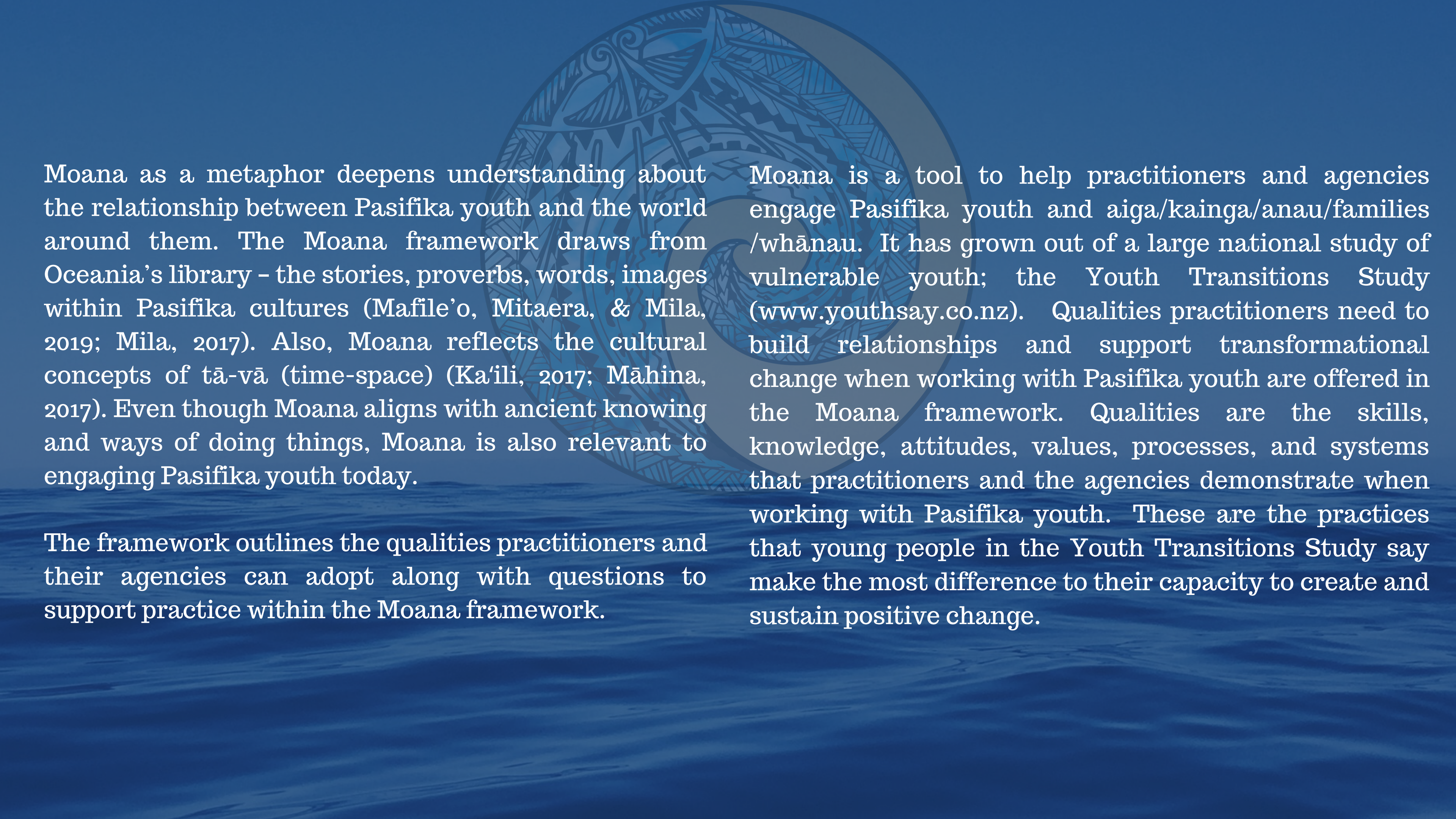




THE MOANA

Framework



Moana as a metaphor deepens understanding about the relationship between Pasifika youth and the world around them. The Moana framework draws from Oceania's library – the stories, proverbs, words, images within Pasifika cultures (Mafile'o, Mitaera, & Mila, 2019; Mila, 2017). Also, Moana reflects the cultural concepts of tā-vā (time-space) (Ka'ili, 2017; Māhina, 2017). Even though Moana aligns with ancient knowing and ways of doing things, Moana is also relevant to engaging Pasifika youth today.

