

Of Waves, Winds and Wonderful Things

A Decade of Rethinking Pacific Education



Selected papers from the 2011 Vaka Pasifiki Education Conference

Edited by
Mo'ale 'Otunuku, Unaisi Nabobo-Baba and Seu'ula Johansson Fua

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Dedication

The Institute of Education dedicates this e-book to its former Director, Professor Konai Helu Thaman, whose significant career includes being UNESCO Chair in Teacher Education and Culture (1998-2016), Head of the School of Humanities and Pro Vice-Chancellor of USP, Fellow of the Asia-Pacific Programme of Educational Innovation for Development, member of the Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers, and teacher. A celebrated poet and academic, proud citizen of the Pacific, and champion of Pacific education, Konai's achievements in the heights of academia have been accomplished with her feet firmly on Pacific ground as she has led by example, espousing an honesty, wisdom and passion for indigenous perspectives and knowledge which has empowered Pacific students across the region to value and harness their traditional and cultural ways of knowing and being in carrying out their studies and work in education. As one of the pioneers of the RPEIPP movement, Konai and her work have been instrumental in advancing RPEIPP activities and inspiring successive generations of Oceanic researchers, academics, education thought leaders, writers, poets and dreamers.

Foreword

Professor Konai Helu-Thaman

The appearance of this publication is timely not because of a certain doom and gloom that is gripping many Pacific educators as they grapple with so many “innovations” and their strategic advocates, but because the time is right for Pacific conversations about Pacific educational issues. The celebration of 10 years of Re-thinking Pacific Education by Pacific for Pacific (RPEIPP) took the form of a Symposium, hosted jointly by the University of the South Pacific (USP) Faculty of Arts, Law and Education (FALE) and the Institute of Education (IOE). This book contains the papers that were presented at the Symposium.

The main concern of the founding members of RPEIPP was to take stock of what had happened and chart a path for the next ten years. It was always the aim of RPEIPP to assist Pacific educational leaders to address the many challenges facing their own countries in a rapidly globalized and ‘modernised’ context. As the titles of the main parts of the book indicate: to reflect on what had gone on before in order to see where changes could be made and approaches improved; and to seek a way forward towards a more inclusive, participatory and visionary journey.

In Part 1, authors recall some of the achievements of RPEIPP associated with the re-thinking process, whether they be conferences held, workshops conducted, or books published. The Hon Dr. ‘Ana Taufe‘ulungaki begins the conversation by taking us on a historical journey to the early years of RPEIPP and the visions of the founding members shared during the 2001 Symposium, thus providing a backdrop against which the activities of the Initiative over the years could be examined. There are personal reflections on what the RPEIPP movement has come to signify to individual educators as they reflect on their own practice and work whether it be teaching, learning, or research. In Part 2, the authors provide RPEIPP members with some timely advice as they reflect about their practice keeping in mind the need to consider individual as well as group rights and ensure ethical practice. In Part 3,

the authors explore new directions in promoting Pacific voices and the indigenization of Pacific Education. They also talk about challenges we face in taking that direction. In the final Part 4, there are some practical suggestions as to how we might wish to imagine a sustainable future of RPEIPP and the Pacific by choosing to live wise and sustainable lives; protecting instead of exploiting Pacific environments; and using new resources such as ICTs wisely and strategically.

I wish to thank and congratulate the editors as well as the authors of the various chapters of this book for bringing this particular RPEIPP project to fruition. The content of this book is valuable food for thought for all those who wish to make a difference to the education of Pacific people, wherever they happen to be. Enjoy! Tu‘a ‘ofa atu.

REFLECTING ON OUR JOURNEY SO FAR

Look Back to Look Forward: A Reflective Pacific Journey¹

‘Ana Maui Taufē ‘ulungaki

I would like first of all to acknowledge God’s presence in our midst and His grace and mercy which have brought us safely to Suva from many parts of the Pacific.

I acknowledge the Vanua and the people of Rewa; Dr. ‘Akanisi Kedrayate, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Law, and Education; Professor Konai Helu Thaman, Chair for UNESCO and Teacher Education; Professor Kabini Sanga, Victoria University of Wellington; Dr Akhila Sharma, Head of the School of Education; Dr Seu‘ula Johansson Fua, Director of the Institute of Education; honoured guests, invited speakers and presenters, and fellow participants. I would also like to especially acknowledge my Fellow Minister from Palau.

I thank the Dean of FALE, Dr Kedrayate, for her kind words of welcome and, on behalf of us all, I thank her and the University for the USP’s continuing support to the Re-Thinking Initiative. I would also like to express our gratitude to the Government of New Zealand, without whose sensitive and timely support, the Re-Thinking Initiative would have remained just an idea, a foetus that would have been aborted from ill-health and malnutrition. I would also like to thank our supporters and other development partners for their assistance over the years.

I acknowledge the work of the Board and the contributions of its members. But I would like to pay a special tribute to Professors Konai Thaman and Kabini Sanga for their leadership and passion for the RPEIPP. There is no doubt in my mind that were it not for their vision,

¹ *Keynote address at the RPEIPP Symposium, Suva, 2011.*

guidance, wisdom, and commitment, we would not have anything to celebrate or to reflect on today.

I was asked to speak from a historical perspective on the journey that we have taken in the last ten years. The truth is that I have not had much time to think about where we have come from, where we have been, what we have done, and what we have achieved in the last ten years, let alone have time to think critically of the process. Nevertheless, I was part of that journey, and this is more or less a personal take of that time. You must be warned, however, that I am a very poor traveller, and suffer from all kinds of maladies during any lengthy journey on land, air, or sea, which is very strange for a daughter descended from a long line of hardy navigators and seafarers. So, if part of the RPEIPP story is blurred or not mentioned, it must have occurred during a period when I was incapacitated!!

RPEIPP as you are all aware stands for “Re-Thinking Pacific Education Initiative by Pacific Peoples for Pacific Peoples”, and is pronounced as “REAP”, meaning to harvest.

The title of my brief presentation is: Look Back to Look Forward: A Reflective Pacific Journey.

Tongans conceive the past in terms of the future, and the future in terms of the past. The phrase “a mui” can mean both the past and the future: hence, the title of this presentation. I consider it an honour and a privilege to participate in this celebratory Symposium to mark the first ten years of RPEIPP.

My presentation is divided into 3 parts:

1. **Part 1** is the historical background of the Initiative;
2. **Part 2** is my personal assessment of our performance after 10 years;
3. **Part 3** is how the Initiative has been applied in a particular country and I will be using Tonga as a Case Study.

Part 1: The Historical Background

I thought it would be appropriate during this time to remind ourselves of the issues and ideas that led to the founding of RPEIPP, lest we forget. For the benefit of those of you who are not familiar with this Initiative, I would like to spend a little time on a bit of history. RPEIPP began as an idea in the inaugural Symposium on Researching the Delivery of Aid to Pacific Education of the Research Unit of Pacific Education of the University of Auckland in December 2000. The picture that emerged of Pacific education in that meeting was depressing. It was noted, for instance, that after 30 years of heavy investments by the Pacific countries themselves and by donor organisations, we were still struggling with the same issues.

During one of the tea breaks, Professor Konai Helu Thaman of USP, Dr Kabini Sanga of Victoria University, Trisha Nelly of NZAID, and myself were talking idly and thinking aloud that it would be wonderful if Pacific educators could meet by themselves, without our donor partners, to re-think education from Pacific perspectives and world views to complement those promoted by formal education, which in most cases were borrowed from outside and were often irrelevant and inappropriate for Pacific contexts and peoples. Thus, was born the Re-Thinking Pacific Education Initiative (RPEI) now re-named RPEIPP, which was funded by NZAID which is still assisting with some activities today. It was a risky position for NZAID to take, as donor partners up to that time were reluctant to invest funding in a programme whose outcomes were likely to challenge basic assumptions in education that were in vogue then.

The first activity of the Initiative was a meeting of selected Pacific educators, which was held here at USP and hosted by the Institute of Education in April of 2001. The recommendations of that first meeting were presented to the Forum Education Ministers in May of the same year and the book “Tree of Opportunity” was one of the main outcomes of that meeting.

That first activity was undertaken under the umbrella of the MOU signed between the University of the South Pacific and Victoria

University of Wellington. It provided the opportunity for a select group of Pacific educators – 19 in all – who had already begun the process of interrogating the values, assumptions, and beliefs underlying formal education and development, to share, debate, and reflect on what they believed to be the main issues and challenges in Pacific education at that time and to begin the exploration of new directions and alternatives in education and development, which might prove more meaningful to Pacific peoples.

That Colloquium began with the assumption that the 30 years or so of extensive reforms in Pacific education and significant investment by national governments and donor agencies had largely failed to provide quality human resources needed to achieve developmental goals. However, it also noted that while educational priority focused on improving the overall quality of education, access to schooling and equity of outcomes, the over-riding issues of what education is, what its purposes are, and what the Pacific visions are for Pacific peoples and communities which should inform the first two questions, had received little or no attention up to that time. Educational reforms had remained largely fixated on improving various aspects of the quantification of education, but there was little questioning of the values and assumptions underpinning formal education or development for that matter.

Research in other parts of the world had indicated that to achieve quality education it was not sufficient to improve leadership, train teachers, revise and renew the curricula, provide adequate support resources, upgrade facilities, widen access, lower costs, mobilise community support, and transform the structures of schools and systems, unless the cultures of schools and systems – that is, the values and belief systems that underpin the behaviours and actions of individuals and institutions, and the structures and processes they create – undergo fundamental changes.

Some Pacific educators have come similarly to attribute the failure of education in the region to the increasing incongruence between the values promoted by formal Western schooling, the modern media, economic systems, and globalisation and those held by Pacific communities.

The Colloquium identified the basic issues that contributed to such failure. Not surprisingly, the same issues that had challenged the region for the last thirty years surfaced again: quality, access, equity, relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency – issues which were related to other issues, such as lack of effective leadership and management; political commitment; adequate human and material resources; planning capacity; adequate data, information, and research; quality teachers; relevant and appropriate curriculum; and appropriate language policies. It was noted, however, that these variables were insufficient in themselves to account for the continuing high failure rate of Pacific students in formal schooling at all levels, not only in the region, but also in metropolitan countries, where the quality of the inputs is much higher.

From its insiders' perspectives – representing as it were the collective experience of Pacific educators, who were also successful students of the formal education sector – the Colloquium targeted issues that are mostly likely to ensure success in formal education not for just the privileged few, but for all Pacific peoples. Two key issues which subsume a number of related issues were identified:

- The first is the lack of ownership by Pacific peoples of the formal education process. It was noted that while the churches have succeeded in becoming fully integrated with the Pacific way of life, education remains an alien process and is looked on by many Pacific peoples as something imposed from outside and an instrument designed to fail, exclude, and marginalise the majority of their students and, therefore, is irrelevant and meaningless to their way of life.
- The second follows on from the first, and that is the lack of a clearly articulated vision for Pacific peoples, which could inform both development and education, assuming, of course, that education is accepted as the key instrument in achieving national visions and developmental goals. Because they do not own the process, educational visions and goals tended to be defined by external sources, as is still the case today, and has been since the introduction of formal education.

The questions that the Colloquium raised related to these two fundamental issues were:

- What does education mean in the context of the Pacific and what are its purposes within the formal school system?
- How do we deal with the alien/foreign nature of schools generally, the curriculum and assessment, the methodology, school structure, processes, culture, and management?
- How do we prepare all students to be successful members of their societies?
- What types of changes are therefore needed in education to bring these changes about?
- Are we (wrongly) perpetuating Western models of education?
- We are educating for failure – how can we ensure that more/most/all succeed?
- Children are learning in an alien language. How can we ensure that the advantages to the learning process of their mother tongues are maintained and enhanced and used as the foundation for teaching and learning in English or another language?
- Education is an expensive process so how can we ensure that education is affordable by all without relying forever on external assistance?
- How can education take more account of parents' and communities' aspirations?
- How do we ensure that the village economy is sustained and harmony is established with the “cash” economy?
- How do we deal with the wastage of the current system, with the increasing numbers of pushouts, dropouts, and repeaters?
- The numbers of school leavers are increasing but job-creation and opportunities are diminishing. How do we address this?
- How do we build on the achievements already made?
- What kinds of research and data do we need to assist us in finding answers and solutions to these questions?

The main challenge, at that time, was to re-conceptualise education in a way that would allow Pacific peoples to reclaim the education process, which would, at the same time, allow for the articulation of a Pacific vision for education. The Colloquium agreed on “The Tree of Opportunity” as the most appropriate metaphor for Re-Thinking Pacific Education: the roots of the tree must be fully embedded in the living soil of Pacific cultures and contexts, their values, knowledge, and beliefs

systems, their languages and history, their geography and traditions, and their social, economic, and political ethos and systems; otherwise it would be like cutting a Christmas tree and planting it in a pot plant for the Christmas period. We would decorate the tree and it would look beautiful. Perhaps, we would even water it, but it will not live beyond the 12 days of Christmas.

The Colloquium collectively agreed to conceptualise Pacific education as the “Tree of Opportunity”, and certain principles were outlined to guide thinking:

1. Pacific peoples and communities have the right, and must be empowered, to have control of their education and education systems.
2. Pacific people must be able to determine the purposes and goals of education for their own communities.
3. Educational purposes and goals must reflect Pacific contexts, values, beliefs, and knowledge systems while at the same time taking cognisance of global forces of change.

To justify the proposed transformation, the Colloquium argued that:

1. It would be more economically viable and cheaper in the long-term.
2. It would be more pedagogically sound, meaningful, efficient, and inclusive, and, if implemented effectively, it would be more successful as outcomes would be broadened.
3. It would create long-term social cohesiveness, political stability, and economic prosperity – including the strengthening of subsistence and village-based economies.
4. It would focus on success stories and the strengths of our Pacific peoples, whereas both the education system and reforms at the time were fixated on addressing the failures in the education process from a deficit model of education perspective.

These justifications were based on research findings, good practice, and the identification of common elements and factors that contributed to the outstanding success of Pacific educators such as those participating in the Colloquium, and their experiences.

The Colloquium noted that, for a very long time, Pacific education has been directed from outside. The Re-Thinking Initiative was an attempt to re-examine Pacific education, using the advantage of the experiences and perceptions of Pacific insiders, who had successfully integrated both worlds, Pacific and Western, or a number of worlds, and so were able to identify themselves first and foremost as members of their own cultural groups, but equally claim membership in the wider national, Pacific, and international communities.

They argued that in order for education in the region to be sustainable, self-directed, and self-managed, it must be controlled and guided by Pacific peoples so that they own the processes, just as they have claimed the churches.

The recommendations that were proposed for the consideration of Education Ministers to be adopted by Pacific education systems included the need for clearly articulated visions of education and its purposes, whose aims were survival and transformation, and its outcomes were to be assessed through appropriate performance and behaviour.

