

The value Pacific Youth place on librarianship as a potential career

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Abstract

Research Problem:

The purpose of this research is to uncover the value Pacific Youth place on librarianship as a viable career or future profession.

Methodology:

This research employs qualitative research methods. This fits with the *Talanoa* method recommended for research with Pacific people. Four focus groups were conducted with the smallest having four members, and the largest with 10. Overall, there were 25 participants. There were 16 questions divided into five sections: Future goals/aspirations; Assumptions/personal views on libraries; Recruitment; Professionalism and Qualifications.

Key Findings:

The LIS is not an industry or profession Pacific Youth are actively looking at for the future. This is due to their perceptions, the perceptions of the Pacific community as a whole, and the general low activity from the LIS in changing those perceptions. In order to lift recruiting levels amongst Pacific Youth, the LIS need to 'go where the students are' and show the amazing and influential work it does in our communities and society.

Implications:

The information received from the participants remains consistent with what the literature says in this area, even though there are very few domestic resources on the subject. This research uncovers the reasons and attitudes for why there is low value placed on librarianship as a viable career by Pacific Youth, and offers up ways in dealing with these. The desire for this research is that both Pacific Youth would find value in the LIS as a rewarding profession to work in, and that the LIS becomes more rounded and developed as it increases its diversity.

Key Words:

Pacific, Pacific Youth, Value, Librarianship, LIS, Attitudes

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(I feel like a music artist writing this for the cover of his album.)

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Introduction

A few years back, I was given an amazing opportunity by my workplace to help produce a policy that would empower the organisation to engage effectively with, and deliver a successful service to, the Pacific people of Auckland. The result of the three-year process was the *Pacific Services Strategy*, later launched into what is now called, *Talanoa*. The ultimate question I tried to answer when producing the strategy was simple: How to connect Pacific people with the organisation more and better. The flipside to this was how the organisation could make itself more Pasifika friendly. I believe I answered that question which was hugely enlightening, but it left some unknown issues for me, particularly with Pacific people being employed in libraries. This research then, has given me the opportunity to delve into one of those ‘unknowns’, mixed with a distinct group I am passionate about working with – Pacific Youth. Essentially, I wanted to see whether the issue of our Pacific Youth not figuring librarianship as a potential future career path was a ‘thing’ and why. My assumption is that it definitely was not, due to my own experiences, but I wanted to find out for sure.

And for sure, I found out – Pacific Youth were definitely not placing any value on librarianship as a viable career path. So it is the aim of this research to identify the reasons and attitudes as to why this is the case. And further to this, it is hoped that authentic and practical solutions would be illuminated for the Library and Information sector (LIS) to help deal with this issue.

The importance in answering this question is two-fold and very personal.

1. My own experience is that I fell into the LIS ‘accidentally’. It was never a career I intentionally sought. I knew the value of libraries during my days as a high school and under-graduate student, but that is as far as its usefulness went. Now however, I can see the immense significance and worth libraries’ contribute to our society through their information services and desire for people to “*foster a love for reading and places in which reading can occur*” (Gaiman, 2013), which in turn, I believe, helps to lift literacy standards. So in finding the answers to the issue presented in the previous paragraph, my personal hope is that statistics such as Pacific people being “under-represented in higher-achieving groups in literacy, maths and science assessments” (Statistics New Zealand, 2006) will begin to change as the value of libraries - their services and resources, and as a worthwhile career – enlarges in the eyes of our Pacific Youth.
2. The second part to my wanting to answer this question is the affirmative implication this research may have on the LIS. The hope is that as more Pacific Youth see the LIS as a viable career, it will hopefully result in a stronger and more developed workforce. Diversity in the workforce is needed as new insights and perspectives will help lift the industry to new levels as other parts of the population are served, yet, as the literature indicates, the industry suffers from not being diverse enough. However, including diversity in the workforce is not as simple as desiring it. There needs to be a specific approach to attaining a good level of diversity, particularly with Pacific Youth, and this research will help to clarify this process for the knowledge and practice.

The outline for this research is set broadly as follows: Chapter One will be a review of what the literature says; Chapter Two discusses the selected methodology; Chapter Three reports the findings and Chapter Four will be a discussion of the findings. The end will be a summary of the findings and conclude the research.

Definitions

Librarianship	The library profession. With regards to this particular research, it will focus mostly on public librarianship. It will not include other roles within the profession such as cataloguing, archives, etc.
LIS	The Library and Information Sector
Pacific	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diverse group of ethnicities - Main ethnicities within this diverse group are from Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, Niue, The Cook Islands, Tokelau and Tahiti (Auckland Council, 2013). Other ethnic groups that can also be included are Fijian Indians, Rotumans, Hawaiian and other Melanesian nations.
Pacific culture	<p>Ethnic groups within the Pacific are extremely varied. However, there are traits that are very similar in nature. Some of these traits will be listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Respect ○ Reciprocity ○ Family links and obligations ○ Community oriented – the good of all is important ○ Collective responsibility ○ Older people revered – gerontocracy ○ Humility ○ Love/charity ○ Service ○ Spirituality, most commonly associated with Christianity (University of Otago, 2011).
Pacific people	This research will employ the Salvation Army’s definition of Pacific people - People in New Zealand who claim ethnic links to Samoa, Tonga, Niue, Fiji, Cook Islands, Tokelau, Tuvalu, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands and the small island states of Micronesia. They will refer to people who currently reside in New Zealand, but may have been born in a Pacific Island or New Zealand (Tanielu & Johnson, 2013)
Pacific Youth	This research will use the following terms to denote Pacific people who are categorised in the ages of 16-19 years (or who are in Year Levels 11-13 of High School), or school leavers from the ages of 18-21 years. People in this age bracket are often seen as being in between childhood and adulthood.
Pasifika	Similar to definitions for ‘Pacific’ and ‘Pacific people’ but is used to refer altogether to the people, cultures, and language of Pacific groups residing in New Zealand. It replaces the term "Polynesian" to distinguish sufficiently between Māori and Pacific groups in New Zealand, and/or between Pacific peoples living in New Zealand and those who still live in the Pacific Islands

	(Te Kete Ipurangi, n.d.)
Talanoa	Literally means ‘talk’. In the context of research, a Talanoa is seen as a discussion forum that helps to garner information (Vaiioleti, 2006)

Chapter 1 - Literature review

Research relating to Pacific people and the LIS is rare. Even rarer is the subject of the 'workforce', and even rarer than that, is that subject relating to Pacific Youth. Existing examinations relating to Pacific people and the LIS industry usually focus on the 'user/customer' perspective as opposed to employment in the industry. However, research which looks at the employing of 'minorities' into libraries, and diverse workforces, could prove useful. Note that the use of the terms: 'minority', 'minorities', 'diversity', through this section will refer to ethnic populations who are fundamentally smaller than the dominant ethnic population of a country e.g. African-Americans/Hispanics - European-Americans; Pacific Islanders - European-New Zealanders.

Where appropriate, the literature review will be themed according to comments I personally received when revealing my career choice to others. Where there is no fitting comment, a standard title will be used.

1.1 "I didn't know you could have a career as a librarian."

In de la Pena McCook & Geist's (1993) article of admonishment to the LIS industry, they note that the profession is 'invisible' to minorities due to a number of reasons, one being a lack of reaching out to minorities early during their education (pg. 3). Dewey & Keally (2008) show through their research that outreaching to minorities certainly yields success, but discovered that in this process, students were actually 'unaware' of job opportunities available in librarianship (pg. 626). From experience, these reasons are accurate. At any career workshops or expo's I attended as a college student, the LIS stall was either a mute presence, or missing. It is important that this research enquire of young Pacific students how the LIS needs to address this issue. Furthermore, a report by Christchurch City Libraries (Brown & Ogilvie, 2008) gives a recommendation for the library system to focus on promoting roles and to make the roles tailored for those to whom the promotion is aimed at (pg. 45)

1.2 "E lelei se totogi i lena galuega?" ("Is that a good paying job?")

The experience in the section above is interesting in light of Lilley, McCaffrey & Marsters (2008) research. Respondents were asked why Pacific people were not applying for roles in the LIS profession and 'unawareness' was not seen as a factor but rather 'perception'. Pacific people's perceptions of the LIS are that it is mono-cultural, not as attractive as other industries, remunerates poorly, etc. (pg. 25). Regarding why the respondents chose librarianship, only 23% said they deliberately chose this field compared to 44.1% who did not (pg. 24). This number is surprisingly higher than I presumed given my own experience.

