

**ABUSE IN CARE ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY
TULOOU – OUR PACIFIC VOICES: TATALA E PULONGA**

Under The Inquiries Act 2013

In the matter of The Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions

Royal Commission: Judge Coral Shaw (Chair)
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Venue: Fale o Samoa
141 Bader Drive
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AUCKLAND

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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

INDEX

MS TU

Questioning by Ms Sharkey	276
Questioning by Commissioners	313

DR SAM MANUELA

Questioning by Ms Va'ai	316
Questioning by Commissioners	340

1 **CHAIR:** And we'll leave the floor to you, because you wanted to say something to conclude.

2 A. Yes, so I wanted to thank you, Commissioners, for hearing me today, and also recognising
3 that my evidence and other people's evidence have been dealing with a lot of pain and
4 harm, and so just acknowledging that you're hearing a lot of painful things and thinking --
5 and that I'm thinking about your well-being.

6 I wanted to thank -- I really wanted to thank my lawyers and investigation team. I
7 don't think that I would have been able to do this if the Commission hadn't thought through
8 carefully who would be taking my evidence. And I just think it's amazing that you've got
9 like a Pasifika investigations team. They helped me from the very beginning, they
10 understood what I was talking about, it didn't feel like that I had to explain things. And
11 I just think that the cultural sensitivity around that has been really important to me and it
12 gave me more courage to know that I was doing the right thing because I told you that I had
13 a lot of conflicts about that.

14 So in particular I wanted to thank Sharkey who I think has, you know, really great
15 to talk to and amazing lawyer, Stephanie, Reina and Helenā. And I wanted to thank the
16 well-being person Maikali who's worked really hard to build a trusting relationship with
17 me, and I haven't been easy to connect with, but he has made me feel really comfortable
18 giving evidence today. And I wanted to thank all my friends and family who are listening
19 in there or are supporting me. Thank you.

20 **CHAIR:** We join you in thank you, I think did you want to -- I think you're going to be honoured
21 with a waiata, yes.

22 **[Samoan song]**

23 **MS SHARKEY:** Fa'afetai lava Ms TU. I'll be in touch with you and I'll pay you for your
24 comments later okay? Thank you very much. We'll talk soon.

25 A. Bye.

26 **CHAIR:** We'll take the lunch adjournment now and resume again at, Ms Sharkey?

27 **MS SHARKEY:** 2.15?

28 **CHAIR:** 2.15 we'll resume, thank you.

29 **Lunch adjournment from 1.14 pm 2.15 pm**

30 **CHAIR:** Good afternoon everybody, welcome back to the last session of today's hearing, and I'm
31 going to invite Ms Va'ai to come forward to present our witness.

32 **MS VA'AI:** Kia orana tatou katoatoa, our first witness is Dr Sam Manuela.

33 **DR SAM MANUELA**

34 **CHAIR:** Good afternoon Dr Manuela, welcome to the Royal Commission. Can you see me?

1 Before we start can I just ask you to take the affirmation. Do you solemnly, sincerely and
2 truly declare and affirm that the evidence that you will give to the Commission will be the
3 truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Thank you, I'll leave with you Ms Va'ai.

6 **QUESTIONING BY MS VA'AI:** Thank you. Kia orana Dr Sam Manuela. Meitaki for being
7 here today. Before we begin I'm wondering if you could please introduce yourself and tell
8 us a bit about your background.

9 A. Yes, kia orana tatou katoatoa. My name is Sam Manuela, I am a senior lecturer in the
10 School of Psychology at the University of Auckland. I am Cook Island through my father,
11 we are from Manihiki in the Cook Islands and we live in Nikao. We also have links to Atiu
12 and Pukapuka. Through my mother I am European, she is from Te Kuiti down in the King
13 Country. Myself, I am born and raised here in New Zealand in Auckland.

14 At the University of Auckland within the School of Psychology I teach across
15 undergraduate psychology, I teach cultural psychology within our introductory psychology
16 courses. In stage 3 I teach in a paper on culture and psychology focusing specifically on
17 Pacific issues that are psychology relevant. In postgraduate I facilitate a course on
18 ethnicity, identity and culture where I encourage students to draw on their own ethnic and
19 cultural expertise to explore topics around sexuality, spirituality, masculinity, identity,
20 language, and how these relate to our people's every day lives as well.

21 In addition to teaching I'm a researcher as well. I'm currently leading two research
22 projects, one is funded by the Health Research Council of New Zealand. And this project is
23 going to be a survey of mental health in the Cook Islands, which has not been done before,
24 so I'm quite excited to head over to the Cook Islands once the Covid situation calms down a
25 bit. Another project that I'm leading is funded by the Royal Society of New Zealand, it's a
26 Marsden Fast-Grant study. That study will be looking at how Pacific psychologists in
27 New Zealand incorporate their cultural knowledge and expertise into their psychological
28 training and working with their clients.

29 Q. Thank you. Very impressive young man. Dr Manuela, in light of your background as an
30 academic, why have you decided to answer the call to be here in the Fale o Samoa as an
31 expert witness for the Pacific hearing, Tatala e Pulonga?

32 A. My research expertise focuses specifically on the identities and well-being of Pacific
33 peoples, so that is a large theme across the broad range of research projects that I do. When
34 I first was asked to be part of this Inquiry I was a bit sceptical about why personally I was

1 asked, but after talking with yourself and the rest of your team, they helped me realise the
2 broader implications of what the survivors have experienced and looking at the statements
3 as well and hearing some of the statements that I've -- throughout the week, I see a lot of
4 the themes that they have experienced as well resonate with what I have specialisation in.

5 **Q.** Thank you. And I've seen you here at the hearing, you've been here for the past couple of
6 days. Would you agree that ethnic and cultural identity are some of the stronger themes
7 coming out of the Pacific survivor stories?

8 **A.** Yes.

9 **Q.** As you are well aware, ethnic and cultural identity and the ways in which they're linked to
10 well-being are very complex. What I'd like to do is unpack these concepts and walk
11 through the ways in which your work through the study of cultural identity and well-being,
12 just looking at how they're closely linked with our Pacific survivor stories. So I'll start off
13 with something that you refer to in your statement provided to the Commission. You refer
14 to something called "psychological perspectives". What does this mean, Dr Manuela?

15 **A.** So psychology as a discipline is a relatively young discipline. It has grown in prominence
16 since the 1800s. Where psychology has been developed has largely been in North America
17 and Europe. And so when I'm talking about psychological perspectives, what I'm referring
18 to primarily is the theories and the methods that have been developed within psychology,
19 but how these methods and theories have been developed within their own cultural context
20 as well, that being primarily North America and Europe. And so when I do talk about
21 psychology perspectives it's recognising that psychology as a discipline is quite Eurocentric
22 and it is predominantly based on western value systems.

23 **Q.** So just to clarify, whenever you refer to psychological perspectives, what you're talking
24 about is a Eurocentric western view of psychology, is that correct?

25 **A.** Yes, in addition to what I do in psychology, I guess I'll clarify a little bit further as well.
26 My background is in social psychology, so it looks at how -- the relationship between
27 people and their social environments that also intersects another specialisation which I have
28 which is in cultural and Pacific psychologies as well. So I'm in kind of a unique position
29 here being -- having expertise in two different areas of psychology. Part of that is
30 recognising the cultural biases that are embedded within the disciplines that we are taught
31 as well. So what I'm doing here is looking at the cultural biases that are embedded within
32 psychology as a discipline and how Pacific knowledges can be part of that and can enhance
33 the discipline as well.

34 **Q.** We'll just put on our western Eurocentric hat for a minute. I'm going to ask whether you

1 can share how ethnic and cultural identity are understood from this perspective.

2 A. Yes. So ethnic identity, there are multiple theories that can help explain from
3 psychological perspectives what that is. Social Identity Theory is one of the major ones.
4 So Social Identity Theory posits that people will categorise themselves into particular social
5 groups. That can be ethnicity, it can be gender, it can also be things like religion, people
6 can identify themselves in terms of the churches that they belong to as well. And so
7 recognition of these different groups that we belong to is ways in which people can form
8 their own identities. So identity itself isn't a singular thing, it is a multi-faceted,
9 multi-factorial construct. So our identities are a constellation of our perceived
10 memberships across various groups.

11 So for instance, under a Social Identity Theory perspective, ethnic identity would be a recognition
12 of an ethnic group that you belong to and your perceived membership within that group as
13 well. With that membership, often there is what we would call an in group. So the in
14 group is what is the group that you identify yourself as belonging to. And then there will
15 also be various out groups. So these are the different groups that we use to compare and
16 contrast ourselves with.

17 These comparisons are usually done in a way in which we can see ourselves in a positive light, and
18 so people will tend to make clear distinctions between one group and another group, make a
19 distinction of themselves belonging to one group and view that group membership in a
20 positive way. So that's under a social identity perspective.

21 If we look more deeply into the content of ethnic identity and what that actually entails. So ethnic
22 identity is then suggested to comprise of recognition of belonging to an ethnic group, so
23 understanding the labels that signify an ethnicity that you can identify with.