In the short-term, the recommendations comprised the following:

1. Consolidation of existing formal educational services (basically primary education, the first six years of formal schooling, and in some cases, basic education also included universal secondary education) and improving the factors, structures, and processes that impact on educational performance and outcomes by embedding and integrating Pacific values, beliefs, and knowledge systems in these existing elements:
 - Legislation and policies, including language policy
 - Curriculum, pedagogies
 - Teacher education and training
 - Assessment and evaluations
 - Management and administration
 - Resourcing of education.

These short-term strategies were considered for immediate adoption as it was recognised that in many education systems, these were already being implemented or were in the process of being implemented.

2. Raising awareness and education of the public, politicians, and policy-makers on how education could be reoriented to reflect the values of Pacific peoples.

The long-term strategies included:

Political commitment to re-orient indigenisation of education in the Pacific; the development and establishment of a Research Centre for Pacific Education attached to IOE, which would focus on research, data collection, and dissemination of research outcomes. In addition, it would also support and encourage:

- i. Pacific Research, both formal and informal
 - ii. The establishment of Pacific research institutes in the region, especially within national institutions
 - iii. The establishment of publishing houses for Pacific writers
 - iv. Training in research methodologies including indigenous methods, and assisting Pacific institutions of higher learning to provide such training at national levels
 - v. Developing networks of Pacific higher education institutions – such as University of Hawaii and PREL, University of Guam, Victoria (Wellington) and Auckland universities, Institute Of Education and Institute of Pacific Studies and University of the South Pacific, New Caledonia, Goroka, from PNG, Solomon Island College of Higher Education, National University of Samoa, Tonga Institute of Education – and hosting regular meetings in which progress and the successes and challenges can be shared;
 - vi. The development of educational policy frameworks, which would include a process of nation-wide consultations among all stakeholders and the sharing of policy decisions with all stakeholders.
3. Curriculum Reform, which would ensure that:
 - i. Indigenous knowledge, world views, philosophies, values, beliefs, and arts are integral parts of the formal school curricula
 - ii. Indigenous pedagogies were also integrated into all

- iii. formal education pedagogies
 - iii. Governments would commit to the survival of their vernacular languages
 - iv. Alternative assessment techniques would be adopted to reflect changes in the curriculum.
4. Teacher Education, which would also ensure:
- i. The integration of indigenous values, epistemologies and pedagogies, beliefs systems, skills, and attitudes into teacher training programmes
 - ii. Raising the status of teachers through the accessibility of higher professional qualifications in teacher training institutions.
5. Financing Education, including development assistance, to ensure that:
- i. There is real and continuing dialogue between governments and development partners
 - ii. Pacific experts are used as consultants
 - iii. Conditional development partner assistance is minimised
 - iv. Existing networks are promoted to advocate for the indigenisation of education; for example, Pacific Association of Teacher Educators (PATE) can be used more effectively.

It was proposed that at the national level education systems adapt the model of the “Tree of Opportunity” as part of their vision for education and that they would ensure that:

- i. Strategies and plans are developed to reflect the vision at each level and in different programmes (teacher education, curriculum development, for example)
- ii. The vision is promoted by informing and educating stakeholders on the new approaches and changes to education
- iii. There is mobilisation of caretakers of indigenous knowledge and their support and contribution are actively sought and valued.

It was further recommended that a package of the model of indigenisation of education in the Pacific be developed, which can be presented to Pacific education leaders. Included in the package would be:

- i. A refined version of the “Tree of Opportunity” model
- ii. Research to support the implementation of this model
- iii. Regional strategies which can be adopted to support successful implementation of the model
- iv. In-country strategies which can be adopted at different levels of the education system.

The recommendations and vision outlined in that first meeting continue to drive the programme today, although some modifications and other initiatives have been added since. The key areas, however, have remained the same:

1. The indigenising of education by embedding and integrating Pacific values, beliefs, and knowledge systems, skills, attitudes, and behaviours in the formal education processes
2. The development of the capacity of Pacific people to take control of their own development and education processes through leadership training, advocacy, and other forms of training and education
3. The development by countries of their own national visions which would, in turn, inform their own educational development and practices
4. The promotion of research and publications by Pacific educators and scholars that would benefit Pacific peoples and contribute to the creation of Pacific knowledge communities and to the world body of knowledge
5. The provision of assistance to Governments and ministries to re-think educational policy; curriculum reform; teacher education; financing of education, including development assistance; and assessment, measurement, and evaluation.

In the first five years of the Initiative from 2001 to the end of 2004, Dr Kabini Sanga and Victoria University took charge and many programmes and activities were successfully undertaken, during that time, including:

- The Re-Thinking Vanuatu Education Conference held in May

2002. A book, “Re-Thinking Vanuatu Education Together”, was a major outcome of that conference

- The training programme on research for Vanuatu educators was also held in 2002
- The international conference on Re-Thinking Aid to Pacific Education was held in Nadi in October of 2003
- The Planning Workshop on Solomon Islands Education Strategic Plan was held in 2003, and was related to Re-Thinking of Education in the Solomon Islands in 2003
- Two training workshops on research that were conducted for Tongan Educators in 2004, followed by field research by individuals and groups participating in those workshops. A book of the research reports was published later
- The Re-Thinking of Pacific Teacher Training Conference hosted by the National University of Samoa in 2004
- The Re-Thinking of Micronesian Education, hosted by the Republic of the Marshall Islands in 2004. The countries of Micronesia – Guam, Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, Kiribati, Nauru and Republic of the Marshall Islands – opted to collaborate and joined together in this one Conference
- Several books which were later published were the outcomes of these activities.

From 2005 onwards, RPEIPP was moved to the Institute of Education (IOE) at the University of the South Pacific (USP), in the belief that IOE and USP are central to the development and achievement of quality education for Pacific peoples. However, the move coincided with a period of time when the IOE was struggling to survive as an institution due to a number of policy decisions and restructuring within the University itself. Ever since that period, IOE has not been fully staffed until this year.

Although the Initiative had moved to IOE, Professor Sanga and the Victoria University continued to provide support, advice, and guidance and Professor Sanga even took one year off to take on the responsibility for the Institute of Education. Thus, by default Victoria University and Professor Sanga continued to take on leadership responsibility for RPEIPP. Today the survival of IOE has been due largely to Professor

Sanga's efforts and to Dr Seu'ula Johansson-Fua's assumption of leadership. We owe these two Pacific scholars a huge debt for the fact that RPEIPP has survived and is gaining strength from day to day.

But I would be remiss in my duty if I do not mention also the contributions of prominent educators and scholars from around the Pacific, who also contributed significantly to ensure that RPEIPP grew and flourished.

From USP: Konai Helu Thaman, Unaisi Nabobo-Baba (now of the University of Guam), Tevi Teaero, Frances Crescentia Koya Vaka'uta, Cliff Benson, Henry Elder, Akanisi Kedrayate, and Sala Bakalevu, to name a few.

From Victoria University: Cherie Chu, Laura van Peer, and all the young Pacific scholars and researchers in New Zealand.

From around the region: Gatoloai Tilianamua Afamasaga in Samoa, John Niroa in Vanuatu, Hilda Heine in the Marshall Islands and Micronesia, Ina Hermann and Teremoana Hodges in the Cook Islands, Jeremy Dorovolomo in the Solomon Islands and USP.

These and many others whose names I have not mentioned have been and continue to be the champions of RPEIPP.

Part 2: So How Did We Do?

At the beginning of this journey, we set sail with high ideals, passion, and clear direction of where we would like to arrive. Our ancestors, who more than five thousand years ago set off in their quest to find new homes in the vast unknown Pacific, also travelled ever onwards purposefully and hopefully. They succeeded and the proof is here in this room. But how did their descendants of the twenty-first century fare in modern times in cyber space?

In my personal view, we cannot have any doubts about two strands of RPEIPP. These are (1) the leadership strand, and (2) the research strand. These strands stand out and are worthy, indeed, of our applause and plaudits. Both include a number of well-received publications which

have fired the imagination and excitement of young scholars across our region, and even beyond our borders.

(1) Ethical Leadership

Across the region, in every country, the single most often mentioned issue of modern times is not the global economic crisis, or the threat of global warming and climate change, or social instability, and the profound political restructuring which is occurring in many countries. It is instead the call for ethical leadership. Many organisations have responded to the call and developed programmes to address the challenge.

Most of these programmes have not made any difference. The RPEIPP Leadership strand took a different approach. As I mentioned at the beginning, RPEIPP approached Leadership issues not from the perspective of addressing corruption and good governance (although those critical aspects of leadership ended up as outcomes), but from the position that each one of us is a leader and that each one of us has ethical responsibilities not only to ourselves as ethical beings but as participating members of our families, communities, and nations. In other words, at the core of the leadership programme is the concept of “service” to others, the relationships we create and maintain, and the values that we acquire that underpin and support those relationships.

To provide ethical service and maintain ethical relationships we have to be proactive and not merely become passive recipients, awaiting others to think for us and decide our destinies.

As Paul Freire argued:

As human beings our shared vocation is to become active individual subjects engaged on an equal basis with others in the process of creating (or naming) the world – creating history and culture – rather than existing merely as passive objects accepting reality and the world ready-made by other people. In creating history and culture we create our own beings in the process.

This is the greatest challenge in literacy education. It is also the greatest

challenge for us as individual Pacific Islanders and the challenge for our communities and our nations. If we allow others to name and define our worlds, to create them for us, we become mere puppets dancing to someone else's manipulations. If we create them ourselves, our worlds will have soul and meaning and worth. The seeds of our liberation lie within us, in our determination and commitment, our willingness to sacrifice, and in our ownership of who we are and the clear vision of where we wish to go.

This is the essence of ethical leadership – and the same values of our Pacific peoples, which underpin all their relationships, are at the core of the RPEIPP. These are the values, principles, processes, beliefs, and behaviours that we strive to integrate into our Visions for Education, into our policies and strategic plans, into our curriculum and teacher education programmes, into our assessment and evaluation procedures, and especially into the outcomes of education for our children. Without these fundamental values and ethical relationships, the next generation of Pacific Islanders will be strangers and aliens in their homelands. Ten years from now, we will still be talking about lack of ownership and control over our own destinies and a visionless future for our peoples.

Development partners are now realising that strategies that have worked elsewhere do not translate well into our Pacific region and they are now much more willing to work with us on strategies and activities that could yield real benefits for Pacific peoples and make their investments in human resources development worthwhile and meaningful. Leadership Pacific philosophy and values are embedded into the Leadership programme that is being funded by Australia and implemented in all schools in Tonga next year. But this did not happen without many meetings and consultations, and it did not happen without convincing evidence, and lessons learned provided by Dr Seu'ula Johansson-Fua. On the Australian side, there is evidence they were willing to listen and take on board alternative ways of thinking and working.

The Leadership Pacific vision of growing 1000 Pacific leaders is on track as other programmes that preceded or followed Tonga's are being implemented across New Zealand and the Pacific. While we do not in any way minimise the challenges that remain – especially at

the national political arena, and in education itself – young leaders in schools, at work, and in communities are stepping forward and assuming responsibilities for themselves, their families, their organisations, and their communities, for sustainable livelihoods.

(2) Research

In the research strand, we have seen many young scholars emerging as confident researchers. They are not only undertaking world class and cutting-edge research, but they are firmly articulating and reclaiming Pacific research frameworks and methodologies, mainstreaming them, and creating research waves that are felt as far away as London and Sweden.

For me, the most exciting part of the process is the unapologetic theorising by young Pacific scholars of their own education processes and coming up with novel solutions to long-standing challenges. I can only applaud their courage and urge them on to greater heights, for the sake of all our futures.

In the bad old days, research and publications by Pacific scholars and researchers were often looked on with reservation in the best cases and with rejection and contempt in the worst scenario. But today, publications are springing up in almost all institutions across the region, led by the examples of New Zealand and Australian institutions, and for the first time our students have access to the written work of other Pacific researchers. It is true that the quality continues to be variable, but the main thing is that they are being printed. And anyway, who is the judge of what is worthy to be printed or not? As I said in the inaugural research Symposium of the Research Unit of the University of Auckland which gave birth to RPEIPP, we have to set our own standards and authenticate our own research and outcomes.

However, it has not been glory all the way for research. The Pacific Education Research Fund (PERF), the foundation which was established to promote and support research, has remained fragile and it needs new ideas and new strategies to enable it to grow into a strong and vibrant institution.

(3) Other strands

In the other areas of RPEIPP's work such as advocacy, institutional integration, national recognition, acceptance, and adoption, we have not fared so well and in this regard, I cannot overemphasise the importance of political will and commitment. Unless we can convince our political masters of the importance of RPEIPP, not only to education in the region but to its very future and survival, RPEIPP will continue to be just another exotic programme.

A few weeks ago, we, in Tonga, hosted guests from Victoria University of Wellington. I thought what a great opportunity this was to talk about the coming Symposium and RPEIPP. It transpired that the main concern of the University was the continuing high failure and drop-out rate of Pacific students in universities across New Zealand. The impression I got was that RPEIPP has failed to become institutionalised and remains, as far as the University is concerned, a marginal activity for the School of Education. Needless to say, I was very disappointed.

But is this something new? Is this not the same view of RPEIPP exhibited by the University of the South Pacific? Does the Faculty of FALE entertain giving the "cause" house room or is it still to remain the waif of yester years? When I listen and read the plans of the University for the future of Pacific studies and programmes in this institution, I ask is there cause here for celebration or for alarm? Do we need to look elsewhere for leadership and for a more welcoming home?

Part 3: Tonga's Case

I have no wish to boast but I do believe that Tonga is implementing RPEIPP well and that is only happening because of political commitment. These positive developments occurred before my time, but I am grateful for them and am building on what have been achieved to date.

The challenges in Pacific education that were identified ten years ago are still with us today, and even though we can claim success for positive developments such as the establishment of PERF and Leadership Pacific, the fact remains that quality education in the region remains a

challenge as do access, equity, relevancy, and sustainability.

Tonga began by re-visioning education, at the core of which is the reclamation of its values, knowledge, and belief systems and its traditions, ways of life, languages, and history.

These were translated into policies and frameworks that guided and directed educational reforms. Nation-wide consultations were held to ensure that all stakeholders were active participants in the process.

