrounds and change their perspectives on the effectiveness of constantly attempting to compete in a global capitalist market. Secondly, such a change of mind-set would also be a link back to the historical context from which Samoa originated. In this case they saw themselves as the centre of the Pacific, as the heart of the Pacific, and it was from here that the rest of the Pacific was explored. In this sense they were originally a core nation within this region. Core countries do change within the given systems based on their internal structures and how well they are able to adapt to the changing nature of the world. So while Samoa may have slipped from a core-like position within a previous system, to their current position within the periphery in the modern capitalist system, it does not mean that they cannot return to a core-like position again. Thus, in a world where brains and ideas have

become so important, Samoa's large emigration and export of 'brains' could in fact at some stage move them back into a core like position. This in turn will have a huge effect on the culture. If such a change were to occur then the Samoan culture would be able to move further away from the ideas of isolation and remoteness as they would see themselves as a core country and not as peripheral and thus remote. If the country can progress further then the culture will also be able to take advantage of the country's stronger position and ensure its longevity.

Discussion

One of the key points raised in the analysis is the way in which Samoa is viewed by the international community. It was highlighted that there is an opportunity for Samoa to change their position within a new world system should there be change towards a stronger emphasis on knowledge rather than economics. However, while there are precedents for such a change as shown through the attempts of most countries to become a knowledge-based economy, there is a need for a change of mind-set within the dominant countries of today's world. World-systems theory speaks of the fact that the core countries do not want the system to change and therefore they exert as much influence over the system as possible to ensure their own status. Through doing so they also maintain the dependency structures and attempt to ensure that other nations remain in their current positions. Meanwhile, North argues that the organisations within the system would need to feel that changing the hierarchical structure of the world would be more beneficial than not changing. In this sense Samoa needs to begin to ensure that they are promoting the knowledge-based economy ideology in order to influence new actors into thinking that it is worth changing the system. This would work in Samoa's favour and allow them to move out of their current peripheral status. While such a change would benefit Samoa, it would also benefit the Polynesian region. The placing of the Pacific back on the map is of key importance and something that this thesis has worked towards. What is needed for this change is not only Samoa's influencing of its neighbours to focus on a knowledge-based economy, but also for the global community to begin to take Pacific Island countries, such as Samoa, seriously once again. One of the ways to begin this process is to bring discussions and research regarding Samoa back into the literature, to allow it to regain its place of distinction where it is able to contribute to the studies of humanities. It is within this where the knowledge based economy becomes important. Samoa could forge themselves a niche market based on the exploration of humanities. They could promote themselves, through their migrants, as a place of higher learning, which focusses on the role of traditional knowledge and humanities and how within these realms Samoa and the Pacific can and does contribute to the world. This could potentially lead to a change as other actors become influenced by the knowledge based economy ideology and an emphasis on the importance of the Pacific and thus would potentially see it as beneficial to change the hierarchy within the system. Therefore it would seem important for a change of system and while this system is being hinted at through the influence

of knowledge it would not harm Samoa if they sped up the process through influencing their neighbours and beginning the process of proving that changing the hierarchy would be much more beneficial for the countries of the Pacific than merely continuing with the status quo.

There are a number of ways in which Samoa could begin to influence other global actors in order to encourage a motivation to change the hierarchy. One of the ways that this is achieved in world-systems theory is through the exportation of culture. This is something that Samoa is already doing in terms of the high levels of migrants. Such migrants have created transnational communities between Samoa and other countries, through maintaining strong ties with the sending country. Many of these migrants are highly skilled and educated individuals. In this sense skilled migrants are prime candidates through which to begin to influence neighbouring countries in order to change their perspectives on the Pacific and countries like Samoa. Such skilled individuals would be able to articulate clearly the Pacific context and not allow it to be tinged by the dominant Western ideologies of today's world, which are being utilised to maintain the current structure. It would be the strength of Samoan culture which would enable such a change, because of the sense of duty which migrants feel towards their family and that the betterment of the family situation can be gained through the country moving out of its current peripheral status.

While the brain drain offers one method of influencing the region, it would seem pertinent for Samoa to adapt a policy which would make them a knowledge centre for the region. However, let us expand upon what sort of knowledge centre would be recommended, because there are a number of knowledge hubs already in place around the Pacific. It would be recommended that Samoa create a knowledge hub which would focus on the role of indigenous knowledge in development. It has already been shown in the analysis that when understanding the brain drain through the traditional context of malaga and how the migrant is still connected to their families and communities through the strength of Fa'a Samoa, that one can gain a sense of the way in which indigenous knowledge could play a very important role in understanding future sustainable development. This would be a niche area of research which could be utilised on a global scale. It would allow the Pacific to once again contribute to the studies of humanity and bring the region back onto the map academically.

Samoa also has institutions in place which would assist with such a process. Samoa is home to two universities, the National University of Samoa and the University of the South Pacific, and these would be two prime candidates to assist with the creation of a knowledge centre. To this end it would be suggested that the Government generate policies which focus on attracting prominent scholars who could work from and base themselves within Samoa.

Having such a hub within Samoa would also work towards reducing the negative connotations of isolation and remoteness which have become prevalent when speaking of countries such as Samoa and this would also have a positive effect on the culture. It would also allow for a truer picture of the region with its history of migration and travel.

The strength of Samoan culture has been one of the key facets that has enabled Samoa to progress to where it is today. However, as the analysis portrayed the brain drain is impacting upon its ability to continue to progress as there is a lack of critical capacity within the country. In fact it was highlighted that it is very difficult for artists to complete their work within Samoa because of its perceived controversial nature. Yet, such controversy, such critical engagement with one's culture is actually a key method of allowing it to progress. To this end it would seem pertinent for there to be new policies regarding the creative leeway which artists are allowed within the country and to allow this to assist in developing the culture and country further. It is understood that it is very controversial to be suggesting changes to a culture, therefore there is a need to contextualise this argument. Firstly, the thesis has attempted to portray Samoa in a non-ahistorical manner through the fact that Samoa has always been changing and developing and has made use of the knowledge gained throughout its history in order to better the situation. Therefore, it is important to try and understand current issues and what can be done to mitigate these and to build on the knowledge gained through past experiences. Unfortunately, with the brain drain, many of those trained in such critical engagement are absent and therefore it would seem pertinent to build such capacity within the country. This capacity is already current within Samoa, though not in excess. It can be seen within important organizations such as the Public Services Commission. Here many of the managers are young, educated and motivated to better their country. It can also be seen in and around Apia. There are many young entrepreneurs who are trying to generate something new within the country. There are local pubs that show the latest Samoan movies, that hold concerts for local musicians to express themselves and their ideas about life. This is further matched with the artists who are able to complete their work within Samoa and have this work displayed in galleries, again expressing their views on Samoa and the world. In this sense there is a vibrant community which is already engaging critically with its surrounds. In fact, one of the clearest pictures of this was at the SIDS Conference where artists from the national university were able to display their works. This not only portrayed the immense talent, but it also portrayed the capacities and the institutional structures which supports this capacity are already in place.

Thus it would seem pertinent to further nurture this critical capacity, to allow it to flourish and to allow it to assist the country and the culture to continue to develop through

utilising the knowledge that they have gained in recent times and to match this with the knowledge of Fa'a Samoa. In terms of policy, it would be important to allow such artists space and visibility in order to begin to get their messages across.