24 Attached to that is also the feelings and the attitudes that you have about your membership with
25 that group as well. So it is a sense of belonging to that ethnic group, it is the positive or the
26 negative attitudes that you can have about that ethnic group as well.

27 Further to that, and this is a source of some contention within psychological
28 literature as well, is the behaviours that are associated with ethnic groups as well. Quite
29 often this is seen as cultural practices, stances, and language as well. So when we're
30 looking at ethnic identity, we're looking in terms -- sometimes we're looking at the content
31 of that, which I have just discussed now.

32 Crucial to ethnic identity, it is important to recognise that we aren't born with an identity, it is
33 something that develops over time. And so ethnic identity development is a long process
34 and within psychological literature there has been what has been described as stages in

1 which people can go through. The first stage would be a diffuse stage. So this is when
2 people have done very little to no exploration around what their identity means to them, and
3 they don't have a very clear understanding of what their ethnic identity means to them
4 either.

5 Another stage is what is called foreclosed. This stage it is where people understand that they
6 belong to an ethnic group, or they know that they are part of a particular ethnic group, but
7 they have not done any exploration around what that means to them.

8 Another stage is moratorium. This part is where people have searched around what their ethnicity
9 means to them, but there is some confusion around what that meaning means, and what that
10 means in relation to their own ethnicity.

11 And finally, there is achieved. So the achieved status suggests that people have explored what
12 their ethnicity means to them, they have a clear and secure understanding of what that
13 means to their own self-concept.

14 Ethnic identity development generally occurs through adolescence. So as people
15 are growing up, they're going through these particular stages, starting at the diffuse stage,
16 perhaps going back and forth between foreclosed and moratorium and then eventually
17 hopefully coming to an achieved status where they have navigated what their ethnic
18 identity means to them.

19 However, with young children and babies as well, and I'd like to connect this to
20 some of the evidence that was provided by expert witness Dr Seini Taufa where we can
21 ascribe identity to someone. So as a baby, like the baby that was just crying now, that baby
22 will be given an ethnic group label. That baby doesn't describe what -- doesn't say what the
23 ethnic group label is. As that young baby gets older, eventually she will come to
24 understand that she is Samoan, or she is Cook Island. As she gets older she'll perhaps start
25 to explore what that means for her and what that means for those around her. And
26 hopefully at some point she will have an understanding of what that actually means and that
27 will then form a strong part of her ethnic identity.

28 **Q.** Thank you. So we've still got the western hat on and can you explain how well-being is
29 understood through this particular lens?

30 **A.** Yes. So well-being is a bit of a surprisingly difficult concept to define easily. And but
31 largely what researchers in this area have -- kind of agree upon is that well-being is the
32 ways in which people appraise or evaluate their life in a positive manner. So this can often
33 be associated with things like quality of life, positive or negative affect, happiness and life
34 satisfaction. Some key theorists in well-being, they posit that well-being can be understood

1 across six key domains. So these include self-acceptance, which is exploring the, or
2 understanding positive attitudes about yourself, environmental mastery, so that is when
3 people are able to make use of the opportunities around them and are able to manage their
4 day-to-day life. Positive relationships with others is another one, so this is when people are
5 able to engage in very meaningful and reciprocal intimate relationships with others.
6 Personal growth, where people can recognise their own development over time. Purpose in
7 life, so people have goals, they can move towards their goals and know that their life holds
8 meaning, and autonomy as well. So people feel that they have the ability to guide their
9 own life and regulate their own behaviour.

10 So what I have described there is what I would call subjective well-being. So
11 subjective well-being is where this is people deciding for themselves what well-being feels
12 like and looks like for them. But we, as a social psychologist, I always am mindful that
13 people are embedded within social systems. So we must balance their own appraisals of
14 their life with what I would call objective indicators of well-being as well.

15 These objective indicators of well-being are things that people can have control
16 over, sometimes they can't have control over. Things like housing, having safe, warm,
17 comfortable homes, a safe home environment, education, employment, health, these things
18 contribute to well-being as well. So although people can evaluate their own lives and the
19 ways in which they need to, we must be mindful that there are other things that contribute
20 to that well-being as well.

21 Quite often when we're looking at things like objective indicators of well-being,
22 there can be a tendency to equate that with success. So having a good job means you're
23 successful, that can -- I think the research generally shows that people with higher
24 qualifications and education tend to be employed in higher paying jobs. There is a saying,
25 I guess, that money doesn't buy happiness. This is a myth and it is not that money buys
26 happiness, it's that being financially secure affords you stability and security when times
27 get tough. So this is the ways in which we can understand the objective indicators of
28 well-being, that having a high paying job is going to afford you that safety net which is
29 going to support or enhance your own subjective well-being as well.

30 **Q.** So if we're still viewing psychology through this western framework, can you explain the
31 relationship between ethnic identity and well-being, how they're linked?

32 **A.** Yes. So when I talked about Social Identity Theory, one of the key aspects of that theory is
33 that people are motivated to see themselves in a positive light. And they will tend to make
34 these comparisons between their in group and their out group in a way that is going to

1 bolster their self-esteem. And so with ethnic identity, particularly those who have a very
2 secure and good understanding of what their ethnic identity means for them, quite often we
3 will see that this is paired with positive self-esteem, that it is paired with mastery in other
4 areas of their life as well.

5 There are several meta-analyses that have been conducted. A meta-analysis is when multiple
6 studies that have been done independently of each other are pulled together, and we look at
7 the average of the results across all of these different studies. And they have consistently
8 shown that a strong or positive ethnic identity has a positive relationship with well-being
9 outcomes. And these well-being outcomes can be diverse, it can be self-esteem, it could be
10 good mental health, it could be a positive self-concept.

11 And so when we see these links here, we just know that ethnic identity is
12 positively related to all these other positive life outcomes, but there are ways in which that
13 relationship can be influenced as well, in light of ethnic identity, perhaps one of the biggest
14 contributors to influencing that relationship would be things like ethnic discrimination,
15 marginalisation, prejudice and things like racism as well.

16 **Q.** You've just mentioned that discrimination can influence the relationship between ethnic
17 identity and well-being. Are you able to expand on this a little bit more?

18 **A.** Yes. So in addition to those meta-analyses that highlight the overall positive relationship
19 between identity and well-being, those same meta-analyses have been conducted to explore
20 the relationships between discrimination and well-being. I have an image that I have
21 developed that will help illustrate these relationships that I'm talking about. Yes, so on the
22 left-hand side there we can see that ethnic identity will positively influence your
23 well-being. Likewise, discrimination is going to negatively impact your well-being.

24 So what we have here is people, we're telling people that your ethnic identity is
25 good for your well-being. We're also telling people that discrimination is bad for your
26 well-being. So what happens if your ethnicity is the target for discrimination? What we
27 see here is these two opposing affects, positive in one direction, negative in the other. So
28 the relationship between ethnic identity and well-being and the relationship between
29 discrimination and well-being is very complex. And the literature does not show a very
30 clear picture of that relationship either.

31 In some instances, ethnic discrimination is going to -- sorry, ethnic discrimination can enhance the
32 negative effects of well-being. In some instances we see that discrimination has no impact
33 on well-being, in other instances we see that discrimination increases well-being. And this
34 really depends on the ways in which we understand the relationship between these three

1 constructs.

2 I will talk a bit later about some research that I have done in relation to this on Pacific identities
3 discrimination and well-being. But I do want to make note here that generally what we are
4 looking at is a very complicated situation and there is no single way in which people are
5 going to respond to ethnic discrimination, it depends on a whole range of different factors,
6 ethnic identity is one part of that puzzle.

7 **Q.** Now we're going to switch hats, we're putting our island hat on now, or ei katu as we're
8 both wearing today. I'm going to take you to paragraph 25 of your statement where you
9 say, "Understanding Pacific ethnic identity requires moving beyond psychological
10 perspectives." Can you please share what you mean by this?

11 **A.** Yes, so when I talked about the cultural context and the cultural biases of psychology,
12 moving beyond that means reframing the knowledge base that we are working with in
13 psychology as well. And so what we can do here is look at Pacific epistemology, and
14 epistemology is the nature of the knowledge and the nature of the construction of
15 knowledge. And this is where we can inform our understanding of something based on the
16 world view of Pacific knowledges, or Pacific epistemologies. I'm intentionally pluralising
17 them here because there is no single Pacific knowledge system. We are constantly working
18 with multiple Pacific knowledge systems. And psychology needs to be reflecting that as
19 well.

20 So when we take a Pacific perspective, we are often doing so from our own unique
21 Pacific perspective. I'm here today as one voice, as a Cook Island man to give my
22 perspective of psychology as that is informed by my understanding of my culture. But I'm
23 also drawing upon common elements across diverse Pacific cultures to inform this
24 understanding as well.

