

# 7. Attitudinal Divergence and the Tongan Transnational System

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Although Tonga is small and its impact on the global geo-political stage is limited, the way in which the country fits into the contemporary global system has attracted its share of attention. Since Marcus' early and cogent observations on the fact of Tongan transnationalism (1981), a great deal of ethnography has been done both in Tonga and with Tongan communities overseas. In just the last 10 years there have been significant full length ethnographies of contemporary Tongan political economy. Evans (2001) and van der Grijp (1993, 2004), for example, have written extensively on the way that the current Tongan economy is shaped by the world economic system. While van der Grijp is interested in processes of globalisation, Evans' work extends to transnationalism—but more to the manifestations on transnational practice in Tonga than a considered assessment of the Tongan transnational system as a whole (see Lee 2006). More detailed work on remittance practices has also been done (Brown 1994, 1995; Brown and Connell 1993). Others, including Besnier (2004), have written eloquently on the ways in which Tongan economic and linguistic practices have embraced a cosmopolitan view of both themselves and the world, and subtly on shifting engagements with tradition and exchange (Addo and Besnier, 2008).

A second trend in recent ethnographic work has been a focus on the Tongan migrant communities; work by Lee (2003) and Small (1997) has focused on the lives, practices and prospects of Tongan migrants. Most recently, we have seen work by Tongan ethnographers, like that of Ka'ili (2005), which focuses on the continuities in Tongan cultural practices in overseas communities.

Much contemporary work derives from concern about just how robust transnational ties are, especially over generations (see Lee 2003, 2004, 2006). Questions about the stability of migration streams, the potential for capital accumulation via migration and remittances, the stability of remittances from migrating and second-generation Tongans are key for Tongan individuals and families, and indeed, for the greater Tongan polity and economy. Whether and how remittances streams continue over time is, arguably, the core element to the stability of many Pacific Island economies, and certainly this is true of Tonga. In her 2004 article "'Second generation" Tongan transnationalism: Hope for the future', Lee develops an argument in support of the 'remittance decay hypothesis' (from Brown and Foster 1995), based primarily on her discussions with second generation and younger migrants who indicated that they have no intention of

remitting to people in Tonga in the future, in part because they had no one left in Tonga to whom to remit.

Remittances play a fundamental role not only in the Tongan economy, but also in the maintenance of the Tongan gift exchange system. Evans (1999, 2001) shows in detail how remittances of both cash and kind play an on-going role in the creation and maintenance of relationships between both individuals and groups in multiple locations within the transnational system. While it is true that the notion of 'transnational corporations of kin' developed by Bertram and Watters (1985; see also Marcus 1981), is problematic (see James 1993 and Munro 1990), the notion that remittances are then to be understood in terms of the actions of individuals (James 1991, 1993; Lee 2004) is also debatable (Evans 1999: 143-144). Gift exchange, of which remittances are a type, are inherently relationship producing. Some of the greatest threats to the continuity of resource streams into Tonga are probably those based on the attenuation of gift exchange relationships which include people in Tonga, because of potential loss of the capacity to use lands to produce materials (Evans 1999). One of the problems with all these assessments of trajectory of the Tongan transnational system however, is that there is not yet a demonstrable decay in the flows of material through what we are calling the Tongan Transnational System (TTS). This is not to assert that the resource flows that energise the TTS need remain stable, but rather to make the claim that in spite of some very obvious transformations in the social, political, and economic landscape in the TTS, a decline is still not demonstrable—this in the face of claims that the end is nigh that go all the way back to Christine Ward Gailey's work on commodification in the 1980s (Gailey 1987).

While a good deal of attention has been paid to Tongan transnationalism, a contemporary anthropology of Tonga and the TTS is problematic because the system is geographically large, and the people operating within the system so diverse (Lee 2004, 2007a, 2007b; Small 1997). The anthropological conceit of a unified singular 'culture' that can be investigated and described has been under pressure for quite some time. This pressure came first from political economists who demanded that the embeddedness of economies and cultures within the world system be recognised (Asad 1973; Wolf 1982; Worsley 1984), and more recently from post-modernist authors suggesting, not unreasonably, that the experience of human social life is positioned by such things as age, gender, class and sexuality, and thus totalitarian images and representations of a culture were just that: totalitarian (see for example Haraway 1988). It is this later sensibility that shapes much recent work. After the little girl Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz, we might observe that no one, not even people actually living in Kansas, is in Kansas anymore.

