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Pacific mental health

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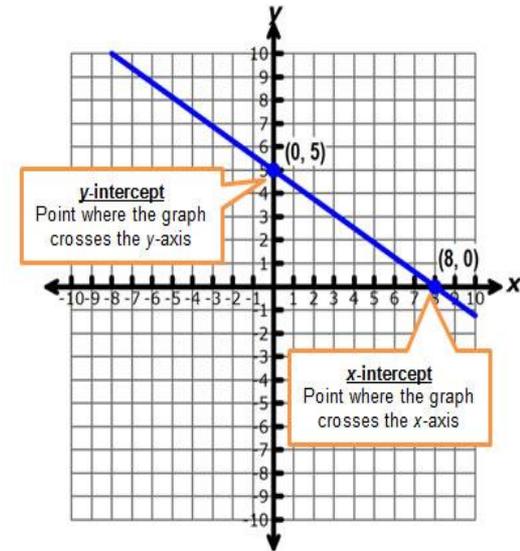


Pacific understandings of mental distress

- Research Background
 - Higher prevalence of mental illness
 - Accessing mental health services
 - Suicide attempts, self harm
 - NZ born Pacific had significant higher prevalence of mental disorder than those born in the islands who migrated to NZ at the age of 18
- Diversity of Pacific population
- Focus on Tongan people

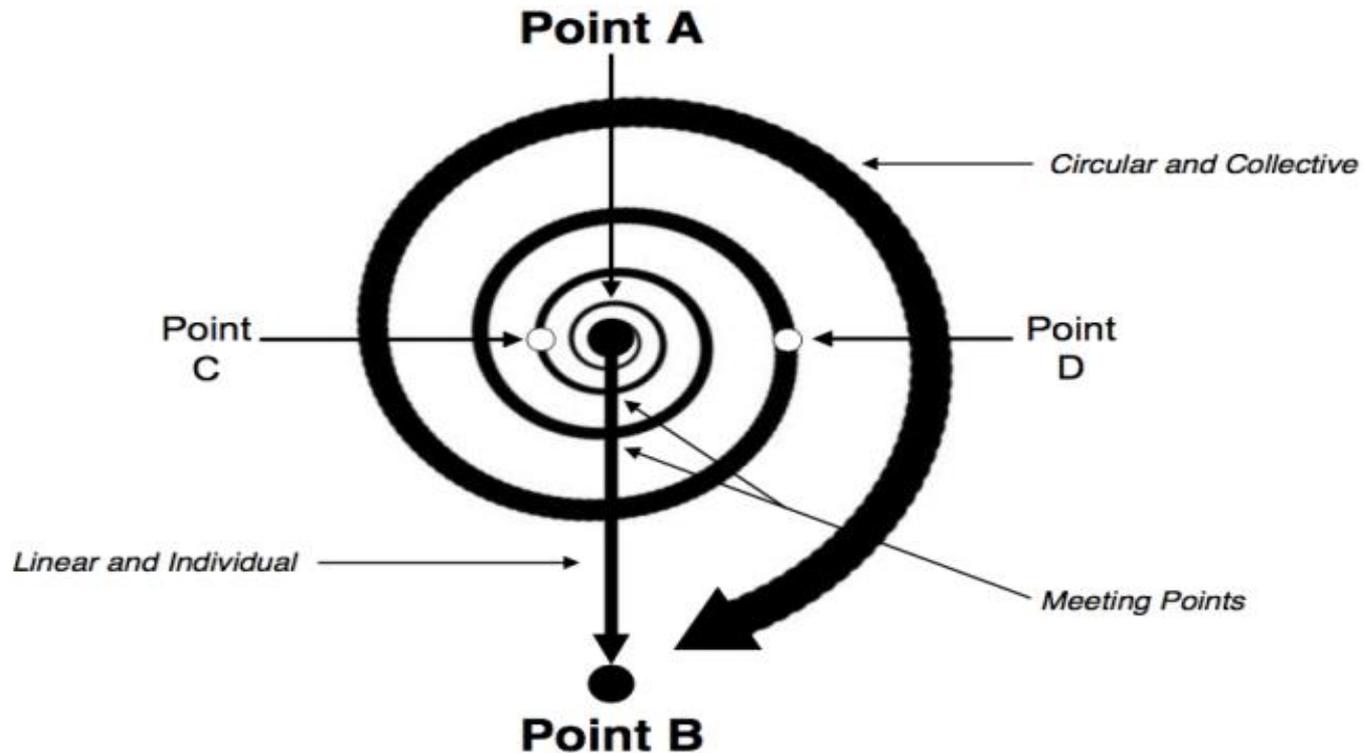
Tongan understandings of mental distress