The next point is not directly connected to the Pacific (or minority) workforce in the LIS industry but rather to the collections of libraries lacking diversity. In her literature review, Linda Frederiksen (2014) notes that only 10.5% of human characters found in the current children's literature were people of colour (pg. 225). Such a lack of diversity in the 'product' of the LIS industry can contribute to the idea that it is an industry for the dominant culture only. While the problem can't be solved by the LIS industry alone (publishing companies are very much a part of this issue), they can aid in growing their purchases of other cultural material, or even contribute to publishing it.

1.3 The Recruitment Process

The absolute need to recruit Pacific people (or minorities) into the LIS industry is a given and will be expanded on in the next section. What this section will focus on are factors affecting recruitment such as where, how and the next steps.

1.3.1 Where and How?

Dewey & Keally's (2008) research presents good examples on how recruitment for diversity needs to be executed. One example showed how minority science librarians went into the career fairs of a historically African-American colleges and targeted students there using specifically-created promotional collateral. The result: Three applicants applying into a science librarian course (pg. 626). As mentioned earlier, as part of their survey, Lilley et al (2009) asked respondents why Pacific people were not applying for librarian roles. The third most common answer perceived how institutions failed to advertise in the right places and in the most appropriate ways (pg. 25). Kumaran (2015) recommends that the library industry must network with education institutions so that students may be exposed to the profession and be encouraged to apply (pg. 441). The literature seems to agree that recruitment needs to be done 'where the people are' and it needs to be communicated in ways understandable to them. The study will look at the current state for how the LIS sector is doing this, and what the future state should be.

1.3.2 Next steps after recruitment

Most of the literature shows that a network support system is needed for minorities who are recruited into the LIS profession. Dewey & Keally (2008) shows how a cohort group used funds from a grant to create the 'Diversity's Librarian's Network' whose aim was to provide information and announcements about residency positions, give guidance, support and encouragement (pg. 626). Kumaran (2015) also gives recommendations about the need for library systems to include a mentorship programme for minority groups. Without such support systems, African Americans were limited in their careers as no mentors with political savvy, organisational influence and power were there to provide guidance (p. 439). de la Pena McCook & Geist also offer similar recommendations for building support groups for minorities. However, their recommendations focus on the library students. The aim though, remains the same – to support minorities in the LIS profession (pg. 2-3) The LIANZA SIG, 'Pasifika Information Managers Network' (PIMN), is a support network for Pacific workers in the industry within New Zealand. Professional development is a key element for the group with every meeting including an hour of professional development for the sake of growth (Salmon, Meehan, & Mcfall-McCaffery, 2015). Regarding my membership with this group, being with other Pacific workers from the LIS profession does make me feel supported in such a European dominant industry. Questions might be asked as to why minority groups receive 'special' support like PIMN, but it is because when you are not a part of the dominant culture, you can easily become 'restructured' into that culture and lose your own. Such support allows minorities to hold onto their culture in the presence of the dominant, and even use it to transform the dominant into something stronger.

1.4 Power of diversity

All the literature agrees that diversity added to the LIS profession will lift the industry to greater levels as new forms of knowledge; experiences and culture are brought in. Dewey & Keally (2008) note that higher education institutions in the US emphasize the need to advance diversity as it is a critical element in the success of learning, engagement and

knowledge creation (p. 622). They exhort the library and information profession to do more in recruiting minorities to help with achieving two end goals:

1. Meeting the information needs of a multicultural population
2. To grow the profession (pg. 629)

Auckland Council's major document, The Auckland Plan, makes reference to Auckland being home to the largest Polynesian population in the world and views this as a key aspect in defining the city's uniqueness (Auckland Council, 2012). While this plan is not libraries-related, it is the document that has shaped a number of Auckland Libraries' governing documents including the Workforce Plan (Auckland Libraries, 2013) which recognises the need for Pacific people to be brought into its personnel to generate a high level of intercultural awareness into the organisation.

The Ministry of Health finds power in a diverse workforce as a means to lift New Zealand's health system for the Pacific community. The document paints a scenario of Pacific patients who forsake engaging with the health system due to a variety of issues e.g. language, finance, immigration, etc. The result of this is low health outcomes for Pacific people, so the need for cultural competence is high (Tiatia, 2008). While not specific to libraries, this document has strong similarities that can be drawn on and applied to the profession.

1.5 "A Library Degree? What do you study for that?"

Lilley et al (2008) showed through their study that the need for a qualification in the LIS sometimes prevented Pacific people from applying for other roles. In fact, the process of attaining a qualification was a major detracting factor i.e. time and cost. On top of this, it was shown that the profession as a whole was not actively working on increasing the number of qualified Pacific librarians. It was recommended that one way to deal with this is to develop scholarships to attract Pacific people into the LIS. This is a point supported by Lisa Hussey in her dissertation about ethnic minorities' choosing librarianship (Hussey, 2006). Students interviewed for Hussey's dissertation found that having a scholarship for LIS studies was very important.

Kelley (2013) noted that, alongside a qualification, the recognition of an African-American or Hispanic's 'life experience' should also be a driving factor when recruiting. This point was supported at an Auckland Libraries' Talanoa session by Pacific staff members who 'felt' that they were by-passed for job opportunities because of their lack of a qualification. Yet, in their everyday tasks, they had been performing aspects of the role they applied for, for some time.

The literature shows that regarding Pacific people and minorities working in the LIS profession, common themes are expressed regardless of the setting. The industry is lagging in tapping the great potential found in having a diverse workforce. Yet, it seems that this is not a recent discovery. As shown, the first reading referenced in this literature review was written in the early 1990's (de la Pena & Geist). The latest (Kumaran) is from 2015, and yet, the issues remain consistent. It would also be useful to further enquire of researchers Lilley, McFall-McCaffrey and Marsters to see whether the recommendations they set in their research has been satisfied. While things may have improved

slightly, there is still more work to be done. What are the areas to target to access this power from diversity? Based on this literature review, the LIS needs:

- To 'spread the word' that our profession is a truly satisfying calling
- To manage recruitment on a number of fronts – recruiting where Pacific Youth are, communicating this recruitment in ways understandable to them and, establishing support networks for Pacific workers once they are employed.
- To develop incentives into its study programmes and also to look at the importance of life experience.

Chapter 2 - Methodology

2.1 Framework

The following factors created the framework for which this research was based upon.

- Historically, the Western methodology that drives much of academic research has been disempowering for Pacific people. There have been instances where research on Pacific people has been presented inaccurately or in a negative light. There has also been a history of the benefits of research not being apportioned with Pacific people. The role of Pacific research is to generate knowledge and understanding about, and for, Pacific peoples (Health Research Council of New Zealand, n.d.) This was key! As suggested earlier, the aim of this research is to provide information that could uplift not only the LIS, but also Pacific people.
- Pacific research is driven by the active involvement of Pacific peoples as researchers, advisors and stakeholders. “‘Users’ are the experts of their own domain” (Hagen, 2011). One of the foundations for this research was to make sure the voice of the Pacific Youth was being heard and understood because they are the ‘experts of their own domain’. Their voice would act as the navigation for how to deal with the issue rather than the LIS assuming how to do it.
- McCartan, Schubotz & Murphy (as cited in Randall, 2013) who said focus groups, helped to produce an environment of comfort for youth as they were with their peers and speaking on their own terms.
- Regarding the Western methodology of research, Vaioleti (2006) claims it does not require a personal relationship between the researcher and the participant. This is an immediate issue for Pacific communities because they hold personal, familial and community relationships in truly high regard. Most of the participants in the research were known to me through various networks, so a relationship already existed. For those I did not know, the mutual contact was the conduit through which those participants would trust me with their responses.
- Vaioleti (2006) also argues that in the space of such relationships, *mo’oni* (pure, real, authentic) information is made available for Pacific research. In order to have achieved *mo’oni* data from the Pacific Youth, I used the basis of familiarity (through family and friends) to ‘break the ice’ particularly with those I did not know personally.

The format of the research was conducted as a qualitative interview in the form of focus groups. This was considered the best method in approaching this research because the style of acquiring information in the Pacific culture is typically done through ‘talks’, discussions and conversations. This mostly informal forum is called a ‘Talanoa’ and can be based on a particular subject, issue, or anything random. Examples of this in practice are:

- a. In Fiji, this forum is used to attain information from all people whether from the villages or from government departments
- b. In Samoa, the Talanoa process is multi-layered and multi-levelled
- c. In Tonga, Talanoa is all about story-telling or having conversations from the heart (Vaioleti, 2006)

To *Talanoa* simply means ‘to talk’, so applied in this context, for the sake of dispensing and receiving information, the discussion needed to be open, without a rigid framework and above all, be based on personal relationships. The fluid framework is supported by Stake (as cited in Randall, 2013) who describes one of the main objectives of qualitative research as being ‘knowledge production’, data that is initiated as a result of asking questions around those originally planned.