Tonga has put in place the following:

1. A National Policy Framework to guide educational development and reforms.
2. A review of existing legislation and regulations and a re-drafting of the Education Act to include the new developments, such as the increase in the compulsory school age from 5 to 18; the new language policy; the registration of teachers; the financing of education, and curriculum requirements, etc.
3. Curriculum reform including:
 - i. A curriculum framework that clearly spells out the values, beliefs, ethos, knowledge systems, teaching and learning styles that are to be actively promoted in the new curricula for primary and secondary schools, and the outcomes to be achieved in each subject, and collectively at the end of students' schooling.
 - ii. An outcomes-based approach, where the child is the focus of teaching and learning.
 - iii. A language policy that has made Tongan compulsory for all students from ECE to Form 7 and where Tongan is the medium of instruction from ECE to Form 7 and where English is not taught until Class 3, and only orally.
 - iv. All subjects at both primary and secondary levels will incorporate Tongan values, beliefs, knowledge systems, etc.
 - v. Printing of more than 100 readers in the Tongan language with more to be printed in 2012.
 - vi. Publication of a monolingual dictionary.
 - vii. Innovative subjects such as Creative Technology and

- Movement and Fitness showcasing Tongan culture and practices.
 - viii. Assessment and evaluation being reformed to reflect the broader outcomes of education and student profiles complement tests scores to ensure that the spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being of students are also measured and reflected in reports.
 - ix. Use of alternative ways of assessment, such as greater use of practical and group assessments and performance.
- 4. Teacher Education:
 - i. Revamped the College beginning with staff –only those with Masters degrees or higher level qualifications can be appointed to the Institute.
 - ii. Defined the outcomes for all teachers to match the attributes for the Faiako Ma‘a Tonga (Teacher for Tonga).
 - iii. Provided scholarships for postgraduate work, and this year we have provided 15 scholarships to those who are completing their Masters by thesis to encourage a research culture, promote research skills, and increase knowledge in areas of need.
 - iv. Upgrade those with Dip.Ed. to B.Ed. Level through the provision of more scholarships.
 - v. Upgrade the qualifications of all untrained teachers and the programme to be completed by 2014.
 - vi. Upgrade all serving teachers to ensure that they have the attributes of the Teacher for Tonga.
 - vii. Established a research unit at TIOE.
 - viii. Established a journal called Faiako for the publication of research outcomes and papers.
 - ix. Establish leadership programmes for all teacher educators, all teachers, staff education systems, including senior students in schools.
 - x. Register all teachers to ensure they possess the attributes of the Tongan Teacher.
- 5. Financing Education:
 - i. Grants to schools have been established for all levels as means for improving teacher quality and students’

- outcomes.
 - ii. Established structures for teachers' salaries across all systems to promote equity.
 - iii. Adopted a sector-wide approach, which would allow us to have a better control of our priorities and directions in education.
6. Parental and Community Support
- i. Mobilisation of greater community engagement through the school-based management programme to promote greater ownership and more active participation in the process.

These are but a few of the positive developments that are happening in Tonga, and they are only happening because of the inspiration and support from RPEIPP, and I take this opportunity to thank Dr Seu'ula Johannson-Fua and her team at IOE and Dr Kabini Sanga for their work in education in Tonga and I urge other member states to make good use of IOE and its strengths to assist you in your own reforms.

It is my hope and prayer that RPEIPP will continue to grow and prosper in the next ten years, when we can return and say that we not only survived but have become mainstreamed in all education systems.
Tu'a 'ofa atu!

Reflections on a decade of the Rethinking Pacific Education Initiative

Laura van Peer and Ivy Abella

Abstract

This paper offers a brief overview of the impacts of the Rethinking Pacific Education Initiative by and for Pacific People (RPEIPP) over the decade since its inception. It summarises the findings of a number of earlier evaluative studies; identifies, reflects, and reports on the impacts of recent events and activities; and notes the increasing breadth and depth of influence as RPEIPP has become a fixture in Pacific education and leadership development.

Introduction

The Rethinking Pacific Education Initiative by and for Pacific Peoples (RPEI/RPEIPP) is an innovative development strategy which was initiated in 2001 by key Pacific educators (Konai Helu Thaman, ‘Ana Taufe‘ulungaki, Tili Afamasaga, John Niroa, Hilda Heine, Kabini Sanga, Kelly Kalolo, Unaisi Nabobo-Baba, Teweiariki Teaero, Ina Herman, Priscilla Puamau, Emery Wenty, and a number of other Pacific educators) and supported with an NZAID grant. This paper attempts to provide an overview of the impacts of RPEI/RPEIPP since its inception a decade ago. This has proven to be both an easy and a difficult task. There are certain challenges involved in collecting data about an initiative that does not advertise itself, has no operating “brand”, and that delivers its activities somewhat anonymously. The result is that often people who are engaged in activities that are RPEIPP-influenced have never heard of it. Therefore, as with previous evaluations, the ripple effect is difficult to accurately and comprehensively document and assess: the examples given are limited to what we know from our personal and professional networks, and anecdotally. We acknowledge that there are likely to be many more impacts than those we know about.

Previous evaluative reports and papers (Sanga & Holland, 2004; Sanga & Nally, 2002; Sanga, Niroa, & Teaero, 2003; Taylor, 2003; van Peer, 2006; van Peer, 2008) document and attest to RPEIPP's capacity to

- Generate excitement, engagement, motivation, purpose, confidence, energy, and enthusiasm
- Empower (individuals) through Leadership development, mentoring, support, encouragement and the utilising of Pacific processes, skills, and knowledge
- Foster relationships and reduce isolation via networking and advocacy
- Build research capacity via training and generate resources/publications
- Maximise participation including mobilising communities and building awareness; and
- Engage in and influence a unique donor/recipient aid partnership.

These earlier evaluative documents show that RPEIPP's perceived strengths, successes, and points of difference were due a number of unique characteristics: the nature of its communication processes, a commitment to resolving issues, the focus on people and processes, a deliberate facilitating of Pacific ownership and Pacific leadership, certain factors of time and timing, attention to the building of strong relationships, and active mentoring. Overall, RPEIPP's successes were attributed to its approach that puts Pacific ownership (people and processes) at the centre of its activity.

A kaupola of examples of impacts

By 2008, there was plenty of evidence that people associated with RPEIPP were purposefully, reflectively, and creatively applying their experiences and learning to a variety of work projects – and actively seeking opportunities to influence others and other contexts. The “Rethinking philosophy” was beginning to impact on a range of programmes, policy, research, and other activity in organisational, national, sub-regional, regional, and international contexts.

There is evidence that the wide-ranging nature of impacts at regional, country, institutional, programme, and individual levels has continued,

despite funding being stopped in 2008. Where did we find such evidence? Well, it seemed to be all around us: from the noticeboard in the Pacific room at He Parekerekere, Victoria University of Wellington, to various websites, the NOPE (Network of Pacific Educators) network, and on the bookshelves at home, in the office, and in the libraries of our institutions. It is not easy to categorise the impacts which often overlap and have required some artificial separation. The “levels” in which impacts are presented here have been selected for ease of presentation.

Regional level impacts of RPEIPP

For evidence of impacts at this level, one just has to take a look at the noticeboard in the Pacific room at He Parekerekere, where the photographs displaying activity for 2011 show a range of mentorship and ethics workshops for a wide cross-section of organisations including the Commonwealth Pacific Secretariat Meeting of Prime Ministers and Public Services (held in Rarotonga), University of the South Pacific senior management (held in Suva), Tongan professionals (held in Nuku‘alofa), staff of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (held in Suva), staff of Fiji National University, Ministry of Education (Fiji) and National University of Fiji (held in Lautoka), members of the Cook Islands community (held in Rarotonga), staff of Corpus Christie Teachers College (held in Suva), and members of the Auckland Leadership Cluster (held in Auckland). These activities involved a range of partners and sponsors including Fiji Ministry of Education, Fiji National University, Tonga Ministry of Education, USP Institute of Education, Victoria University of Wellington, Pacific Cooperation Foundation, University of Saskatchewan, and the Commonwealth Secretariat. As a result of these activities, further work is in the pipeline. Impacts at the regional level have also been evident in student presentations at DevNet conferences in Wellington in 2008 and Palmerston North in 2010. Furthermore, membership of the Network of Pacific Educators (an electronic “community”) stands at about 700 today and is growing.

In-Country Impacts

We have seen a number of reports prepared by Dr Seu‘ula Johansson-Fua and others on a range of topics from Tonga and other countries in which the RPEIPP influence in the approach taken for this work can be easily recognised. For example, the 2011 “Cultural Mapping, Planning and Policy: Tonga” report (facilitated by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and funded by the European Union); the 2009 “Education for Sustainable Livelihood in Nauru” (SLEP) report (PRIDE funded); and the 2009 “Tonga Police National Consultation”, conducted in collaboration with University of the South Pacific and funded by NZAID and AUSAID. These projects – largely designed, managed, and conducted by Pacific researchers – employed and refined indigenous research frameworks (such as Talanoa and Kato Alu): “With RPEIPP activity – particularly in the SLEP study – we were able to trial Talanoa extensively in Tonga. That is the first project in Tonga that I know of Talanoa being used in local communities. Before this, most use of Talanoa was in New Zealand with Pasifika communities and also used by Fijians and in Solomon Islands” (Dr Seu‘ula Johansson-Fua, personal communication, July 19th, 2010).

A number of National Leadership mobilisation events have also occurred at the country level, several of which have exposed whole new audiences to RPEIPP influence. In New Zealand there have been a number of events: a National Symposium in Porirua in 2009, a “Niu Tupu” mentoring workshop in Wellington in 2010, and a Symposium in Auckland in 2010. In November 2011, the Solomon Islands National leadership mobilisation conference was held in Honiara.

Institutional level Impacts

To guide its strategic direction, Whitireia Community Polytechnic (a tertiary institution located in Porirua near Wellington with a high ratio of Pacific students) recently commissioned and adopted a strategy for Pacific Education. The influence of RPEIPP is evident throughout and we are in a position to know that RPEIPP affected both the development process and the content of the document. For example, the “Tree of Opportunity’s vision that the main purpose of education in the Pacific

is the survival, transformation and sustainability of Pacific peoples and societies” (p. 3) is articulated in the strategy, and the authors acknowledge the encouragement, mentoring, and confidence they gained from their own engagement with RPEIPP activities (Falepau and van Peer, 2012). RPEIPP’s Impacts at the Teaching/Faculty Instructional level

We know about programmes such as those Dr Cherie Chu teaches at Victoria University of Wellington and how RPEIPP is embedded in these from level 1 to post-graduate studies. There are clues in the names of the papers: PASI 101 The Pacific Heritage; Kura 101 Cultural Politics of Education in New Zealand and the Pan-Pacific; Kura 341 Multi-ethnic education; Kura 342 Contemporary Issues in Indigenous Education in Aotearoa; Kura 404/504 Education for the indigenous peoples of the Pacific; Kura 401/501 Research as Praxis: Indigenous Perspectives.

Here is a recent sample of unsolicited feedback from one of Cherie’s students:

I just wanted to thank you for a fantastic course. It was an eye-opening experience...it was a privilege to be part of this small but zealous group of newly converted re-thinkers! Thank you so much for your personal example too...I was so impressed by the warm welcome you gave the summer scholars at the orientation meeting. You gave the other academic staff a taste of what your students experience in your classrooms – sincerity and encouragement (email to VUW cluster).

Clearly Cherie lives the mālie and the māfana for her students.

Further evidence of the ripple nature of RPEIPP impacts is represented by the 2011 publication, TokPiksa of Leadership Pacific: As seen through students’ eyes (Chu, Rimoni, and Sanga, 2011) compiled from the work of the students in Cherie’s level 2 course, Kura 242 – Pacific Nations Education. This is an example of a group of individuals who perhaps do not know about/have had no direct experience of RPEI, but whose stories were, in turn, inspired by those of the cluster in “Living and Leaving a Legacy of Hope: Stories by New Generation Pacific

Leaders” (Sanga and Chu, 2009). This is an excellent example of the ripple effect mentioned above.

Impacts Related to Academic Activities and Research

If you Google “Rethinking Pacific Education Initiative” you get about 138,000 results (although not ALL of these are about RPEIPP). A quick flick through the first few pages, however, shows links to various academic papers, as well as to PRIDE, NOPE, UNICEF, and even Amazon. As well as the in-country research activity (mentioned above), we know from our work in the university that RPEIPP has become a topic of interest for students: at Masters and PhD levels, we see where both the choice of topic and the approach to the research projects have been impacted by RPEIPP. Two examples are the PhD theses of Dr Cherie Chu (2009) and Dr Donasio Ruru (2010). Further to this, there is evidence of research tools and or Pacific Research Frameworks developed and refined in the Pacific for the Pacific context increasingly being applied in the New Zealand context and elsewhere.

Individual level and Leadership Pacific Impacts

Those of us who belong to cluster groups – such as the Victoria University students cluster – and those who subscribe to NOPE are frequently reminded of the impacts on individuals as people share their stories and experiences, their challenges and triumphs. At the time of writing there were 63 registered leaders on the website <http://www.leadershipspacific.org/>

Leadership development is a theme that runs throughout and is inseparable from RPEIPP at every level. Its ongoing impact on individuals deserves a paper of its own; there have been many examples evident in papers delivered at this symposium as at all the other various RPEIPP events. Leadership Pacific grew out of RPEIPP, which was for a number of years supported with NZAID grants. With this funding and since, a number of leadership development workshops were held for USP students from Solomon Island, Vanuatu, Samoa, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Tonga, and Fiji. As described elsewhere in this paper, other leadership and mentoring training has been undertaken for regional educators,

community, NGO and public officers, and many Pacific students in New Zealand.

Publications as Impact

Since the “Tree of Opportunity” was published following the 2001 Fiji colloquium, the generating of texts has been a deliberate RPEIPP strategy. Papers and presentations from national and regional symposia, workshops, and conferences have been regularly collated and published. The books that have emerged range from topic-specific (Sanga and Thaman, 2009), to country-specific (Sanga, Niroa, Matai and Crowl, 2004), to regionally informative (Sanga, Chu, Hall and Crowl, 2005; Sanga, & Taufe‘ulungaki, 2005), to training-specific (Sanga and Walker, 2005). The most recent publications include “Tohi Tokoni Ma‘a e Faiako Founga Fekumi: Research Manual for teachers” (Tonga Institute of Education, 2009); “Tokoni Faiako: Tonga Journal of Education” (Johansson-Fua, 2009); “Living and Leaving a Legacy of Hope: Stories by New Generation Pacific Leaders” (Sanga and Chu, 2009); “Re-thinking Education Curricula in the Pacific: Challenges and Prospects” (Sanga and Thaman, 2009); and “TokPiksa of Leadership Pacific: As seen through students’ eyes” (Chu, Rimoni, and Sanga, 2011). We know these books are highly valued and in use throughout the Pacific, including in New Zealand.

To consider the impacts of just one of these: we all have many stories about the positive impacts of “Living and Leaving a Legacy of Hope: Stories by New Generation Pacific Leaders”. This book appears to have influenced individuals, programmes, institutional activity, country-wide initiatives, and – even beyond the regional level – it is in the hands of Aboriginal leaders in Australia (and Cherie has ambitions of President Obama owning one too!). Here are a few stories of the impacts of this book:

- We have heard personally from an Auckland Family Court judge that this book is a valuable resource for him and his colleagues.
- An email message to the VUW cluster from a cluster member read, “Next week I meet with a family member teaching in a boys’ secondary school who has purchased our book and will be talking to the School Principal about getting the book for their school

library. I have been working on (other initiatives) to get these books into other secondary schools throughout the country via family members and friends who teach in the schools especially where there are high numbers of Pasifika students, but certainly not limited to them”.