- Qualitative – *talanoa*
- Participants – 7 *talanoa* groups ($n = 62$)
 1. Community leader's *talanoa* group ($n = 9$)
 2. Women's *talanoa* group ($n = 12$)
 3. Youth's *talanoa* group ($n = 7$)
 4. Mental health service user's *talanoa* group ($n = 12$)
 5. Families with mental health service users *talanoa* group ($n = 5$)
 6. Families without mental health service users ($n = 8$)
 7. Men's *talanoa* group ($n = 9$)



Talanoa – *tala* (to tell/told) + *noa* (sense of balance, harmony, zero)

- Linear versus Circular
- Individual versus Collective



Themes

1. *Tufunga faka-Tonga* (Tongan constructions of mental distress)
2. *Tufunga faka-paiōsaikosōsiolo* (biopsychosocial constructions of mental distress)
3. *Tufunga fepaki mo e fetaulaki he vaha'a 'o e tufunga faka-paiōsaikosōsiolo mo e tufunga faka-Tonga* (intersections between biopsychosocial and Tongan constructions of mental distress)



Tufunga faka-paiōsaikosōsiolo (biopsychosocial constructions of mental distress)

- Challenging Tongan beliefs
- Stress as onset of mental illness
- Drugs and alcohol
- Language – using of English and medical terminologies



Tufunga fepaki (intersections between biopsychosocial and Tongan constructions of mental distress)

- Migration
- Social networks and influences
- Resources and services
- Treatment outcomes
- Experiences with mental illness
- Christian faiths



Tufunga faka-Tonga (Tongan constructions of mental distress)

- *Fa'unga* (Reality)
- *Hu'unga* (Directionality)
- *Tā'anga* (Temporality)
- *Tu'unga* (Positionality)



Fa'unga (Reality) - tangibles

- ... *ko e matoli foki ia, 'a ia kapau 'e 'i ai ha fo'i mapu 'e fō lelei. Tau pehē 'oku haohaoa ia, 'oku sai ia, fo'i mapu ko e 'oku matoli, 'a ia 'oku 'i ai e me'a ia 'oku fehālaaki mo ia, pe matilo, 'a ia ko e 'ai ko e 'a e matoli. 'Oku mahino 'oku 'i ai e me'a 'oku fehālaaki, kapau teu talanoa mo ha taha pehē, 'e 'alu'alu kehe atu pē 'ene talanoa 'a'ana, pea ka lolotonga 'e tau 'ai 'e tautolu e fo'i me'a ko ē, 'oku tu'u ia 'o 'ai e fo'i me'a kehe 'aupito, 'aupito pe ia.*
- ... *Matoli* (cracked) for example, if there was a marble, round and smooth. Then we say it is perfect and it is good, and the marble that is cracked (*matoli*), there is something wrong with it, or chipped (*matilo*) so with *matoli*. It is clear that there is something wrong, and if we talk with someone like that, he will talk differently in his own ways, and if we do something, he will get up and do something totally different.
 - *Inoke* (Youth)

Fa'unga (Reality)

- ... *'oku te'eki ai ketau sio tautolu ki ha taba 'oku ne tā 'a e tokotaha puke, ka 'oku makafokafo ia 'o hangē na'e tā'aki ha taufale nai he'etau sio ko e ki hono sino, 'osi sio tonu au he ngaahi me'a pehee e ... pea hangē ko e taka'uli, 'asi ko e u'u, hangehangē ha u'u. 'Oku labilahi foki mo e me'a pehē hangē ko e totototo e ongo kano'i mata, pehē na'e tubu'i e*
- ... we do not see the one who slapped the unwell person, but there are body marks which looks like that he/she had been beaten with a broom. I have seen this ... like black bruises, and tooth marked, like they have been bitten. There are also bloodshot eyes, looks like their eyes have been poked
 - *Ili (Men)*

Fa'unga (Reality)

- *Te ma tuli efiafi e valu ki mala'e ke ma'u 'oku kei loto tokua, ee, 'a ia ko e fakapo'uli hifo. 'Oku ma avangi leva e fa'itoka, hu ki ai e fo'i pamu 'o fakatafe e vai ki ai. Ko 'ene fakatafe ko e 'a e vai, pea ko 'ema foki mai ko ia, 'oku sai ange 'a e mahaki ia 'o talamai ko e 'oku ha'u 'o kole fakamolemole 'oku lalave mai e tafa'aki ko e, mahalo ko e tafa'aki ia na'e mahua atu ai 'a e lou'akau pe ko e ha*
- We will rush to the grave to get there before eight o'clock in the evening, to get the person's spirit (dead) inside. We opened the grave, inserted a pump, and drained the water inside. When the water and leaves were drained, we returned and found that the unwell person was already well. The spirit (dead) came and apologised as it was very painful at the grave (referring to the dead spirit), maybe that was the water and the leaves
 - *Vikilani (Families without mental health service users).*