As one can perceive, the *Talanoa* is the customary method in information distribution and socialising in the Pacific culture, so it is only right that information sought for this research was done in such a format.

2.2 Sample

Twenty-five youths were interviewed as part of four different focus groups for this research. Their ages ranged from 16 years to 22 years, with the majority being in the 16-17 year age group. This was also reflected in the number of participants who listed ‘High School’ as their education status. While the age range aimed for was initially 16 – 21 years, a 22 year old woman was also keen in participating, so was allowed as she had just recently turned twenty-two. There were two main ethnic groups represented in the research with 15 identifying themselves as Samoan and nine identifying themselves as Tongan. The other island groups represented were Niue, Tokelauan and Kiribati. The number of ethnic representatives in the study is bigger than the number of participants because of the way some identified themselves, as belonging to more than one ethnic group. A few of the Tongan participants themselves were half-caste; the other half being Hindu Indian.

Leedy and Ormrod (2015) suggests focus groups be limited to a maximum of 10-12 participants. I ran a total of four workshops with the lowest number being four and the largest with ten. Each group was classed based on their relationship with one another. Two were church youth groups. One was all family members to me; and the last group were students from the local high school. Because of the already formed relationships with one another, the level of comfort (as alluded to earlier) was strong so the sharing of thoughts and feelings from the Pacific Youth felt *mo'oni*. Of the four groups, three needed recruitment through a mutual contact.

2.3 Research Questions

There were a total of 16 questions divided into 5 sections:

Personal thoughts/assumptions

- What is a job you are aiming for in the future? Why?
- When you hear the word ‘library’, what comes immediately to your mind? Why do you think these things?
- Has the thought of working for in a library ever crossed your mind?

Recruitment

- How can libraries encourage Pacific youth to look at libraries as a career?
- Is it important for libraries to be at events like career expos, the Polyfest or school career evenings?

Professionalism

- What kind of learning and development do you think libraries can offer to help young Pacific workers so they can be successful in their job?

- If you were working in libraries, would the idea of having a 'support network' be important?
- Do you know if librarians receive good pay? Does this affect your decision to work in libraries?
- What kind of working environment would encourage you to stay working in the LIS sector for a good number of years e.g. 5-10 years?

Diversity/Culture:

- What do you think would happen to libraries if more Pacific youth saw librarianship as an important career path?
- Do you think libraries in Auckland are 'Pacific' enough?
- What does the Pacific culture offer the libraries?
- In your opinion or experience, what in the Pacific culture can act as a barrier to seeing librarianship as a possible career?

Qualifications

- Did you know that librarianship requires a qualification? Yes / No
- Knowing that you need a qualification to gain employment in libraries' (especially for the higher roles), does this make you want to study a library degree or does it put you off? Yes / No. Why?
- Would a FULL scholarship encourage you to take up library studies? Yes / No. Why?

2.4 Limitations

I came into this research with the basis of recently having helped produce the Pacific Services Strategy for my organisation (as stated in the introduction). The research I yielded from that process had shaped my general thinking about Pacific people and libraries. Coupled with this, I also came with my own experiences, who being a Pacific person, attended libraries as a young child and as a young man, fell into libraries unintentionally. The point I am making is that I came into this process with the assumption that libraries, in the eyes of the Pacific community, is undesirable. Or from the other side, the Pacific community are unenthusiastic towards libraries. It could be apparent that the beginning of this research has started from a deficit point of view. Leedy and Ormrod (2015) talks about using reflexivity as a strategy to identify any biases that may affect data collection and interpretation (p. 278). Using this technique, it made me aware of my assumption and I would consciously steer away from it. One example of this in action was when participants would answer the question: *Do you think libraries in Auckland are 'Pacific' enough?* Many of the answers agreed with my own bias but I would not let participants know this. Rather I would ask them to elaborate and prevent myself from showing agreement.

One limitation I encountered during the research phase was my assumption in producing the 'Professionalism' questions. Terms such as 'Learning and Development', 'Support Network' and 'Working Environment' are typical in the workplace and for the worker. However, most of the people I interviewed were not in the workplace or workers.

2.5 Ethical Considerations

The Victoria University of Wellington Human Ethics Committee approved my ethics application in March 2017 (reference 0000024256). Each of the 25 participants were given an information sheet which outlined who I am, the aim of the project, how they were contributing and the way their contribution was going to be documented and saved,

what happens to their contribution, what the research will produce and their rights as a participant. Informed consent was gathered from all participants.

2.6 Data Analysis

The themes that shone strongly through the literature review gave rise to the themes used to set up the interview questions. These themes were: Assumptions, Recruitment, Professionalism, Diversity/Culture and qualifications.

Two of the focus groups were recorded via a mobile phone as they were larger groups and I wanted to make sure I did not miss anything out. To keep energy levels up, I asked some groups to act out in skit form, their answers for some of the questions. This became quite a fun exercise for those groups as humour and creativity was brought into the mix. The other three groups were smaller so I was able to capture their data by having them write it down on a questionnaire form as we spoke with one another. The reason behind this was merely for personal ease. Capturing codes/themes through text or the written form is easier for me than to try to capture it through audio or video. Leedy and Ormrod (2015) write that codes are used to help organise data into meaningful information. The codes that were expressed by the participants were connected to the themes given above. For example, within the theme of 'recruitment', a strong code that came through was 'going into the schools'. This was mentioned multiple times by different participants so it obviously shows the importance of that attribute in regards to recruiting Pacific Youth.

All the data (audio, video and written) was transcribed with care and joy. I took into consideration what the University of Texas at Austin (n.d.) suggested when transcribing: should it be verbatim or only include complete thoughts and useful information. I decided to do the later as making it verbatim would have been too copious to deal with as with youth sometimes, there can be a tendency to go off topic and talk about other things. Non-standard grammar was taken or dialects and slang were left as such, but were asked to be clarified if I did not understand. Notes were looked over multiple times so I could unearth those codes spoken of earlier.

Chapter 3 - Results

In this chapter, I will uncover the value Pacific youth place on librarianship as a viable career. The findings will be arranged into the following themes (see below) – themes that shone strongly through the literature review found in Chapter One, minus Theme One. There was a dual-purpose for the first theme. This will be highlighted below.

Theme One: Personal future aspirations

This intent of these questions was to uncover the types of careers or jobs Pacific youth leaned towards, the reason why these roles were chosen, and whether the LIS featured. These questions also operate as a good ice-breaker particularly for those youth who did not know me personally.

Theme Two: General perceptions of libraries

The aim of this question was to find where the ‘library’ sits in the perspectives of the youth members. It will describe personal experiences the youth have with the library.

The following four themes focus on specific parts of the LIS and were produced based on the literature.

Theme Three: Recruitment for libraries

If a goal for libraries is to recruit more Pacific workers, then the best people to ask regarding this would be Pacific youth. That is the goal of these questions – to see how recruitment with Pacific youth can best be done; in what ways and in which avenues that would yield the best returns.

Theme Four: Professionalism

After attracting and recruiting the right workers, the aim of any employer should then be to see how to ‘keep’ the employee and build up their skills and capabilities, for the sake of the person and the organisation. Keeping turnover low is the aim for any company, so the company needs to keep its good workers. The questions here focus on four sub-themes as indicated by the literature: ‘Learning and Development’, ‘Support Network’, ‘Remuneration’ and ‘Working environment’.

Theme Five: Diversity and Culture

One of the key themes highlighted strongly through the literature is the importance of diversity in any organisation. The questions within this theme assume that libraries in their current state have not yet reached the desired level of diversity the literature paints. The questions look at the level of ‘Pacificness’ in libraries from the perspective of the youth. Within this theme, there is also an important question that seeks information around cultural influences that may permit barriers to librarianship.

Theme Six: Qualifications

The questions within this theme look at the value of qualifications in the LIS. The last question asked of the group aims to find whether Pacific youth would find value in studying a library qualification or studying if all costs are met by another person or organisation, despite what it is for.