However, while this will generate positive outcomes for the country through raising awareness of the region internationally, international legitimacy does not always lead to legitimacy amongst those at the grassroots level (Fry & Kabutaulaka, 2008, p. xi) and these issues can be exacerbated by the brain drain. Within Samoa and other Pacific countries there is a gap between the ruling elite and proletariat (Hau'ofa, 1994, p. 148). While it can be argued that a strict hierarchy can lead to stability, there is also a need for communication between the two to ensure that the decisions that the leaders make also benefit the general public. In Samoa this collaboration seems to be there for the most as the Government has implemented a 'Strategy for the Development of Samoa' for the past number of decades which looks to create social stability, economic growth and development for the country while also protecting vulnerable peoples (Mof.gov.ws, 2015). However the brain drain places an immense pressure on the number of individuals who are able to implement such well-founded plans and projects. It can be seen through the response to the Citizen Investment Bill, where many members of the public speak of the negative impact of such bills on the culture and Samoa as well. This would point towards a disjoint between the citizens and the ruling elite. Therefore it would seem that there is a need for a policy which will close such a gap and lead to a more harmonious relationship between the two. Prior to independence a model based a "*legally recognised system of local government, [which would be] in subordination to the central government, was suggested*" (Prof Davidson quoted by Afamasaga Toleafoa quoted by Commonwealth Secretariat 2013, p. 71). This idea is maybe worth taking up once again given the impact that the culture and the cultural structures have on the brain drain and ensuring longevity. This would be an area for further research and something that the new organisation, to be explained later, could take up.

This links into one of the key goals of the Samoan Government which is to ensure the countries security: socially, environmentally and economically in the long term. However in the current system it is very difficult for a country like Samoa to opt out of the current development models (Thomas, 1987, p. 8). As the analysis highlighted, the World Bank has suggested that Samoa will struggle to generate marked growth through following the current development model and needs to engage its diaspora in a different manner. Because of Samoa's strong culture, migrants do send remittances and maintain a close connection with the family through traditional bonds such as malaga. Thus, it would be recommended for the Samoan

Government to generate a policy which would make it easier for citizens to access remittances and to do so through official channels. This would allow the Government to save citizens money in transaction costs incurred when utilising international money transfer agencies such as Western Union. In this sense it seems pertinent for the Government to create official channels through which Samoan migrants can send remittances. The policy would also need to place a strong emphasis on encouraging re-investment of the money saved by citizens in transaction costs. Such re-investment would ease the economic pressure on the country and allow them to secure themselves further economically. Furthermore, encouraging the local investment would lessen the need for foreign investment. Foreign investment has been difficult for Samoa to attract and the methods that have been utilised, such as the Citizen Investment Bill, could potentially have a negative impact upon the culture in terms of changing the internal dynamics as foreigners become more influential.

As this portrays there are a number of potential policy options which Samoa could undertake which would enable them to take advantage of the central paradox. However, it would seem that it is very important to gather more data as to the specifics of migration, remittances, reasons for leaving and options in foreign countries because, as of recently, such knowledge is limited and there seems to be a lack of want to gather such information (Connell, 2015b, p. 178). Therefore it would be suggested to create an organisation within the Samoan Government who would focus on this topic. The reason for suggesting the creation of such an organization is that in the analysis it became clear that there is the potential for the diaspora and the levels of brain drain to not only assist in the maintenance of Samoan culture but also to assist in further developing the country. Diaspora have not yet played an important official role in development, though they have un-officially through the levels of remittances, but they could play an important role as the World Bank report highlighted. Therefore it would seem pertinent to create an organization which could deal with these issues and look to generate policy recommendations.

One of the first tasks would be to research the policies surrounding information gathering on migrants and to begin to make full use of such things as arrival and departure cards (Connell, 2015b, p. 178). Once the organisation has completed thorough research of the migration issues and has compiled a robust set of data regarding the issue then it could begin to produce policy recommendations which could be put to Cabinet. It is felt that the capacity for this is already in the country given the author's brief insight into the work of the Public Services Commission (PSC). As mentioned in the Inspiration section it was the energetic and knowledgeable managers there that sparked my interest in researching the brain drain further.

There is also the excellent statistical department, the Samoan Bureau of Statistics (SBS), who could assist in the research and the compiling of the data gathered. It would be recommended that the organization be based within the PSC and work closely with SBS. It would also be able to tie in with the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSO), who were set up to deal with developmental issues. Basing it within the PSC would enable the organization to generate policy recommendations of the highest calibre. As this goes to show, the capacities are there within Samoa and this will assist in reducing the difficulties in creating such an organisation.

One of the key difficulties though, is a lack of resources. Within small island states, governments have often spoken about streamlining, about less being more in the sense that they have a limited workforce and capacities so they cannot be spread too widely. This is of serious concern as some might argue that the creation of a new organisation will merely place more pressure and stretch further the already limited resources, thus undermining the ability of a new organisation. It would be hoped to overcome this issue by placing it within the PSC and through linking it with other organisations such as MWCSO and SBS in order to not only spread the work load but also utilise the capacities and expertise that are present in the country already. Thus it should not place extra pressure on the limited resources and in turn would be able to generate actions which can have a positive effect on further development which utilises the brain drain and the strength of Fa'a Samoa. This organisation would also have close links with the knowledge hub in order to utilise the research that is carried out and ensure that traditional knowledge is deeply incorporated into development ideologies.

The thesis would recommend that the organisation could, after a thorough research process, potentially begin with the following policy recommendations which have been explored in this discussion:

- A policy that would allow for more freedom of expression amongst artists and to continue to nurture the talent and critical capabilities which are already present within the country through offering them more freedom, opportunities and visibility.
- A policy which allows for the creation of a knowledge hub within Samoa which will focus on the way in which indigenous knowledge can contribute to the sustainable development debate while also adding further knowledge to the humanities.
- A policy which allows citizens official channels through which to gain access to remittances sent by family and which also encourages the re-investment of a portion of those remittances into local infrastructure.

Conclusion

This thesis has explored the paradox between the out migration of skilled individuals from Samoa and its impact upon Fa'a Samoa. It was found to have impacts on both sides of the paradox. In terms of the negative impacts, the reliance on remittances has created a hand-out mentality amongst the general public and this perpetuates dependency structures. Furthermore, remittances play such an important role in the Samoan economy that if it decreased markedly or stopped, then the economy may collapse. However, remittances also form a key way in which the culture is being maintained as it provides surplus cash for families to cover important cultural events and necessities such as schooling. The brain drain's impact upon the culture can also be seen in a positive sense when viewed through the indigenous views of Malaga and how Samoan families have groomed one member to travel overseas in order to generate a source of remittances. In the case of Malaga, the migrant is not disconnected from the family and can actually continue to assist the family, irrelevant of where they may physically be located. Thus, *"migration meant a way of maintaining the family by leaving the family, and a means of going away without leaving"* (Nietschmann as quoted in Connell, 2010). Further, the contraction *"and compression of the world through migration...[has] ultimately...ensured that symbolically and practically, especially with kinship demarcated in land tenure, islanders rarely abandon island homes"* (Connell, 2010). The history of the Pacific region, Samoa included, is one of migration and travel and thus there are historical precedents for the current levels of migration. This historical view ties in with the indigenous knowledge and creates a much more positive view of how the brain drain has impacted upon the culture. It is, in many ways, generated by the culture, but the culture also has developed the structures to utilise migration. This works towards breaking down the ideas of isolation and remoteness and through this the Pacific region can be brought back into the global consciousness, one of the main goals of the thesis. Migration has, however, deprived the country of critical thinking 'brains' and this has impacted negatively upon the culture and the country in that it does not seem that currently the incentives are in place that encourage risky knowledge seeking behaviour which would enable the society to best overcome the problems that they constantly face.

However, overall emigration and the large Samoan diaspora could actually play an important role in the future development of Samoa. This is because it seems that the world

system is moving towards one which places a larger emphasis on knowledge rather than economics. Because Samoa exports brains and has the cultural structures in place to take advantage of this, it means that they have the ideal internal structures for a change in world-system and thus could change their position. This would also assist in bringing Samoa back on to the map.