In this paper we argue, by way of demonstration, that there is some untapped and certainly under-used potential in quantitative methods for assessing and describing contemporary transnational systems. Currently most quantitative analyses regarding Tonga are devoted to economic data—remittances and the like—but in other areas of the social sciences quantitative methods are used over a much wider range of phenomena. For several reasons, statistical analysis of sociological data is virtually non-existent in contemporary anthropology. While we recognise that there are real and immediate limitations and constraints to quantitative questionnaire style research, in this paper we discuss the results of just such a quantitative survey undertaken in Tonga and in the Tongan community in New Zealand. We offer this as a small contribution to conceptualising and describing the Tongan Transnational system—one of the striking elements of this way of describing the TTS is that fragmentation of attitudes and commitments, and therefore behaviour, seems less pervasive than some ethnographic accounts might suggest.

Developing a prognosis for Tongan migration and remittance behaviour on the basis of attitudinal assessments is not uncommon (James 1991, Lee 2004, Small 1997). Indeed we might make a cautious claim that in the absence of economic data demonstrating the expected decay in remittance behaviour, attitudinal assessments are the meat of the argument. But one key limitation to our current understanding of how people throughout the TTS think about the values and practices that underpin the system, is a lack of systematic assessment or reporting. That is, because qualitative methods are generally employed, it is difficult to determine the relative intensity or distribution of attitudes within the TTS. Though it has become quite uncommon to use quantitative surveys in anthropology, one of the advantages of such techniques is that analysis of attitudes, and most importantly the differences in attitudes within a sample, can be conducted. It is important to note here that difference within a sample is important in terms of how it is positioned—that is, for example, in terms of how gender, age, and location (i.e. subject position!) are related to variations in attitude. Neither the critique above, nor the analysis offered below, are intended to suggest that ethnographic representation is somehow flawed; no quantitative analysis can replace the impact of nuanced ethnographic practice. Nonetheless quantitative analyses do have something to offer, and this something has been all but lost to anthropology over the last couple of decades.

## **Towards a Quantitative Assessment of Attitudes in the Tongan Transnational System<sup>1</sup>**

To develop such a quantitative description of the TTS, a questionnaire-style survey assessing the attitudes of people regarding key elements of Tongan identity was conducted in Tongatapu and Auckland in 2005. Participants were

Tongan adults (n=691) aged 16 years and older living in Tonga (n=504) and in the Tongan community in Auckland (n=187).<sup>2</sup>

The survey used was a questionnaire developed collaboratively and administered to each of the respondents.<sup>3</sup> It was comprised of four sections relating to: 1) demographics; 2) elements of Tongan identity; 3) rank order of important characteristics of a Tongan; and 4) characteristics of a good woman and a good man. This paper makes use of the first two sections: demographics and elements of Tongan identity.

In the 'demographic' section of the survey, people were asked basic questions such as gender, place of birth, place of residence, year of birth, time spent away from Tonga, level of education, occupation and church denomination membership. The 'elements of Tongan identity' section consisted of a series of items in which people were asked to assess their responses to particular statements along a seven-point Likert scale.<sup>4</sup> For example:

Over the course of a lifetime, these things are the responsibilities of all Tongans:

**Teaching daughters to weave and make ngatu (i.e. barkcloth)**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
strongly disagree	disagree	no difference		agree		strongly agree

Seven dependent variables (or factors) were derived from the 64 items in the 'elements of Tongan identity' section of the questionnaire using a factor analysis.<sup>5</sup> This technique is one that groups statistically related individual items into larger and more robust meta-items (i.e. factors) that can then be used for subsequent analysis. In lay terms the technique establishes which items relate to the same underlying attitudes and groups them together. That is, the items in a factor are grouped together because they follow the same patterns of variation (are statistically similar to one another). Only those factors that include a minimum number of items (in this case, three) and meet certain statistical tests for reliability and robustness are used. The items included within each factor were then assessed in order to identify the common theme unifying the items. The items that form the factors are interesting in and of themselves as they are indicative of a collective view of the inter-relation between societal values.<sup>6</sup>

**Factors Identified <sup>7</sup>**

The first factor was identified as value placed on common goals and projects over individual ones. Items include:

In order to be a real Tongan, one must...