25 And so when we are trying to understand any kind of Pacific perspective, especially in relation to
26 Pacific identities and well-being, my specific focus is going to be in the context of
27 Aotearoa. So how this has developed within this country. Pacific perspectives also make
28 sure that we are mindful and aware of the social, the cultural and the historical backdrops of
29 what we are dealing with at the same time. So for Pacific peoples in New Zealand, this
30 means that we are taking into account the influence of Christianity being introduced to our
31 region, the migration story of our people to this country, the Dawn Raids that happened to
32 us as well. And this is the historical backdrop that we have in this country where the young
33 people, young Pacific people that we have in New Zealand today are the products of their
34 history that they have come from.

1 It is also recognising that the diversity that exists within the Pacific, our Cook Islanders, our
2 Samoans, our Tongans, they are all reflected here in New Zealand, but there's also other
3 levels that we need to be mindful of as well. Myself, I am born and raised in New Zealand.
4 We also must be mindful of those who are recent migrants to this country too, that the
5 experiences that they may have in this country will likely be different to the experiences
6 that I have here.

7 There are other aspects that we need to take into consideration as well. Ethnicity does not act
8 alone. They are not -- it is not the only thing that make up who we are. We have our
9 religions, we have our spiritualities, we have our sexualities, we have our physical health as
10 well. All of these things are forming the wider picture of who we need to -- of what we
11 need to understand to know who we are.

12 But these all have their own culturally nuanced meanings as well which have changed over time
13 and they change depending on where we are. What it means to be Tongan in New Zealand
14 is not the same, likely not to be the same as what it means to be Tongan in Tonga or
15 Tongan in Australia. The histories of these countries are different, the cultural context of
16 these countries are different as well. So a Pacific perspective is recognising all of that in
17 addition to recognising the cultural knowledge that we hold in this country too.

18 **Q.** Thank you. In your statement you mentioned the word "vā" and vā is a concept that we've
19 heard even just as early as earlier today.

20 **A.** Yes.

21 **Q.** And also yesterday. But there are so many layers to this pan-Pacific concept. Can you
22 explain how you see the vā working in the context of abuse in care?

23 **A.** Yes. For me, and this is my understanding as well, I will talk about what I think vā is first.
24 And it has been spoken about quite a lot throughout this Inquiry this week. For me, vā is
25 the space between people, it is also the space between people and objects, people and their
26 land. And when we talk about space, we're not talking about a physical gap, we're talking
27 about a social space. It is a space that isn't defined by distance, but it is defined by
28 connections. And so it is within the space in which we -- in which relationships are formed
29 and it is in which relationships are nurtured and in which they are maintained.

30 So vā in the context of abuse in care, if we're thinking about the importance and the value, the
31 sacredness of these relationships that we have, these relationships are tapu, our vā is tapu.
32 Abuse in care is a violation of that relationship. It is a damage to the vā. And so it is
33 important for us to be able to recognise what that damage looks like and it is also important
34 for us to be able to nurture that space, nurture that vā and to repair it as well.

- 1 **Q.** You've shared how cultural and ethnic identity are understood from psychological
2 perspectives. From your perspective as a Pacific professional, how is cultural and ethnic
3 identity, how are they viewed through a Pacific lens?
- 4 **A.** I will start by critiquing some of the theories that I just mentioned earlier. When I talked
5 about the -- those stages of ethnic identity, of being diffuse, foreclosed, moratorium and
6 achieved, that gives an impression that identity is a linear process, that is something that we
7 have a trajectory towards. Research in Pacific locations and with Pacific peoples is
8 different. We don't look at identity as a linear process. Perhaps a more apt description is
9 that our ethnic identity is a journey, and it is a journey that doesn't have a destination, it is a
10 continuous thing that we are always navigating.
- 11 So when we're thinking about these journeys that we go upon, there may be some
12 similarities so what we see in psychological perspectives, but what psychological
13 perspectives miss is a lot of the social and cultural and historical contexts in which we are
14 embedded in that shape these journeys that we go along.
- 15 So part of this is recognising that our journeys can be marked by periods of confusion, periods of
16 exploration, and periods of tension as well. To be Pacific in this country means that you
17 are being Pacific against a backdrop of discrimination and against a backdrop in which
18 systems have been developed in a way that does not take who you are as a Pacific person
19 into account.
- 20 We are also, although many of us are born in this country, we are tauiwi, we are visitors to this
21 country as well. Our Tangata Whenua here we are connected to through our own
22 relationships, but Aotearoa is not our land, our land is elsewhere. That we are connected by
23 our oceans, it is important for us to recognise the ways in which our identities are tied to
24 our lands as well.
- 25 When we're looking at, I guess, the ways in which psychology can resonate with the Pacific stories
26 of our identities, identity for Pacific peoples which psychology would classify us as a
27 collective culture in comparison to an individualistic culture, our self concepts could be
28 understood as interdependent. So our identities are formed based on our relationships or
29 memberships within different groups.
- 30 It is common for many Pacific peoples when they introduce their selves, you might meet someone
31 and you say "Tell me a bit about yourself." They will say something like -- I'll use myself
32 as an example, which I did at the beginning, I am Cook Island, my father is from Nikao,
33 he's from Manihiki. What I'm doing is signifying that I'm connected, you know, my family
34 links are important, my place where I am located is important. These groups in which

1 I belong to are important. So my identity is dependent on my relationships with other
2 people.

3 That would be a psychological perspective that would resonate with us as Pacific peoples. But in
4 addition to that, taking, I guess, a more Pacific perspective within that, vā is a way in which
5 we can understand our identities as well. So my identity is understood through the
6 relationships or the vā that I have with others. So this would be meaning that ourself,
7 ourselves are relational, or what we can call the relational self. So our identities are formed
8 based on these relationships that we have. In psychology it is understood as an
9 interdependent self-concept. In Pacific it is the vā, it is the relationships that bind us
10 together and that form our identities. So that means that I guess in one way the self is a
11 Eurocentric concept because the self and Pacific is intricately tied to do so many other
12 people.

13 My own research that I have done in this area, a little bit more about my specific expertise; I am a
14 quantitative researcher, though I do draw extensively on Pacific knowledges, which does
15 put me in that unique position of doing culturally-informed quantitative research. My PhD
16 and masters focused on psychometrics. Psychometrics is -- I'm trying to explain this in a
17 way that is --

18 **Q.** Please explain.

19 **A.** I feel like I'm giving a lecture. If I wanted to measure weight I would get out my scales and
20 I would measure your weight. If I wanted to measure the distance between us, I would get
21 out my ruler and I would measure that. If I wanted to measure your identity, I can't take out
22 your brain and measure it that way, I potentially could, but the information I might get from
23 that isn't really what we're looking for. Psychometrics is a statistical method that we can
24 use to get an indication of what identity is.

25 Part of that is what I would call a latent construct. So it is recognising that there is
26 something there that I can't directly measure. But what I can do is I can look at how you
27 respond to things that are related to this thing that I'm trying to measure. So this is where
28 we see things like identity scales or if you've ever done a survey where there's a 1 to 7
29 strongly agree, strongly disagree, these kinds of things.

30 What I do in psychometrics and what I have done is developed a measure of
31 Pacific identity and well-being. So it asks people questions that are related to their
32 identities, and looks at patterns within those responses as well. That is something called
33 Exploratory Factor Analysis followed up by something called Confirmatory Factor
34 Analysis. So it is looking at the patterns in ways in which people respond to these

1 particular items.

2 The patterns that I noted in the surveys that I conducted with people were very
3 much reflective of the themes that we see in Pacific literature around what Pacific identities
4 encompass. This includes our sense of belonging to our ethnic groups, to our communities.
5 It includes the positive attitudes that we have towards our ethnic groups as well, which I
6 have called in my own studies Group Membership Evaluation.

7 It also -- my studies also capture something that I have called Religious Centrality
8 and Embeddedness which looks at the extent to which religion is intertwined with our
9 Pacific cultures. I have also noted something called -- which I have termed "cultural
10 efficacy", which looks at the extent to which someone feels that they are able to participate
11 comfortably within a Pacific cultural context.

12 In addition to that is domains around well-being which in my research has focused
13 on family well-being and also societal well-being as well. So our Pacific identities are
14 constructed of many of these different things, of the ways in which we see ourselves
15 belonging to groups, the positive attitudes that we have towards those groups, the extent to
16 which we feel that we can participate within those groups, the extent to which we feel that
17 our religions and our faith is intertwined with these groups, and the ways in which we feel
18 supported and are satisfied with our families and the societies that we live in.

19 **Q.** Can you explain, religion is such a big thing for Pacific people, can you explain what role
20 religion plays just a little bit more?

21 **A.** We would need to go a little bit further back into history before the missionaries came
22 through the Pacific and introduced Christianity. So before then we had, and we still do
23 today, we had a cosmology of beliefs, our atua, our gods of the sea, the skies. And they
24 exist, they existed for many, many, many years and then as missionaries came through and
25 they introduced Christianity to the Pacific and this was readily adopted, not readily
26 adopted, over time it was adopted and incorporated into Pacific nations within the Pacific.