The framework outlines the qualities practitioners and their agencies can adopt along with questions to support practice within the Moana framework.

Moana is a tool to help practitioners and agencies engage Pasifika youth and aiga/kainga/anau/families /whānau. It has grown out of a large national study of vulnerable youth; the Youth Transitions Study (www.youthsay.co.nz). Qualities practitioners need to build relationships and support transformational change when working with Pasifika youth are offered in the Moana framework. Qualities are the skills, knowledge, attitudes, values, processes, and systems that practitioners and the agencies demonstrate when working with Pasifika youth. These are the practices that young people in the Youth Transitions Study say make the most difference to their capacity to create and sustain positive change.

Tā-vā is a Pasifika way of seeing the world where everything is in relationship over time. Tā is a word for time, and vā is a word for space, including the relational space. So tā-vā is the understanding that we are connected to the past and to the future, and are a part of something bigger than what is happening now. It is also the understanding that exchanges are always happening, and harmony and beauty results when there is symmetry in our reciprocal exchanges. On the other hand, disharmony results from imbalances in the give-and-take of our connected lives. The Moana framework is underpinned by a tā-vā perspective where practitioners and agencies can apply Pasifika ways of doing things and positively serve Pasifika youth and families.

The Moana framework uses the ocean (moana) as a metaphor – a picture or story which helps us to understand something in a deeper way. The Moana framework includes waves (young people), shorelines (practice encounters), sand (knowledge and values), and light (reflections).

WAVES

A representation of the Pasifika youth in perpetual movement

SHORELINES

Shorelines symbolise opportunities for Va, authentic relational spaces between Pasifika youth, aiga/kainga/anau/families/whānau and practitioners that acknowledge their Turanga.

SAND

A representation of practice that is fluid, adaptable and flexible through Tā-Vā.

LIGHT

A natural phenomenon to depict pathways highlighted through Langi/Rangi/Ranginui, holders of natural light sources that offers spaces for deep reflections and focus.

WAVES

Waves, a symbol of the Pasifika young person, in perpetual movement, in the framework, the sun and the moon are relational forces for tidal behaviour and the connectivity to the environment that surrounds the ocean. Instinctive actions of knowing the point the tide turns inward and outward represent a young person acknowledging their essence of who they are. Both shoreline and ocean waves are a representation of deeper energy movements and the Pacific Ocean is home to the deepest trenches on earth. The metaphor of the wave symbolises for the practitioner the visual representation of the Pasifika young person and acknowledges the depths of their stories, experiences, knowledge and life exchanges.



Qualities of a Practitioner:

Listen astutely and respond with strong and open conversations

Facilitate healing and creativity

Respect and validate Pasifika youth experiences

Critical-Reflective Questions:

How am I honouring the Pasifika young person and being transparent in my conversations?

What am I doing that is creative and providing opportunities to grow and heal?

How am I navigating and validating youth experiences without judgement?

SHORELINES

Shorelines symbolise opportunities for Vā, authentic relational interactions occurring between Pasifika young people and their aiga/kainga/anau/families/whānau and the practitioner. The shoreline symbolises a privileged position where Pasifika young people are the drivers of their futures and the practitioners support growth of hope, self-belief, dreams, and resources of new opportunities.

Qualities of a Practitioner:

Value the Turanga (essence from one's status, position, geneology) of Pasifika youth