Hu'unga (Directionality) - 'āvea, 'āvanga

- ... *ko e puke ia ko e 'i he hē e 'atamai 'i ha fu'u mo'ua 'ene fakakaukau 'i ha me'a 'oku 'āvea ia, 'alu'alu ai pe 'ene fakakaukau 'a'ana he me'a ko e 'oku nofo ai 'ene fakakaukau 'o hē hē ai pe ai.*
- ... the illness is when the mind is *hē* (lost), it is when the mind is obsessed with something and become *'āvea*, that person's thoughts become very lost.
- Lomio (*Families without mental health service users*)



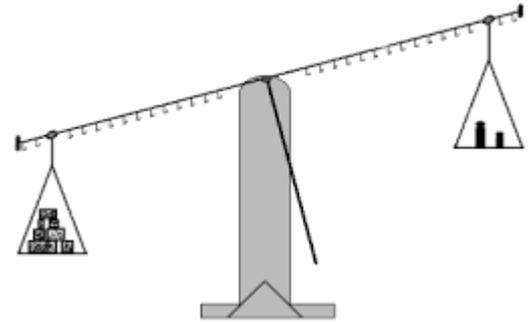
Tā'anga (Temporality) – slow, fast

- ... *kapau 'e 'asi mai ki heni ha tokotaha ia 'oku fa'alea, pea 'ohovale pē 'oku ne fai 'e ia ha fa'abinga fōtunga 'oku fakaoli. Ka 'oku 'ikai fe'unga ia mo e ha'ofanga ko ia, te tau ui ia ko e mental illness, pea tau pehē pē tautolu 'i he Tongan terms, tau pehe pe 'e tautolu, meimei taimi vave, he 'oku kehe 'a 'ene fakafōtunga ko e 'a 'ene action*
- ... if someone comes here who is always talkative, and all of a sudden, he does something funny. This is inappropriate and we can call that mental illness, and we can describe it in the Tongan terms as *meimei taimi vave* (nearly fast timing), because the presentation of his actions is different
 - *Ane (Community leaders)*



Tu'unga (Positionality)

- *Mahei* - tilted
- *Suei* - swayed
- *Male'ei* – inclined
- *Mafuli* – overturned/turned upside down
- *Haafe meti* – half mate/mad
- *Fakatafa* – one sided
- *Motu tapili* – broken propeller



Themes



Men

CL

Women

F without

F with

SU

Youths

Ūloa





Ūloa

Five groups in Phase One:

1. Mental health service users
2. Mental health service users (youth)
3. Tongan mental health providers - traditional healers and Aotearoa Tongan Health Workers Association
4. Staff at Counties Manukau DHB
5. Mixture of participants from Group One to Group Four



Ūloa

Phase Two:

- All information from Phase One will be collected and the model will be amended based on outcomes of Phase One.

Phase Three:

- Implementation of *ūloa* in CMDHB & Tongan community in South Auckland Community.



Phase 1 - Findings

- Collaborations
- Connectedness
- Culture
- Contexts
- Community



Phase 2

- Amend *ūloa* model according to Phase 1



Phase 3

- To implement the *ūloa* model and assess its effectiveness
 - Staff at health providers
 - Staff at non-government organization
 - Traditional healers
 - Service users



Traditional practices and improved mental health status of Tongans: The Evidence

- *Talanoa* – research
- *Ūloa* – mental health - *napangapangamalie*
- Mental health inquiry report 2018 in NZ
 - “For Pacific peoples, the adoption of ‘Pacific ways’ to enable Pacific health and wellbeing – a holistic approach incorporating Pacific **languages, identity, connectedness, spirituality, nutrition, physical activity and healthy relationships**” page 9
- Young Tongan male 23 years old with Peti Tēvī (RIP)

Malinoa Island (Tonga)





'Epeli Hau'ofa

"We should not be defined by the smallness of our islands, but by the greatness of our oceans.

We are the sea, we are the ocean,

Oceania is us

We must wake up to this ancient truth and together use it to overturn all hegemonic views that aim ultimately to confine us again, physically and psychologically.

It is time to create things for ourselves, to create established standards of excellence that match those of our ancestors"

--'Epeli Hau'ofa

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