- An email message shared by another cluster member said, “In the last month I have had the privilege of meeting a small group at Victoria University who are studying English here – a group of young “new generation” leaders from Burma. They are all students but some are also political activists and exiled from Burma by the Military junta/government. I was invited by their teacher to go and talk to them about our “Living and Leaving a Legacy of Hope” book... which they were reading in class. This has then prompted them to write their own stories of leadership.” The email included some of the stories, many of which were heart-wrenching.

Looking back and looking ahead

It may be asked – indeed it has been asked, surprisingly, by those close to RPEIPP – “What has changed as a result of RPEIPP? What has been achieved? Has anything been achieved? How worthwhile have our efforts been?” Perhaps this is not so surprising, after all, because reflection and evaluation have always been an integral part of RPEIPP’s process.

For those of us who have been involved, it is hard now to imagine a Pacific without the influences of RPEIPP which, we know, have penetrated far and wide. The “initiative” is now described by many as a “movement”. But while we celebrate what has been achieved, we also know that much remains to be done.

How will the momentum to be sustained? How do we move forward in the spirit of liberation, inclusion, and solidarity that RPEIPP and IOE envision? The evidence is that this occurs through careful attention to knowing what we do: that reflection and on-going conversations generate the insights and understandings that are important for sustaining excellence and for identifying the learning we need to better

negotiate the future.

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RPEIPP in Micronesia: Impacts and Lessons Learned

Hilda C. Heine and Masa-Aki Emeisochoi

Abstract

Since the launch of RPEIPP in Micronesia, the Rethinking Education in Micronesia (REIM) has furthered the agenda of rethinking education through research, through capacity building and through a number of developmental projects. Much work has been carried out in the Micronesian region, including work on traditional language, research on culture, research on traditional medicine, and a wide range of traditional knowledge. The impacts of the REIM have increased the appreciation for indigenous languages and culture and strengthened bonds and pride amongst Micronesians.

Introduction

This chapter will focus on several key milestones in the journey of REIM in the waters of Micronesia; the launching of RPEIPP in Micronesia, the RPEIPP in a sub-regional context, RPEIPP journeys and highlights by island country, feedback from stakeholders, impact of the movement, lessons learned in the past decade and looking forward to the future of the rethinking movement in Micronesia.

Launching of RPEIPP in Micronesia

In 2002 and in 2003, there were key presentations during the Pacific Education Conference (PEC) to put forward an RPEIP vision for Micronesian educators. This was only a year since the 2001 RPEI symposium. One would say that we were enthusiastic to take this vision to the North and to quickly sow the seeds of the rethinking movement. In 2004, Marshall Islands Ministry of Education hosted the first RPEIP conference for Micronesia, in Majuro. The conference launched the Micronesian RPEIPP canoe with the formulation of the Commission on

Education in Micronesia (CEM).

With the launch of the CEM, we advocated for the inclusion of indigenous knowledge, philosophies, and practices in the education of Micronesian children. We also offered guidance and support to individuals, groups, and agencies promoting and enhancing the integration of indigenous knowledge, philosophies, and practices in education of Micronesia. The CEM activities also promoted that each member of the CEM work as a catalyst for the RPEIPP initiative in their own country. Additional to the CEM, we also established the Micronesian Evaluator Group to promote and mentor indigenous Micronesian evaluators. The CEM also encouraged research activities, and to date this has included the RMI Education for Sustainable Development study and Cultural mapping and the Child protection baseline research (in collaboration with UNICEF).

Country activities

Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI)

The Ministry of Education sponsored two rethinking education conferences in 2007 and again in 2008. The first conference in 2007 was based on the theme “Ej Ju Ei Bwe’n Loñjat” which translates to “reading the currents to set a proper course for your canoe”. This was taken from the idea that traditional navigators could find their way over wide stretches of ocean far from land by studying the waves and current patterns. Subtle disturbances in the currents caused by out-of-sight islands/atolls informed the skilled navigator of this position and allowed him to make proper adjustments to lead the canoe and his passengers to their destination. The metaphor applies to education and the quest to “study the currents” and properly readjust the sails, or course of actions, as needed to meet needs of people.

Key outcomes of the conference centered on advancing the rethinking philosophy further in Micronesia. For RMI, it included a commitment to ensure that the Marshallese culture and tradition must be at the center of our education; education must be relevant, efficient, and effective; education must be holistic; education is a collective responsibility; all must be accountable for results; education must be equitable, gender

sensitive, and inclusive.

In the past years, several activities have taken place in RMI that highlights our commitment to the above principles. These activities have included a study on the impact of external aid in the RMI 2004-2005; Values research project (PERF funded) in 2008; MOE Social studies standards and curriculum revision based on the learning from the Values Research 2008-2009; RMI Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) study and Curriculum mapping (sponsored by UNESCO) 2009. Our activities also extended to include community-based events including the Annual Bōb (pandanus) Festival in 2008, Intangible Cultural Heritage Conference 2010, and other on ongoing school-based activities.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)

Several events have taken place in CNMI that have been influenced by the rethinking philosophy, including the following: a revised orthography has encouraged greater public usage of the Chamorro-English dictionary; a Chamorro language conference was also convened. Other activities in CNMI included a focus on traditional medicine and promotion of the cultural association through a traditional medicine symposium, published volume on traditional medicine and healers in three languages, increased knowledge/appreciation of plants and trees, and a series of workshops have been conducted on traditional medicine.

Guam

In collaboration with CNMI, several activities have taken place to promote the use of the Chamorro language and culture, including annual Chamorro language and culture conferences, annual Pacific islands Bilingual Bicultural Association conferences, and school and community-wide activities focusing on culture and language.

Palau

In Palau, the CEM was active in promoting the following activities: Palau-English dictionary, Palauan-Palauan Dictionary, Palauan

Grammar Textbook, new orthography mandated in schools, Palauan studies curriculum standards (language and culture), Language Commission, Association of Palauan Historians, and the Annual Women's conference (culture and practices).

Impacts

Since the first RPEIPP conference in Majuro in 2004 much has happened to provide new insights into our own ways of thinking and understanding; for example, as a result of the traditional medicine work, the rediscovery of words connected with nature, the spiritual world, the mind and the relationships between people and of people with the environment. Since the RPEIPP canoe arrived in Micronesia, we have gained strength and encouragement; there is a noticeable sense of pride and dignity among our people about us as a people. There has also been a significant sense of appreciation for indigenous language and culture – such as the mandated use of adopted orthography in several jurisdictions.

The rethinking philosophy has also impacted on programs, particularly in a stronger sense of ownership of education with the integration of values, skills, and knowledge in curriculum standards. This has included the setup of the Marshallese Studies program at the College of the Marshall Islands (CMI). In schools, the impact of the rethinking philosophy has included school-based programs and increased integration of values, knowledge, and skills in school curricula/activities such as are evident in Delap Elementary School, Mejrrok Elementary School, and Marshall Islands High School through the Jaññor Project.

The impact of the RPEIPP in the Micronesian region has been significant on multiple levels, but perhaps most importantly is the impact it has had on a more personal level as expressed by these key Micronesian educators:

From the Rethinking Education in Micronesia Conference, I have realized that it is very important for the RMI to continue the process of rethinking its own education system. That is why I have continued to work with others at promoting and encouraging 'rethinking' education processes to continue in

the RMI. (Stege, RMI, 2008)

There are several rethinking activities taking place in the region and in the CNMI as well. These include the emerging views among our people that our language and culture must be strengthened through projects and events that support our people to present their works, their ideas, and their creations in the communities. (Recebei, CNMI)

Since the first regional rethinking, I have become very mindful of the need to integrate our traditional knowledge and skills in whatever work I carry out. (Rilometo, Pohnpei) RPEIPP has also provided the opportunity for leaders and educators to rethink and reflect on the current education system we have today, and from the rethinking conference, RMIO was able to move forward to bring in our own values and concepts to the planning of the ministry. (Alik-Maddison, RMI)

Lessons Learned

The RPEIPP has also been an opportunity to reflect on our journey and much has been learned in the years since the first conference in Majuro in 2004. We have learned that systems (departments, ministries, universities) are hard to change – we have only been able to chip away at things. Funding sources have to be convinced about direction of education for change to take place. And more successful rethinking activities are taking place at the community level and informally rather than in formal settings/structures. We have also learned that school and classroom set ups are not equipped to accommodate transfer of local knowledge. But perhaps most importantly, we have learned to appreciate that teachers are key to ensuring that “rethinking education” occurs in the classroom.

On a more personal level, in the 10 years that I have been involved with the RPEIPP, I have undertaken a maiden voyage of validation of the beliefs, values, and identity of being a Marshallese. I have also gained a deeper appreciation of my own cultural knowledge and appreciation of

our indigenous perspective. This has also been a journey into leadership roles and rising personal commitment to indigenous issues. This has also been an opportunity to build new, and strengthen existing, linkages and professional relationships. In the years of being involved with the RPEIPP, I have on occasion been given the opportunity to mentor a younger generation of indigenous educators. But perhaps more importantly, it has given me time to talk story bwebwenato, about our development as people of the Pacific.

Beyond 2011

As we close our first decade, we look forward to another decade of furthering this journey, as we continue to carry out research and identify local epistemological assumptions, approaches to inquiry, conceptual frameworks and methodologies to anchor research and program development. As we move forward, we also look to develop Micronesian/Palauan/Marshallese/Chamorro Studies programs and centers at our local colleges and universities. We will look forward to more research, publication of books in our indigenous languages, mentoring of local educators and leaders, and indigenization of teacher education programs. As we look beyond 2011, we will put in effort to increase our political commitment to sustaining the RPEIPP philosophy.

When A Generation Reaps What Another Generation Sows

Cherie Chu

Abstract

Story telling is integral to practices in the Pacific Islands. This is how people teach one another. This is how specific learning takes place, on certain principles and values. People have said “How come I don’t know about this rethinking initiative?” Well, perhaps I need to tell a story so that it can be passed on. In my paper, I share my experiences of the Rethinking Pacific Education Initiative (RPEI). This is a personal story. It is a long story of ten years collapsed into 3000 words on paper. I discuss how I developed with the growth of RPEI. From the start I was a product of RPEI. In many ways, I “grew up” with RPEI. From my rethinking learnings, I provide a discussion on how this rethinking philosophy can be institutionalised with the experiences of university students. Thus, RPEI is described as a way of mentoring and passing on the knowledge of its philosophy. The story continues.

Introduction

I often announce (proudly!) to my education colleagues and students that “I grew up in the era of the Rethinking Pacific Education Initiative (RPEI)”. Unusual as this sounds coming from an already grown adult, I am then happily and passionately obliged to explain what I mean. On most day-to-day occasions an entire conversation can follow with exploding ideas of the possibility to educate, inspire the uninspired, and share the rethinking philosophy. Of course, I am not the only individual to have enjoyed the prosperity of rethinking. In the last ten years (2000-2010), hundreds of students in Wellington have been educated with a rethinking mind through my university courses. As I am a lecturer at Victoria University of Wellington, I find myself well positioned to educate a generation of thinkers, of learners, and educators to be the

rethinkers of their time. An individual cannot just pick up a textbook and become a rethinker. There is no prescriptive curriculum, nor is there one main method to learn to become a rethinker. Despite my own experience of being totally immersed in a process of learning, it has taken me several years to fully appreciate rethinking. But, as a lecturer, my time with my students is precious. They might be with me for only one trimester. However, it is this time that I embrace to educate them in the rethinking philosophy. In this paper I intend to show how RPEI has become institutionalised at Victoria University through mentoring, and the impact this has had on a generation of students. When a generation reaps what a generation sows.

The Influence of the Rethinking Pacific Education Initiative

Can I take you, as the reader, on a journey over a ten year period? Can I share some of the knowledge and the philosophy that I have learnt and carried forward to others? Can I stimulate your interest in RETHINKING? What are some inspiring experiences in education that have allowed you, and provided you with the courage, to move forward in your life? I am fortunate enough to be able answer this question for myself. My university student life experience at Victoria University was thrilling, well more thrilling than my school years. Educationally unproductive and emotionally traumatic years at secondary school in Wellington had left me scarred, with feelings of personal invisibility as well as distaste toward formal education and teachers. However, I could not wait to leave the college that I was imprisoned in and escape to the hills of Victoria University in Wellington.

Fortunately, at university I found the discipline of Education which led me to be surrounded by people who wanted to support me, not because they had to, but because they wanted to. Many of these supporters were fellow students and academic staff. Some were Pacific people, some were Māori, and some were Pakeha. And in the year 2000, Dr. Kabini Sanga turned up on the School of Education scene. Who was Kabini? Where was he from? The Solomon Islands? Many of us knew very little about Solomon Islands' culture and kastom. There were so many questions for us. But little did we students know that Kabini would become a significant life-changer for many of us who were going

about our day-to-day student business. Very soon, Kabini became my mentor and threw me opportunities (as mentors do) that I had never had before. For instance, in 2003, he casually told me that I would be the conference administrator for an international conference on “Rethinking Educational Aid in the Pacific” to be held in Fiji. I recall thinking “Dear me, what does this mean?” I had never ever organised such a large-scale initiative, let alone in the Pacific Islands. However, this challenge was part of Kabini’s master-mentoring plan. In the previous year, Kabini had taken a group of students from his Master of Education class to Vanuatu for the “Rethinking Vanuatu Education Conference” and had I played a small role in supporting the class even though I was working in a different department of the university. In hindsight, it was clear that my mentor was building the foundations for some of us to develop our skills, leadership, and knowledge through these rethinking initiatives. These foundations lie solidly in many of the students Kabini has mentored across the Pacific region.

Anyway, back to the Fiji conference on rethinking educational aid. One night after a conference session, I was sitting amongst some of the most influential educational leaders of the Pacific. They were meeting after a long day of discussions. Kabini had asked me to come along and listen to the discussion on how they saw the conference dialogue going and what they needed to do to shape some of the directions for discussion and strategy. It was an informal gathering and I sat quietly but listened very carefully. I observed that all of the leaders in the meeting were of a generation who had experienced an education system entrenched with colonial ideologies. There was frustration and emotion towards a system that had not delivered positive outcomes for Pacific people. This was a generation of leaders who were also familiar with one another. They had grown up together through the University of the South Pacific system that brought the region’s students together. They had seen a formal education system impact terribly on Pacific communities. This generation held a vast amount of knowledge from their unique experiences which no other group of people held. I suddenly saw myself as a younger person desperately wanting to learn from them. Many thoughts were racing through my mind. Why were they so emotional and angrily desperate for change? Why was I sitting with them? That was when Kabini spoke. He asked his colleagues, “Why have you not

brought your students with you to the conference?” Silence overcame the room. The reasons came steadily from the leaders. In frustration Kabini shook his head, saying, “No, that is not good enough”. It was this brief five-minute exchange between the leaders that inspired me and changed my thinking and practice – forever. This may sound like words for a fairy tale. But “forever” is now – the meeting remains crystallised in my memory and it has had a profound impact on my life. It is still changing me in 2012.