- Contribute to the funerals of relatives, church members, and friends
- Participate in a Tongan church, not some other church
- Regularly give generously to church.

One cannot be truly Tongan if one does not...

- Support schools one attended in the past
- Support projects in villages one grew up in
- Support collective Tongan projects in the place one is living
- *Faka'apa'apa* (show respect) to the nobility
- *Faka'apa'apa* to the king
- Share like a Tongan, e.g, share cigarettes at a *faikava*, or school supplies in the classroom
- Have *koloa faka-Tonga* (traditional Tongan wealth items)
- Give *koloa faka-Tonga* appropriately.

The issues bundled into this factor concern cooperation, mutual aid, and sharing; all the items are concerned with the common good and orderly society as people know it to have been in the past and mostly still want it to be today. Giving to church, to family events and rituals such as funerals—including having and bringing *koloa faka-Tonga* appropriately, donating to schools and village projects both in one's village of origin and in the place one presently resides—are all ways in which one shows oneself to be a part of a greater collective, hence having certain obligations. Similarly, attending a Tongan church, as opposed to a *pālangi* one, is to acknowledge responsibility to the social circle in which one grew up. The idea that a person must share like a Tongan to be identifiably Tongan encompasses this factor. The broad statement here is that Tongans take responsibility for their part within the social groups in which they participate. To show *faka'apa'apa* to the King, and the *hou'eiki* (high ranking people, i.e. nobles) also shows that one knows one's place in society. The King and the *hou'eiki*, among other things, are symbols of social order and centres for expressing social loyalty, and to be part of the group led by them is to have responsibilities within that group. To say it is important to *faka'apa'apa* to the *hou'eiki* is not so different from saying that it is important to contribute to one's village or to funerals in one's extended family—contributing appropriately to one's place within social order.

The second factor identified represents value placed on maintaining family relationships and cultural continuity. Items include:

Over the course of a lifetime, these things are the responsibilities of all Tongans...

- Travelling overseas to visit relatives there
- Hosting relatives visiting Tonga from overseas
- Participating in church
- Being known to participate in church
- Teaching daughters to weave and make *ngatu* (bark cloth)
- Teaching boys to be capable farmers
- Teaching children to be good at *faiva faka-Tonga* (Tongan dance)

- Teaching children about their ancestors and family history
- Seeing that children learn about Tongan art and history.

These items are about a kind of cultural continuity, including continuity in family structure and gender roles. The answers describe the socio-cultural environment that is comfortable for people. The importance of visiting family and hosting family when they visit, shows that family relations are not broken by international borders or distances. That people gave similar answers to the desirability of boys learning to farm, and girls learning to weave and make *ngatu* suggest that cultural change, especially that affecting gendered work and continuity with the past, is unattractive to most people. That young people should learn to be good dancers fits in with that—‘traditional’ Tongan skills are still valued. The importance of knowing about family and Tongan history also fit neatly into this category of important ways to maintain continuity with the past. Likewise, attending church is an important way to reproduce cultural values and to ensure a degree of conformity with the past.

The third factor meeting the criteria represents appropriate *faka’apa’apa* in everyday face-to-face relationships. Items include:

These are important parts of being Tongan...

- Showing *faka’apa’apa* to one’s sister/brother
- Showing *faka’apa’apa* and deferring to one’s parents
- Using language appropriate to one’s social circumstances
- Respecting church leaders.

This is about *faka’apa’apa* on a more personal scale. It is about knowing one’s place in one’s own family and immediate social circumstances, and enacting that knowledge appropriately through one’s relations with those others.

The fourth factor represents *obvious aspects of Tongan identity*. Items are:

In order to be a real Tongan, one must...