27 So what we saw was a fundamental shift, I would say, in Pacific cultures then where the values
28 within a Christian religious framework were different to those to the values embedded
29 within a Pacific cultural framework back in those days. And so we started to see a shift
30 there. One example may be the ways in which views on gender changed, where gender
31 pre-Christianity may have been more fluid, understood differently with fa'afafine,
32 akava'ine. Gender was different. The introduction of Christianity saw a shift in the
33 understanding of gender roles in the Pacific. So this is ways in which Christianity has had
34 an influence and shaped who we are today.

1 And today, I would argue and would suggest many would argue as well, that our religions have
2 become so intertwined with Pacific cultures that we can't separate them anymore, even the
3 social structures that we have can revolve around religiosity, which I want to clarify is
4 different from spirituality as well. So spirituality is looking at how we are connected to
5 things that transcend who we are as people, and religiosity or religion would be the social
6 structures in which that spirituality can be performed. Both have influenced our Pacific
7 cultures.

8 In New Zealand, especially during the Dawn Raids, our churches -- sorry, I'll go back a little bit.
9 In New Zealand, especially with the first migrants coming to New Zealand, our churches
10 were pivotal, absolutely pivotal. They provided that village away from home where you
11 could be connected with people who you knew, who you understood, and who understood
12 you as well.

13 And so the social role that religion and churches play in Pacific lives is absolutely vital and critical
14 for us. And is also reflecting the ways in which we can't separate them anymore, they are
15 so enmeshed together. In saying that, there is a growing proportion of Pacific peoples,
16 when we see in the census, who do not declare any religious affiliation as well. So not all
17 Pacific people are religious. Again, just highlighting there the diversity within our Pacific
18 cultures here today. But religion still is impacting on people regardless of their religious
19 affiliations or not.

20 **Q.** We've heard from survivors who have shared about how their cultural identity has been
21 stripped because, you know, they can't speak their own language. Can you explain what
22 role does language play here?

23 **A.** Yes. I mentioned earlier that ethnic behaviours was a bit of a contentious area in
24 understanding ethnic identity. And language is one of those perfect examples of that.
25 I myself do not speak Māori, Cook Island Māori, but I identify as Cook Island. If we were
26 to flip that a little bit. If I could speak French, that doesn't mean that I would necessarily
27 identify as French. So what this is showing is that yes, language is very intricately tied to
28 our identities, and quite often we can view language as identity. And this is a controversial
29 issue within Pacific research spaces as well. When we -- I have heard people say that, I
30 will use Samoans as an example, that you can't be Samoan if you can't speak the language.
31 And I understand that sentiment. There is knowledge located within languages that can't be
32 translated into English. There is an essence that belongs to them. And it is why we are
33 taking great care to protect our languages.

34 But that doesn't mean that those who are, for whatever reason, are unable to speak their language,

1 are unable to identify with their ethnic groups either. Part of why that is so important to
2 recognise is that language is something that belongs to us but it is also something that can
3 be taken from us. We saw here in Aotearoa through colonisation where Māori were forced
4 not to speak their language in schools. We also see that various ways in Pacific, in the
5 Pacific nations as well, where there is growing prominence of English speaking too.

6 I believe in New Zealand 95% of Cook Island people who are born in New Zealand are unable to
7 speak their language. And compare that to Samoans, I believe it is about 60% of
8 New Zealand-born Samoans can speak their language. So we need to be mindful of the
9 nuances that we see across the Pacific and the relationship between languages and identity
10 as well.

11 But language is an important marker of identity, but it is not all that makes up our identity as well.

12 I say this with a bit of caution. I don't want to give the impression that our languages are
13 not important. They are absolutely vital for us and they are vital for our continuation of our
14 cultures and of our histories, because we are an oral culture, our stories and our knowledges
15 are passed through our oratory. So we must protect those languages.

16 We must also be mindful that our relationships, or our personal relationships with our languages
17 are not uniform either. That people, through no fault of their own, have been disconnected
18 from their languages, and that there are critical periods throughout your development that
19 are easier to learn a language; usually during adolescence and perhaps into your kind of
20 later teen years. There is a, I guess what I would call a critical period for language
21 acquisition, where you have that time and space to learn your languages.

22 This does depend on your surroundings though. If you are in an environment where the languages
23 are not spoken, you're not going to pick it up and it's not going to be very easy to pick it up.
24 In New Zealand, the primary language of instruction is English. For many of our Pacific
25 peoples we have to be able to speak English. But all of New Zealand does not have to
26 speak Cook Island Māori. So there is a bit of imbalance there, I guess, in terms of the
27 values in which our society can place on different languages.

28 But again, it is important to note that it is not just languages that make up our ethnic identities,
29 there is our sense of belonging and connection to that. Which is why in my research that
30 I did I initially had the same ideas of language being a marker of identity. The methods
31 that I use in terms of developing items to reflect identity and language were very difficult to
32 kind of get out within the statistical methods I was using. And that was because a lot of
33 people who were unable to speak the language strongly identified with their ethnic group.
34 So it became a bit of a problem in what I was trying to do.

1 So what I did instead was lend from literature and research on self-efficacy. So self-efficacy,
2 meaning the beliefs that one has to be able to do something. And so I drew on that concept
3 and developed this area of cultural efficacy. So this meant that I'm not, I guess, taking kind
4 of tick box approach to what it means to be a Pacific person that you have to be able to
5 speak Cook Island, that you have to be able going to church; it is looking at the dimensions
6 that we can connect to and how we vary along those dimensions. And cultural efficacy in
7 that respect meant looking -- rather than saying you must speak a particular language to be
8 Pacific, it's asking people how comfortable do you feel within a Pacific cultural setting. So
9 that may mean perhaps if I don't speak the language I can still feel comfortable within that
10 context so I can kind of score myself quite highly on that.

11 **Q.** Just reflecting on language acquisition, we heard this morning from Ms TU, a Samoan
12 survivor who shared about being adopted into a Palagi family. There was that real sense of
13 disconnection and in her words discomfort. Something that you've raised in our previous
14 talanoa is a phrase called "ethnic labelling". Can you explain what ethnic labelling is?

15 **A.** Yes. Again, I will connect to the evidence provided by expert witness Dr Seini Taufa who
16 spoke about the ethnicity data, and I guess we can think of ethnic labelling as that tick box
17 exercise of which ethnic groups do you belong to. These are the markers of ethnicity,
18 which is -- I want to clarify, is something separate from ethnic identity. Ethnicity is -- can
19 be understood as the -- a social construct that reflects the geographic and cultural heritage
20 of a particular people. Ethnic identity is your sense and sense of meaning and sense of
21 attachment to that. Our baby that was crying earlier, I could give that baby an ethnic label
22 as a parent. But that does not necessarily mean that as that baby gets older that that baby is
23 going to identify with that identity that I have given them, or with that ethnicity I have
24 given them, in the same way that we might see ethnic identity.

25 So this is what I would call an ascribed identity, so it is an ethnic label that we give to others. So
26 this is also recognising that identity is interplay between yourself and other people. So it
27 does -- and ethnic identity context, it does start with us giving ethnic labels to our children.
28 What we can often see is for -- and also for many Pacific peoples, is when there are those
29 with multiple ethnic backgrounds -- myself, for example, I am both Cook Island and
30 European. On a survey or whatever, I would have to tick two boxes, Cook Island and
31 European. But it is -- that is my ethnicity. My identity is something different. My identity
32 is how I feel and how I am connected to those boxes that I have ticked. I guess the labels
33 force me to identify in a particular way. But my identity allows me to do so in a way that is
34 more fluid and reflective of how I feel. So we must be careful that we don't conflate these

1 ethnic labels with your own personal sense of ethnic identity there.

2 **Q.** You've just mentioned that identity is fluid and I understand there is a concept called
3 "identity fluidity", which you have touched on before. Can you expand on what identity
4 fluidity actually means and the way that this relates to ethnic identity development?

5 **A.** Yes. So our -- if we looked at the ethnic identity development process, or journey, it is not
6 something that is consistent over time, it fluctuates as we try to navigate what that means
7 for us. Even if you have a secure understanding of your own identity and what that means,
8 these identities are multi-faceted. I will use our Pacific peoples as an example of that.
9 When we first came to New Zealand we were perhaps identifying ourselves in terms of the
10 villages that we belong to or the churches that we belong to. We weren't identifying
11 ourselves as Cook Island or Samoan. But once we came to New Zealand, we were labelled
12 Pacific Islanders. So that was something that was given to us. And it is also something that
13 we have adopted in some sense, either through necessity or through the ways in which our
14 socialisation and experiences in this country have forced us to as well.

15 Those initial migrants that came to New Zealand were labelled as Pacific Islanders despite that
16 they were perhaps not viewing themselves in that way. But they were all sharing a
17 common experience of trying to acculturate to New Zealand society. They had children,
18 their children were born into a context where their experiences were going to be very, very
19 similar to them.

20 Through very good intentions, many Pacific parents encouraged English speaking for their children
21 as what they saw as a way to survive New Zealand society. New Zealand viewed us as a
22 single community of Pacific Islanders, despite us knowing very well that we have different
23 histories, languages that make up this diverse group of who we are.