The potential policy recommendations attempt to build on this and to further establish structures which support this movement. The recommendations include easier access to remittances through official channels and the creation of an organisation that would research and generate policies which could best utilise the brain drain out of Samoa and the diaspora that it has created. Therefore, while migration has mitigated though not resolved development issues, *“it constitutes one increasingly less hesitant solution: an expanding and unsatisfied outward urge, a bottom-up globalization that, while necessarily somewhat uncertain, has enabled some resurgence of self reliance and cultural continuity”* (Connell, 2010).

Thus, it becomes clear that the brain drain could play a very important role in the future development of Samoa and the maintenance of Fa’a Samoa, as well as being a method through which to bring the Pacific and countries like Samoa back into the global consciousness.

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Appendix

Appendix A

All interviews were conducted in Samoa, over a three week period in January 2014, at various locations in both Apia and Upolu as best suited the interviewees. The interviewees were contacted prior to the interviews and the questions were also prepared prior to the meetings. All interviewees were explained the background and reasons for the research, with all giving consent for their views to be utilised in the writing of this thesis.

Lena Rivers Interview

Thomas: Thank you very much, what we are trying to look at in this thesis is the out migration and the in migration in Samoa and the effects that this has on the country and also the effects that the diaspora and the eventual diaspora has on the country. So to sort of, what sort of trends have you seen as far as out migration and in migration within Samoa?

Lena: As in like generation wise?

Thomas: Yea as in have people spoken to you about why they move have you seen a higher propensity of people leaving over recent years or has it been more in the past and has dropped off now. Or do you feel like there is more people coming back to Samoa. People who have left for whatever reason and have decided to come back because they prefer it here?

Lena: Well I think the number of people moving is increasing. Reasons being is for education and for a better life. And for better pay. Like most of our qualified students who have gone to school overseas they have come back. They work here and they have decided to move out again the minute they have an opportunity to work overseas they take it because they are offering better money.

Thomas: Does that also mean that they can support their families better?

Lena: Basically it all goes to money, sending money back home to support their families.

Thomas: So that remittances is quite an important factor?

Lena: Yes it is very important. And as for people coming back. I find that for us, because I myself moved away for well, to educate our children that was the main reason we moved. And that's all done. I find that when you get older they all decide to come back home.

Thomas: Where did you go with your children?

Lena: We moved to New Zealand. We lived there for about 16 years. Send the kids to school.

Thomas: How was that?

Lena: It was good.

Thomas: Do you have lots of family in New Zealand?

Lena: Ah we do. We do have lots of family there. So the support was always there. But as you grow older you always feel like you have that urge to come back home.

Thomas: Did you also, when you were considering moving to New Zealand for the kids, was there also a similar urge to move for a better education for the children?

Lena: Well that was always the goal. That was the main goal for our move was the better education for our children.

Thomas: And are they back in Samoa? Or are they still overseas?

Lena: My two daughters are back here. And my two sons still live overseas. The other one just went, returned from Hong Kong he lived there for about 3 years. And my two daughters live here.

Thomas: Do you think your sons will come back as well when they get older?

Lena: Yes.

Thomas: So they still talk about coming back?

Lena: Yes they still talk about coming back but I guess it's the money that is holding them back.

Thomas: so when they retire?

Lena: Yes.

Thomas: Do you think that education within Samoa plays a role as well? Do you think the levels of education in Samoa are increasing to a level where people who do not have the opportunity to do their education overseas can do their schooling here and still access the overseas job markets?

Lena: Hmmmm not really one to comment on that. I don't really have a good thought about that, especially with the latest reports that have been coming out. Have you been reading the paper?

Thomas: I have been trying to.

Lena: The Observer, the failure rate.

Thomas: Yea it was quite high.

Lena: Yea. It's good. I must say it comes down to the children as well and the support from home. But for those who want to further their children's education their choice is to move overseas. Unfortunately for the majority who can't afford to do that they have to go through here. But there are a lot of children out there who don't finish their schooling because of the money. Like when they get left behind that's it there is no other opportunity for them to further their education.

Thomas: So do you feel that Samoa has a bit of a brain drain issue? In the sense that the intellectuals are looking overseas for those opportunities and that capacity is not staying in the country?

Lena: I think so.

Thomas: And what sort of impact do you think it has on the country?

Lena: (small laugh) There is still a lot of good people here. But I think it would be unfair for me to say that all the brains have gone overseas because there's still a lot of brains let's say around here. and I can see that things are changing as well, like how...I think they are starting to follow what they do overseas, so which is a good thing. But still there is a lot of good people who left.

Thomas: When you say this is getting better do you think graduating from Least Developed Country to a Middle Income Country status which happened just last year. Do you think that's also reflective of how it is progressing positively within Samoa how there is still this capacity within the country?

Lena: Yes definitely.

Thomas: And you think that that shows good signs for the future?

Lena: that's right.

Thomas: so we are heading in an upwards...

Lena: Yup we are going upwards. We can see that happening, as tough as things are we can see it happening like a lot of improvements.

Thomas: Do you think the Government could do a little bit more than they are doing to help these improvements to help the people that do remain in Samoa to have more job opportunities or education opportunities.

Lena: Well I think they are. I think they are doing as much as they can like for instance, because, there is a lot if writing about investors coming into the country. But this is how the government is seeing that, its creating jobs for the locals. So they are.

Thomas: I guess foreign investment is one of those key things to kick start an economy.

Lena: That's right.

Thomas: To link, when you say there are a lot of people moving, to link this back into the history. Polynesia has always been full of great explorers and a lot of migration in the past. Do you think that current trends or current movement is similar to what has always happened within the Pacific? Or do you thinks that it's increased as such?

Lena: It has increased but I feel that it is in their blood, you know that unsettled like they always have that feeling of wanting to move on. So it's in there.

Thomas: So you feel that has always been a part of Samoa?

Lena: Yes.

Thomas: Does that also happen from New Zealand onwards? So do feel that a lot of Samoan people move onto maybe Europe or the States?

Lena: Yea, Australia.

Thomas: So it is not just within the Pacific anymore?

Lena: Anywhere in the world, there is Samoans, or Pacific people. I'm talking mainly about the Samoans, they are everywhere. Germany, Switzerland anywhere. And I mean I hear that, I mean I haven't done that much traveling only up to the States, but other parts of the world like in Europe there's Samoans everywhere. And it's because of that, they love to move around.

Thomas: Do you feel that, do you feel that there is a big immigration in Samoa, that there is a large number of not necessarily Samoans who come to Samoa. For example there is the New Zealanders who run resorts, or someone like Chan Mow who runs Chan Mow. Do you feel those numbers of expats, do you feel those numbers are increasing?

Lena: They are. They are definitely increasing. And I think a lot of people are having problems with that as well.

Thomas: In which way?

Lena: Well they... lets say they are thinking that these people, people moving in are going to take over. I think that's a frightening thought for the majority. Especially people out in the outer villages they are not business people, and so business people who are around the town area they can all see the potential of these new investors coming in and. But yea there is a big, there is a large number.

Thomas: Do feel those expats do try and assimilate, they do try and be respectful and try and acclimatise themselves and become part of the society or do feel some of them are quite forced?

Lena: From my experience some of them are, but some of them try to stick to their own kind. That sort of thing. It's like they don't really wander out of their circle.

Thomas: So do you feel that there's a bit of tension them between some of those groups for some people?

Lena: For some yes. I mean I have never had that problem. But for some I do know that for a

fact.

Thomas: To turn it around a little bit. Looking at the diaspora within New Zealand, there is quite a big community obviously within New Zealand. How do you think that diaspora assist Samoa progress. Obviously there is remittances there. Do you feel they do more than just send money to help Samoa to help the Samoan cause, to give it economic opportunities, export opportunities or something similar?