Relationally connect to enhance wellbeing

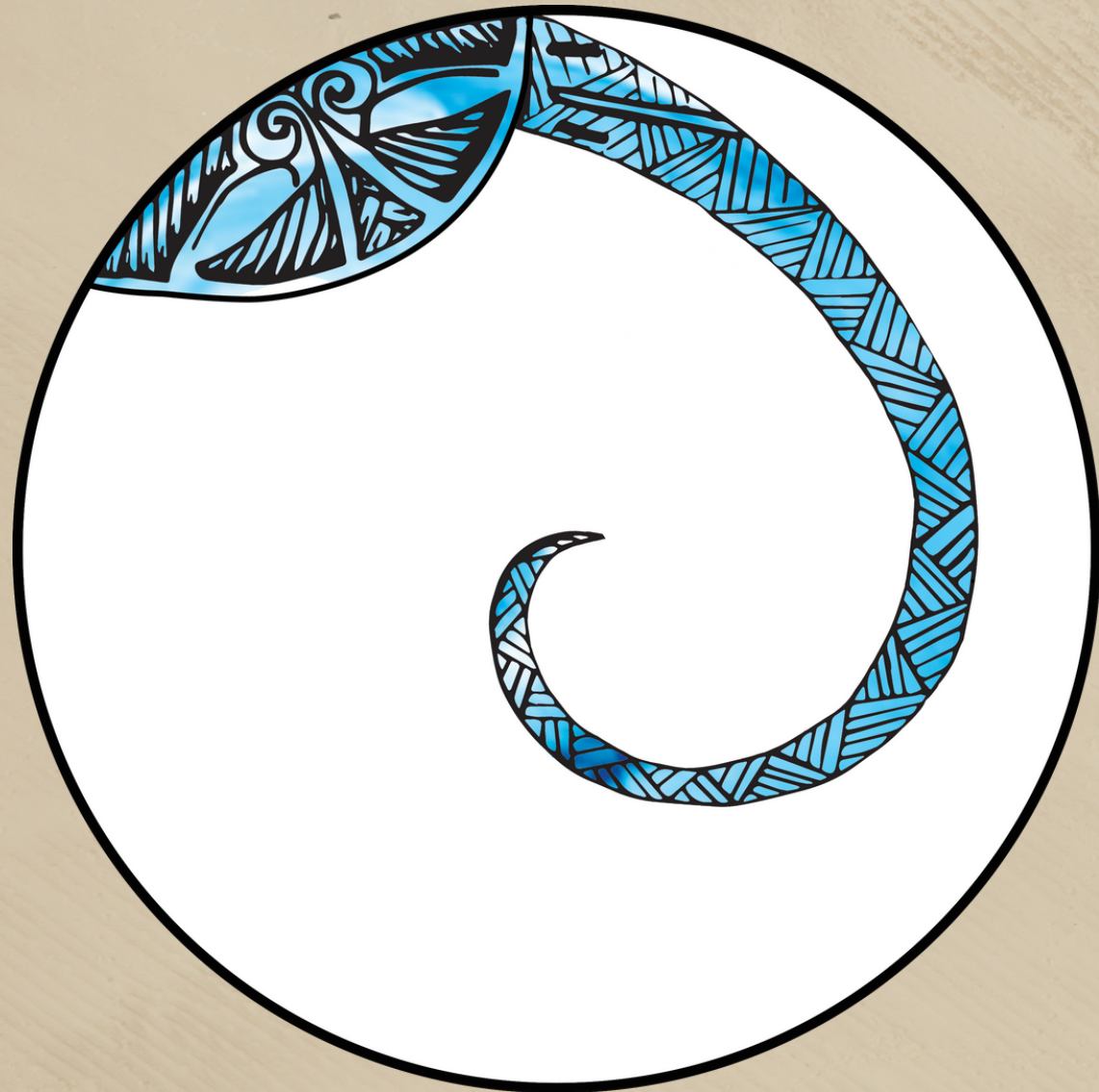
Support dreams and hold hope through nurturing the Vā
Adapt with agility while honouring and valuing

Critical-Reflective Questions:

What is the unique essence of this Pasifika youth and how am I valuing this?

Culturally how am I connecting to possible pathways for the Pasifika young person?
What resources do I need to bring to this shoreline for this Pasifika youth to achieve their aspirations?

Is my practice agile and adaptive to the needs of the Pasifika youth?



SAND

Sand is a physical example of Tā-Vā within this framework that represents knowledge held within time and space, from the past, present and future. Sand has the ability to be flexible, adaptable and fluid within its ecosystem, an example of how a practitioner can support the Pasifika young person within their environment, young adulthood, working towards their aspirations and Tā-Vā. Within Tā-Vā the essence of Culture, Language, Spiritual, Emotional and Physical wellbeing of the Pasifika young person is paramount and nurtured.