- Eat Tongan food a few times a week
- Be fluent in Tongan
- Speak Tongan on an everyday basis
- Be skilled at *faiva faka-Tonga*
- Have lived in Tonga for a significant period of time
- Have Tongan ancestors.

These are the most obvious, maybe most emotional, outward aspects of identity. Whether or not you can know if someone feels like a Tongan in their heart, you can always judge them by what goes into their mouths and what comes out. Living in Tonga is also one of those obvious signs of identity. Dancing is a fun, public mark of Tongan identity, especially overseas. Dancing is emotionally

compelling and because the Tongan version is so difficult to do, competence or excellence at it definitely says something about a person.

The fifth factor represents *comparing quality and character of life in Tonga and overseas*. Items are:

- Tongans in Tonga have a better life than Tongans overseas
- Tongans in Tonga are more *fiamālie* (happy and content) than Tongans overseas
- Tongans in Tonga are more Tongan than those living elsewhere.

Each of these items asks people to compare life in Tonga with life overseas: where people have a better life, where people are more content and whether island Tongans are 'more Tongan' than overseas Tongans.

The sixth factor identified represents *attitudes about the hou'eiki as a people*. Items are:

- The *hou'eiki* are role models for Tongans today
- The *hou'eiki* are models of religious faith in Tonga today
- The *hou'eiki* are models of effective government work for Tongans today.

All these items speak about people's perceptions of *hou'eiki* in terms of how they behave in the contemporary TTS. This is distinct from more diffusely held ideas about *faka'apa'apa* more generally as a concept or ideal.

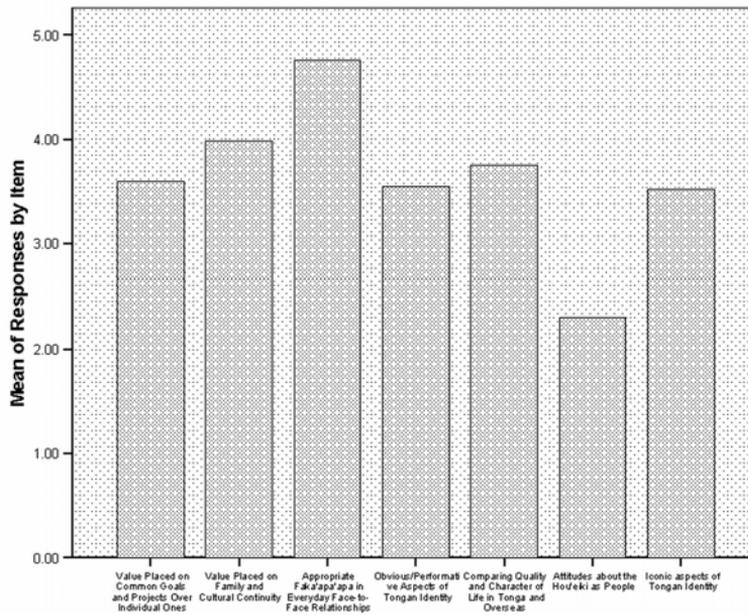
The seventh factor represents *iconic aspects of Tongan identity*.

Tongans are Tongans because they...

- Will always return to Tonga
- Value their families' interests over their personal interests
- Share generously in intelligent ways.

The items dealing with Tongans returning to Tonga, putting family before self and being thoughtfully generous are all three characteristics of *anga faka-Tonga* (the 'Tongan way') that both Tongans and almost any outside analyst who has ever been to Tonga would readily recognise as primary identifying characteristics of *anga faka-Tonga*. This makes them characteristically different from the obvious ethnic markers in Factor Four, which are also readily understood as characteristically Tongan, but are more superficial aspects of Tongan identity and daily life than these foundations of identity and social organisation and interaction.