Lena: I think there are but there is not that many. Like a lot of them are doing good they are in very high paying jobs which is giving Samoa a good name as well. Yea they are.

Thomas: Do you feel that good name that Samoa gets is starting to spread around the world. Do you think that has been a positive influence for Samoa, the amount of Samoans spreading around and their good nature has..?

Lena: Yes definitely.

Thomas: So more people know about Samoa I suppose and opportunities.

Lena: Yes.

Thomas: Okay. Has it mostly been positive what you've heard?

Lena: A lot of it negative as well. A lot of negative as well. Mind you overseas they tend to highlight the negative a lot more than the positive.

Thomas: Do you think though that the diaspora could do a little bit more for Samoa?

Lena: I think so. I think so. But then it all goes back to..... I think they're doing a lot. They are doing a lot to help, but they could do more, I feel they can do more.

Thomas: To link slightly back to the current Middle Income status do you feel that that reflects life within Samoa?

Lena: Middle Income?

Thomas: So it's sort of I guess.... the social welfare is there, the hospital system the job opportunities are there or thereabouts and the lifestyle I suppose is a lot easier or nicer sorry. Do you feel like Samoa is quite a safe country, things function?

Lena: Samoa is a safe, very very safe country. I mean compared to other countries in the world it's very safe.

Thomas: And you enjoy the standard of living here?

Lena: Well I do, I actually do enjoy. In fact I really missed this life here when I was living overseas, because overseas even though everything was there you always felt like you were... I don't know you didn't have that freedom. The openness and the freedom.

Thomas: And do you think that openness and freedom, that will remain even as Samoa develops, continues to develop?

Lena: Yes. I hope so. And I feel that that is the main reason why most people want to come back as they get older.

Thomas: If there was maybe two key things that you could point out that you would like to see done better in Samoa in terms of maybe maintaining those people, the educated people, maybe bringing them back earlier or something. Was there anything in particular you think that...?

Lean: Well I still feel that it's good for these people to have experience overseas first and then try and bring them back here with that you know like if you weave in that experience that overseas experience with Fa'a Samoa would be good. I think they should. I would like to see them bring them back, do something.

Thomas: Maybe a little bit earlier?

Lena Yea.

Thomas: What do you think would need to be in place for something like that to happen?

Lena: It all goes down to the money.

Thomas: So the job opportunities here?

Lena Job opportunities. Yea.

Thomas: Well I suppose that will hopefully come over time with the way Samoa is looking anyway.

Lena: Yea it will take time.

Lena: The thing that I find frustrating is that when you are trying to enquire about something you are given the run around. Nobody can come straight. You know like overseas you ring this department and you want to find out some informations straight away they give it to you. I hope they start improving on stuff like that.

Thomas: So it would just be little things like that that would make the whole business environment easier or living here.....?

Lena: Yes because I find that very frustrating. An I also know for a fact that a lot of people who have lived overseas and come from overseas find it really frustrating. You ring up okay you want to find out some information, there's oh hang on then you pass on to someone else and then that someone else pass you on to someone else, you know that sort of thing.

Thomas: then you don't get exactly the information anyway.

Lena: Yea. Something that you can get done in one day or less than a day, it will take days because of that very reason.

Thomas: Where do you think that attitude comes from?

Lena: Umm I think that there's just how they are because we are very laid back people, no urgency. (small laugh). Yea.

Thomas: So it's just pass it on sort of...?

Lena: It's like they come into work you know... so I still feel, this is where I say that it's good for people who have lived overseas they come in with that experience and they just drum it in.

Thomas: So you think it has always sort of been there a little bit that nice relaxed nature?

Lena: Yes that is part of us. Like there is no urgency in anything.

Thomas: Which can be really nice.

Lena: Yes but at the same time it can be a little bit.....

Thomas: Frustrating.

Lena: Yea.

End of Interview

Susan Faoagali Interview

Thomas: What trends have you seen as far as out and in migration in Samoa?

Susan: I have been in Samoa for about 20 years and what I have noticed is that there is a lot of travel. First of all there is a lot of travel a lot of people coming and going um a lot of people coming and going for holidays, particularly holidays a lot of people coming for family reunions and for other fae lavelave like bestowal of chiefly titles weddings and funerals and stuff, but I guess you mean moving to live I think what, I think, my view on that is that there is still a general belief, a general goal for people to move away because they think that it is better overseas, but once, possibly once they go over to New Zealand, they realise that its not as easy or as yea easy as they thought it was gonna be, so in fact I have actually seen people go away, move away and then come back. But possible people with young kids want to go away, they also have a belief that the education is better overseas, I don't have that belief my son did all his schooling here and he did perfectly fine but a lot of people still think that, but my experience is that education over here has its limitations but as is overseas. There are certainly good systems and not so good systems in whatever country you end up going to.

Thomas: Do you think the education levels have increased, or the standard of education has been increasing here in Samoa?

Susan: Oh it has. Its got more, people have got more access to it basically, because I am a teacher educator I also have strong opinions on what you mean by quality but um generally, well the statistics show that it hasn't, the quality of education has not improved but at the same time the qualifications for teachers have improved and for some reason that hasn't translated into, which is what my research was about, that hasn't translated to um increased success, "success," for our students so that's something really big that I was working on when I was doing my research, is how can teachers can improve the outcomes of their students

Thomas: Yup, so you wouldn't say the increasing capacities of teachers and the increase of access to schooling has had much to do with the out migration? In terms of people having more of an understanding of the outside world and then using that to move?

Susan: No its an old ahh, belief that New Zealand is better than here and that's from all levels of society. possibly that is changing, probably in the last very few years, last 2 or 3 years where people like I said to you before, people have come to move here they have chosen to live here, for example me I can live anywhere but I chose to live here, but also people moving and then moving back going hmmm nah didn't like that I would rather be ahh here.

Thomas: Is that one of the main reasons that you have heard for other people choosing to come back?

Susan: Is what?

Thomas: They would rather live here in Samoa?

Susan: Oh yea. People come back for the family, people come back for the lifestyle. They don't come back to be rich or to have big business or to become a millionaire, they come for the lifestyle and in fact, and this is the reverse thing, they come back for their children, they would rather bring up their children here, whereas you've got a whole group of people here who want to go overseas because they want more opportunities for their children. But I would imagine there's a whole lot or generation of people coming back so they can bring up their children here.

Thomas: What role do you think the history plays in Samoa's migration patterns, in terms of Samoans were possibly some of the greatest explorers that were around, or the Pacific people in general, and do you think that those trends of constant exploration and travel, do you think they relate somehow to today's trends?

Susan: Yea I do. I think that it's part of the Samoan way of life. Samoan culture because a lot of the legends and the way of living includes travel from other places. Although I am not a historian.

Thomas: I guess then to put it quite bluntly, do you believe that Samoa has a brain drain issue and if so what do you believe that long term consequences will be for Samoa? And to clarify brain drain just for this, brain drain is the educated individuals who lets say have good credentials to get a job in a foreign market, in a foreign market place, so not just the unskilled labour but more the skilled labour.

Susan: Um, so what is the real question?

Thomas: Do you think it is an issue in Samoa?