Qualities of a Practitioner:

Understand the interrelationships between the parts of the ecosystem, and power imbalances through the Pasifika view of Tā-Vā

Understand the natural support systems of the Pasifika youth

Practice flexibility, adaptability and fluidity

Practice humility in the sharing of personal stories

Critical-Reflective Questions:

Through the Tā-Vā lens how am I supporting a shift in power, growth and transformation of the Pasifika young person's ecosystem?

How am I supporting the Pasifika youth to connect with their natural systems of support?

Am I able to recognise when I need to practice flexibility, adaptability and fluidity and what stops me from practicing in this way if I am not?

How am I maintaining consistency of honouring and valuing their voice?

LIGHT

Light from Langi/Rangi, connects both above and below the moana, islands, shorelines and sand. As an instrument of illumination, the practitioner can utilise this to encompass a multi-layered view of a Pasifika young person's context with an invitation to explore more deeply a pathway towards transformation. Light highlights depths within waves that focuses on strength, capacity and the resources of the Pasifika young person and aiga/kainga/anau/families/whānau to be seen, acknowledged and encouraged.



Qualities of a Practitioner :

Recognise and create actions towards transformational opportunities

Gain a deeper understanding

Be an expert in their feild, trustworthy and show integrity

Value the privilege of walking alongside aiga/kainga/anau/families/whānau as they navigate non-Pasifika systems

Critical-Reflective Questions:

How am I supporting Pasifika anau to recognise and celebrate 'transformations' in their youth?

How am I creating connection that is responsive and understanding?

What qualities do I need when building trust?
How am I communicating integrity within relationships?

How can I be available and supportive of Pasifika young people in navigating and standing strong in their cultural identity? How do I represent Pasifika youth without compromising their cultural identity?

RESOURCES

Yavu: Foundations of Pacific Engagement is a resource developed by the Ministry of Pacific Peoples as a guideline on how to engage with our Pacific communities in a way that is meaningful and relevant.

<https://www.mpp.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/MPP8836-Yavu-Pacific-Engagement-Digital-Book.pdf>

Pasifika Proud is a network taking action to strengthen Pasifika families provide community-led family violence prevention. They have developed a range of resources relevant to working with Pasifika youth, families and communities.

<https://www.pasefikaproud.co.nz/>

Mana Moana Digital Ocean is an immersive web-based digital art experience exploring our relationships with the ocean and climate breakdown, highlighting indigenous voices and knowledge. This is art as activism.

<https://digitalocean.manamoana.co.nz/>

REFERENCES

Ka'ili, T. O. (2017). Marking indigeneity: The Tongan art of sociospatial relations. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press.

Mafile'o, T. (2019). Social work with Pacific communities. In R. Munford & K. O'Donoghue (Eds.), *New Theories for Social Work Practice: Ethical Practice for Working with Individuals, Families and Communities* (pp. 212-230). London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Mafile'o, T., Mitaera, J., & Mila, K. (2019). Pacific-Indigenous social work theories and models. In J. Ravulo, Mafile'o, T. & Yeates, D. B. (Ed.), *2019. Pacific social work: Navigating practice, policy and research* (pp. 22-34). Oxon: Routledge.

Māhina, O. (2017). Time, space, and culture: A new tā-vā theory of Moana anthropology. *Pacific Studies*, 40(1/2), 105-132.

Mila, K. (2017). Mana Moana: Healing the va, developing spiritually and culturally embedded practices. In L. Béres (Ed.), *Practising spirituality : Reflections on meaning-making in personal and professional contexts* (pp. 61-XX). Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave.

This framework was developed by staff at Te Aroha Noa Community Services in Palmerston North. Theresa Chick, Donna MacNicol and Situi Fata worked with Tracie Mafile'o and a team of advisors to bring together the framework and have tested it with Pasifika practitioners around the country.

Special thanks to Tupou Valu for the artwork and Chris Pohe for the design components.

Thank you to MBIE for funding this research and the young people and their supporters and practitioners who assisted with the research. Thank you also to the advisory group who assisted in the development of The Moana Framework.

Contacts:

Justina Webster kohatu.creationz@gmail.com

Robyn Munford r.munford@massey.ac.nz

Jackie Sanders j.sanders@massey.ac.nz

Further information: www.youthsay.co.nz