The world of rethinking was not a one-off initiative, nor it was it a policy, nor a programme, and definitely not a project. It was not defined by Western principles and it was not reliant on funding. “Rethinking” became a school of thought, a philosophy, a way of life. Change for Pacific education was necessary. There was no more time to wait for any government to make a major change. Rethinking change was represented in the ethos of appreciating the strengths of people and of communities, of not relying on external resources and people for advice, and of the development of younger leaders and assuming responsibility for their futures. The desperation of the education leaders spurred the birth of rethinking. Looking ten years and beyond into the future, they were worried that if something different did not occur, then their people would remain in the system that was continuing to spiral downwards with negative outcomes.

The main point that stood out to me from my learning was the mentoring of the younger generation. To what extent was this evidently available and happening? I had “clicked” and the light bulb was switched on in my mind. Kabini had taken me to this meeting because he wanted me to learn. His agenda was about transformation of lives. Anyhow, the question about mentoring remained in my mind till I returned to New Zealand. I did not do anything with this thought, but it remained with me. The following year I was offered a Pacific lecturer’s role in the School of Education. The role meant that committing to doctoral studies was a necessity. I was not short of a topic. I had that question in my mind – how do we mentor the next generation? How do I take what I have learnt from my mentor and transform the young ones around me, in my classes and in the community? Rethinking enabled me to demonstrate that doctoral studies and mentoring Pacific students were

partners. While I was studying for a higher degree, I was also gaining the momentum for transformative learning via mentoring relationships with my students. Within this journey, I was learning and gaining from the rethinking initiative. It was teaching me; and teaching me more than a textbook could teach me. I was learning from experience. Kabini's question "Why have you not brought your students with you to the conference?" was a poignant teaching tool. This question became the answer to the method of rethinking: Growing a new generation of leaders. Rethinking was focused on assuming responsibility for our own people. Instead of accepting that things happened to us, we had to do what we could do to create a better world. We reverted back to the strengths of people, rather than waiting for outsiders to tell us what to do. There were no barriers big enough to prevent action. Money was not to be a factor in our mind frame. A main message from RPEI is "Do not wait for money to fall from the trees before you act".

The University as space for mentoring Pacific leaders

"Why bother to mentor students at the university – they don't need it as much as the youth in the community!" This statement is one example of the comments I have faced in the past. Usually, the comments come from people who do not understand the realities of student life. There is a strong need to mentor Pacific students in the realm of leadership. There are absolutely millions of definitions of leadership. One merely has to google the term to find the different discourses on leadership: everyone has a perspective on it.

Leadership as understood through the rethinking lens is concerned with relationships of influence. Hence, my point here, leadership is contextual. I learnt that small but significant point from my mentor, Kabini Sanga, and this is a salient point, especially in terms of rethinking. The needs and humane concerns of a context help to define what leadership is about. The village in Vanuatu will have a leadership need which is different to leadership needs in Porirua, New Zealand. The one-size-fits-all approach to leadership becomes irrelevant.

For us immersed in rethinking, we agree and consistently reaffirm that mentoring and leadership go hand-in-hand. A leader must

mentor and a mentee must lead. This is what I meant with the topic: “A Generation Reaps What Another Generation Sows”. If we are to take the rethinking flame and light peoples’ flames with the rethinking passion and possibility, there needs to be a deliberate mentoring for leadership strategy. The intention is that we start with the people around us. We begin with this starting point because we see them regularly, we understand them, we hear their hopes, and we want to help them move towards their dreams.

In my time at the university as a tutor, mentoring coordinator, and student, I have seen a lot of struggle and heartache for Pacific students. I could put together an extensive list: from cultural barriers to learning challenges, through to a lack of confidence. Some of these issues prevent students from completing their degrees. I am not exaggerating the situation. So these are the reasons why we attend to the mentoring of Pacific students studying at the university.

As a mentor, I have been committed to ensuring that Pacific students make it through to where they cross the academic stage to receive their degrees. But there is also another cause, a bigger cause, wrapped up within the rethinking philosophy. Students should have the opportunity to participate in leadership development alongside their studies. They should have the opportunities that I have had, to grow and develop my skills and knowledge and to prepare for new horizons. The mentoring I had received from Kabini was visionary. It transformed me so that, in turn, I have been able to contribute to student development in a more purposeful way.

A Clustering of Students

Rethinking has made me passionate about many things. One of these is to look for the goodness in my students, enrich their experiences at the university and to bring out the different “gifts” each has that they may not be aware of. I ask reflective questions: What are they good at and try to let go of preconceived negative theories embedded in historical discourse about their grouping or affiliations. I am always in awe of my students. Their motivation and determination help to define my everyday outlook. They give me hope. These are the students who no

longer fit the status quo. They do not want to sit around with nothing to do. These young ones have passion to action change! And they crave the mentoring, almost in an addictive manner. Rethinking has taught me to search out areas of attention. Where are the places that I can personally serve? Who can I serve? Which communities need support? As a university educator, it is critical that I move beyond the concrete walls of the institution and into the heart of the community. Over the years, this has been a focus of the rethinking philosophy – for people to get on and take the initiative to do something about a problem and not wait for anyone else to do it.

For a mentor, knowing that a group of students can have tremendous influence is key to building a generation who will then go on to influence the next generation. In ten years, I have thoroughly enjoyed mentoring students who have taken up education courses. One of my long-time protégés has been with me for ten years. She often jokes with me that she is the protégé who I cannot drop. This relationship serves as evidence that mentoring relationships can be carried on after students have completed their studies. As I think about her influence, I see that a younger generation has already reaped what she has sown. The ripple effect of transformation has taken place as she has used her own educational roles to teach her students how to be the thinkers of their own destinies.

At Victoria University, I can say that we have successfully developed student “clusters” for mentoring and rethinking. These clusters have enabled students to become familiar with one another so that they can own their own knowledge and so they can be rethinkers together. In fact, this type of mentoring has institutionalised itself in various locations within the university. The institutionalisation has worked somewhat covertly and in some ways as an underground movement. Whatever manner with which it has spread its wings, its impact has been significant. In a recent graduate class I had, a reflective student told me and her student peers that she wished she had done my course before any other course in the faculty because it was there that she learnt to be a rethinker. Her attitude had changed, her outlook on what was important for Pacific communities shifted, and she could clearly see that rethinking was more powerful than an institutional policy which

professed to make educational differences for Pacific students. The rethinking approach in Victoria University has been reflected in two significant books titled “TokPiksa” (Chu, Rimoni, and Sanga, 2011) and “Living and Leaving a Legacy of Hope: stories by a new generation of Pacific leaders” (Sanga and Chu, 2009). In “Living and Leaving...”, the authors were university students studying in undergraduate and postgraduate classes and programmes that I instructed. Students wrote about their perceptions and experiences of leadership in their lives. These were deep personal insights into leadership, their heartfelt personal stories. Many of the stories embraced the influence of mentoring on their lives. When one thinks of throwing a stone into a calm pool, the moment the stone touches the water, a rippling of the water quickly transpires. One small wave creates another wave and another. If I take this analogy, the rippling effect has also occurred here, where one group influences and inspires another group, the books have been instrumental in influencing years of students at the university. As a lecturer, I ensure the students have access to the books and are able to utilise them in ways that they gain learning about rethinking and leadership for themselves, their families, and their communities. This process includes Pacific and non-Pacific students and anyone else who is interested in positive transformative changes in people. This is one part of the process of passing on knowledge of rethinking from one generation to the next within the university context. As a result of the legacy stories, the follow-on book, “TokPiksa” (Chu, Rimoni, & Sanga, 2011) is authored by students who were influenced by the leadership stories in “Living and Leaving...”. Thus, one cohort of students passed on their inspirations to another grouping of students, and this is the evidence for “When A Generation Reaps What Another Generation Sows”. *“We are a New Generation of mind. Being concerned, and in knowing, we act to improve. We may not be ‘there yet’ in terms of personal leadership development, but we are not waiting until we ‘are there’ before we act”* (Sanga & Chu, 2009, p.10).

When educators work with what they have around them, in particular with the people, there is the potential for great outcomes. The outcomes are that peoples’ lives change. While the students gain their degrees, they also gain a rethinking philosophy and mindset they can take as their own to change the difficult worlds around them. I have observed

students who have left my courses and then gone on to rethink in other university courses. They challenge the status quo, challenge the teaching methods, challenge the curriculum, and in some cases challenge the lecturers.

In the bigger picture, the rethinking philosophy has provided our mentoring relationships within a university with hope. Some mentoring programmes depend on financial resources from a pool of money. But mentoring relationships do not have to be recognised by the university management to be effective. Mentoring relationships do not require or depend solely upon a lot of funding. But if major tertiary institutions such as the university are serious about supporting Pacific students, it may do them well to be aware of, and look carefully at, the work that is making big impacts on peoples' lives – initiatives like Rethinking is one.

My journey as a mentor and as a rethinker leads me to develop mentoring beyond the barriers of the institution. My mentoring relationships are about everyday life. I am consistent and serious about mentoring as a way of living. I do not only engage in mentoring at the university; I “live” mentoring. I live the rethinking. These are the attitudes, values, and behaviours that give life to relationships. My own personal experience of mentoring and living with the rethinking philosophy has enabled me to pass on this most valuable knowledge. It is not just for “the now” but for a lifetime. My institutionalising of rethinking through the students is now on its course to bigger things! New generations of students and communities are exposed to rethinking – sometimes even without the actual terminologies being used. Thus, a generation reaps what a generation sows...

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More than a Philosophy! Personal Reflections on the impact of RPEI on Leadership, Research and Education in Pacific Contemporary Arts: A Tala.

Lingikoni Vaka 'uta and Cresantia Frances Koya

Fakaikiiki (Abstract)

Our involvement in the Rethinking Pacific Education Initiative discourse has informed our ways of conceptualising and approaching Pacific Contemporary Art development in the islands. For the last fifteen years we have been involved in Pacific Art and Educational discourse and pedagogy at the University of the South Pacific. The philosophical standpoint of the rethinking movement resonated with our own educational experiences and highlighted the need for awareness, training and education, leadership, dialogue, research, and publication in the arts. Moreover, it emphasised the post-colonial reality of hegemonic Western paradigms of conceptualising Pacific Art and artists. Pacific island artists and their works continue to be marginalised, relegated to the periphery of Contemporary Pacific Art discourse with artists of Pacific heritage living in diaspora claiming primary attention, development, and support from the global and often regional community.

This Tala presents our reflections, re-thinking, and journeying towards a Sustainable Arts Industry through purposeful efforts in arts education and training, capacity building, leadership and research in the arts, and the establishment of the Pacific Islands Arts Initiative in 2012.

Fakatapu (Acknowledgement)

‘Oku ma kole ke ma fakatulou atu he ha‘ofanga tapú ni, pea ‘oku ou kole ha ngofua ke fai ha vahevahe atu ‘i he kaveinga kuo fokotu‘ú. Ka ‘i ai ha lea pe ko ha fakakaukau ‘e tōnounou mei ho‘omou ‘amanakí, pea ‘oku ou kole ke ma hūfanga pē he mana mo e ‘ilo-poto fakapotopoto ‘a

hotau kau taki ‘i he Vaka Pasifiki.

We are acknowledging this sacred gathering and requesting permission and space to share and talk on the topic being raised. If there are words or thoughts that fall short of expectations, we take refuge in the mana and wisdom of our Vaka Pasifiki leaders.

Background: The Gift Of Kakala

In 1988 when Konai Helu Thaman first introduced Kakala as a personal philosophy and methodology for teaching and learning (Thaman, 2002, p. 10) she had no inkling of the profound impact her theorising would have on Pacific education and research. Kakala has grown into a comprehensive Pacific research framework (c.f., Johansson Fua, 2008, 2011; Johansson Fua, Manu, Takapauloto, & Taufe‘ulungaki, 2007; Manuatu, 2001) and has inspired the development of numerous Pacific research models and methodologies for Pacific Island scholars in the islands and in diaspora. In this paper, the authors acknowledge the gifting of RPEIPP as a Kakala of welcome extended by the founders to gather with a single mission “to work purposefully toward improving the quality of Pacific education”.

In the spirit of re-thinking, this article is deliberately presented in the phases of the traditional Tongan Kakala – beginning with the act of receiving or accepting the garland, Tali. We thread our personal journeys through the re-thinking of leadership, research, and education and reflect on how this has impacted our efforts in the area of Pacific Arts and Culture through the phases of the Kakala framework – Teu (preparation), Toli (gathering), and Tui (threading). We conclude by preparing to Luva (re-gift), discussing the concepts of Mālie and Māfana as our driving force and context for the establishment of the “Re-thinking Pacific Island Arts Initiative”.

Tali

Roots of Acceptance and Affirmation

Our journey with RPEIPP began in 2005 with a symposium at USP

Laucala campus and later at a Training of Trainers leadership programme in 2008. The invitation to observe and participate is interpreted as Tali – the process of receiving and acceptance of any acknowledgment, work, responsibility, or other cultural protocol in order to assert affirmation. While traditionally, this affirmation is culturally expressed through material reciprocity, in this context, the highest reciprocity we could pay to the founders is continuing the work of the RPEI leaders and in our case, expanding the movement and applying these to the arts in the areas of leadership, research, and education.

In retrospect, we acknowledge the disempowering experience of Western style schooling – an experience that the RPEI philosophy of for and by Pacific peoples spoke to and resonated with what we held to be true and worthwhile. The movement provided the answers to questions that we had not yet found the words to articulate. And, it was through engaging with the founding group and members that we found the ideology of possibility and hope. In accepting the garland of responsibility, the mana of the elder-guides kindled māfana and a sense of obligation. We began to see that if we ourselves, as Pacific peoples, did not assume responsibility for ourselves we should not expect anyone else to do the same.

Teu

Empowerment

The early phase of our engagement with RPEI was symbolic. Accepting the call to be part of something bigger than ourselves – the commitment to a vision for a better Pacific – also provided the space to remember our childhood stories, genealogies, and cultural experiences, long relegated to the past in our quest for a Western-style education. The power of the written and drawn word became significant through our engagement in academia and the arts. If knowledge is power, whose knowledge and what power are we purporting to “empower” with? This burning question fuelled our determination to really re-think what we were doing and how, and more significantly, for what purpose. Unbeknown to us, we were increasingly analysing and critiquing development in the Pacific using the critical lens of values theory and were continually

alarmed at the values dissonance that was, and is, glaringly apparent.