Susan: I think it is an issue but I don't think that is a new issue. Its an old, old issue and I think that we are dealing with it the best way that we can. Possibly, mainly because when you are talking about qualified individuals you don't get qualified here, you have to go overseas to get qualified. If you want to be a lawyer, if you want to be an engineer if you want to be a doctor if you want to be any sort of skilled technician you have to go overseas to do that training. So the idea is that you finish that training and then you come home, um and what happens is people don't come home. The other part of that is that they don't come home straight away. For example my son has done his engineering degree in Australia and came home and did, because it was a scholarship, came home and worked here for two years and di his bond and now he has gone back to Australia because he cant specialise in the area he wants to specialise, actually it keeps changing but anyway, he cant do that while he is here, you know he was 22-23 at the time, he is now 28 and doing very well overseas and um he calls Samoa his home but I cant imagine that he will come back until he wants to settle or whatever he has decided later on. So possibly that is a brain drain but its also he's a qualified engineer but there is very little work here for qualified engineers and then the engineering group here they come they do work of Ministry of Works and then they start their own business. So either, they do the actual work, construction or road building or civil construction or they become a consultant and they manage all the building and stuff. So we have a lot of buildings, and civil engineering, water engineering is another really big thing, but you know as far as a career path goes and that whole brain drain I think, Small Island Developing States just have it's not a thing that um.....brain drain its there but you deal with it you know. We have also got the quota where people are randomly chosen to leave and they could be either really skilled or not skilled but they still have to have a job in New Zealand to go to. And a lot of people do go on that list because they want to in a legal sense, in a "legal sense," move to New Zealand and immigrate. Does that answer your question?

Thomas: Yes certainly. So do you think that we could sort of say that within a small island state this idea of people constantly moving is not a new thing, won't be a new thing and that its not necessarily a bad thing either that people move because it means that other people are coming through as well, so it's almost a circle?

Susan: Absolutely. The same thing, I have already talked to you about sports as well. Qualified well experienced sports people the same, they go away they come back again.

Thomas: So to continue that on, what role do you think diaspora play in assisting Samoa to develop further?

Susan: You mean Samoa as a Nation?

Thomas: Yes, well I guess we could break it down, we could start with Samoa as a nation.

Susan: Well remittances is one of the biggest exports/imports yea. But it, that remittances, doesn't go to the government. It goes to individual families and individuals as well. But it also particularly goes into the building of houses, building of probably churches as well. So, also a lot of people do fundraising overseas so people overseas, the diaspora they do contribute to Samoa through money through money, through fundraising, through giving to help build this and do this and do that, I don't know what else, how else they can contribute to Samoa's development because they are not here how else can they contribute?

Thomas: Well I suppose that leads into the next question. How do you feel the Samoa diaspora influence their host country in terms of that hosts countries policies towards Samoa? So if we look at somewhere like New Zealand that has a large population of Samoans and also Samoan's in relatively important and influential positions within the government and parliament. Do you think that that relationship and their voice within New Zealand and within that parliament somehow positively effects Samoa or do think that just being close neighbours is?

Susan: Dunno. Ahh dunno. I don't know I think that as far as sports go it doesn't make any difference at all, personally. For rugby in particular.

Thomas: Do you think it makes any difference to the way that Samoa is viewed as a country by New Zealand, having a large portion of Samoan's in New Zealand?

Susan: Undoubtedly. Because we have, we actually don't have many visitors from New Zealand as tourists over here, and I have heard lots of people say it's because they don't want to, they know Samoans back in New Zealand, why would they want to come here you know. They don't really see it as a holiday destination because they see Samoa in a certain way because of the way the Samoan people behave and the way they live their life. But that doesn't really bother me, as a Samoan citizen living in Samoa I don't really care what they think, I don't care what New Zealand thinks, I don't care what Australia thinks about Samoa and I don't actually care about what Samoans in New Zealand think about Samoa, actually. I only

care what people in Samoa think about and how their life is and how we can make their life better and develop the country and develop the systems so that the vulnerable and the poor are advantaged more than the rich are, that's all really.

Thomas: I was looking on the Human Development Report and Samoa rates or comes in at about 96th, do you think that that is a fair reflection of the reality of living within Samoa? 96 is relatively low.

Susan: What's the report based on?

Thomas: The Human Development Index is based on income levels, health levels and education among a few other criteria. So Samoa ranks relatively low on that.

Susan: Out of how many countries?

Thomas: 180 countries.

Susan: Yea well we are a small developing country, in fact we used to be a least developing country we only just moved out of that.

Thomas: To maybe put it into context there is no current wars or major disease outbreaks, so maybe the 96 doesn't really reflect how good life is in Samoa?

Susan: I see, maybe. Who looks at the human development report?

Thomas: Its really just to get an idea of how people view Samoa.

Susan: I don't care how other people view Samoa.

Thomas: Okay, lets turn it around how do you feel the standard of life is in Samoa?

Susan: That's better. I love it that is why I am here, but I still think that there are lots of vulnerable people that need assistance and that's what donor countries should be focussing on and that's what the government should be focussing on as well. But the reason I live here is because I love it here, I wake up every morning and I am glad to be here and I love having visitors and a lot of visitors come and they like it to. Otherwise I wouldn't still be here I don't think.

Thomas: What role do think the government has within the brain drain, you were talking about

how it's been going on for a long time and the government or the countries have been dealing with it as they have the best they can. Do you think the government could do more or do you think its fine the way it is just ticking along trying to keep things?

Susan: I don't think the government sees it as such a big issue because people have always travelled and people, like I said to be qualified you have to leave and what they have done is that if you are on a government scholarship you need to come back. You are required to come back, unfortunately even though you are required to come back, you are required to come back even if there is no job here for you. So I think the government understands the issue but they certainly don't want to stop the remittances because it's bringing a lot of cash into the country basically. Keeps it going especially for the poor.

End Interview.

Victor Vaauli Interview.

Thomas: Starting out, thank you for your time, what sort of trends have you seen as far as out and in migration in Samoa?

Victor: I think, trends of migrations, I think there's a lot of trends o migrations that have been happening. One it's where families send their, probably the working age group to New Zealand. And to work there depending on, or the depending family rely on them for the remittances. So basically the first trend of migration that's happening where people see New Zealand, Australia as a bright future for them so they get to take that as an advance and go there and work and send money back home to their families. The second trend is for the, the opportunity that parents see in overseas countries in the case of academic aspect, where they send their children over for school and university because they see it as a better chance of achieving their goals and their dreams. The third trend is the New Zealand Government in partnership with the Samoan Government through this quota sort of programme. Where the Samoan citizens sign up for this quota or this programme and then New Zealand will draw up a draw and then they just pick up probably 100 applicants. So its those people that will get a chance to go to New Zealand and probably become New Zealand citizens after that. The New Zealand Government and the Samoan Government through the collaboration for this sort of programme that they have. So Samoan people migrate to New Zealand they move to New Zealand through the quota and the New Zealand Government they already allocate jobs for them and houses and after that

the Samoan people who move to New Zealand will become citizens of New Zealand. So those are the three main migration trends that I know about. Its academic migration, movement of people to New Zealand just to work and save up, for remittances sort of sending back income for feeding the family and the third one is the quota programme that they have.

Thomas: Do you guys talk about it amongst your friends, about moving, about different opportunities? Is that quite a common conversation?

Victor: Yea it is a common thing now because Samoa is still under the category of the UN as a developing country, so sometimes we can have a talk with our friends just probably a joke you know to try and move to overseas. To look for a better future there because there are a lot of chances, a lot of opportunities for the teenagers to look into when they go to overseas, where as in Samoa, there is opportunities but it's narrow. It's not a big range of opportunities open in Samoa. For example in Samoa when you working for the labour, if your hard labour, you know working in the street picking up rubbish, that is, they... allocated as a low salary probably 4 tala an hour. But if you look into New Zealand, Australia those kind of jobs they set a really high standard of salary you know probably 20 dollars an hour. So those are the kind of opportunities that we kind of look, that we kind of compare and contrast. You know, it doesn't matter if you work in the street or in the office, you still get more money than what we do here in Samoa, we are not saying, we are not compare and contrast that the Samoan Government is not paying the people the good salaries, but we are just seeing that there are a lot opportunities in overseas countries. But I think the main thing that is stops most of the young people or people from migrating is that there is no one to develop their families in Samoa. If they all move out, plus the culture is one of the aspects that is holding people behind. You know the more people that move the land is left over the houses you know, all the resources.... And probably ten years later after they leave they come back its gone because Samoan people you know when the land is left over they tend to use it because it's been wasted, you know the land has to be worked.