24 And so our subsequent generations were born into this context where they had more in common
25 with each other than what they had in common with the generations that came before them.
26 And so they were developing this broader identity, Pacific identity which spoke to the
27 common experiences that they were having. At the same time they knew that they are
28 Niuean, or that you are also Cook Island, or that you are Samoan. So what we are seeing
29 here is a multi-layered ethnic identity, where sometimes you are Cook Island, sometimes
30 you are Pacific, it really depends on where you are.

31 Today I am Cook Island, at the University of Auckland I am Pacific. Why? Because there is not
32 many of us in my faculty. So there is strength in our numbers. And the way in which we
33 can connect more easier is by recognising that we are Pacific. So we have a stronger voice.
34 We can access more resources as a wider collective rather than a constellation of smaller

1 collectives. So that stronger relationship between who we all are does serve a good purpose
2 for us. It does come at the expense of losing sometimes that specific nuance that gives us
3 that uniqueness of what makes each of us special in our own ways.

4 So identity fluidity can refer to the ways in which our identity changes depending on the context in
5 which we are in. Some aspects of our identity will be more salient in some spaces than
6 they are in other spaces. Likewise, because identity develops over time, there may be
7 instances where your understanding of your ethnicity and your ethnic identity can change
8 over time. Even if I was to go back to the psychological perspectives, and achieved identity
9 does not necessarily mean that one can experience confusion about what their ethnic
10 identity means to them either.

11 So there is a constant back and forth. Identity, as I said earlier, is a journey and journeys have
12 bumps in the road and they wind, they go up and down. And they don't have that
13 destination either. So that is one way in which we can see that fluidity. But we can see that
14 fluidity on paper as well. When we're looking at data, we can get the impression that
15 identity or perhaps ethnicity is a stable construct.

16 But what we have seen, and what has been evidenced by many of the survivors here, is that people
17 can be mislabelled. So we are -- if we were to follow that one individual across time, at the
18 various points at which they have -- their data has been entered into our systems, someone
19 has been Māori, suddenly they're Samoan, suddenly they're Rarotongan. Parents, when
20 they label their children, especially if the parents are of different ethnic backgrounds, the
21 way in which they label their children can differ as well. Mum might define her child as
22 Samoan, but dad might define his child as Tongan. The child is both Samoan and Tongan.
23 But depending on who -- I guess maybe depending on what mood dad is in today, he might
24 just tick the Tongan box or something like that.

25 As that child gets older and they grow in their understanding of what their ethnicity means to them,
26 the way they tick that box can change as well. They might tick Tongan and Samoan, or
27 they might just tick Tongan. It depends on what their experiences were like growing up.
28 As we saw with many of our survivors, some were disconnected from their families and
29 perhaps did not have that sense of connection and belonging to that ethnic label that they
30 may have to tick.

31 So in that instance, what we're seeing there is fluidity again on discrete data. So there's multiple
32 ways in which our identities can be fluid in both our understanding, but also in the official
33 statistics that we have about who we are as well.

34 **Q.** Now, we're still continuing our journey, we've still got our Pacific hat on. I'm going to talk

1 to you about well-being, ask you about well-being and what that means from a Pacific
2 perspective in psychology.

3 A. Yes, so when I was talking about identity earlier, I mentioned religion, senses of belonging
4 and things like that. This is same -- the same ways in which we can conceptualise Pacific
5 well-being as well. I have a slide that I would like to share that highlights Pacific models
6 of health. So these models can illustrate the broader, holistic conceptualisations that
7 people, that Pacific people or Pacific health theorists have about how we can understand
8 what health and well-being can look like and can be understood from a Pacific perspective.

9 On the left-hand side is Fonofale. Fonofale was developed by Fuimaono Carl Puluotu-Endemann.
10 He uses a fale as a way to articulate different dimensions of Pacific people's lives. The
11 foundation of the fale represents family, the roof represents culture, and on this image there
12 are four posts. Each post represents something as well. So one post represents physical
13 health, one represents spirituality, one represents mental health, and the last post it says
14 other, but that represents things like gender, education, employment, income and things like
15 that. Surrounding that fale is a cocoon that represents environment, time and context.

16 That fale, the way that it represents health and well-being is that the architecture of the fale needs
17 to be in balance. If the foundation of the fale is weak, the rest of the fale can collapse, or
18 the structure will be compromised. This means that to understand Pacific health means we
19 need to understand the importance that families have, that if a family is experiencing
20 hardship in any way, shape or form, that this can impact on their physical health, this can
21 impact on their spirituality, this can impact on their mental health, this can impact on the
22 ways in which they can express their cultures. So it is a representation of the holistic ways
23 in which health is understood within a Pacific world view.

24 The one on the far right-hand side is Te Vaka Atafaga. It is a Tokelauan model of health
25 developed by Kupa Kupa, who I believe he is in the nursing industry. He uses a vāka as a
26 way to understand Tokelau models of health. Similar to the ways in which Fonofale
27 represents a Samoan perspective, I guess. Kupa here -- one thing that I want to point out is
28 something called 'inati, this is a Tokelau concept of social support. I'm not Tokelauan so
29 I hope I do my explanation justice here. In Tokelau, 'inati is a cultural way of providing
30 support for others. For instance, the example that is given in the publication of this
31 framework, he talks about a mother who has lost her husband, her husband has died, and so
32 the rest of the village will provide for her and the children as well. That culturally
33 embedded way of supporting her is called 'inati. And it is something that is part of their
34 cultural practices, it is not something that is questioned, it is just what is done.

1 In the middle there is Fonua, a Tongan model of health developed by Sione Tu'itahi within the
 2 Health Promotion Agency, and each of those circles represents a different domain, very
 3 similar to Fonofale and Te Vaka Atafaga. In the middle you have your spirituality and as
 4 you go outwards there's mental health, physical health, your community and the
 5 environment and the different levels in which these need to be understood as well, at the
 6 individual level, the family, local, national and global levels.

7 I highlight these three models of health here so we can appreciate the differences that exist within
 8 them. Fonofale is Samoan, it's slightly different to Te Vaka Atafaga which has its own
 9 unique Tokelau concepts within it, which is different to Fonua which has its own Tongan
 10 phrasings to describe what is going on there. But there is commonalities across them.
 11 There is the family, spirituality, the physical body, the communities that we belong to as
 12 well.

13 I will note that with Te Vaka Atafaga, family is represented by the lashings that tie
 14 the different components of the vaka together. Like we see up here on our fale, the lashings
 15 that keep the wooden structures together, Kupa articulates those lashings as family, as tying
 16 everything together.

17 **MS VA'AI:** Madam Chair, I'm wondering whether this is a good place to take a break.

18 **CHAIR:** Yes, I think so. We've got a lot to think about, so I think we all need to take a break, and
 19 have a think about it and we'll come back to finish your evidence in the second half of the
 20 afternoon. Thank you.

21 A. Thank you.

22 **Adjournment from 3.29 pm to 3.50 pm**

23 **CHAIR:** Welcome back everybody. And welcome back to you Dr Manuela. Thank you Ms
 24 Va'ai.

25 **MS VA'AI:** Thank you. Dr Manuela, so just summarising what you've said so far in your
 26 evidence, right at the beginning you discussed psychological perspectives which is a
 27 Eurocentric, Palagi way of viewing cultural identity and well-being. Now we have our
 28 Pacific hat on, our ei katu and you've taken us through Pacific perspectives of cultural
 29 identity, in particular Pacific models.

30 A. Yes.

31 **Q.** So if we could just bring that slide up please Hene.

32 A. Yes, so to finish with this part here, these three models are just a few of a wider array of
 33 Pacific models of health and well-being that are available and that exist within our cultural
 34 landscape. My own spin on this, I guess, is again related to vā. So my interpretation of

1 well-being for Pacific peoples and how this can be understood through vā, again the vā is
2 the space between us, it's that relationship between us. We can extend upon these models
3 that exist here by understanding how well-being can be reflected through the vā that you
4 have with each of these different dimensions of life; what is the nature and the quality of
5 the vā within your family relationships. We can extend that to what is the vā between you
6 and your culture as well. Though culture is not a person, nor is it an object, it is something
7 that we have a relationship with. Likewise, our mental health can be understood as the vā,
8 the relationship that you have with your own mental well-being; your physical health as
9 well.

10 So my professional perspective of Pacific well-being, based upon my consolidation of these
11 various models, is that vā for Pacific peoples can be understood as the totality of the quality
12 of the relationships that we have across these various domains of life, recognising that
13 people are -- we have relationships with people across each of those dimensions as well.

14 **Q.** Your research touches on discrimination and racism as well within this context. Can you
15 explain how it's linked to both well-being and identity?

16 **A.** Yes.

17 **Q.** For Pacific people, sorry, Dr Manuela.

18 **A.** Yeah. Earlier I showed a diagram that had the opposing effects of identity and well-being
19 on -- sorry, identity and discrimination on well-being. What I have done in my own
20 research is explore how that relationship looks like. What I have found, or the research that
21 I have done in various surveys and the subsequent analyses that I have conducted with that
22 has shown -- I have shown that ethnic identity moderates the relationship between
23 discrimination and well-being.