**Figure 7-1: Mean of Responses for each of Seven Factors**



In Figure 7-1 we see the relative weighting of evaluation for each factor by the entire sample. Though this graph does not control for any independent variable, it is interesting if not definitive. In this graph '5' indicates a strong commitment to the underlying elements contained within the factor, '3' is an indication of neutrality, while anything under '3' indicates a negative evaluation. It is worth noting here that the most esteemed factor is that of *appropriate faka'apa'apa in everyday face-to-face relationships*, while the least is *attitudes about the hou'eiki as a people*. The next step in our analysis was to use the factors identified here to examine variation within the total sample. To do this a number of key characteristics of the respondents were chosen for examination. These 'independent variables' were used to investigate whether there were any statistically significant effects of gender, age, education, church membership, or residence patterns as described below.

### **Axes of Variation (independent variables)**

Seven independent variables were assessed:

1) & 2) An independent variable of primary interest was *current place of residence*. The 10 initial categories (Ha'avakatolo, Sopu, Fo'ui, Nuku'alofa, Ha'apai, Vava'u, Tongatapu, New Zealand, United States and Australia) were reduced to three. These categories are: Nuku'alofa (Sopu, Nuku'alofa), the rest of Tonga (Ha'apai, Vava'u, Ha'avakatolo, Fo'ui) and overseas (New Zealand, US, Australia). Thirty one per cent of respondents (n=214) resided in Nuku'alofa, 26.5 per cent resided

overseas (n=187) and 42.5 per cent (n=290) resided in Tonga, but outside Nuku'alofa. In order to assess these data via the technique of a multiple regression equation, two dummy variables were computed.<sup>8</sup> One new variable, labelled *Current Residence 1*, compares those living in Nuku'alofa to all others (Nuku'alofa=1, others=0). The second new variable, *Current Residence 2*, compares those living overseas with all others (overseas=1, others=0).

3) *Church membership* was dichotomised based on whether a denomination was Tonganised or not.<sup>9</sup> The initial variable was comprised of seven categories, specifically, Free Wesleyan, Free Church of Tonga, Latter Day Saints, Church of Tonga, Roman Catholic, Tokaikolo and other. The majority (83.7 per cent) of respondents identified themselves as belonging to Tonganised churches (all categories shown above except Latter Day Saints) and 16.3 per cent indicated that they belonged to a non-Tonganised church (Latter Day Saints).

4) *Time spent away from Tonga* was measured on a four-point ordinal scale. About one quarter of respondents (26.5 per cent) had not left Tonga, slightly more had been overseas for less than 12 months, about one quarter had been overseas for between one and 10 years, and one fifth (19.8 per cent) had spent at least 10 years away from Tonga.

5) *Gender* split was almost 50–50, with 50.8 per cent being males.

6) Mean *age* was 34.4 years (sd=14.3 years).

7) *Education* was measured on a four-point ordinal scale, asking respondents for the highest level of schooling obtained. Slightly less than half of respondents had not completed high school (47.5 per cent), one-in-four had finished high school (26.3 per cent), 17.8 per cent finished a tertiary degree or diploma, and 6.5 per cent had finished a university degree

## Analysis

Multiple regression allows for simultaneous statistical control of multiple covariates and is robust in dealing with various levels of measurement and moderate degrees of measurement error (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001); it is thus an appropriate technique for this situation. The seven independent variables described above were regressed on each of the dependent variables (i.e. the factors) in turn, for a total of seven regressions. That is, in the first regression, the independent variables—current residence 1, current residence 2, church membership, time spent away from Tonga, gender, age and highest level of schooling—were regressed on the dependent variable *value placed on common goals and projects over individual ones*. The following six regressions include the same seven covariates each time, with only the dependent variable being replaced each time.

Each of the seven equations was found to be statistically significant. The results of the analysis are presented here first in narrative form and then in a summary table:

*Value placed on common goals and projects over individual ones:* Six explanatory variables influence responses to this scale. Those living overseas tend to score lower on this scale than those living in Tonga outside Nuku'alofa, controlling for the effect of all other variables in the equation (a condition that applies to the remaining results reported). Longer duration of overseas living also results in lower scores, as does membership in the Latter Day Saints church compared to those belonging to other churches. Older age is associated with higher scale scores. Of all variables in this model, level of schooling is most strongly associated with this scale, as Tongans with higher levels of schooling tend to score lower on this scale. (Level of schooling is either the most important or second most important explanatory variable for all seven scales, and is always negatively related, i.e. more education is related to lower scale scores.) The relative ranking of the remaining five explanatory variables, in descending order, is age, overseas current residence, time spent overseas, and church membership. (Gender has no effect on any of the seven dependent variables and is not included in the remaining results reported.)