Thomas: Do you feel that the levels of, the increasing levels of education in Samoa is also effecting these trends? Do you think people with the gained knowledge, the better skills is also having a, I suppose, positive effect on more migration? Or do you think the migration patterns have been pretty solid?

Victor: I think with the level of education in Samoa, it's not... I'm not....., I going to be honest with this it's not setting a high standard yet. But it's getting there, it's getting there. I think over

100 percent we would be 85 percent. There was a case, the school certificate from the exams just last year where the students sit this exam before they go for their entry point into university, for the subject of maths no one got a grade one for maths, no one out of Samoa, everyone that sat the maths exam failed, no one passed the maths exam. So that's just like a small indication you know levels of education it's not even like, it's not even 100 percent in all aspects of the courses and subjects. It means you know that the Ministry of Education is not focussing on all the aspects of the education. They are just talking about the broad education and stuff, but they are not going into subject by subject. But the level of education within Samoa is increasing. It's not even stopping, even if the level of education is getting better year by year it will not stop the migration trends. People will still migrate. Not only by private migrations, where families take their students and pay for it. But the Government you know through New Zealand Aid and AusAID they are increasing the number of scholarships that they give to Samoa. For New Zealand they just increased to 5, they added 5 scholarships to 15 so that is 20 students going. But even if, apart from those scholarships granted by AusAID and New Zealand Aid, there is still a number of students migrating for education in New Zealand and it could be positive and it could be a negative outcome as well. Because some students they migrate there, after their degree they will stay there, because what's the point in coming back home when my salary is higher than the one in Samoa. But some students they will come back just for the pride, the heritage and all that and giving back to the community and the Government. Pretty much the student that migrate through scholarships for sure they will have to come and pay their bond. But the one that goes private you know that have made that choice themselves.

End Interview.

Vanya Taule'alo Interview

Thomas: (thank you for your time etc). The first question is what sort of trends have you seen as far as in and out migration within Samoa in the last couple of year?

Vanya: The last couple of years, gosh. I can think back a bit further where I can pinpoint a huge exodus which came in 1981 with the strike. After the PSC, Public Service Commission strike for 3 months a lot of people who were with the current government of the time they left and went overseas. So that was the likes of Albert Wendt who people who then became the vice Chancellor of USP it was a huge exodus. In more recent years to be honest I am not really watching what is going on. I am interested to see the usual kind of blue collar people who are

going overseas in search of a better life, in inverted comas. But I am also interested to see the number of diaspora Samoans with some kind of entrepreneurial skills are coming back to Samoa.

Thomas: Maybe realising that life is not always better in other countries?

Vanya: Yes, and I mean, these people may have grown up overseas. And I can give you names of people you may also like to interview (could add this or not, not super important).

Thomas: So you feel there is a bit of a trend coming back as well a lot of people are starting to come back to the island?

Vanya: I think there has always been people coming back post retirement. They want to die here that is standard. But people like Peta and other people who are wanting to engage in businesses or are setting up some kind of entrepreneurial thing here, they seem to be coming back.

Thomas: Do you think that the business environment within Samoa has changed so that it makes it more attractive for people to come back? Or do you think people just have the skill and the drive?

Vanya: I don't think that business environments have improved any, I think that its just there are less restrictions and loop holes to go through then you might have overseas. So if you want to do something you can pretty much go ahead and do it. So there is that freedom. I suppose in some-ways also there is certainly more of an availability of stuff then there was 20-30 years ago when I first arrived, so it is easier to have a business. You will also find that, one of the trends that you might also want to look into, some of the hoteliers are coming back, or not coming back are coming over here, are Palangi's. So you are looking at the people who own Seabreeze, why are they coming over, You are looking at the people I wrote about Saleatonga Sands in the newspaper last week on p.10 on the Monday and Gavin and Louie Brightwell are New Zealanders who have come to live here to so its like it would be interesting to know why those without an affiliation with Samoa are actually coming here as well.

Thomas: What did they say?

Vanya: I was looking more in the article last week, of why did they investing in art, because that is my background. And they did invest in the art of a well-known Samoan artist whom I

show in my gallery. I am looking at places in Samoa that are willing to invest in art like I have this display here but I have to say that children have taken two of the signs off and I am a bit pissed off about that.

Thomas: So you have a few places where art is shown?

Vanya: just this and Alemoana Resort just down at Matautu. I am not going to do it again because I had an article in the paper yesterday and that was sure as they are pushing more for the idea that if you want a display how about you rent it and then the gallery owner has to come and check and put up the money or the artist who is displaying or rent to buy which would be my preferred option after this experience.

Thomas: Talking about art and artists. Is there a market here, is there the job opportunities for young artists?

Vanya: Its tough, yea it's a tough market, and my cousin Fatu at Saleatonga doing some work there, he has already established a career he is at the upper ends of Pacific artists and he got an award from the government at one stage for efforts for Pacific arts, the art world we know here is quite different from the art world we know overseas and people are trained differently, so we often tend to see more of the same rather than a spread of individualistic work.

Thomas: Talking about the Pacific in general. If we take it from an arts point of view, is there similarities throughout the Pacific that maybe come through the generations, through the great migration, are there similar techniques?

Vanya: Well in as much as Lapita symbols are found throughout the Pacific. Certainly some countries in the Pacific there is the use of certain symbols, though colours will be different and some of the symbols will be different. For example the difference between here and New Caledonia although they may draw on Lapita patterns their petroglyphs are quite different. So we don't have petroglyphs. So I think the differences really are in relationship to how conservative is a society and what you are allowed to talk about and what you are not allowed to talk about. And I also believe that distance from what I call the source gives you greater flexibility and freedom. You are not confined by very traditional communities.

Thomas: Do you feel Samoa is quite restrictive in that sense?

Vanya: I think it is. I think that Christianity has a lot to answer for. Everywhere you go I am

having God thrust down my throat. And that makes people incredibly conservative and self-righteous, so if you want to look at things that are going on in society in a critical way. If you want to look at incest, if you want to look at violence against women, if you want to look at even religious freedom, if you want to look at any kind of social issue that might be slightly edgy, you're going to get criticised and even if you want to talk about a legend, most legends are rife with sexual connotations and do's and don'ts I mean they literally, legends, are to teach you about how to live in your society, in many ways. So if I am to do a legend about Sina and the eel. And I am to look at the phallic content of the eel and the huge insinuation that Sina fell in love with the eel and everything else transpired it's like well how can I couch this in a way that is not going to be offensive, I mean it can be really annoying.

Thomas: Do you feel that that plays a role in peoples minds when they choose to leave?

Vanya: I think so. Though a lot of what I call the major Pacific or Samoan artists overseas, probably grew up there anyway. Fatu left when he was 19 and he is now 68, he didn't become a professional artist until the early 80's. He always maintained a respect for Samoan tradition, he has not been critical. But other artists who have gone have been very critical basically might have been born here but grew up overseas. And they will talk about colonialism, they will talk about violence against women and a whole lot of other issues like that. And they tend to have grown up overseas.

Thomas: Do you feel that that is maybe a slightly missing aspect here within Samoan, being able to be slightly critical through the arts?

Vanya: Yes I absolutely think so. I long for the fact that we could be a little more open minded. I have a friend, Victor Rogers, who is doing some plays in Hawaii at the moment, he has done a play called Black Faggot which I saw over in Edinburgh last year at a festival, and he is doing another one at the moment, I think its my name is Garry Cooper, and its in Hawaii and I said oh God I long to see things like this in Samoa. I deal with these people on Facebook and he said you know hell will freeze over before work like this is allowed and I spoke to my friend also an artist a performer, Fiona Collins, yesterday we were having a talk and she was saying, yea there is no way in hell. She has looked at doing a play last year Pelestars which touched on sexual abuse of children in her character and that was brave of her to do, it was fantastic. And she did that here.