24 In this particular study that I did, I looked at how people who reported high levels of ethnic identity
25 relative to low levels of ethnic identity on the identity measure that I developed. Those
26 who experienced discrimination, people who reported higher discrimination, what I found
27 was that they were protected from the corrosive effects of that discrimination. So the
28 reports of their life satisfaction, their satisfaction with their physical health and their
29 satisfaction with life were not affected directly at least by the impacts of that
30 discrimination. That suggests to me that ethnic identity provides some kind of
31 psychological resource that buffers you against the negative impacts of ethnic
32 discrimination.

33 In addition to this, those people who reported lower ethnic identity scores, what I found was that
34 they also reported lower satisfaction within their families, lower satisfaction with their

- 1 physical health, and lower satisfaction with their life overall.
- 2 To me what this suggests is that ethnic -- sorry, discrimination has a more harmful effect on those
3 who are still trying to understand what their ethnic identity means for them. That does not
4 mean that those with a secure understanding of their ethnic identity are also not impacted
5 by that discrimination, it does mean that their identity does provide some protection against
6 that.
- 7 Furthermore, if we are to understand conceptually what identity and well-being is for Pacific
8 peoples, in psychology perspectives we look at identity as its own concept, we look at
9 well-being as its own concept, and we model the relationship between the two using
10 various statistical methods.
- 11 In a Pacific world view, identity can be understood in terms of the *vā* between myself and other
12 people. Well-being can be understood in terms of the *vā* between myself and across these
13 various domains in life.
- 14 Because of *vā*, we can't conceptualise identity and well-being as distinct concepts within a Pacific
15 world view. Like how I mentioned earlier that religion and Pacific cultures are so
16 intertwined, this is the same for Pacific identities and well-being. Our identity relies on the
17 quality of the relationships with ourselves and with our other people and our well-being
18 relies on the quality of the relationships with other people as well. Because of this, I guess
19 we can say that identity is well-being and well-being is also identity. Or perhaps we just
20 don't have the words in English to articulate that as we can in a Pacific way.
- 21 **Q.** I remember having a discussion with you in preparation for this and when I asked you, is
22 there a Pacific word for well-being?
- 23 **A.** Not that I know of. There is no distinct translation into well-being, but there are ways in
24 which our languages reflect that how our relationships are fully embedded in our ways of
25 knowing and our ways of being. If I was to say, if I was to greet you in my language, I
26 would say *kia orana*. That means I wish you good life. That to me is well-being. It is
27 reflected in everything that we do. We don't greet you as hello, we greet you by wishing
28 you good life.
- 29 **Q.** Meitaki. In your statement you provided you reflected on our Pacific survivor stories and
30 you categorise them into different themes. I'm just going to walk you through these themes
31 and wondering whether you could share your thoughts; firstly on family?
- 32 **A.** Yes. So many of the survivors talked about how they were either completely disconnected
33 and taken away from their families and put into other places. Others talked about how their
34 family environments were of a different ethnic and cultural background to them. Others

1 spoke about how their family environments were unhealthy and not a good place for them
2 to be in.

3 If we think about the ways in which we look at the importance of family, for instance like
4 Fonofale, if the family unit is not strong, then the rest of the person is going to be
5 compromised. And families are important for us. They are something through which we
6 draw our strength. Which can in some instances be a double-edged sword because families
7 are so important to us, if that family is not well, the damage can be horrific, as we have
8 seen by the survivors. But that is also, in my opinion, where we can intervene. It is also
9 where we can heal as well.

10 **Q.** Another theme or category that you have mentioned or highlighted is culture. Can you
11 please share your observations on that?

12 **A.** Again, many of our survivors talked about being disconnected from their cultures and their
13 languages. If we think about how important it is for you to develop your own identity, how
14 this is connected to other positive outcomes, your self-esteem, your well-being, not having
15 access to your culture through no fault of your own, means that you have been cut off from
16 that source of well-being as well. It can also be a way for you to connect with others.

17 As people, what we know in psychology is that one of the most harmful things to a person is
18 isolation. And to be disconnected from something that connects you to other people in
19 ways in which other cultures may not understand. You have been isolated through no fault
20 of your own. We know people die in isolation and we know that those social relationships
21 can form a protection there. Our culture is more than the way we view and understand the
22 world, it is part of our health as well. So for many of our survivors when I reflect on their
23 stories that they have shared, I feel their pain and their longing for wanting to be connected
24 to that. Because it is through those connections that healing can be found and can occur,
25 but it is through those connections as well in which you can be protected. My own research
26 demonstrates that as well.

27 But I must also make note that some survivors, though on paper they have been labelled Pacific,
28 for them their ethnicity is not a centrally defining aspect of their identity. And we must be
29 mindful of that as well. To me this means that any Pacific-orientated approach to redress,
30 what has happened to our survivors, must also take into account the diverse ways in which
31 people are Pacific. There is no one size fits all for a Pacific person. The way that they
32 orient themselves or connect to their ethnicity or their culture must be taken into
33 consideration, even if that means that a Pacific way may not be for them.

34 I reflect now on the evidence provided yesterday by one of the survivors who spoke about his

1 experience of being present in this fale where he was contending with the fact that he
2 discovered abruptly that he was Samoan, believing he was Māori. That he attributed a lot
3 of the hardships and abuse that he experienced to Pacific peoples in the school that he was
4 at. And I felt that being present in this space in some ways brought to light a lot of that
5 trauma again that he had experienced. But he was also very careful to ensure that he did
6 not believe that this was reflective of Pacific peoples entirely. But it is an example of how
7 our care and approach must be nuanced to the individual needs of our survivors.

8 **Q.** Looking at identity and discrimination, what are your reflections on those two themes?

9 **A.** Again, looking at the ways in which culture and identity can provide that protection for
10 those who have been disconnected from their families and from their culture, what we're
11 seeing is people who have been stripped through no fault of their own of something that
12 they deserve. The discrimination that they have experienced as well, though at times,
13 though they spoke of the discrimination that they experienced in the places in which they
14 had been placed into care, this discrimination happens all over the place as well. And we
15 must be mindful of that too. Many of them spoke about, even our survivor this morning
16 who was adopted into a European family, her physical appearance denotes who she is.
17 Despite her perhaps only knowing her ethnic background, her ethnic identity is still
18 developing. Her journey is still continuing. Growing up she was treated in a particular
19 way. They viewed her as a particular way, despite her not seeing herself in that way.

20 So when we look at identity, I don't want to put responsibility on to an individual. Individuals are
21 within a wider system. So people, other people and societies have their role in the harm
22 that they have done to their survivors as well. What our country has done in terms of the
23 Dawn Raids, very overt forms of discrimination can give permission, for lack of a better
24 word, for other people to treat us negatively, to discriminate against us. And so we need to
25 be sure that while we are doing our best to provide that cultural support and safety for our
26 young people as they are growing up, that we are also pairing this with societal shifts and
27 attitudes towards inclusion and acceptance and embracing of the diverse peoples that call
28 this country home as well.

29 **Q.** Having listened to survivor stories throughout the week, are there any other reflections or
30 themes that you've thought about so far?

31 **A.** Yes. One would be the intergenerational trauma that has been carried on. I was born in
32 1986 after the Dawn Raids. But my reality is shaped by that. This is the same for many
33 other people as well. These events influence policies and we are all affected by those. So
34 we must be sure that we are mindful of how this trauma is carried by all of us, but this

1 trauma can manifest itself in ways that are even more harmful on others. Our survivors
2 within their families, their families are also the products of the histories within this country
3 as well. I don't know the situations of these families, but I do know that these families were
4 in trouble for whatever reason that may have been, and this trouble has then been passed on
5 to the survivors who have done their best to deal with it as much as they can.

6 So the intergenerational trauma is another theme that I have seen. Connected to that and to also
7 relate that back to culture and identity, it is within our families that our identities and our
8 cultures are passed on. Our culture is passed on between generations and when that family
9 breaks down, that intergenerational transfer of knowledge and of identity is lost.

10 **Q.** Finally, as a Pacific, as a Cook Island professional working in psychology, what is your
11 hope for our Pacific people, our survivors in this space?

12 **A.** One is connected to another theme that I would like to talk to, and that is about resiliency.
13 So I have noted how strong each of our survivors have been to come, share their stories as
14 hard as it can be for them to relive that trauma that they have experienced. Resiliency is
15 about someone's ability to adapt to a situation that is harmful to them. It is a way to survive
16 that and then to return back to who you are, to return back to your happiness. The survivors
17 did not talk about resiliency directly, but they have shown it indirectly.

18 Our Commissioners, I have noted that you have mentioned resiliency. I do have some critiques of
19 resiliency as a thing that I hope you take into consideration as well. Part of this critique is
20 recognising the racial dimensions of resiliency. There is an unequal distribution of power
21 within this country. If people are to be resilient, we need to understand what that resiliency
22 looks like and who is being asked to be resilient.