3.1 Theme One: Personal future aspirations

The sector that came through as the most desired to aspire towards was the Health sector. Of the 25 youth interviewed, a few showed a passionate interest in the following roles: Doctor, Nurse and Paramedic, with nursing being the strongest. The highest single role that was chosen by the youth was a Police Officer. The next roles featured were teachers, forensic scientists and the performing arts. Other sectors and roles that were highlighted were: Law (with one focussing specifically on being a human rights activist), Human Resources, Social work, Accounting, Entrepreneurship, New Zealand Defence and a flight attendant. Only one participant indicated that they were unsure what they wanted to do in the future

When asked about whether working in the library had ever been a consideration, overwhelmingly most participants said no (some with a passion). The impression I was given by these participants who answered no fervently, was a sense of “*Pfttt - as if!*” I unfortunately did not follow this up, but when looking at the answers expressed in theme two, it is understandable why they would answer as such. The small number who indicated that at some point they had thought about it, interestingly said it was only when they were young that they had such considerations. They revealed that they had been chosen as library monitors at their primary school libraries and thoroughly enjoyed the task of scanning books and seeing the types of books that were available. At this point, a probing question was asked about what had changed from that point to now and one of the issues given was the advancement of technology and the libraries inability in not keeping up. Another reason that was given related to the experiences of the participants in the school library, which will be expanded further in the next section.

3.2 Theme Two: General perceptions of libraries

“If you’re gonna stay in the library, please turn your phone on silent and read the books, thanks”

There were uniform answers shown when the task of sharing immediate thoughts upon hearing the term library was given to the youth. Common terms or themes included were: ‘Quiet’, ‘Peaceful space’, ‘Books’, ‘Place to study’, ‘Reading’, ‘Free Wi-Fi’, ‘a place to learn’, ‘scanning books’, ‘issuing books’, ‘librarian not seeing us’ and ‘librarian being upset at noise’. Other descriptors showed personal experiences certain individuals had with specific libraries. A few participants described events they had attended at their local community library as youngsters, and larger community events their libraries were involved with in the past. A very strong theme that came from the focus groups showed that their present perspectives on libraries were shaped by their previous experiences with their school library. One individual noted that “*we always had library (school) periods where we ‘had’ to read books*”. In answering another question, but strongly related to this, one participant went as far to say: “*The reason some of us youth don’t like libraries’ is because of our experiences with our school library. We just went in there to read books. No programmes and stuff. Just go in and read books, study and get out, and I guess that’s why people don’t want to come libraries.*” This theme of experiences at the school library shows up again in section 3.5.2. Another strong theme that came through was the idea of the library as a ‘hang-out’. The terms used by the youth to express this were “meet-ups”, “chill” and “catch-up time”.

There were also a few answers shown that related to specific processes that are connected purely to libraries i.e. scanning and issuing books.

3.3 Theme Three: Recruitment

The advice given by participants regarding how the LIS can encourage Pacific youth to look at libraries as a career was quite consistent amongst all them all “*by going to schools and help them to know that libraries play a big part in our community*” was a common response. The LIS needed to go where youth are and uncover a side of libraries not always known to the public or to the youth themselves: “*that is more than just books, but plays a major role within and for the community*”; “*the social interactions libraries hold within it*”; “*running more programmes aimed at their age group*.” All these things would help to “*break the mould of what libraries is*” and help to make the sector a more attractive workplace. One participant highlighted that her desire to be a police officer was sparked because the Police went into her school and showed the difference their jobs made to the community. She said she felt “*inspired*” by that meeting and had a desire to also inspire the next generation as the Police did with her. Other advice was to use well-known Pacific role models to promote libraries as a good workplace, and to increase the presence of Pacific staff at libraries. Three participants thought it would be a done deal if library bosses “*shouted free lunch to the workers*”.

In regards to the importance of attending vocational events such as career expo’s and school career evenings, all the participants overwhelmingly said it was important they attend such events. The same applied to cultural events such as ASB Polyfest and Pasifika. One participant thought however that cultural events should remain off-limits from libraries. In his eyes, the library was not a ‘cultural’ institution so had no place at cultural events.

An important point that was highlighted came from one participant who said: “*the more advertising the better. We don’t think about libraries until we drive past one.*”

3.4 Theme Four: Professionalism

3.4.1 Learning and Development

The type of Learning and Development participants would want in the workplace would be one that is approachable, helpful, and enable the learner to gain the skills needed for the job. Other aspects would be that the educators were of Pacific descent or understood the Pacific culture. The ‘workshop’ learning style would be the preferred format as opposed to just reading materials. One participant maturely noted that success in learning and development could only be achieved if the learner had the following attitude: “*I want to be better*”. Without this attitude, no learning and development programme can make one better.

3.4.2 Support Network

There was tremendous support for the need of a support network in the workplace for the Pacific youth. The reasons behind the need of a support network lay in the following reasons: “*It would give workers more confidence*”; “*it would help build each other up...*”; “*it is good to know that you have other people who speak your language or is the same culture as you*”; “*It would make me feel open if I had barriers to work through*”; “*People are there backing you up*” and “*Support is essential to success*”.

3.4.3 Good Pay

Participants were asked whether they knew if librarians received good remuneration for their work and the answers were mixed. On one end of the spectrum, some participants believed librarians earned minimum wage; others didn't know; while others sat on the other end of the spectrum believing librarians earned good money. One participant was able to look up the average income of librarians and found it to be on average to be between \$53,000-\$94,000. She thought this was a “*decent amount of money*”. When asked whether having ‘good pay’ would encourage them into the LIS, most participants again sat on various positions of a spectrum. Some said it potentially would because having a good income to provide for the family, pay bills and fund the lifestyle they desired was important for them. Others said that although receiving good pay would be good, the preference would be to work a job based on personal passion, adoration or service. The majority of participants said they wanted a job where they were giving back to the community (something that was reflected in the question about future aspirations).

3.4.4 Working Environment

The dominant characteristic that showed itself with this question related to working with others. Having a good team to work with is what defined a good working environment for nearly all participants: “*I think having a good work environment means everyone is on the same page. It also makes everyone more open with each other and would make me feel welcome; when working as a team, there is unity and we are able to help others better*”. Other characteristics were ‘fun’, ‘full of culture, history and diversity’. Other comments relating to this sub-theme talked about the vitality of having a good working environment: “*if you don't have a good working environment, you won't enjoy going to work every day and you end up not liking your job*” and “*important as you spend a lot of days there, - the working environment will have an effect on whether you going to enjoy your work or not*”.

3.5 Theme Five: Diversity and Culture

3.5.1 Impacts on the LIS

Interestingly, participants expressed answers that showed the potential impacts on the Pacific youth community rather than on the LIS community itself. Participants felt that if more Pacific youth saw librarianship as an important career, it would lift the readership and reading levels of Pacific young people. Participants who did answer regarding the impacts on the LIS said libraries would become “*good*”, it would attract more Pacific people and the LIS would become “*leaders in the community*”. The potential increase of Pacific diversity in the sector would help the Pacific community know that libraries is “*not just a palagi*” thing.

3.5.2 Are libraries in Auckland ‘Pacific’ enough?

The varying answers regarding this question were dependant on the participant's personal experience with libraries. Those who believed libraries were ‘Pacific’ enough listed libraries they often visited. The characteristics that made that particular library Pacific had the following: Pacific staff, Pacific collections and some Pacific design element on the building. One participant who currently uses an academic library for their

studies used the same characteristics to define their institutions library as being 'Pacific'. Those who felt libraries were not reflective of the Pacific culture focussed on their previous experiences such as their school library: *"our librarian is palagi but she isn't the reason it's not Pacific. We have Chinese books. It's bland – no style. Even the books, the resources are real old so they're stink to read."*

3.5.3 Pacific culture and its offering to libraries

"Pacific Islanders are family-orientated, and we'd do anything for our family, and knowing the social issues that walk through the doors of the libraries, that attitude will help a lot of people... we looked at them like brothers and sisters rather than just 'someone' loitering around"; "Culture, vibrant, "louder" – Most islanders are naturally hard working and they want the best so if you want the best for your library, it does influence others, it's influential"; "Their history, identity and stories brought down from their ancestors." Family based values, culture, history, the Pacific Identity and vibrancy, are the attributes the Pacific culture offers to libraries. A few of the participants indicated that they didn't know what the Pacific culture would offer to libraries.