*Value placed on maintaining family relationships and cultural continuity:* Responses to this scale are uninfluenced by current residence, or church membership. Age is related, again positively (older Tongans score higher than do younger Tongans in general), as is time spent overseas in the same manner as with the previous scale (negatively). Church membership is unrelated. In order of importance, in descending order, we have level of schooling, age and time spent overseas.

*Appropriate faka'apa'apa in everyday, face-to-face relationships:* Age, level of schooling, and time spent overseas are related to scores on this scale. As with the previous two dependent variables, level of schooling is negatively related and age is positively related. Current residence, and church membership are unrelated. Of the statistically significant covariates, time spent overseas is ranked as most important, followed by levels of schooling and age, respectively.

*Obvious/performative aspects of Tongan identity:* Level of schooling is negatively related with this scale, as is time spent overseas. Age is positively related. Current residence is unrelated, as is church membership. Level of schooling is in relative terms most influential, followed in order by age and time spent overseas.

*Comparing quality and character of life in Tonga and overseas:* While level of schooling and time spent overseas remain significant explanatory variables and in the same direction as in all regression equations discussed above, age drops out and current residence emerges as the dominant covariate. That is, Tongans living overseas are more likely than Tongans resident in Tonga but outside Nuku'alofa to score low on this scale. Likewise, but not to the same extent, those resident in Nuku'alofa tend to score lower than Tongans resident in Tonga but outside Nuku'alofa. Relative rankings of the explanatory variables are current residence overseas, level of schooling, time spent overseas and current residence in Nuku'alofa. There were significant differences between the ideas of people living overseas and people living in Tonga at the time they filled out the forms.

*Attitudes about the hou'eiki as a people:* Two variables are related to this scale: level of schooling (negatively) and church membership, also negatively. The order of importance is schooling followed by church membership. The effect sizes are relatively small, which is reflected in the low R-squared (.03) and F statistic and its associated significance level ( $f = 2.62$ ;  $p < .05$ ).

*Iconic aspects of Tongan identity:* Responses to this scale are influenced in this model by two variables: level of schooling (negatively) and current residence. Tongans resident overseas tend to score lower than Tongans in Tonga (outside Nuku'alofa). For the second time, current residence emerges as the most important influence in the model on the dependent variable.

*Additional observations:* Overall, current residence does not exert significant effects on four of the seven scales, i.e., it appears that place of residence—whether overseas, in Nuku'alofa, or elsewhere in Tonga—does not influence the value that Tongans place on maintaining family relationships and cultural continuity, their view of the appropriateness of *faka'apa'apa* in everyday face-to-face relationships, their views of the obvious aspects of Tongan identity, or attitudes about the *hou'eiki* as a people. Current residence is weakly related to value placed on common goals and projects over individual ones. The two exceptions are for the dependent variables *comparing quality and character of life in Tonga and overseas*, and *iconic aspects of Tongan identity*. Of the remaining variables, level of schooling is most important overall. Age exerts a significant influence on four dependent variables and time spent overseas is a significant influence on five dependent variables. Church membership has an effect in two equations, while (again) gender has no effect in any equation. These data are summarized, with appropriate statistical detail in Table 7-1, as shown.

**Table 7–1: Multiple Regression Results for the Seven Models: Unstandardised Correlation Coefficients and Model Fit (R-squared)**

Independent variable	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6	Factor 7
School	-.25***	-.18***	-.06**	-.17***	-.19***	-.12**	-.17***
Current residence 1	-.02	-.09	-.03	-.01	-.20*	-.03	-.08
Current residence 2	-.26*	-.04	-.05	-.08	-.49***	-.17	-.43**
Gender	-.10	.01	.03	.02	-.08	-.04	-.04
Age	.01**	.01***	.01**	.01***	-.00	-.00	.00
Church	-.21*	-.14	.04	-.08	.08	-.27*	-.07
Overseas	-.08*	-.06*	-.04*	-.09*	-.10*	-.01	-.02
F-statistic	14.35***	10.36***	5.70***	9.38***	14.02***	2.62*	6.82***
R-squared	.16	.12	.07	.11	.15	.03	.08