Listening to and sharing life stories and ideas about education, research, and leadership is perhaps the most enriching and affirming experience in the life of an emerging Pacific scholar. This experience was heightened because we had the added advantage of getting to know our “elder-guides” on a personal basis: a mentorship model that is specific to RPEIPP – we were able to see the full person and not just “read” academic reflections. The lived examples of leadership through the Leadership Pacific Initiative (LP), various re-thinking activities, the establishment of the Pacific Education and Research Foundation (PERF), and online Network of Pacific Educators (NOPE) demonstrated a “living and leading by example” philosophy that challenged the status quo and inspired us to want to do more.

Responsibility

It became apparent that we needed to think of ways to empower and nurture others’ development. The symbolic kakala of welcome may have legitimised our presence within a privileged space of scholarly discourse, but, as in all things Pacific, with privilege comes responsibility. We quickly learned that, as we drew from the strength and knowledge of the first and second generation of Pacific thinkers, we, too, were assuming responsibility in “keeping the fire”.

The critical role of “political” will and the general absence of leadership in the arts was a reminder that the onus is not only on like-minded Pacific Island scholars, but also on our governments and institutions – both national and regional – to provide necessary facilities and resources, and to facilitate relevant avenues for arts education, development, and dialogue. There is a dire need for transformative leadership by artists and educators willing to take on the role of growing the movement. We also note the urgency for ethical institutional leadership that recognises the social transformative role of education and views the arts as a potentially viable industry. It is the general absence of this leadership that continues to drive much of our collaborative efforts in the arts.

Ownership

RPEI offers a cultural approach affirming Pacific worldviews; it advocates a balanced blending or hybridisation that draws from Pacific ways of knowing, learning, being, and doing, and examines ways to blend these with relevant mainstream thinking and practice. It is mindful that the dominant education and research paradigm is a hegemonic Western perspective premised on and bounded by histories, philosophies, and contextual realities that are not our own.

In view of this and the alienating schooling experience which continues to “fail” large populations of Pacific youth, RPEI demands a deconstruction, reflection, and reconstruction of these paradigms through an active re-thinking process that legitimates, validates, and gives Pacific “voice” to the scholarly discourse on quality Pacific education and research. Through a reflexive action-driven re-thinking, Pacific peoples may begin to reclaim ownership of their realities. Ultimately, the mana (energy) of the movement is shared and grown through this notion of empowering each other by allowing Pacific thinkers to assume and assert ownership, actively and pro-actively participating, and working collectively towards sustainability in education – a pedagogy that we purposefully apply in our work in the arts.

Mana

The formative stage of our conscientisation (Freire, 1970) was marked as continuously shifting between each of these phases on a continuum that began at one end with acceptance and entry point into the RPEIPP conversation, and, at the other, our own efforts in moving the vision forward. After much thinking, reflection, questioning, affirmation, doubt, re-affirmation, and re-thinking, the transition from mentee to mentor was realised in the culmination and advocacy of the values, knowledge, and skills acquired. Self-realisation brought to the fore the primary foundation of leadership-for-change, that of “servitude”, highlighting the collective and individual responsibility of “giving back”. It is at this stage of our growth that we present this paper as an affirmation of our commitment to the re-thinking and a strong desire to actively participate in the furthering of its philosophy and methodology

in the Pacific Islands. Filled with resolve, we move into the purposeful processes of Toli and Tui specifically towards a re-thinking of Pacific Island arts.

Toli – The gathering



Vaka'uta 2004, Toli Ink on Paper

Our experiences in education and the arts are the result of involvement in art practice as artists and through non-formal and formal arts education. It is grounded in our individual creative and cultural experiences of our respective upbringings where traditional art forms were a part of daily cultural practice. The initial euphoria of exploring Pacific arts at USP was soon replaced by awareness of the wide-reaching and, in many ways, embedded Western perceptions and influence on art in the Islands. This – coupled with the lead author's ten-year residency at the Oceania Centre for Arts and

Culture (OCAC) under the directorship of the late, influential scholar and re-thinker in his own right, Professor Epeli Hau'ofa – kindled a passion for the reclaiming of Pacific Island arts.

The recognition of New Zealand diasporic art as “Pacific” art inevitably means that Pacific art produced in the Islands continues to be marginalised and neglected. New Zealand Pasifika artists have at their disposal structures and systems that provide opportunities for training, education, and development. In the Islands, the situation continues to be a disempowering one, with few talented artists able to thrive in a highly competitive and mostly dysfunctional system of unstructured, disconnected, and sporadic support. Hau'ofa's notion of Oceanic Art in his establishment of the Oceania Centre at USP provided an opening for conversations about art and artists' needs in the Islands and sustained

the discourse during his term as Director.

Thaman, Taufe'ulungaki and Sanga, the founders of RPEI, called for a re-thinking of education and the role of culture in epistemological and pedagogical discussions critical to reclaiming and redefining “quality” Pacific education for Pacific Island children. Similarly, Hau'ofa recommended a re-thinking of art practice. He argued that it was not acceptable to simply duplicate heritage art forms such as those produced in the cultural communities and label them Contemporary Pacific Arts; nor was he interested in Pacific Island artists “mimicking” Western art forms. His vision was one in which Pacific Island artists felt free to create their arts grounded in who they were, representative of where they came from and the cultures that they represented.

Our own creative journeys and voices that had emerged through visual and literary arts had always been imbued with our personal cultural stories of self and community and by engaging with the ideas of the early RPEI-thinkers, we found synergy. The gathering of ideas and stories that we “picked” from them nurtured our own re-thinking and development of our own ideas and pedagogical tools.

Critique is an important part of the gathering process and through our respective experiences and projects, we found leadership, research, and education were sorely lacking in the Pacific Island arts discussion. Whereas Hau'ofa's style of “free-creative-space” nurtured and allowed the creative spirit to breathe and find wings, the system – or lack thereof – imposed very rigid paradigms of what comprised art and who an artist should be. Selective “picking” and sifting through these paradigms took up a large part of the process and remains a challenge.

For many, the idea of the talented, unschooled, struggling artist presents a romanticised view of an enlightened, creative spirit who lives only to create and many an art collector would take much pride in sharing a story of a wonderful piece that s/he acquired at a “bargain” from a wonderfully gifted youth who “had no idea” of the potential value of his/her work. On the flip-side, within the artist community, the lack of art systems, standards, regulations, and critics, means that “anything” could, and does, go at whatever price the artist may “feel like” ascribing

to a work.

Another on-going concern is the general lack of art-ethics. Art-derivatives began to take the form of blatant plagiarism and the politics of art for livelihoods and survival soon reared its ugly head. Where questions were raised, so-called “leaders-in-the arts” shied away from the discussion and quickly diverted their attention to other more comfortable conversations such as providing a “market-style” stall at regional meetings, where artist-vendors could try to sell their wares, seeing no harm in relegating the artist to little more than a street seller. Another issue is the general unavailability of proper exhibition spaces and funding for art development workshops and training. In many cases, where new and emerging artists demonstrated raw talent, communication and ICT skills were lacking, as was knowledge about how to access funding, training, residencies, and the like. Where the need for workshops and development was raised, the same groups of artists continued, and continue, to dominate these forums and opportunities thereby disadvantaging emerging artists.

Further to this, the lack of regional outreach in the identification and development of Pacific Island artists beyond Fiji remains a contentious issue. George (2005) laments the failure of the Oceania Centre which, “has not lived up to its expectations as a central, regional focus for the arts” (p. 133) and comments that the “centre [whose] purpose [was] built to generate dynamism has failed to gain any traction” (Ibid). As insiders to the conversations at USP, the desire to reach out was evident but, due to funding issues, opportunities to do so remained elusive. To date, the vast majority of artists housed at the centre are Fijians who began their time there during the Hau‘ofa era in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

It is saddening to note the lack of development vision which prevents new and emerging artists to benefit from that regional art space. It is also disheartening that fewer than ten Pacific Island artists from outside of Fiji have been based at the centre, with the lead author – being the longest-standing artist in residence – responsible for capacity building and mentoring of new artists over the 1998-2008 period. Similarly, the USP Oceanian Gallery, opened in 2011 has yet to exhibit a Pacific

exhibition featuring the art works of non-Fijian artists. The lack of regional presence and visibility is one that is heavily dependent on funding, “political will”, and personal interests.

The critical reflection and selection of Toli has shown that ideas, dreams, and philosophies must translate into practical applications if transformative change is the end goal. Drawing on these experiences, the three main areas of concern in our re-thinking of the arts are transformative leadership, Pacific context-driven research, and forms of arts education that employ Pacific concepts in production, dissemination, and consumption of the arts.

RPEI presents the opportunity to consider the ways by which these may come about in order to move purposefully toward a sustainable future for the arts in the Islands. George (2005) reminds us that failure to take ownership and “author[ship] by the indigenous” (p. 134) gives credibility and legitimacy to the outsider objectification of Pacific art forms. At present the “experts” in things Pacific or Oceanic tend to come from the larger colonial countries. How often have we seen doctoral candidates putting out publications of what started as research as coffee table books that brand them as the authority of Oceanic Art (Ibid)?

Tui – Threading ideas and stories



Vaka'uta 2004, Tui Ink on Paper

RPEI’s re-thinking of Pacific leadership, Pacific education, and Pacific research has informed our conceptualisation of Pacific Island Arts and we have attempted to apply this in art education with artists, youth, teachers, and various stakeholders. Together, we explore the current situation, identifying gaps, challenges, and opportunities as well as promote the re-thinking as a critical component to developing the arts industry and education. Threading our stories and the stories

of other artists and art educators, we note the marginalisation of Pacific arts in basic education and at tertiary level in the Islands indicates a need for Pacific leadership integrated into every aspect of formal and non-formal arts education and research. The fact that there is a dearth of arts research by Pacific scholars and artists in the Islands is testimony to this. Leadership Pacific provides a model on which the re-thinking of Pacific Island arts leadership may take shape outside of personal agendas and the individual quest for recognition. This transformative leadership model of empowerment and mentorship is critical to bringing about transformative change.

In response to this, we constructed a pedagogical approach to the dissemination of the re-thinking of arts philosophy and practice by example in order to generate interest and commitment. The aim of this undertaking was to purposefully select Pacific lenses through which to view leadership, research, and education in the arts. In the interest of brevity, we limit our discussion to three examples. These are art workshops and symposiums; development of teaching materials for the mainstreaming of arts education; and the establishment of a re-thinking Pacific art in the Islands collective.

The re-thinking of art place and space led to the realisation that there was, and is, a lack of safe spaces, and critical dialogue, combined with commitment and investment. Urged on by the ever-present question “if we don’t do it – who will?” the core components of workshops that have been facilitated include introducing the idea of Pacific Island arts as valid and significant. Programmes include deconstructing the dual challenges of Western roots of Contemporary Art and Schooling in the context of current art practice and thinking. Another important area of discussion that generates a lot of interest is the issue of internal tensions – that is, Pacific Islanders, ourselves, perpetuating the undervaluing of indigenous knowledges and art forms and promoting Western art ideals and/or tourist market-driven approaches to the production and dissemination of contemporary art.

This non-formal approach to art education emphasises the power-driven, value-laden art discussion and participants are often surprised to find that their own perceptions of art and arts education are premised on Western

ideals of aesthetics. Workshop participants are often uncomfortable when they realize that they have a part to play in propagating this non-Pacific value of aesthetics and take great interest in exploring a Pacific values approach to re-thinking what art currently is, and what it could be in terms of “owning” and “directing” their own ideas about Pacific art. Experience has shown that most of the art produced is a direct derivative of what is found in the West, because artists remain concerned about the market; what “sells”. Essentially, the question of livelihoods is an issue that continues to challenge the re-thinking dialogue.

It is noted that there is little literature in Pacific Art and Culture discourse, and what literature exists is dominated by non-Pacific Islanders writing on traditional arts (usually termed crafts) and contemporary arts focusing on diasporic New Zealand Pacific Arts and artists. More troubling is the lack of Pacific Island scholars writing on Pacific Island art and cultural practice; Teweiariki Teaero stands out in this regard.

In terms of art production, most art produced is reflective of that found in the West. In his opening address at the James Harvey Gallery in Sydney, Australia featuring the works of a number of Red Wave Artists from OCAC, Hau‘ofa (2000) argued, “We are not interested in imitating (Western art) and asking our artists to perform dances for tourists. It is time to create things for ourselves, create and establish standards of excellence which match those of our ancestors”. Hau‘ofa’s concern calls into question our own resilience in pursuing authentic voice and expression through the arts.

In terms of art development and mentoring at OCAC in the late 1990s and early 2000s, Hau‘ofa procured the services of acclaimed artists, New Zealand-born Niuean John Pule and New Zealand-based Tongan Filipe Tohi, to facilitate workshops for artists at USP. Evidence of the Western paradigm of thinking is the outcome of the Pule workshops in which he explained the “grid-system” of construction in his painting derived from Polynesian tapa grid-systems. When other artists including the lead author later applied this method, it was interpreted as a Pulean style rather than the cultural derivative that the artists had drawn on from their own cultural knowledge and practice of tapa making. Green (1979) argues that this “border/in-fill style is as old as Lapita culture

itself going back around 3000 years” (in Gell, 1996, p. 95). Gell further notes that in post-Lapitan Oceanic art styles “there are consistent design principles” including the use of a grid “with designs organized according to the ‘zoning’ or ‘compartment-making’ principle” (Ibid). Tongan ngatu and Samoan siapo are the best-known examples of grid-system tapa construction that inform this style of painting. The reductionist approach ascribes credit to Pule, whereas a deeper cultural analysis would show that some artists are holistically applying their own cultural voices through the deliberate use of styles, cultural motifs, metaphors, stories, and ideals in their works.

Despite efforts to develop a “Pacific” thinking of art, the dominant hegemonic perspective is continually promoted by institutions, seen in workshops facilitated by these as recently as 2011 promoting still life painting of coconut trees, breadfruit trees, portraitures, and the like. The re-thinking movement compels us to move beyond mere complacency and highlights the need for political will fuelled by the knowledge that it is only through a “will-to-power” that change will come.

In 2010, an OCAC Tonga outreach programme was held in conjunction with the Kava Kuo Heka Festival, under the directorship of the second author. The performance leadership of Allan Alo coupled with the musical talents of Calvin Rore and Damiano Longaivou and creative writing of the second author brought the stage production “A Love for Life: Silence and HIV” to Nuku‘alofa. A visual arts workshop and art exhibition was facilitated by the lead author, and a teachers’ workshop on the use of arts in the application of a culture-sensitive, faith-based approach to the teaching of sexual and reproductive health in Tongan schools was conducted at the USP Tonga campus. These three initiatives were developed using a cultural approach challenging the culture-deficit and culture-neutral approach usually adhered to in environmental and health advocacy programs. Initial misgivings about reactions to the stage production were quelled by the overwhelmingly positive responses and emotive reactions of those in attendance including students, teachers, members of the wider community, and representatives of the royal family. Additionally, the production recording was aired on Tongan television three times over the next two months with much positive response to the emphasis on culture, family, and faith rather than

sexuality and sexual behaviour.