23 We know that Pacific people experience discrimination and other hardships in this country and we
24 expect them to be resilient against it. Our resilience is more than that. What does Pacific
25 resilience look like? In some instances it looks like this. It is our people coming to you to
26 tell you their stories, the ways in which systems have failed them, systems have
27 marginalised them, and what they have done to try to survive that.

28 So resilience also looks like resistance. It is resistance against these systems that fail us. It is us
29 holding those in power to account to ensure that they are doing what they should be doing
30 to protect. One thing with resilience, a critique that is shared by scholars in Māori research
31 as well, is that if we are to encourage resilience, we do so at the risk of accepting these
32 inequalities and these inequities. We do not accept them and our survivors have expressed
33 that in many, many different ways that they do not accept this.

34 So yes, individually our survivors have shown great resiliency and to our survivors I thank you so

1 much for sharing your stories. Individual resiliency is one thing, and collective resistance
2 is something that is going to be paired with that resiliency as well. We must ensure that
3 what they have gone through can't be done again.

4 Your individual resiliency to our survivors, I hope that you can take strength from our collective in
5 seeking your redress to what has been happened to you. I also try to share my hopes and
6 understandings of your own identities in ways in which you have been taken from them, in
7 ways you can't control. You belong to us and we belong to you. It is hard to not get
8 emotional about these things. As an academic and researcher we're taught in psychology to
9 be objective to these things. But this is our community, we can't deny that who we are are
10 not reflected in the testimonies of our survivors. We must also be authentic in what we do.
11 We have to be sure that we present ourselves as whole people throughout this entire process
12 just as our survivors have presented themselves as whole people as well.

13 So to our survivors, again I extend to you my warmest gratitude for you and your families and
14 thank you for everything that you have shared with us and I hope to you all that you do find
15 ways in which you can connect with who you are, because you belong to one of the greatest
16 legacies in this world. Perhaps you don't understand it just yet, but there are people out
17 there who will champion you regardless of your own experiences that you have gone
18 through.

19 **Q.** Meitaki ma'ata Dr Sam Manuela. I understand that you're happy to take questions.

20 **A.** Yes.

21 **Q.** Thank you Madam Chair.

22 **CHAIR:** Thank you Dr Manuela, I'm going to ask my colleagues if they would like to any
23 questions.

24 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Kia ora Dr Manuela, thank you so much for your enlightening
25 statement today. Yeah, I thought -- there were so many things in there so I just don't know
26 where to start, but I'll just focus on our terms of reference, let's think about that. I thought it
27 was really interesting in thinking about the nature and effects of abuse and neglect,
28 discriminatory statements on someone whose identity wasn't fully formed or robust in
29 terms of ethnicity and the negative impact that those statements would have on that not
30 fully formed ethnic identity. It's really useful for us to understand, to think about the
31 nature, the full extent, nature of discriminatory statements for example. And I wondered --
32 and also the flip-side of that about healthy, robust identity would mean that you are more
33 resistant to those attacks, right, I wanted to hear that and you said that, that's great, it's great
34 to know that.

1 I wonder too whether -- I'm not sure whether you were talking in your statement
2 about the stigmatisation of identities too, and how that can be internalised by the identity,
3 you know, by the person so that if you're called lazy, you know, so forth, then you actually
4 -- it starts to form part of your identity. Would you agree with that that these are some of
5 the effects?

6 A. They're not uniform effects. We can see that sometimes. I have shown in some research
7 that I have done that there can be societal attitudes that can be shared by Pacific peoples
8 who may also hold negative views or hold negative stereotypes against Pacific peoples as
9 well. Where the source of those attitudes come from, I don't know, but there definitely is
10 people who are Pacific peoples who would hold attitudes that would be similar to kind of
11 more dominant discriminatory attitudes as well.

12 Q. Yeah, I think that makes sense, if you're told something over and over again by the
13 dominant cast or what have you, then there's a risk that it is internalised and it then
14 becomes part of your identity, right?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. So that's another way of looking at the harm of discrimination on survivors, yeah?

17 A. I think to that point as well, the way that it can -- that can manifest itself can be important
18 to consider. So it could be things like trying to push children into a certain profession or
19 trying to persuade them to -- "Why do you want to study this, you should be doing
20 something else." And so it can be a recognition that our people don't do a particular
21 profession. And so --

22 Q. Yes, yeah, the Māoris will do the trade and so forth.

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Yeah, exactly, yeah. And I did -- I think it's a really -- now moving to healing if you like, I
25 think it's a really important insight that you had about how on identity, to be nuanced about
26 it. Because if we look at it, say, at one end of the spectrum you've got a more sort of fully
27 formed sense of identity kind of closed, if you like, and at the other a more cosmopolitan
28 identity, see it as a spectrum, do you know what I'm talking about?

29 A. Yeah, I would say that identity is -- has multiple dimensions, and that we can vary along
30 each of those dimensions. And so a more psychological perspective might have a more
31 kind of concrete idea of perhaps like a more global identity perspective of ethnic identity,
32 but within Pacific peoples what we're looking at is these specific dimensions which relate
33 to identity as well. And to what extent do people connect to each of those dimensions too.
34 So that could mean that you could be highly identifying as a Pacific person, but not

1 religious. And so what we can do there is look at the extent to which the dimension along
2 religiosity is important to yourself concept as a Pacific person.

3 **Q.** I appreciate, because you talk about our multiple affiliations and identities, yet it seems to
4 me that when it comes to -- you seem to be saying that ordinarily for Pasifika peoples or
5 Māori, what have you, that would most likely prioritise their ethnic identity over the other
6 parts, the other affiliations they might have?

7 **A.** It depends on the context that we're in as well. So usually for ethnic minorities, because the
8 ethnicity is much more salient and prominent, that tends to be something that becomes their
9 defining feature in society. So it tends to be something that they would tend to identify
10 more strongly, because that is the way that they're treated more often.

11 **Q.** Yes, I think so. And particularly if you're subject to discrimination, that that part of your
12 identity would be more prominent than perhaps your religious or your class affiliations or
13 your gender or so forth?

14 **A.** Yes, yes, but they're each important as well, because within our ethnic understandings,
15 there's those own nuanced understandings of things like gender and religiosity as well.

16 **Q.** To give you an example, when they had the US primaries for the US election several years
17 back and Obama was running with Hillary Clinton, my wife, who's also Māori, was torn
18 between whether she should support Obama or Hillary Clinton because it was race and
19 gender, and I was obviously for Obama, and then eventually I think she moved back
20 towards Obama again, but that -- because of the work that we do, the field that we do, we
21 strongly self-identify as being Māori obviously, so it's a very strong part of our identity, but
22 it shows just that even then --

23 **A.** Yes.

24 **Q.** -- there's complexities.

25 **A.** Yeah.

26 **Q.** Great, thank you so much for your evidence, really enjoyed it.

27 **A.** Thank you.

28 **COMMISSIONER STEENSON:** Tēnā koe Dr Manuela.

29 **A.** Tēnā koe.

30 **Q.** Thank you for your expertise today. It's really made sure that we've focused on a Friday
31 afternoon, that's for sure. My question is, can you help unpack a little bit when you talked
32 about the theory that one is born without a cultural identity and learns it, which for me is a
33 difficult concept because of the idea of whakapapa and being born with that. And I think
34 we heard from a survivor this morning who spoke to that, even though not being brought up

1 in an environment where she learned about her culture, she naturally had this draw towards
2 it. And I understand that with other survivors being disassociated with their culture due to
3 a traumatic event subsequent to birth. So I kind of need to get you to unpack that theory a
4 little for me please.

5 A. Yes. So when we are born, what I was referring to specifically there is an ascribed identity.
6 So the ethnicity which people will give to a child on any kind of official document or
7 anything.

8 Q. That isn't necessarily their blood?

9 A. It could be.

10 Q. Could be, okay.

11 A. Yeah. Also recognising in terms of, I guess, just thinking about cognitive development as
12 well, as a baby, babies, I don't even know what babies think, but they're definitely not
13 thinking in terms of identity or culture as well. And when I say we aren't born with an
14 identity, perhaps a better thing to say would be we are born into a culture that we learn over
15 time, absolutely recognising that who we are is connected through our whakapapa as well.
16 But the understanding that comes with that is something that develops over time of what
17 that means to them.

18 Q. Thank you. The other question I had was around you talked about ethnic labelling being
19 different from cultural identity, which was very useful. So does it follow then that ethnic
20 labelling has an impact on someone's cultural identity?

21 A. Yes, absolutely, yeah. The labels that we use are things that we can identify with, and the
22 language that we have to articulate a particular identity that we have as well.

23 Q. Because I think we've seen lots of evidence of that from being wrongly labelled.

24 A. Yes, absolutely, yeah. And I guess what we risk with conflating ethnicity and identity is
25 that if we look at the statistics and we see ethnic disparities in, say, health outcomes, if
26 we're conflating ethnicity and identity, we could be representing those disparities in terms
27 of a deficit that belongs as part of the cultural understandings or part of the culture of a
28 particular group. Which is definitely not the case but it is something that can be implied if
29 we attribute, it's something called the cultural attribution fallacy where we attribute ethnic
30 differences that we see between groups as being explained by their cultural practices
31 without any evidence that it is cultural practices that have led to these differences that we
32 see.