\* p </.05; \*\* p </.01; \*\*\* p </.001

The data in Table 7–1 are presented as unstandardised correlation coefficients in order to help the reader to see the effect of variation in the independent variables (level of education, etc.) on the dependent variables. For example, we can see that for each difference in the level of education (1–4), there is a marked effect on factor 1, *value placed on common goals and projects over individual ones*, and with each increase in level of education (School) comes a corresponding decrease of -0.25 on a five-point scale; in other words, we can read the effect in the actual measure of the original data. It is important to recall here that this figure is for the effect of education within the *multiple regression analysis*, i.e., it is the effect of level of education when considered in the context of all the other independent variables at the same time.

The limitation of the presentation of the analysis using the unstandardised correlation coefficient is that we cannot assess the relative effect of the independent variables within a factor, because the scale of the effect varies. For example, we might think that there is a radically different effect from age than from level of schooling on factor one, but, because there are only four different values for level of education, and as many values for age as there are ages in the sample, the two are not comparable in relative terms. For this reason, the standardised correlation coefficient (called the *beta*) is usually calculated; the *beta*, however, measures relative effect across the independent variables (i.e. it is a standardised measure) but the values calculated are not directly comprehensible in terms of the original scale and are difficult to assess in terms of direct impact. In the interests of brevity, we present analysis of the *beta* in Table 7-2 showing the rank order of the independent variables on each factor.

It is this last table that shows most simply the effects of the independent variables. We have drawn out the detail in our narrative description, but a quick glance at the general pattern expressed in Table 7-2 indicates that ‘level of schooling’ and ‘age’ have the strongest and broadest relative effect in the analysis.

We do not speculate or offer further opinion on the root causes of the patterns that have emerged here, but rather leave it to the careful reader to contemplate the analysis in terms of their own specific interests.

**Table 7–2: Relative Importance of Statistically Significant Independent Variables within each Model, Based on the Standardised Correlation Coefficient**

Independent variable	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6	Factor 7
School	1	1	2	1	2	1	2
Current residence 1	-	-	-	-	4	-	-
Current residence 2	3	-	-	-	1	-	1
Gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Age	2	2	3	2	-	-	-
Church	5	-	-	-	-	2	-
Overseas	4	3	1	3	3	-	-

## Conclusion

There is broad agreement among contemporary analysts of the Tongan Transnational System that change is afoot and that shifting attitudes brought on by increasing engagement with the world system, migration and globalisation are root causes of whatever change might come. There is less certainty about the degree and nature of change within the TTS, and the relative uniformity of patterns of change within the system. In the above analysis, we used quantitative data to establish the patterns of variation emerging within and between Tongans living in Tonga, and those living in Auckland. These variations are more complex than location alone can account for and contradict overly simple Tonga/Overseas Tongan community distinctions. We suggest that providing a quantifiable context with which to compare existing qualitative and narrative analyses of the degree and direction of transformations and distinctions within contemporary Tongan identity, while by no means definitive or without methodological caveats, is a valuable, and currently neglected, area of research. We would further suggest that employing techniques like these can add to discussions of the present and emerging nature of transnationalism more generally. Carefully and appropriately done, such analyses allow us to quantify divergence within transnational systems. We are not suggesting that such a turn should or could replace qualitative analyses, but rather that statistical assessments can provide a valuable context in which qualitative materials can be read and understood.

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> At the request of the editors we present this analysis in a colloquial style. We do so out of a desire to make the paper accessible to the anticipated readership of this volume and in the knowledge that this may disconcert those more familiar with the conventions of quantitative sociological work. Such is the current schism between qualitative and quantitative traditions in the contemporary social sciences that positioning this paper is somewhat problematic—we have done our best to balance the sensibilities of both broad traditions here.