The ten-day visual arts workshop on Climate Change and ensuing exhibition titled *Ko e ngaue ‘a tangata mo e ‘oho mai ‘a Natula* (The work of man and the assault of Nature) had considerable impact in that it was hosted at the Tongan National Cultural Centre and was the first of its kind in Tonga. The workshop was conducted bilingually and drew on the cultural experiences and indigenous knowledge of the participants. Three artworks were selected and exhibited at the “Islands, Oceans and Skies – Creativity and Climate Change International Conference” exhibition held at USP, with one of the art pieces, *Sunday School Survivor*, by Tevita Latu drawing the most attention at that international event. An evaluation of the Tonga workshop and exhibition indicated that having a Tongan facilitator made an impact in that participants felt more at ease and inspired to value their own cultural context and knowledge base as the foundation for their artistic creations. At the time of writing Tevita Latu had just held a solo exhibition in Nuku‘alofa at which he had sold all of his artwork proving that, with awareness about the arts, local artists may earn a living from their skills.

In the rethinking of Arts Education, the authors have been engaged in a Mainstreaming Education for Sustainable Development through the Expressive Arts initiative in collaboration with the Fiji Ministry of Education and the Fiji Arts Council since 2011. This project was born out of an idea in 2010, developed by the second author and Adi Meretui Ratanabuabua, then Principal Cultural Officer at the Department of National Heritage, Culture and the Arts, Ministry of Education. The initiative focuses on visual arts and the performing arts at primary and secondary school and emphasises the need to draw from cultural contexts and indigenous knowledge bases. The writing of teacher manuals has brought together a number of experienced local art practitioners in order to shift thinking about arts education away from an academic examination-oriented curriculum to an interactive, process-oriented art curricula. The process has not been without challenge but presents an opportunity to re-think the way in which arts education is conceptualised, developed, and implemented with the support of the Ministry of Education.

Similarly, an art symposium facilitated by the School of Education in April 2012, supported by the United States Embassy in Suva, and in conjunction with the Fiji Arts Council, brought together for the first time, artists, teachers, and institutional representatives to dialogue on the state of the arts in Fiji. This workshop was evaluated as “the best” that most participants had attended in that the re-thinking of Arts in Fiji had never been done in this way – bringing together a history of Pacific art, through contemporary practice, the roles of art institutions as well as the significance of intellectual property discussions. As in the Tonga example, participants expressed the desire and need for further workshops and symposiums to enable a greater collaboration and active participation in the re-thinking of arts dialogue.

Luva – Towards Mālie and Māfana

Acknowledgement, Gratitude, and Responsibility



Vaka'uta 2004, Luva Ink on paper

In our efforts to continue the re-thinking movement, we have come to a place of reasoning that meaningful dialogue with the wider Pacific community, political will, investment, and ownership, are critical components for the development of Pacific models of good practice in both education and the arts. Despite the challenges of social, political, and economic vulnerabilities of Pacific Island Countries as Small Island Developing States, it is essential to establish foundations for systemic structural development and change. A viable Pacific Art

industry can be nurtured by employing Pacific epistemologies while selectively adapting and engaging with Western Contemporary Art discourse. While Pacific Island artists who have migrated benefit from established systems in countries such as New Zealand, Australia, and

the United States, the training and capacity building of Pacific Island artists through non-formal education is identified as key to ensuring integration into the global Arts scene.

It is in this context that the idea to establish a Rethinking Pacific Island Arts Initiative for and by Pacific Peoples was first presented by the lead author at the 2011 Vaka Pasifiki Symposium “Celebrating a decade of re-thinking” held at USP’s Laucala campus in Suva. In April 2012, the idea was revisited and a core-group set up comprising the authors; Fiji-based, Solomon Island musician Calvin Rore; and three Fiji counterparts, Damiano Longavau, Vitalina Nabola, and Mary Daya. The six-member core group is currently working towards establishing itself as a working group through which to facilitate further dialogue, workshops, symposia, research, and publications.

The group is of the collective view that the rules of regional and glocal engagement (Merowitz, 2005) underscore the need for academically qualified Pacific Islanders to assume responsibility for art development. Glocality, simply defined as thinking globally, acting locally is explained by Merowitz (2005) as a new state of consciousness in which we are both inside and outside of place. Whether we like it or not, we are global citizens and our ways of thinking, knowing, and engaging with the world are deeply influenced by the global perspective. In line with the re-thinking, it therefore becomes imperative that Pacific voices are given platform to participate in the shaping of our world. To this end, it is significant that all members of the group are currently working towards postgraduate qualifications in the areas of Pacific Arts, Culture and Development. We believe that this leverage provides a space within which to develop a strong Pacific Island art voice critical to the development of Pacific Island art discourse in the region.

In summary, we assume some responsibility for the new decade of re-thinking and we affirm our commitment to the vision that Vaka Pasifiki has given us – the pursuit of hope and purpose. We are responsible for a new journey and so begin to weave a new kakala – a garland of welcome to a new generation of Pacific Island thinkers who will seek the blessing of the elders and set sail a second Vaka that will map a course that brings art, culture, and spirituality back into our learning

systems.

Just as the first Vaka set sail ten years ago, we too set sail in search of a new horizon inspired by the Mālie of those initiatives that have inspired us through māfana to commit to the journey. It will be in the worthiness (Mālie) of our efforts that we may hope to create māfana (excitement, enthusiasm) and critical mass in a new generation of re-thinkers who will, in turn, be inspired to dare to hope and work towards a collective dream where we may create the determination to develop a Pacific Island arts movement within the broader RPEIPP.



Vaka'uta 2001, Kaivai Ink on Paper

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Kakala Research Framework: A garland in celebration of a decade of rethinking education

Seu‘ula Johansson Fua

Introduction

Have you ever seen a group of women sit down to string a few garlands? Usually, it looks something like this. Picture a group of older women sitting on a mat under a tree: sprawled around them are scented flowers, usually carefully wrapped with some piece of cloth, a variety of needles, and strings of *fau* (stripped from bark of the *fau* tree). Buzzing around them would be children of different ages, who would be venturing out to different gardens throughout the village collecting flowers and leaves for the women to carefully string together into a *kakala*, a garland. As with everything else in Tonga, each *kakala* is ranked as each flower and design used in a *kakala* are ranked. It is a communal process that demonstrates collaboration, sharing of resources and the passing of skills to the next generation. But at the same time, it is a process with a distinct focus of preparing a designed garland for a particular occasion and with a definite person in mind. It may seem from afar to be disorganised and chaotic, but it is purposeful, strategic, and with meticulous attention to fine detail.

The original *Kakala* framework was put together by Professor Konai Helu Thaman as an articulation of her conceptualisation of teaching and learning. Professor Konai Thaman and others have written extensively on the original *Kakala* framework. The original *Kakala* framework gave Pacific students an opportunity to articulate theories from their perspectives and to recognise Pacific world views in their thinking. The original *Kakala* framework, in a way, opened the door for others; it encouraged other Pacific academics to take courage and conceptualise from their distinctive world view recognising and giving value to Pacific philosophies, values, and customs. The original *Kakala* was an example of how it may be done. The beauty of the original *Kakala* was

its apparent simplicity but complex underlying structures. The original Kakala framework led the way for others, including the *Vanua* and the *Iluvatu* frameworks from Fiji, the Tivaevae framework from the Cook Islands, and the Lakalaka Educational Policy framework and the *Langa fale ako* Teachers Professional development framework, both from Tonga.

The *Kakala* Research Framework, as it is today, was put together by Professor Konai Helu Thaman, Dr ‘Ana Taufeu‘ulungaki, and Dr Seu‘ula Johansson Fua with additional ideas from the work of Dr Linita Manu‘atu. It was two senior Tongan academics sitting to string the garland, with one younger Tongan academic gathering garlands, including flowers from Dr Manu‘atu’s garden, upon instructions from the two senior academics. We started with the original *Kakala* processes of Toli, Tui, and Luva and we completed the *Kakala* research framework with the addition of Teu, Malie, and Māfana. In some ways, the process of stringing the *Kakala* research framework was very much like that of any other group of women making garlands. For me, as the apprentice, it was an exciting process of re-thinking about education, about research, and about being Tongan. It was my own personal re-education as I worked with these two academics in search of a research framework that would capture the reality and the truth about our world view. The *Kakala* research framework was a space that would allow us to be who we are, with all of our insights, knowledge, experiences, and inherited gifts and to position ourselves where we belong without shame or pretence. It is from this position as a researcher that we can do justice to our world view and to present an accurate account of what and who we really are.

Rationale for a new research framework

In 2006, the Institute of Education took up a research project, funded by NZAid at the time, to study how education can help alleviate poverty. It was rumoured that the project had been given to the University of the South Pacific (USP), but no one really wanted to conduct the study. As the “new kid on the block” I was given the project with instructions to “redesign and make it look Pacific”. I was encouraged to think like a Pacific person and make sure that the proposal reflected the reality

of our context; to re-conceptualise from my context. This took many meetings with the Institute of Education's director at the time, Dr 'Ana Taufe'ulungaki, and with Professor Konai Thaman; many meetings of re-educating, re-conceptualising, re-thinking, and re-designing the whole research process and the key variables of the study. We wanted a research approach that would capture the reality of Pacific people's livelihoods, a research approach that would find answers rather than further describe problems. So, rather than looking for more problems, we turned the research approach to focus on what strategies and processes are currently working; how is education being used to alleviate poverty and how are people living sustainable livelihoods. From experience, we collectively knew that there were many people living perfectly sustainable livelihoods in the Pacific, with less than US\$1.00 per day (the common criteria for defining poverty). But how do we capture this reality? And more importantly, as Pacific researchers we asked how we could uphold the honour of our people in the research process. We were certainly not keen on asking people to "describe their state of poverty". To re-think the whole notion of "education" and "poverty" required us to re-conceptualise from our own source of knowledge system. It required us to dig deep into our own Tongan knowledge system, values, and experiences. To think like a Pacific researcher, you must first learn to think as a Tongan (in my case), or as a Fijian, a Māori Cook Islander, a Malaitan or Ni-Vanuatu; to think first from your own cultural context via the language of the place with questions such as: What does this mean in my context? How do we do this in my village? Or, Do we do this at all? Why? and Why not? Re-conceptualisation is a process of thinking from your context, not about translating some foreign ideas into your context – that is just translation. To re-conceptualise is to dig deep before you can emerge with old traditional knowledge but newly crafted in a contemporary setting. This is in line with social constructivism, where we are given space to think from our own context, to construct the world as we know it from our experiences, observed facts, and reality.

Once we started re-conceptualising the key variables of the study – "poverty" and "education" – we knew that the traditional Western methods of research would not be sufficient to capture a traditional knowledge system that was most often difficult to access. We needed to

gain participants' trust, and to value their time and skills and willingness to share their traditional knowledge system with our field researchers. We need to widen the scope, to open up our traditional ways of doing research, so that we could fully capture the traditional knowledge system of our participants. We needed a research approach that would enable our participants to trust us, to see the study as useful for them, and that would honour their knowledge, skills, and values that we would ask of them. We needed a research approach that would fully recognise their values, their beliefs, and their way of life.

The traditional knowledge system for each of our Pacific cultures is located within a definite paradigm, with its own particular philosophy, processes, and structures. Often, these traditional systems are treated at most superficially, and almost always studied through the eyes of non-Pacific researchers. From as early as the 17th century explorers' recordings of our cultures, our traditional knowledge systems have been partially understood at best, misrepresented, and often relegated to knowledge that is "interesting" with little value to contemporary life. Yet, we who live in the region know that there are villages and island communities that are thriving and living sustainable livelihoods by utilising the skills and knowledge – traditional knowledge systems – passed down from generation to generation.

We needed a research framework that would no longer confine and bind us to pretend that we are outsiders in our own context. The research framework that we wished to design would allow us as insiders to be insiders, studying our own people, our own knowledge system. A research framework was needed that would allow us to access and capture the authenticity of our traditional knowledge system in its intended form, structure, and processes. It was out of this need that we then developed the Kakala Research Framework for the pilot of a study on sustainable livelihood and education.

Kakala Research Framework

The Kakala research framework consists of six key components: Teu, Toli, Tui, Luva, Malie, and Māfana.

The Kakala research framework was originally piloted using the Sustainable Livelihood and Education in the Pacific project (SLEP) with the framework being piloted in the field work conducted in Tonga. The SLEP study was later used as a guide to conduct similar studies in Nauru and in Marshall Islands. In both cases, field researchers from Nauru and Marshall Islands developed their own research framework to guide their work. Findings from the SLEP study have been published elsewhere (Fua, 2009; Taufe‘ulungaki, Fua, et al., 2007). The main outcome of the SLEP study has been its input into the new Curriculum framework for the Tonga Primary school curriculum introduced to schools in 2012.

The Kakala research framework has also been used in many other research projects in Tonga, particularly with projects at community level, including the Tonga Police National consultation in 2009, National Domestic Violence study 2009-2010, Profile of School Leadership for Tongan Schools 2010-2012, and the National Consultation on Teacher Professional Development 2010-2011. The Kakala research framework continues to be used by emerging researchers in Tonga, but much remains to be explored with this research framework which belongs to all Tongans.

Teu

Teu basically means to prepare; it is the preparatory stage before the work begins. It is a time for conceptualising, designing, and planning for the work ahead. In this stage we ask questions such as: how do we define it? What does it mean for us? What is our source of conceptualisation? Who? Why? We refer to this stage as the conceptualisation stage.

Toli

Toli means to pick a flower, or choose an object. It is commonly used in reference to picking flowers or fruits. When picking flowers for a garland, the flowers are purposely selected and carefully picked depending on the design that has been chosen during the Teu stage. It is a critical stage in the research process; all else depends on the Toli stage. In the research process this is the data collection stage. Just as

young girls gather flowers from different gardens around the village, field researchers will need to know how to approach participants and seek information. As such the process of data collection and the ethics used to access the knowledge are critical to obtaining authentic and accurate data. In the Toli stage, we also developed Tongan research tools of Talanoa and Nofo and clarified Tongan research ethics.

Tui

Tui has several meanings in the Tongan language, including “belief”, “knee” and to “string a garland”. In the Kakala research framework, Tui is used to refer to the analysis stage of the research process. Tui in a garland process always follows a particular pattern in accordance with the event and the person that the garland is intended for. In a research analysis process, we are looking for patterns in the data, as we look for similarities, variations, and new emerging patterns in the data. As in the garland process, the Tui process is also a collective process involving the senior women stringing the garland and the young girls who gather the flowers. It is not uncommon to send the girls out again to gather more flowers, or gather another type of flower or leaves to complete the desired pattern. It is also common to change the pattern originally planned, as the flowers for the planned pattern may not be available or sufficient to complete the pattern. There is a process of negotiation and correction between the women stringing the garlands and the girls picking the flowers. Similarly, the research analysis process is a process of negotiation, passing of information, and readjusting initial plans depending on the information received from the field researchers. In the research analysis the field researchers and the principal researcher are all involved in the analysis process. During this stage, we asked such questions as: does the information make sense? What is the context behind the context? Where is the solution? Are emerging solutions meaningful, sustainable strategies for addressing real problems?