Thomas: How was it met?

Vanya: It was done up at the old Homecafé so it was a smallish audience and people loved it. But you know put that out to the greater population.....

Thomas: Yea I guess a slightly different crowd at Homecafé.

Vanya: Yea and with its small, in-tune kind of crowd you can never really afford to bring these kind of people over.

Thomas: Do you feel though at some stage having that diaspora that is pushing those boundaries trying to open up to talk about those things in other countries could eventually influence Samoa?

Vanya: I think it does influence what goes on here, because if you look back, I came here in 1976, so I was a young in my 20s then, we wore mormom rules and I am an atheist ex catholic and my husband and I are just so disgusted with what goes on with the church here that we just don't go even though he is from a long line of pastors and his father was a pastor. But I think that we have watched things, we have come from a very conservative place when I a young Palangi in the village where I was like the Pied Piper, the kids were so fascinated to see me. To a place where now so many Samoans are coming back for holidays and Christmas. But even if you look at fashion how has that changed, it has changed so much because of what's coming in from overseas. How mind-sets change, that takes longer, but these kind of veneers can certainly change quite quickly and the music that people listen to. I think the use of drugs is a worry here and its certainly on the increase, its massive and I have been to a point where people come in and I told that they are offered all the time on the street do you want dope do you want dope and that never used to happened. And I think that that attitude and peoples lifestyles have changed, but then they keep falling back on God as a justification for everything.

Thomas: Do think also peoples expectations for life are beginning to change as well with maybe the increase ease of movement between countries?

Vanya: I think that the people think that if they go overseas they will have a better life for their children and I'm not sure that actually plays out in reality. Because from what I understand, I haven't been in New Zealand. Where are you from?

Thomas: New Zealand.

Vanya: I haven't been in New Zealand for a long long time. so the latest place I have lived for

any period of time was when we were studying in Sydney. So we had six years in Sydney in the early 90's. but from what I see of what is going on for example over in New Zealand, a lot of the diaspora is really, really sad in many respects. Yes there are those that are achieving, there are those that are going to university and those that are getting great jobs. Yet there are a hell of a lot who are not, who are falling completely under the radar and ending up in the wrong situations and rather mimicking the gang culture of America. So what's improved there? At least if they were in Samoa they may be in a village where that kind of behaviour is not tolerated, but then I think that the heavy arm of the village law is questionable as well.

Thomas: Certainly right that idea of it being better in another country is not always true.

Vanya: Yes and I think that you know the idea that people overseas are living off the fat of the land and that they can afford to pay back money to families here, just doesn't exist. And there is less and less remittances coming through so you are seeing pressure on people overseas and a lot of pressure on people here.

Thomas: Do you feel that diaspora is coming under more pressure to supply?

Vanya: Yea definitely. They are having demands made upon them that are huge. They cant pay their rent, they cant do this, they cant put their kids through school, what ever. So the expectations of the people here meeting the realities of what's going on in New Zealand or Australia post the economic crisis is quite different. So I don't know what happens but I think that people have completely unrealistic demands made of them.

Thomas: Samoa is often labelled as a Migration, Bureaucratic, Remittance country so it's a bit of an acronym that an economist has come up with. Because the bureaucracy tends to employ a lot of people, migration is quite high and remittances have been a large part of the economy. Buts that's not necessarily such a positive acronym to use for a country. I was wandering if you feel that that is reflective of life within the country?

Vanya: No it's not a very positive acronym. It certainly used to be, people lived heavily on remittances and I used to think that it's a disgrace. And friend of mine, I used to teach a the University for years, and a women that I taught with there was a VSA and she and her husband worked there before they went over to Savai'i. And she experienced people just sitting around doing nothing and just waiting for the remittances to come in say every week Monday or something like that. And she was absolutely disgusted. I think we should not be a nation that

relies on remittances we have got plenty of our own arable land that we can plant and we can become self-sufficient. So I think that remittances, aid and remittances have sort of created a nation where they put their hand out very quickly and I really dislike that.

Thomas: Do you feel that Samoa graduating from Least Developed Country up to Middle Income status last year, that's a sign for progress, for a brighter future?

Vanya: I think it would be and I think that is why they have done it. But I think that half the people are probably saying ahh that's a bit sad because as a Least Developed Country we can have access to this, this and this. whereas now they have got to make it a lot on their own. I mean for instance I just put a post on Facebook this morning about the coconut industry and why with all the accolades going on overseas we, a number of times out at Vaitele we have had coconut factories and they all belly-up. And it's like why are they bellying-up and it's also like why are we just sending overseas the raw product and why are we not making that product and why are we not turning these industries where we are doing the creation of other products that we can then sell to the rest of the world. I mean the Bodyshop has got oils out of the Women and Business but we can do far more than that and its just ridiculous. It doesn't take much for farmers to go and re-grow their plantations, to remove the senile trees and start demanding a reasonable price per nut because a lot of the problem is that they don't get a decent price per nut. Its not worth collecting them in the end. but I mean be industrious and look at whats going on. Look at global trends. But what people tend to do and the Agricultural Department is notorious for saying farmers go and plant passion fruit. Oh people don't want that now, go and plant coco because the chocolate industry is going to take off. Oh no people don't want that now. And all these farmers are being sucked into these various and the government is not making any market for it. Its not creating the markets so the farmers are getting disheartened. But come on the markets have got to be founds and people can go and find them themselves as well and start utilising so much land that is underutilised.

Thomas: Do you feel the government has a little to answer for in-terms of not generating enough employment so that people have to look overseas?

Vanya: Absolutely I think their record in creating jobs is absolutely appalling. Especially within the youth. When I was at the university I proposed in 2004 the development of a separate school of creative arts that would cover all sorts of industries you know design, landscaping, jewellery, textiles. That if they went through it people could develop, plus graphic design and

those computer skills, that it would allow people, young people and people who wanted to study, to come out of this school and to feed the needs of the business community and also the government community. I was between 2004 and 2008, the senate approved but the council would not hear my submission, even though it was in the Strategic Plan. And one of the major things of that was youth employment. You know we bring in IT experts, all these other people to do films for us to do videos for us you know Samoa Tourism Authority and things like that, but we could be doing it ourselves. But we need to be able to people tertiary education from certificate level to post-graduate level where they can lead the charge on what the community is needing. Because the communities needs have become more sophisticated. Look when I went overseas in 1989, my husband was doing his master then we didn't know how to use a computer because there were hardly any computers on island. Now if you are not computer savvy you are stuffed. So the community has changed a hell of a lot in the last what's that 20 years (laughs).

Thomas: But obviously the government is not playing that role within the education they are not matching it, or trying to create these pathways into jobs.

Vanya: We have got the Australian Technical Institution here and its training a lot of other people to go back their islands. Its also training Samoans to be suitable to be employed in Australia, and I would like to know how many of them are employed here. They have this mandate that obviously if they are an Australian funded technical college its looking after its own and I don't know how long with Tony Abbott that's going to last because he is a complete jerk. So I think that the government here and my husband agrees with me to and he is the Chairman of the Public Services Commission. The government and its reputation and how its moved forward for youth employment is abysmal. And because of that we have huge social issues. I live in an area called Suisenga, down the road is an area called Vaitele and it used to be covered in coconut plantations for what used to be the German plantations, it used to be called Westec, then they sold them off into quarter acre sections, there has been a whole huge drift into town especially from Savai'i and I can tell that Samoans can destroy a quarter acre of section in a split second and we have got a lot of youth there, there aren't enough schools out there, people are quite impoverished and we have a lot of youth issues over there and with that a lot of youth walking around the community doing a hell of a lot of break ins and a hell of a lot of selling of drugs. If you want drugs you have to get them. And not only is it dope, I understand that there is an increasing industry in methamphetamine. And that's a huge concern

because Polynesians are not good on dope they can get quite psychotic, it just happens to be one of the.... a tendency that's just more than in other people. Also methamphetamine we know makes anybody violent.