3.5.4 Barriers to librarianship through the Pacific culture

"It's not an 'up-there' job like a lawyer or a doctor – you know, what our parents want us to be. Librarians is not on that list. It doesn't have its own Master's degree or diploma's or... any letters next to it, so automatically to them it's like "nah"; "Can't help the family, especially knowing island parents, it's about the money, like providing for the family and for a librarian, it's minimum wage." The answers provided by the participants were consistent with the quote above. If careers were divided on a spectrum, on the higher end would be careers in medicine, most notably a doctor, and in law, a lawyer. Participants agreed that parents focus on these careers because of the strong potential in earning a high income to help the family. Librarianship would be considered on the lower end of the spectrum. Another barrier that shone through the answers was the degree of 'self-esteem' for the parents. Being a doctor or lawyer was highly esteemed compared to being a librarian, *"Our parent's mentality - hearing their son/daughter wanting to work in a library is disappointing because they expect their kids to either become a lawyer or a doctor. Working in an office, not in a quiet place where there's nothing to do. "Pea ai lou mafaufau" is a statement I mostly hear from older family members, which means that your brain wouldn't operate if working in a library. Being a librarian is a job elders look down on, which would affect kids to choose a different career than working in a library."* Also related to this are the perspectives of the participants themselves who felt that libraries is *"for older people and that it isn't 'cool' enough"; "not a cool career like being a rugby player or a police officer" and that the "job is boring"*.

3.6 Theme Six: Qualifications

Less than a third of the participants believed that librarianship required a qualification of some sort. Only one participant of this group explained why she believed this as fact. She felt that all careers would have expectations attached to it and a qualification was part of those expectations.

After answering this question, it was made known to the participants of the research that librarianship, particularly higher, more specialised and leadership roles did require a qualification. With this newfound knowledge, the question was asked of the participants as to whether this would make any of them want to study a library degree. The majority of answers were no, but these came for a variety of reasons. Others said no purely because they expressed no interest in it. Some said no because their personal experiences with libraries was minimal. The majority of those who answered no said so because they already had their aspirations to aim for: *“I already have my mind set on something. If I loved books maybe but nah.”* Those who indicated some interest said so purely to learn something new. Another said that this particular research had sparked a small degree of interest for her and that they may study it to *“get more P.I’s into libraries.”*

Lastly, a fictional scenario was presented to the participants about being presented with a full scholarship to undertake library studies. Most participants said they would accept the scholarship because it meant their studies were being paid for and that they were *“getting something out of it.”* Those who said they would not take up the offer of a full scholarship said they wouldn’t do so because they wanted to follow their own career path.

Chapter 4 - Discussion

This section will discuss the findings from the previous chapter in more depth. However, before we launch into a discussion regarding the results, it would be important to again, provide the context and importance for why this research is being done. It is both professional and personal for me. I will present it as follows in a list form:

- Diversity in the LIS creates a stronger and more developed workforce as new insights are received and new populations are being served
- Identify issues and attitudes that prevent Pacific Youth from viewing librarianship as a viable career
- Greater hope is that statistics such as Pacific people being “under-represented in higher-achieving groups in literacy, maths and science assessments” (Statistics New Zealand, 2006) will begin to change as the value of libraries in the eyes of our Pacific communities will increase

It is hoped that through this discussion, recommendations can be made to the LIS in helping to increase the number of Pacific Youth to genuinely look at the sector as a valuable place to work or build a career in. The discussion will be divided into the relevant themes.

4.1 Theme One: Is being a librarian on the list of personal aspirations for Pacific Youth?

The short answer to this question is – No! Of the 25 youth who participated in the research, not one chose librarianship as a potential career option. Nearly all of the careers stated by the participants were chosen for one reason – to help others, whether it is family or others in the Pacific community. After asking why they selected the particular field or job they have chosen, most participants responded with, “I want to help”, “I want equality for everyone”, “I want to save lives”, “So I can give closure to families [of victims]”, etc. This is obviously the main driver behind why many of the youth select the jobs they chose - One of admiration and potentially, idealism. It does beg the question however, do Pacific Youth not see librarianship as ‘helping others’. How then do they perceive librarianship in terms of its contribution to society? Unfortunately, this question was not asked of the participants (which serves as a limitation in this research) but it would seem that derived from the answers, Pacific Youth do not see librarianship as ‘helping people’. Or maybe they do, but not on any significant scale. The core ‘service’ libraries provide to people or contribute to society is “information”, and as seen in the answers from the next paragraph, “information” can be found at the fingertips of one’s mobile device - the library is no longer needed! This may well be the type of thinking that limits Pacific Youth from considering librarianship as a potential career. It would be important to ask a question regarding their perspective on libraries’ contribution to society should this research delve even deeper.

The thought of librarianship being a possible career was at one point in their lives something a number of participants had (commonly in around the Primary School age). This was based on the interaction these participants had. Some had been ‘library monitors’ at their school libraries and had enjoyed the process of checking in and checking out books, and seeing the types of books available. One person was influenced by her interaction with her local public library and the librarians there. However, somewhere along their paths of life, this changed to being a faint possibility to an unequivocal no, and as shown in the results section, the main reason for this change in answer was the development of

technology and the inability of the LIS in keeping up with the change. This shows here that for some of the participants, technology has some influence in determining the type of work one chooses. However, the selection of career choices presented by the participants did not mirror this, so it would seem that the desire to help others and contribute to society is still the most influential reason.

4.2 Theme Two: General perceptions of libraries

Perception is an interesting and complex concept, and very powerful. Although this is not a psychology report, it is important to see how this concept has affected the LIS, particularly in the minds of Pacific Youth. Perception is developed in three stages

1. Experiencing through the senses
2. The organisation of that information into ways that similar information was stored
3. The interpretation of the information (The Peak Performance Centre, 2016)

All three stages are applicable to this theme of the perceptions Pacific Youth hold regarding libraries. It will be further explained through my own experience: The stereotypes that sometimes define libraries i.e. quiet, older white women, lack of customer interaction, etc., were ones I experienced first-hand. As a youngster in my local library, although I loved the books and the world of information at my hand, I do not think once did any of the older female Pakeha staff members ever engage with me unless I was doing something wrong (like being a little loud). This probably resulted in me never casting a thought towards librarianship as a career. And it was not because it caused a dislike towards libraries (quite the opposite really), but my experience unconsciously shaped my mind to think ‘nothing’ of libraries in terms of a career. Despite spending more time in public and academic libraries during my childhood and student life - reading books, quietly studying, standing in the queue waiting to be served by a staff member, etc., it never dawned on me once to consider a career in the industry. So the asking of this question is important to discovering the perceptions Pacific Youth hold regarding libraries and whether this had an impact of their views of librarianship as a career. And as the answers suggest, it does. What does this suggest? Two things:

1. The experience of the participants with libraries seems to be mostly unpleasant. This negative experience has been formed through the senses, has then been organised into the ‘negative experience’ file and thus, libraries are interpreted as such. This was not always the case however, as a few of the participants enjoyed their earlier experiences with libraries, especially as at Primary School. Nevertheless, newer experiences have altered that previous experience.
2. That at the very least from the time I was young to the present, the LIS has generally failed to challenge and change this widely perceived stigma. There are individual instances where a particular library has shown itself to be more than the ‘stereotypes’ and this has positively affected the view of a few participants. The positive-leaning labels applied to libraries by these participants, such as ‘Free Wi-Fi’, ‘Catch-up time’ and the library being a community-centred place, are however not enough to sway these Pacific Youth to perceive librarianship as a future job. Overall, the LIS still fails to shake off these perceived labels. If the desire of the industry to invite more diversity into its order, particularly more Pacific people with respects to this research, it will need to find a way to address and challenge those perceptions, and instead, express its true form.

4.3 Theme Three: Recruitment

The major finding in this section is quite simple and has two parts to it. When recruiting, the LIS need to:

1. Go to where the youth are e.g. schools, career expos, large public cultural events, etc.
2. When there, reveal the influential and important work libraries do in and for the community

This agrees with what the literature says. Dewey & Kelley (2008) found success in specifically targeted promotion, and Lilley et al. (2007) indicate that respondents in their research say our LIS institutions are not advertising in the right places. They may suggest that the LIS are either insular in their approach to recruiting Pacific workers, or they have been non-existent in their recruitment tactics. See the example below to view the differences in recruitment strategy for the LIS compared to other industries:

LIANZA (Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa - the National body for the LIS in New Zealand) organise the Hikuwai Library Study Expo. A report from one of the committee members (D. Gordon, personal communication, June 1, 2017) following a recent expo held in May 2017, indicated that the point of the expo is to: Promote librarianship as a career and profession; Provide information on study options; engage library staff to take up Lianza membership; Networking and Professional Development. This was promoted via the LIANZA website and various library publications and email distribution lists. There was also promotion via the LIANZA Facebook page. Two sessions for this expo were run: One in South Auckland, the other in Whangarei. The report indicated that 10 attended the South Auckland expo, which was held in one of the Manukau Institute of Technology (MIT) libraries (the Whangarei expo was held at Whangarei Library). Nine of the ten attendees were already employed in libraries. The times given for this session were 12pm-3pm. This potentially shows the type of recruitment approach the LIS in New Zealand employ. Although the aim of the expo would not have been exclusive to any particular age and ethnic group, Pacific Youth were obviously not a priority at this time. In fact, I asked the committee member if any Pacific people attended, and she said no.