<sup>2</sup> The sample was selected by Paul Harms; this sample was serendipitous. Most of the data was collected within church congregations, church choirs, and other institutional contexts both in Tonga and New Zealand; these were places where Harms was more and less known to the people involved. The best return rate on forms handed out was in contexts where he was most familiar with the greatest number of people and they were about as familiar with him (see Evans 2001, 10–11 on the significance of social relationship and survey response in Tonga). The church minister, the choir director, or the school principal was asked to introduce the researcher (Harms) and then the research was explained. The endorsement from a trusted leader was significant; survey forms were only handed out in places where such a leader was known to the researcher. In Auckland, in various congregations of the *Siasi 'o Tonga* (Church of Tonga) a church official introduced Harms. Initial contact happened at a regular Monday night *faikava* (kava drinking party) which involved young men in the *Siasi 'o Tonga* from all over Auckland and often also their church ministers. In some places, people filled in the forms immediately, but usually people would take them home and return them later. Some forms were also completed by Tongan students at the University of Auckland. Those were mostly filled in on the spot, although some were returned later. Similarly, a small number of forms were given to friends who handed them out to friends and colleagues; these were returned filled in. Though this sample was not random, we have every reason to believe it representative; further, the techniques for analysis have been selected to control for variation in gender, age, location, and level of education.

<sup>3</sup> The survey was developed by Paul Harms in both English and Tongan (of which he is a fairly fluent speaker). Half of the questions were written in each language, and then translated to the other. The questions and their organisation were based on a combination of ideas about the key issues in Tongan identity. This first draft was revised (and reduced in size) by Evans and then the questions were revised again in Tongan by Harms. Harms' questions were then evaluated by a number of Tongan first language speakers, including Siaoisi Kavapalu, Seini Laungā, Suli Liava'a, and Fatai Vave, who all made important comments and suggestions. Tongan demographer Viliami Liava'a's input was especially helpful. There was a final revision of the content and wording of the Tongan form further according to these comments, and then a final revision to the English version to match it. Distribution of the survey in Tonga was assisted by Siaoisi Kavapalu and Sione Koloamātangi.

<sup>4</sup> Because of concern over the impact of having a seven-point scale but only five written cues, the seven-point scale was reduced to a five-point scale by collapsing the values for 2 & 3 and 5 & 6.

<sup>5</sup> A factor analysis using principal components analysis and varimax orthogonal rotation was used for scale construction. The distribution for each item was examined to identify any non-discriminating items (those for which 90 per cent or more chose the same response) for deletion. The criteria for retention of a factor for the purpose of scale construction were: 1) at least three items retained per factor; 2) eigenvalue of at least 1.0; 3) interpretability of the factor. Individual items were retained for each factor analysis derived scale when associated factor loadings were 0.40 or higher (Pett, Lackey and Sullivan, 2003). Pett et al. (2003) also suggest 10 to 15 subjects per item for factor analyses, a standard met in this study. The retained items identified in each factor were assessed for internal reliability, based on a Cronbach's alpha of at least 0.65, and then summed to create each respective scale. Among the 17 factors having eigenvalues of 1.0 or greater, seven met the criteria for inclusion laid out above. Further statistical detail is beyond the scope of this paper.

<sup>6</sup> Herein lies one of the key problems with quantitative techniques—this statement is true only insofar as the questions asked reflect societal values in reasonable ways. In other words, asking sensible questions is a pre-requisite for getting sensible answers! In this study, the creation of good questions was achieved via the process outlined in footnote #3.

<sup>7</sup> Many of the observations that follow were contributed by Paul Harms.

<sup>8</sup> The new variables, technically referred to as 'dummy' variables, were computed to satisfy the statistical requirements of multiple regressions. Specifically, all the variables in a multiple regression are assumed to be measured at the interval level. The technique is robust enough to handle this conversion.

<sup>9</sup> This division of churches is somewhat problematic, as it effectively analyses the LDS as distinct from all others in the sample. Further, it could be argued that significant elements of LDS practice are in fact

Tonganised. We recognise these issues and make only a weak claim here that the Tonganised/non-Tonganised distinction captures a meaningful axis of variation.