Thomas: I did just have one last question if that's alright. What's your view on aid, just coming from working for UNDP and through my studies, and I know it's a very broad question, but do you think aid is doing for Samoa, has done for Samoa, could do for the future or should it just get out?

Vanya: I am going to sound very harsh in this respect, recently I have been told by someone who is working in one of the major international organisations, who is a friend. That I have known for a long time that we have been selling our soul to the Chinese and I am very concerned about this. I have been concerned about this for the last 10-15 years, yea 1997 I came back from Sydney, and I hear that for instance that the government is so kissing the ass of the Chinese that they are accepting a deal for the airport which is 15 million dollars more than one that Japanese offered. The Japanese offered I think outright aid, whereas the Chinese are offering a loan which has to be paid back. And this kind of thing continues. I also think that um who is funding some of the environmental things that we do. I know that near the prison there is, Isikuki Pulivalu and Associates are importing from Australia tyres to burn to make fuel. It's appalling and I don't know what sort of funding they are getting to do it but obviously they are getting something. And we have been trying to push the farmers to grow the bio-fuel that is going to benefit the farmer and the alternative energy system in Samoa but the governments not interested in that. So for a long time we worked with a group of people that are dealing with Virgin, there is a group there of international people, the guy who owns Virgin, Richard Branson and the American Politician Al Gore. So they also have an organisation where we were trying to make some of the first totally alternative country, but the government kept stalling this kind thing. And I don't know why but it really bothers me that you come in with these offers and you've got to commit something and they have got to commit something, and the government is not prepared to commit anything to see something happen. So not only environmentally but politically what does that do to us. You've got the Chinese with a much more autocratic type of political system and you think well how much of that is being echoed in the system we see here, where the government an discredit a commission of enquiry they setup to other day to investigate something and then the Prime Minister comes out on Saturday and Sunday and says that this is all shit. So I think that aid here has a lot of political implications

it has implications for future generations to in terms of who is left to pay it back. I think that we need to be very smart about what aid we take on and what we don't. and I also think that there needs to be a consensus, I mean why are we bringing in tyre with an untested technology when I live out there, what are they going to be doing with the effluent when they burn it and for what purpose when farmers could have been growing plants that we have already identified for bio-gas.

Thomas: I have that there are also a couple of local vines that can be used for bio-fuel that are running rampant anyways.

Vanya: Yes there are and there are also particular types of grasses can be grown and trees and stuff like that and that has been well tested and well sought out.

Thomas: And I guess especially heading into 2015 where technologies are a lot higher than what they were 5-10 years ago and the government probably doesn't have a foot to stand on saying that it's too expensive because it there. Do you think its maybe time for a little bit of a change within the government then?

Vanya: I think that any government that has been in power for so long, and my husband was responsible for this government coming into power. Because he led the 1981 strike which toppled the previous government, which was very arrogant by the way. But I think that anyone, it becomes a quasi-democracy and I think that its time for a change. But there is not enough powerful, there's not a united body against it. Because if you want to get a ministerial job you are not going to go for a party that's losing, so you will all go on to one side, that losing, so then you can manipulate from within there so as to serve your own needs. And lets face it there are a huge number of them there that are after what they want and they are corrupt. We know that and everybody knows that. Samoans are very politically aware but what can we do because every time we try to do something we get shot down. So yes there is absolutely a need for a strong united body against what we have here.

Thomas: Do you think that a lack of a united body, a lack of an opposition for want of a better word, do you think that there is something in the challenge of having a Westminster system and having a Matai system or do you just think that's functioning fine and its just the Westminster system where it has all just become one-sided?

Vanya: I think it has become too one-sided. If you were dealing with the village system, my

husband goes to the fono's every month I get quite disgusted at some of the things they have to deal with. They are absolutely autocratic they are absolutely entrenched. So you know if you do something wrong within the village you get kicked out of the village and you have to pay a fine to get back into the village. And they are not going to look at why you did what you did because you have a problem with alcohol so let's go and get that to go to AA instead. Or somebody who obviously has some psychological issue you know give them some kind of avenue for treatment instead of this hmmm which is what they do. I think that the village authority has to modernise I mean its lead by a whole lot of old people trying to keep things like they were in the 1970's and before. And society has moved on and people are used to having more of a say. And that is why a lot of the people are going overseas because they can't stand living in the village and having their every move dictated to them by the village. So if they are more your blue collar worker or more on the lower scale in terms of your employment regime they are the ones that are going because they don't want to be pushed around. Whereas those that have more of an education and have the opportunity to climb they can do that and then they can make quite a nice little life for themselves in some ways. Or hopefully they might at some stage be able to at some stage to change things.

Thomas: There is a correlation when talking about brain drain between your skilled and your unskilled labour, where skilled people will move to find a better job but it proven that there is also a large number of unskilled people who will go as well because they have the connection, they know someone?

Vanya: And it's probably more of them are going than the other way around.

Thomas: Do though that there is also a little bit of say the higher educated people will come back than the lesser skilled people?

Vanya: Yes, eventually they will come back and then of course those who have pensions will bring their pensions with them and then stay till they are very old.

End Interview.

Olsen and Jane Va'afusuaga Interview

This is the longest interview that was conducted as part of this thesis and therefore it is only partly transcribed. A full audio copy can be made available.

Olsen: We just had a couple that came in, took them to the waterfall, the boy and the girl and she is really strong. She said she has been coming back for the last ten years, come back every second year, stay in the village. They want their boy and girl to be raised up in a way that they can speak the language, and survive get away from the world and all that, she is a forward thinking lady, and her husband, and that's great you know. These kids if you don't build them up, what happens here is, they will still be in their....they will work its hard to....., they will be educated, they will do the things that keep the country running, but they won't go beyond the aid, or the remittances mentality..... No we have to save our little green spot here. Let the village take ownership of conserving their natural resources. Build up eco-tourism where everyone is employed here, self-sufficient, and sustainable the whole thing about it. And then if the Chinese want to come in and build we can go oh no we are happy...employed locally here....That's when the people if they are confident at that time and they say you know we are going to keep this place untouched, we got food on the plate and we are happy.

Thomas: Do you feel that there are a lot of people who are leaving the village as well. Do the younger generation talk about heading to New Zealand Australia or Apia?

Jane: I think its everybody's dream, well particularly the young guys, when we have groups come here and they've got the young palagi girls, (Laughter). But the thing is your my ticket out of here. I can see you as a ticket. I think there is always that at the back of their minds and I think that the remittance thing, I think that families here, or like what you were saying, they have quite a few children, I have seen it in families, so I think its really good the way they organise it. You do the plantation...(Short break as one of the workers arrives). But what I see, and a good example is a friend of mine in Savai'i and they have a big family. And the thing is you get somebody in the family to do the plantation, one to go fishing, and you know a couple of girls will do the washing and look after the kids. Everyone has got their role, and if you can get someone to go and work in Apia, there's some cash every week. And if you can get someone to go to New Zealand then you're sweet. And I think that's kind of the... because of the remittances, if you have a son or daughter who go to New Zealand or Australia they will send money back to the families. Any of the houses here, any of the cars. And the nine years since

I have lived here more people have cars all come from money from family overseas. And the same with the houses that are being rebuilt. Like that family there they came they built the house, but they didn't finish it. So the family waited and they came back after two years and finished it. But they wouldn't have had it done unless it was for family overseas.

End Interview.