33 Q. Thank you. Excellent. I also really enjoyed your kōrero around resistance not to accept
34 what is wrong as an important representation of resilience, not just getting through a

1 traumatic event and stabilising one self. I think that was really insightful. Thank you very
2 much. Tēnā koe.

3 A. Thank you.

4 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Kia orana katoatoa Dr Manuela.

5 A. Kia orana.

6 **Q.** Meitaki ma'ata for your talanoa this afternoon. Really rich insights that we're able to take
7 away and soak up. Thank you for explaining so well the intricacies and how imbued
8 culture, passion, faith are so interlinked, it's very hard to see one from the other. You
9 explained how we can do -- you can measure individuals, right, in terms of well-being, but
10 one of the things that we hear constantly, and it doesn't have to just be here in our space,
11 but it's pertaining here to our space in this fale now, is collective; it's the collective
12 well-being of the aiga, the kāinga, the magafaoa. Is it possible to actually measure that in
13 such a way that we're able to then influence systems? Because Pasifika are always forced
14 together with Māori into little boxes and we can't always see the flow of the narrative. Are
15 you able to comment on that or...

16 A. There are measures of collective well-being that exist. I don't know a lot about them, I do
17 know that they do exist. In terms of collective well-being, we would need to consider what
18 are the indicators that we are going to use to reflect that, and do those indicators accurately
19 reflect Pacific well-being. Quite often what we can and do see is things like those objective
20 indicators, like housing, access to education, these are important aspects for collective
21 well-being as well. How, if we look at home ownership rates amongst Pacific peoples we
22 know that it is quite low, at the same time that rents are very, very high. So what does the
23 living situation look like for multiple Pacific families, and are we -- how are we using that
24 living arrangement as an indicator for something like economic well-being. You know,
25 those are just the kind of collective objective indicators that we have that we know are
26 related to health outcomes and education outcomes and things like that.

27 Other aspects of collective well-being do speak to a lot of our cultural aspects as well. To what
28 extent are Pacific people able to practise their languages, to what extent have -- recognising
29 then as well, you know, how endangered is a language. This is one way that we can assess
30 or try to assess and understand collective well-being by looking at language use but being
31 careful not to alienate people who are trying to learn the languages as well or recognising
32 that there are multiple ways in which you can connect to your culture as well.

33 And we can -- even though they are individual measures, I'm involved in a number of studies that
34 do survey populations, I work with populations. Some longitudinal studies as well, so we

1 can track individuals over time but also track groups over time as well. The importance of
 2 these big datasets is vital, because they do provide information about groups, the more data
 3 that we have, the more intricate we can model the specific relationships that affect, that are
 4 affected by the nuance that exist within groups as well. So it's important that we do
 5 multiple levels, individual, community, national approaches to collective well-being as
 6 well. Noting that, I guess, taking a more theoretical and conceptual approach, that our
 7 well-being is inherently relational. And so it is something that is going to be inherently
 8 collective as well.

9 How to measure that, I'm not sure. I do know that there is a paper by Fiona Cram, she is a Māori
 10 researcher, she's published a paper providing suggestions on how can measure Māori
 11 well-being, which I think would be quite useful to read. I can't remember it off the top of
 12 my head.

13 **Q.** That's fine, we'll find it. Just one more question please, Dr Manuela, and it really relates --
 14 a big issue that we've been tasked with and which you've heard about perhaps this week is
 15 the concept of redress, how do you right the wrong. And you've been very generous in
 16 your talanoa this afternoon about making sure we understand the nuances and don't just
 17 lump everyone together under a pan-Pacific label. This really comes to -- it's a policy
 18 question perhaps, you know, around is it enough to just say in a document, in a report, in
 19 any other way that might be culturally appropriate, or do you think that that is wide enough
 20 to be able to afford a survivor a Pacific survivor who might be looking at it and say oh I can
 21 apply a Tongan framework to that, I can apply a Cook Island framework to that?

22 **A.** I think there are ways. And I've seen documents before that have drawn upon multiple
 23 perspectives and infused them all into various ways, into the way that they do their
 24 methodologies of something, or say things around family violence prevention and
 25 intervention programmes that have drawn on a kind of broader framework, but also make
 26 reference to specific cultural frameworks within there as well. So I think there definitely is
 27 space. How that looks like I'm not entirely sure, but I think -- one important thing for me,
 28 I guess, and I'll use the Dawn Raids again, I think next Sunday is the Dawn Raid apology
 29 by the Government. Apologies are meaningless without actions, really. And so what does
 30 redress look like, I think, is the main thing to -- not the main thing, but a thing to ensure
 31 that the policies don't just exist on paper but they are fully enacted, yeah.

32 **Q.** Much appreciated, fa'afetai, fa'afetai, fa'afetai lava.

33 **A.** Meitaki.

34 **CHAIR:** I'm the lucky last. Really most of the things I wanted to say have been covered, but

1 I just wanted to make it clear that we deeply appreciate the fact that you've brought your
2 scholarship and your expertise and for me personally what you have done is provided
3 frameworks, ways of thinking to help us properly understand what our survivors have been
4 telling us. They have framed it from their own personal deeply held and deeply moving
5 experiences, and we don't lose sight of those, but to have them brought up and -- I don't
6 want to say codified but I'm going to say it. I hope you don't think I'm disparaging them,
7 but just to give us a -- I think the word framework is probably better, really helps us to
8 understand it, because we have to turn those accounts into recommendations of the sort that
9 my colleague here has just talked about. Do you say "and any other appropriate way", or
10 can we be more specific, more helpful.

11 In that regard I just wanted to thank you for two very important revelations, or
12 important thoughts that you've given us, which we will take away and may even call on you
13 again in future. The first relates to the implications for care of children, vulnerable adults
14 in the future, and that's Pacific people. That is your reference to the *vā* that exists between
15 family members, because what's happening when children and others are taken out of their
16 own family environment, as you've pointed out in paragraph 65, the *vā* that exists between
17 family members doesn't have the same meaning as the *vā* between a person and unfamiliar
18 others. And I think that for me has been a very important idea that you've really put your
19 finger on something, what goes wrong when you take a child from a home, when you take a
20 disabled person from their home and place them in an institution. You're losing the
21 familiar, you're losing the relationship. So in terms of our recommendations for care for
22 Pacific people I think we must bear that in mind, it's very valuable.

23 The second thing relates to the redress. I think your emphasis again on the *vā*, the
24 merging of well-being and, what was the other bit, well-being and --

25 A. Identity.

26 Q. -- and identity. Very important for people who will be giving the redress in future, that that
27 is recognised, acknowledged, stated so that it can be well advanced. So those in those two
28 really important areas, care and redress, you've given us really valuable insights for which
29 I thank you. And don't be surprised if he come knocking at your door again in the future
30 because I think we've got a lot more to learn from you.

31 So on that note, many thanks for the scholarship and work you've done to put into
32 this paper which I think we should all read again very carefully and thank you for coming
33 today.

34 A. Meitaki, thank you.

1 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Great to see you on a mission to decolonise the science of
2 psychology bro.

3 A. It's a long mission.

4 **Q.** Go hard.

5 **CHAIR:** On that note our first week of hearings is drawn to an end. We will start again on
6 Monday, I believe at 10 o'clock, am I right on that? Yes, so if you're interested please
7 return. Thank you to all of those who have come. I know not all of you have been here all
8 through the week, but one in particular I see has been Halo, thank you, he's always here.
9 With the turn-out of the Pacific communities to support and listen has been very moving for
10 us and we're greatly appreciative of it. And I think it's time that we closed and that we
11 get -- is Reverend Aptinko still here? Here he is, so please we invite you again Reverend to
12 close off our proceedings for the week.

13 **REVEREND APTINKO:** I want to close with the Gospel of John chapter 10 verse 10. "Thieves
14 come only to steal, kill and destroy. I have come that they may have life and heaven in
15 full." As Christian faith leaders and Pacific community leaders we are called to champion
16 what Christ has started; supporting, caring and providing for our people who live a life in
17 full. And as I said in the morning, compassion is not about saying it and thinking, but it's
18 about moving us to respond and giving, as Christ was moved and filled with compassion
19 when he saw people who were like lost sheep without a shepherd. So he responded by
20 healing and feeding the multitude according to the gospels.

21 Care institutes need to care with compassion to do that our Pacific community is in
22 need of a system composed by those who has the wisdom of God and are driven by
23 compassion. I relate the Pacific investigators and the working team to the good shepherd.
24 That you are now on the ground level, level with those who are suffering, connecting and
25 giving to those who are suffering to have a good life restored. Let us pray. [**Prayer in**
26 **Rotuman]**

27 **CHAIR:** Thank you Reverend.

28 **Hearing adjourned at 4.49 pm to Monday, 26 July 2021 at 10 am**

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