Earlier in the same month, a huge youth employment event was run in Manukau, South Auckland called *JobFest*. The aim of *JobFest* is to give young people, particularly those in the region and of Maori and Pacific descent, the opportunity to meet with employers, discuss available jobs, use services to build one's CV, improve interview skills and job applications. According to an internal email to Auckland Council employees in the Operations department, over 1400 young people were in attendance at this event, 74 employers were also in attendance and many young people got jobs at the event (I. Maxwell, personal communication, May 12, 2017). Looking at the types of jobs available at the event, it was evident that many industries were in attendance. One employer said his reason for attending the event was to find young people with "attitude and passion" (Te Whata, 2017). The skills part, he added, can be taught

later. Interestingly, when typing 'library' in the search box (via the JobFest website), "No results to show" was given.

The use of this example is not meant to show any disrespect to the organisers of the expo, but to highlight the contrasting ways the LIS recruits compared to other industries. This insular manner of 'keeping to ourselves' that sometimes depicts the LIS may be demeaning the profession more than it does lift it. It would seem that the more the LIS promoted itself, marketed itself, publicised itself and made Pacific Youth more aware of itself, recruitment amongst the Pacific community would be better placed. And as seen from the findings, the type of things the LIS needs to promote, market and publicise, are their vital and much needed works in the community. This brings into question, what then are libraries currently being painted as? Referring back to the previous section, the following quote will express how libraries are generally perceived by Pacific Youth today: *"If you're gonna stay in the library, please turn your phone on silent and read books..."* If the drive, for Pacific Youth, in looking for a fitting future career rests on desiring to 'help others' (as suggested in the first theme), this picture of libraries would instantly turn them away. But as a sector, the power rests in our hands to change this and it would do well to begin with the way and the places it recruits in.

4.4 Theme Four: Professionalism

The theme of professionalism was split into four sections:

- a. Learning and Development
- b. Support Network
- c. Good pay
- d. Working Environment.

The four sections are important elements of any job or career, so selecting them were a means to find out what Pacific Youth would find important in a job.

The main findings for each section are as follows:

4.4.1 Learning and Development

A good Learning and Development programme should ultimately be beneficial in its theory and practice. This will be helped if instructors have a strong understanding of the Pacific worldview.

This is standard – it would be expected that any person undertaking any learning and development programme would want it to be beneficial. The interesting element is the need for instructors to have an understanding of a Pacific worldview - for someone who has the ability to integrate 'Pasifika' into a learning and development programme - is important for Pacific Youth. This suggests that their past and current learning experiences are largely Western/European based. If the LIS is to integrate a Pacific pedagogy into its Learning and Development programme, what would this look like? Unfortunately, this was not asked of the participants, but given what the small amount of literature available on Pacific pedagogy says, this would mean that the Learning and Development programme would:

- Reflect on its current teaching practices
- Apply important Pacific values such as love, respect, service and dignity

- Use family, culture and spirituality as a basis for learning (Health Research Council of New Zealand, n.d.)

As mentioned in the limitations section, this term needed further clarification before it was fully understood. This was the example used to bring understanding: A person attains a job with their current skill-set. Later on, their managers ask that they learn a 'new skill' because the job is gearing up for new challenges. This act of learning a new skill would be the 'Learning and Development'.

4.4.2 Support Network

The ideas of 'boosted confidence', 'feeling valued' and 'being upheld' are some reasons for why Pacific Youth feel it is important to have a Support Network in their job.

Using the 'Youth Group' (in church) model was the way I explained a 'Support Network'. Everyone is a member of the wider church family, but oftentimes, you need to be with people your age, who have the same interests and experiences you have, and think similarly in order to feel supported. This can either be because being with young children and adults is uncomfortable, or being part of the wider church loses ones individuality. The youth group operates as a support network for those in the appropriate age group in the church.

4.4.3 Good Pay

The main findings in this section were quite varying. Asking the question about what they perceived would be the income level of librarians, the participants who believed they earned 'minimum wage', believed so because of the assumed 'low skill' needed for the job. This is also a mind-set expressed by Pacific parents and elders, according to the participants. This again supports the notion that the LIS is virtually unknown to those outside of it. On the flip side of this, those who believed librarians' earned good income did not explicitly give a reason as to why they thought so, but given our conversations, I speculate that although they knew little of the librarian job, they still saw it as a 'professional' role. When asked whether a good income would push them towards a librarian role, it was interesting to note that the older participants, generally those who had left high school and were either in tertiary studies or working, highlighted the importance of having a good income for things like bills, helping family and achieving the lifestyle they desired. The younger participants ignored 'good pay' as a factor for entering a job. This certainly shows the degree of life experience amongst the different participants so should influence the way the LIS presents themselves to those in high school compared to those in post-high school. Despite the differences in this section, all in all, as presented in the results, the main driving force for all participants in deciding the type of employment they desire, was one that 'helped others'. One can argue that libraries are most certainly in this category, but it would seem from the research that this is blinded from Pacific Youth, or the LIS is not emphasising this publicly enough. The LIS again, need to find a way to make this known to Pacific Youth, or the wider community as a whole.

4.4.4 Working Environment

When producing the question for this particular sub-topic, I used the term 'Working Environment' to encompass a range of factors. These factors were:

- the team one would be working as a part of

- the physical environment one would work in;
- the vision and mission of the organisation, and
- the technology driving the work.

However, this was not clarified for the participants. Yet, without any explaining from me, the participants viewed the term as only one of the factors – the team. For the participants, the working environment was defined by their relationship and ability to work with others. If the team they were working in was characterised by the following: ‘fun’, ‘diverse’, ‘enjoyable’, ‘open communication’, ‘united’ and ‘supportive’, then the working environment was deemed a success. Another important finding from the Pacific Youth for this sub-topic is that the level of enjoyment for a job is connected directly to the effectiveness of the team.

It would have been good to have clarified this term as intended with the focus groups but it is encouraging to know that these young participants see the importance in working well with others, and the concept of a good working team as essential to success,

4.5 Theme Five: Diversity and Culture

In some research I conducted for the organisation I currently work for, a theme that came through strongly was the essence of the ‘library’ being a Western/Euro-centric institution. The aim around these questions was to find perspectives on how, or even if, the Pacific culture would be able to add value to libraries.

4.5.1 Impacts on the LIS

The aim of the first question, around the impacts on the LIS if more Pacific Youth saw librarianship as a viable career, was flipped around by the majority of participants. These participants instead answered this question about the impacts on the general Pacific Youth population if they viewed libraries better. It was felt amongst this group that the Pacific community would develop more as reading levels would increase. This may have come down to the way my question was phrased, but nevertheless, the information that came through was important. Those who did answer the question believed the permeation of Pasifika into the LIS would make it ‘good’. Does this mean that in its current status, Pacific Youth view libraries as ‘bad’ or not at an acceptable level? Another way to see this is via another answer that was given, if Pasifika set a strong presence in the LIS, it would ‘*not just be a palagi*’ institution. This supports the statement I made earlier where Pacific people view libraries fundamentally as Western/Euro-centric institutions. It was also interesting to note what one participant said in that the LIS would be seen as a ‘leader’ in the Pacific community if Pasifika influenced the LIS. This is because anything that has the ability to add great value to the Pacific community would be given a leadership mantle. This can almost be compared to foreigners being bestowed Matai/Chiefly titles (such as former Prime Ministers David Lange, Robert Muldoon and John Key), Although they are not Samoan, they are given the honour because of their service to the Samoan people (Tominiko, 2012). If libraries become more Pasifika in its essence, it too will be honoured.

4.5.2 Are libraries ‘Pacific’ enough?

The aim of this question was to find out whether the participants would be able to perceive if, that although at its core it is a Western/Euro-centric based institution, libraries were incorporating the Pasifika culture in it visibly and

strongly. As perceived by the answers, the Pasifika culture was defined by a few conditions: These were staff members, resources and the building design itself. If there were enough of these elements seen in their experiences with libraries, then libraries would be deemed 'Pacific enough'. And obviously, the opposite also applied: Not enough visibility of these elements, then libraries was "not Pacific". The varying answers regarding this question were dependant on the participant's personal experience with libraries, which invariably shaped their present perceptions of libraries. This is a vital point for the LIS to pick up on, as most early (and even current) experiences these Pacific Youth had with libraries, was or is their school library. The picture is that early experiences (i.e. in Primary School) were positive, but this became lost somehow.

4.5.3 Pacific culture and its offerings to libraries

This question can be seen as the opposite of the previous question: looking at the potential influences the Pacific culture places on libraries. It is interesting to note that in answering this question, the definition for the 'Pacific culture' changes compared to the previous question. Previously, the Pacific culture was defined by physical characteristics (i.e. people, resources, buildings). Yet for this question, the Pacific culture is seen as an attitude, an ethic, or behaviour. This may have been due to the question and its wording (the previous question only used the term 'Pacific' whereas this question used 'Pacific culture') but it is interesting the means by which the participants answered this. For Pacific Youth, the Pacific culture offers libraries an understanding, a history, an identity, a work ethic, of the Pacific people and their communities. The values important to Pacific people, such as love, respect and family, are also things the Pacific culture gives to libraries.

4.5.4 Barriers to librarianship through the Pacific culture

The question here asks what 'in' the Pacific culture can act as a barrier to seeing librarianship in a more favourable light. It assumes that librarianship is seen unenthusiastically in the Pacific community, and as seen in the first section that would seem the case. The interesting point here is that the answers given are more reflective of 'general' attitudes than it is about what the Pacific culture specifically says about librarianship. It is assumed that every parent, no matter the nationality or race, dreams of their children doing well in education and translating that into their future career. This is not Pacific-specific. But certain factors have shaped the Pacific mind-set, which in turn, affects the way they perceive librarianship. Some of these factors will be highlighted briefly below:

- Better educational opportunities for their children in New Zealand than in the islands
 - o Pacific parents came to New Zealand in search of a 'better' life for themselves and their families. Often this was for educational purposes for the children. This was supported in a report conducted by Manukau Institute of Technology who noted that "*most Pacific parents see the value of education for their children and many have migrated to New Zealand to give their children the chance for a better life not only for themselves but for the family as a whole.*" (Manukau Institute of Technology Pacific Student Research Team, 2004).
- True measure of success in education is gaining a 'professional degree'
 - o Pacific parents have a deep desire for their children to do well in education which is mostly characterised by attending university and gaining professional degrees. In a report to the Ministry of

Education, Anae, Anderson, Benseman, and Coxon (2002) highlighted the vitality of tertiary study for their children as becoming increasingly important for Pacific parents.

- Education as a vital means to preventing a ‘hard life’ – a life they currently experience
 - o Pacific parents desire success in education for their children to prevent them from living the ‘hard life’ they currently live. Leaupepe and Sauni (2014) noted that Pacific parents perceived success in education as a means to increase the quality of life and stay away from ‘work in the factories for minimal wages and... terrible working conditions.’ (pg. 1712). Anae et al. (2002) supported this idea as she presented Tongan parents whose ultimate aspirations for their children doing well academically was to “*avoid the type of work they have had to endure in plantations in Tonga or dirty factories in New Zealand.*” (pg. 8).
- Highly desired jobs for their children are professional and respectable
 - o A well-known Pacific Island columnist noted this as something her father used to say often, “‘We come for the education’ [so her and her siblings were expected to] do well at school... get a good job. Preferably as a doctor, lawyer, teacher or, for the boys, church minister.” (Misa, 2002). In a report produced by The Families Commission (2009) a Cook Island woman said her mother desired for her to take on commerce but she had a preference for the arts. As a result, her relationship with her parents was strained (pg. 81).
- Success in education translates to helping the family
 - o Another desire for their children in having a good income was to help out the family. Leaupepe and Sauni (2014) reported that Pacific parents saw achievement in education as the key to improving income which would then enhance the ability to contribute to the family network (pg. 1712). Pacific learners are also motivated to learn because they see the end outcome as one way in which they are able to help their families. Pasikale (as cited by Manukau Institute of Technology Pacific Student Research Group, 2004) stated that most learners want to be successful in their learning activities so that they can contribute to their families’ economic resources (pg. 12). Although Pasikale is an old resource (i.e. 1996), this shows how deeply embedded this attitude is for Pacific parents. Interestingly, Anae et al. (2002) stated that Pacific Youth who did not make it into university were forced to take on employment for the sake of supporting the family (pg. 9).

While these factors are not uniquely related to the Pacific people, one can see how they influence perceptions and attitudes Pacific people carry regarding education, employment and income, which in turn, creates barriers in the way librarianship is viewed. Librarianship may then be perceived to be low-skilled and low-paid – attributes Pacific parent try to direct their children away from.

Pacific Youth themselves perceive librarianship unflattering also but these are for slightly different reasons. Librarianship is seen as ‘boring’ and ‘not cool’, whereas jobs such as a Police officer or a professional sports person are the ones that carry with it honour and respect, characteristics that are important for Pacific Youth.

4.6 Theme Six: Qualifications

It is assumed that any job carrying with it a requirement of a qualification would be high value. So the aim of this question was to see from another angle whether the Pacific Youth saw librarianship as high value. With more than two-thirds of the participants believing there was no qualification needed to work as a librarian, it would seem that the general attitude towards librarianship as a high value job is low. Even in disclosing with the participants the purpose of this research and the qualification I was working towards, I could see both admiration in what I was doing, and shock that something such as a library degree could exist.

The second part of this section was used to see whether the newfound knowledge of librarians requiring a qualification, thus perceiving it as a high value role, would change any perspectives to go into librarianship. However, perceptions/attitudes remained constant as participants wanted to stick to their chosen path. This shows that although new knowledge of librarianship actually being a high value role has been made clear, it is too late to change their perspectives. What the LIS needs to do is to make this knowledge known to Pacific Youth, with the aim of potentially increasing the value of a library qualification and librarianship, earlier in their lives.

The last question really was used to as an enticement to see whether the offer of a full scholarship would further increase the value of librarianship in the eyes of the participants. Many said they would take on library studies with the proviso that it would all be paid for, but it was not being done for the sake of the industry, but for themselves - that something would be there for them at the end of it i.e. a qualification. I believe a full scholarship for someone going into library studies would have more meaning for an individual who has placed a higher perceived value on librarianship.

Conclusion

Importance of the research

Change is inevitable, and if an organisation does not adjust to the changes, it will fail. Look at the example of Kodak and their failure to keep up with digital photography. The LIS is in the same boat. My own organisation is currently in a state of change as it adjusts to these changes (Auckland Council, 2017). The importance in what this research has looked at lies in its desire to uplift two parties – Pacific people and the LIS in New Zealand. Currently, the LIS is not diverse enough and Pacific Youth have no aspirations to work in the profession. This research has identified the gaps between these two parties and has suggested ways it might be able to deal with it.

Summary

Here are some of the key discoveries made through the process of this research:

- Pacific Youth are not looking at the LIS as a potential future career path. The reason behind this lies in two reasons: The big one, the perception of libraries for Pacific Youth continues to sit in the typical stereotypes i.e. quiet, older white woman with a bun, etc. This greatly affects Pacific Youth viewing librarianship as a job to aim for. The second reason is the motives for their job choice: to help people. Either other jobs are better at this than the LIS is, or Pacific Youth do not see how the LIS ‘helps people’.
- Recruitment for the LIS is largely insular and needs to begin focussing outwards. The LIS needs to connect with schools, other educational facilities, and the community. This is the first step. The second step needs to be the presentation the LIS gives to these external parties. The LIS needs to show itself as a difference maker in the community, thus making it a more viable career for Pacific Youth.
- The professionalism of the LIS needs to have a learning and development programme that is founded on and reflective of Pacific values; would provide a support system for its Pacific workers; would recognise good remuneration is important for lifestyle, but the desire to help others is what drives Pacific Youth in looking for a job, and that the make-up of a team is important in determining the level of work enjoyment.
- The LIS is essentially a euro-centric establishment so deeper and careful thought needs to go into how the Pacific culture can affect its ‘heart’ and not merely the externals. The presence of the Pacific culture can add immense value to the LIS if allowed.
- There is nothing in the culture of Pacific people that prohibits it from seeing the LIS as a good place to work in, but it is the perceptions (as mentioned above) mixed with the specific contexts Pacific people abide in, that brings forth attitudes that view the LIS as a ‘found wanting’ industry to work for.
- The existence of a library qualification does little to change the perception of the LIS in the minds of Pacific Youth at this stage, but there is a bit of respect produced when they find out it exists.

Recommendations for further research

Although I take great pride in the number of participants who agreed to chat with me in the focus groups, it must be noted that the sample group for this research was rather small i.e. 25 Pacific youth. So it must be further noted that the perspectives and key ideas offered in this research, come from a small group. Although the raw data from the participants and the literature support each other, it would be great to extend this research to other parts of the country

where Pacific communities lie (and even potentially to other countries e.g. Sydney, Australia where there is a high Pacific population), to see if the information remains consistent or if there are other variables that are missed in this context.

There would be some benefit in further research looking at the level of job satisfaction amongst current Pasifika staff in libraries to see if the expectations of the youth have any justification and ensure longevity of their career within the LIS.

It would also be recommended that this study is also done with a younger age range as perceptions about the LIS may not be as a 'set' as they are with the older group. Also, a study on the older Pacific generation and how their attitudes and perceptions can be addressed by the LIS would be meaningful. As seen in the research, their attitudes and perceptions heavily influence the attitudes and perceptions of Pacific Youth. Another facet to research in the future, with the older generation, would be to look at finding ways to recruit them as they carry amazing experiences and skills not necessarily carried by Pacific Youth, as they are just as valuable to the LIS.

Conclusion

The general conclusion from the research is that the LIS is currently not a desirable industry to work in for Pacific Youth. Put simply, this is mostly due to the perceptions they currently hold regarding the LIS, and the lack of activity the LIS presents to Pacific Youth. The low perceptions of the Pacific community regarding the LIS, also influences and informs the perceptions of the Pacific Youth.

Finding out the heart of a problem is hard but enlightening and vital; because unless the central issue of a problem is fully addressed, there are no favourable outcomes and the problem will continue. That is probably one of the key advantages for good research – discovering the heart of a problem and identifying ways to deal with it. In this case, although the summary and the overall conclusion does not show favourably for the LIS, the good news is that now that the reasons and attitudes for why Pacific Youth place such low value on librarianship as a potential career have been identified, work can begin on addressing it so the LIS can develop and grow. If the goal for the LIS is become more rounded and more adept to change, then develop and grow it must do.

To conclude, I will share how I 'fell' into the LIS and why I have remained. It started with having lunch with a good Samoan friend, then a staff member at Tupu, who revealed to me a job opening at Tupu Youth Library. The role, she said, encompassed working with youth in Otara and encouraging them towards a love for reading. I was hooked! Those were things I had a passion for – Youth and literacy. Successfully getting the role, my manager at the time, who is of Tongan/Niuean descent, shared with me about the positive differences Tupu was making in the community. It was the line and sinker this time. I wanted to be part of the influence. My team were amazing people who were all on the same page in what we desired for the community. Those first few years working as the youth librarian were amazing. And actually, it started a fire in my heart about the vitality of libraries in our communities, which has carried on to this day and encourages me remain in such an instrumental sector. If the LIS can replicate this type of story in some way for our Pacific Youth, it will go a long way to making this great sector even better. *[Word count: 14,120]*

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Appendices

Appendix A - Information Sheet



The perceived value of librarianship as a viable career for Pacific Youth

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

Thank you for your interest in this project. Please read this information before deciding whether or not to take part. If you decide to participate, thank you. If you decide not to take part, thank you for considering my request.

Who am I?

My name is Richard Misilei and I am a Masters student in Information Studies at Victoria University of Wellington. This research project is work towards my Info580 Research Paper.

What is the aim of the project?

This project will look at the value Pacific youth/school leavers place on working in the libraries and information industry as a future career.

This research has been approved by the Victoria University of Wellington School of Information Management's Human Ethics Committee.

How can you help?

If you agree to take part in the focus group session, I will conduct the session at a location related to your group. The research will be done in the form of a 'focus group' so you will be with your peers. The focus group session will take approximately 1 hour and will be recorded. The recording will be turned into written form later. You can withdraw yourself from the study by contacting me at any point before 2 April 2017. If you do choose to withdraw, you may wish to have the information you provided be removed. However, highlighting and removing individual statements from a group setting may potentially be a difficult and arduous process.

What will happen to the information you give?

Participation is voluntary, and you will not be identified personally in any written report produced as a result of this research, including possible publication in academic conferences and journals. You should be aware that this is a small project and your identity might be obvious to others in your community.

Only my supervisors and I will read the notes or transcript of the interview. The interview transcripts, summaries and any recordings will be kept securely and destroyed *two* years after the research ends.

What will the project produce?

The information from my research will be used in my Masters Research paper.

If you accept this invitation, what are your rights as a research participant?

You do not have to accept this invitation if you don't want to. If you do decide to participate, you have the right to:

- choose not to answer any question;
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview;
- withdraw from the study before 29 April 2017;
- ask any questions about the study at any time;
- receive a copy of your interview recording (if it is recorded);
- read over and comment on a written summary of your interview;
- agree on another name for me to use rather than your real name;
- be able to read any reports of this research by emailing the researcher to request a copy.

If you have any questions or problems, who can you contact?

If you have any questions, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:

Student:

Name: Richard Misilei
University email address:
misilerich@myvuw.ac.nz

Supervisor:

Name: Dr Philip Calvert
Role: Senior Lecturer School of Information
Management
School: Victoria University of Wellington
Phone: (04) 463 6629
Email: philip.calvert@vuw.ac.nz

Human Ethics Committee information

If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Victoria University HEC Convener:
Associate Professor Susan Corbett. Email susan.corbett@vuw.ac.nz or telephone +64-4-463 5480.

Appendix B - Consent Form



The value of working in the Libraries & Information industry for the Pacific youth/school leaver

CONSENT TO INTERVIEW

This consent form will be held for 1 year.

Researcher: *Richard Misilei, Information Studies, Victoria University of Wellington.*

- I have read the Information Sheet and the project has been explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I can ask further questions at any time.
- I agree for myself to take part in an audio recorded focus group session.

I understand that:

- I may withdraw from this study at any point before 29 April 2017, without giving any reason, and any information that I have provided will be removed.
- The information I have provided will be destroyed two years after the research is finished.
- Any information I provide will be kept confidential to the researcher and the supervisor. I understand that the results will be used for a Masters report and a summary of the results may be used in academic reports and/or presented at conferences.
- My name will not be used in reports, nor will any information that would identify me/them.
- I would like a copy of the transcript of our interviews: Yes No
- I understand that any comments made by others in the focus group will not be repeated to people outside after the focus group is over. Yes No

Signature of participant: _____
Name of participant: _____
Date: ___/___/2017
Contact details: _____

Appendix C - Focus Group Questions

1. Personal Information

Gender:

Pacific Ethnic Group/s you identify with:

Age:

Education status i.e. Year Level, School Leaver:

Main language spoken at home:

2. Personal thoughts/assumptions

- What is a job you are aiming for in the future? And why? (If you don't know, that's fine):
- When you hear the word 'library', what comes immediately to your mind? Why do you think these things?
- Has the thought of working for in a library ever crossed your mind?

These next sections will look at different parts of the Library Career

3. A) Recruitment

- How can libraries encourage Pacific youth to look at libraries as a career?
- Is it important for libraries to be at events like career expos, the Polyfest or school career evenings?

B) Professionalism

- What kind of learning and development do you think libraries can offer to help young Pacific workers so they can be successful in their job?
- If you were working in libraries, would the idea of having a 'support network' be important?
- Do you know if librarians receive good pay? Does this affect your decision to work in libraries?
- What kind of working environment would encourage you to stay working in the LIS sector for a good number of years e.g. 5-10 years?

C) Diversity/Culture:

- What do you think would happen to libraries if more Pacific youth saw librarianship as an important career path?
- Do you think libraries' in Auckland is 'Pacific' enough to be welcoming to Pacific youth as users and potential employees?
- What does the Pacific culture offer the libraries?
- In your opinion or experience, what in the Pacific culture can act as a barrier to seeing librarianship as a possible career?

D) Qualifications

- Did you know that librarianship requires a qualification? Yes / No
- Knowing that you need a qualification to gain employment in libraries' (especially for the higher roles), does this make you want to study a library degree or does it put you off? Yes / No. Why?
- Would a FULL scholarship encourage you to take up library studies? Yes / No. Why?

Thank you very much for answering this questionnaire. Your responses are very much appreciated!