Luva

Luva means a gift from the heart. To Luva a gift usually means that the gift is given with heartfelt sincerity, humility, and honour. It is also associated with the notion that much work and sacrifice has been required

to create the gift being given. In the Kakala research process, the Luva process refers to the reporting and dissemination stage, signalling a process of returning the gift of knowledge to the people who had given the knowledge. The main purpose of the Luva process is to honour those who have given their knowledge, who have participated in the study. The report, the outcome, and the dissemination of the findings of the study must firstly benefit the lives of those who have participated in the study. As such, the reporting process must give voice to Pacific people, and the report is done with care, with respect and always to protect Pacific knowledge systems, ensuring that it serves the needs of Pacific people.

Mālie

Mālie is said when an audience appreciates a performance; it is an expression of “bravo” or “well done”. It means that the audience, at least in the Tongan protocols for performing arts, has not only understood, but appreciates the inter-play between the music, the dance, the costumes, and the performers. It is a response from the audience about the performance that provides encouragement and support for the performers. In order to appreciate a performance in the Tongan context, it normally requires a certain level of understanding of the music, the costume, the performers, and the expressions of the story being performed. This means that there is a shared understanding between the audience and the performers and when this is executed well, there is Mālie. For the Kakala research framework this a point where we evaluate the whole research process, asking such questions such as: Was it useful? Was it worthwhile? Who was it useful for? and Who benefited from the research process? Were the Talanoa sessions meaningful, honest, exciting, and worthwhile? Did it make sense? Did it serve the needs of our communities and was the process meaningful? The evaluation process of the Kakala research framework happens throughout the research process, rather than at the end. It involves constantly monitoring the research process from the conceptualisation stage to the data collection to the analysis stage. It is an ongoing process of monitoring the research process against the key ideas of utility, applicability, and relevancy to the context.

Māfana

Māfana refers to warmth, something that is heartfelt and has touched one emotionally. In the context of a Tongan performance, one observes Māfana, when a member of the audience, in the appreciation of the performance, joins the performers, either dancing with them or putting money or tapa cloth around a performer. The moment of transition from being a mere spectator to being part of the performance is a moment of great exhilaration, of Māfana and willingness to be part of something exciting. Māfana, then, is seen as the final evaluation process of the Kakala research framework, where we seek whether transformation, and application and sustainability of the transformation, has taken place. It is the moment when the researcher and the knowledge giver are both transformed, and in that transformation they have created a new solution or a new understanding to an existing problem. And part of that transformation is the willingness to step forward and be part of the solution or be part of the movement towards reaching that solution. This transformation phase is also empowering and recognises people's ability to resolve their own problems. In the evaluation process of the Kakala research framework, we ask such questions as: Were the outputs practical and sustainable? Were the participants transformed, empowered to make real changes? What were the impacts and results of the process on the researcher and those that participated in the research process?

Tongan Research Tools

In developing the Kakala research framework it also became evident that the traditional Western research tools of interview and observation were not sufficient to fully capture the dynamics of the Tongan traditional system. It was also recognised that the use of interview and observation were not sufficient to gather authentic, rich, descriptive data from our own context. We re-examined the use of the Talanoa as a research tool and found that the process needed refinement and clearer guidelines for the intended field researchers. Additionally, we recognised that even through Talanoa we do not always find the most accurate picture. Therefore, we formulated a new research tool, Nofo, as a way to complement the Talanoa tool. I have published more detailed

description of Talanoa and Nofu elsewhere (Fua, 2010; Fua, 2009) and therefore will only give a brief description here.

Talanoa

Talanoa is generic term referring to a conversation, chat, sharing of ideas and talking with someone. It is a term that is shared by Tongans, Samoans, and Fijians. Talanoa can be formal, as between chiefs and his or her people, and it can be informal, as between friends in a kava circle. Talanoa is also used for different purposes; to teach a skill, to share ideas, to preach, to resolve problems, to build and maintain relationships, and to gather information. As Talanoa is context specific, the language and behaviour used in a Talanoa can change with the context and the people that are involved in it. But most importantly, Talanoa is a skill, with associated knowledge about usage, form, and purposes. The skill of Talanoa is embedded in the values and the behaviour that are associated with the Talanoa, and it is the context of the particular Talanoa that determines the appropriate behaviours and values for it.

When we used Talanoa in the Kakala research framework there were several features that were made obvious.

Talanoa is used a research tool – not a research framework, or a research approach, but a tool that fits the qualitative research approach. Talanoa operates from a constructivist perspective where knowledge is socially constructed through the process of Talanoa.

Talanoa is used mainly for data collection and data analysis.

Talanoa is not an interview, but a shift in thinking from semi-structured interview; it is seen as the loosest type of data gathering tool. Talanoa approaches the participant with an idea that the participant is asked to muse, to reflect upon, to talk about, to critique, to argue, to confirm, and express their conceptualisation in accordance with their beliefs and experiences.

Talanoa, most importantly, requires Fanongo or deep listening and feeling/sensing. Fanongo is the role of the researcher in a Talanoa session.

The researcher is required to Fanongo, not only to the words being spoken but also to the silences, to the implied meanings, and the shared understandings. Fanongo is a critical skill for the researcher to have in order to generate, encourage, and contribute to the Talanoa in such a way that would allow the participant to clarify their conceptualisation. Talanoa is also naturalistic in nature, requiring the researcher to be fully immersed in the context. This is why the language of the Talanoa should be in the language of the participant, not the researcher. This also means that the setting of the Talanoa should be in the participant's most natural setting. If it is a Talanoa about fishing, the most natural setting would, of course, be out in the sea using the language of the fisherman. This also means that Talanoa is limited by neither time nor space. The context of the Talanoa determines the time and the context. Finally, Talanoa should be recognised as a skill with particular guiding principles. For Talanoa to be effective in the Tongan context, the researcher needs to observe the basic principles of faka'apa'apa (respect), loto fakatokilalo (humility), fe'ofa'aki (love, compassion) and feveitokai (caring, generosity). These principles are the guide for conducting effective Talanoa.

Nofo

Nofo refers to “reside” or to “stay”. We used Nofo as a complementary research tool for Talanoa, whereby the researcher takes an emic perspective and goes to live and experience the lives of the participants. The Nofo method is in line with auto-ethnographic tradition of inquiry. When Nofo is used as a research tool, several features are made obvious. In using Nofo, a researcher is engaged in observation, participant observation and Talanoa, as the researcher is immersed in the context. Nofo is also heavily reliant on adopting the most appropriate ethical conduct in a given context. Pacific cultures are rich in protocols and as relationship is at its most fundamental social fabric, behaving appropriately is most critical in gaining access to a place and gaining trust of people. Nofo is also very flexible and adaptable to the purpose of the research; it can be carried out in a village setting, a school setting, or workplace. Nofo can also vary in time and the duration that a researcher may spend in a certain context varies. Similarly, Nofo can be done continuously in one particular setting, or as a series of Nofo

sessions spread over time.

When Nofo is used in combination with Talanoa, data collected is rich and descriptive, and data saturation is reached quickly in the field work. Nofo has also proven to provide additional information to Talanoa and as a way to validate information gathered through Talanoa. When Nofo and Talanoa are used together, it allows the researcher to quickly understand the context of the participants and to provide in-depth analysis of the context because of their experience. However, it should also be noted that to use both Talanoa and Nofo is demanding for any field researcher.

Since the pilot in Tonga, Talanoa and Nofo, have been used in Fiji, Samoa, Marshall Islands, and Nauru by other Pacific researchers.

Tongan Research Ethics

When using the Kakala research framework – and particularly when using Talanoa and Nofo as research tools – it becomes critical to re-examine the research ethics being utilised to conduct the research. In common practice, the research ethics utilised for most traditional research comply with the requirements of the university or funding agency. This requires filling in a number of forms and a series meetings of the research ethics committees before a research study is permitted to begin. In this approach to research ethics, the primary concern is to protect the university and the researcher, and the participants to a lesser degree.

When using the Kakala research framework, Talanoa, and Nofo a context specific research ethics is required for several reasons.

To access knowledge, particularly traditional knowledge systems that can often be protected and guarded by families, it is critical that the right ethical conduct is applied in order to gain trust. As most Pacific people know, there is some knowledge that can be easily shared and other knowledge that is tapu to outsiders. With the right ethical conduct, a researcher can build relationships that will establish trust and thus gain access to information that participants are willing to share.

Understanding ethics also means that, as a researcher, one knows when to respect and leave tapu knowledge alone.

Appropriate ethical conduct also means that as researchers we work to ensure that any knowledge gathered is authentic and accurate. Given Pacific people's tendency to tell "stories", and particularly for Tongans to talk in metaphors, it is critical that the researchers know how to engage participants in such a way that the knowledge given is authentic and is understood within the context that it is given.

Most important when considering context specific ethical conduct, is to ensure that knowledge gathered is used for the benefit of the participants, those who have given their knowledge.

Some of the key features of Tongan research ethics are as follows:

Ethical conduct of a researcher is lived by the researcher, not just for the field work, but in their everyday lives. As we live in small communities, potential participants judge researchers as persons belonging to a community, rather than just researchers.

Ethical conduct for each context is defined by the culture and customs of that context.

Research process is constantly monitored according to the research ethics of the researchers. The ethical procedure is not completed at the beginning of the research project and then forgotten during the process.

Ethical conduct not only guides the relationship between the researcher and the participants, but also the relationship between researchers.

The researcher is held accountable to the participants.

The core research ethics for Tonga are founded upon faka'apa'apa (respect), loto fakatōkilalo (humility), fe'ofa'aki (love, compassion) and feveitokai (caring, generosity).

When conducting research in a Pacific context, we have for too long

relied on Pacific people's generosity with their time and their knowledge and have neglected to re-examine our behaviour as Pacific researchers. If we want to value Pacific knowledge, it is important that as Pacific researchers we apply a more rigorous standard in ourselves and others who choose to do research in our region.

Tuli e Mālie – Transformational sustainable application

Ultimately, at the end of every research process we have to ask, was it all worth it? The big “so what” question. The questions for us as researchers who have used the Kakala research framework are: Was it worth designing a new research framework and one in particular for Tongan context? Could we have gathered the same information if we had used “mainstream” Western research frameworks and methods? The answer, is quite simply, no, we would not have been able to access traditional knowledge systems shared with us amongst villages, nor would have gathered more information than expected.

The Kakala research framework and the use of Talanoa and Nofo with associated Tongan ethical conduct, allowed the research team to access traditional knowledge rarely shared in research. The findings from the research published elsewhere (Taufe`ulungaki et al., 2007) show new understandings of poverty, sustainable livelihoods, and expectations of education for Tongans. Findings from the study revealed understandings that are in alignment and in agreement with what we also know to be what is lived and practiced in Tongan contexts. One of the significant findings of the research project was the Tongan conceptualisation of sustainable livelihood in mo`ui fakapotopoto, referring to a holistic approach to life that encompasses physical, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing. It was also revealed in the study that “poverty” in the Tongan context is measured by one's behaviour, with masiva he anga, lacking the appropriate behaviour, being regarded as the most extreme form of poverty. Another significant finding of the research project was the identification of an emerging framework for Tongan learning style.

However, perhaps most important is the impact of the research study on revising the Tonga Primary school curriculum and the impact on the 40 field researchers who were part of the Kakala research framework.

The 40 field researchers who took part in this research project are now teachers and have continued to participate in research projects from time to time. Their experiences as field researchers using the Kakala research framework have been opportunities for them to refine their thinking about education and their role as teachers in Tonga's education system. Those who participated in the study demonstrated their māfana in being part of the study, by giving gifts to the field researchers at the completion of the study. Primary school children are now enjoying new subjects that include design and technology, music, and Tongan culture and customs. The hope is that the new curriculum will encourage more children to learn skills that will enable them live sustainably in their island communities.

Today the Kakala research framework is being taught at the Tonga Institute of Education with a research manual detailing the Kakala research framework available to all teachers in Tonga (Fua, 2010).

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Re-thinking Pacific Education: Reflections from the Pasifika Margins, Pacific Rim

Tanya Wendt Samu

Abstract

This paper shares some of the outcomes of conceptual analyses carried out by Auckland-based Pacific educators grappling with concerns similar to those of the RPEIPP project, although from the context of education policy and practice within New Zealand. The paper will demonstrate how a modified version of the rich and robust “Tree of Opportunity” concept has provided a useful lens through which to critically reflect on the underlying values and belief systems of both policy and practice in an effort to challenge, at the very least, complacency amongst those actively engaged in Pacific education in New Zealand.

Introduction

While there are those who have been actively re-thinking and reconceptualising education in the Pacific, others – like me – have watched, listened, read, and studied the Rethinking Pacific Education Initiative (RPEIPP) from afar: as an observer at conferences, a reader of RPEIPP publications, an attentive registrant within the Network of Pacific Educators’ (NOPE) online community, and as an educator living and working in Auckland, New Zealand. I further situate myself as follows: as an emergent womanist (rather than feminist) scholar and a Pasifika (Samoan) immigrant woman teacher educator and academic currently working at a university in the largest Polynesian city in the world. In this paper I integrate theory (elements of analytic philosophy, discourse analysis, and oceanic epistemology) and practice (professional experiences within New Zealand and the Pacific Region) in order to re-think (self-reflexively and recursively) the applicability of the RPEIPP’s original conceptual metaphor, the so-called “Tree

of Opportunity”, to the education of Pacific-heritage peoples in New Zealand. Due to the integrated nature of the theorising that informs this paper, as well as publication word constraints, the theorising is not necessarily explicated throughout the paper.

I will now situate New Zealand, the primary location from which I live and work. Historically, New Zealand falls into the category of Pacific Rim. This is an influential discourse “that emerged in the United States in the mid-1970s” (Coxon, 2011, p. 5), and refers exclusively to the larger, more economically powerful nations that encircle the Pacific Ocean. According to Coxon, this discourse was “predicated on the development of a connectedness that would strengthen economic, political and socio-cultural relationships between the countries edging the Pacific Ocean. What was excluded from the vision was the ‘inside’ of the Pacific, and those who live there” (2011, p. 5). However, particularly in more recent times, both New Zealand and Australia have developed strong relationships with Pacific nations, providing extensive aid (particularly in education), military, policing, and governance assistance. They (with Japan and the United States) are also essential export markets. However, the recent attendance of the U.S. Secretary of State to the Pacific Islands Forum meeting “signals the growing strategic importance of the South Pacific” and “may also be a response to China’s increasing presence in the region” (Wallis, 2012, emphasis added). The Pacific nations may now be more visible to these Rim nations, but nonetheless, as a discourse, the Pacific Rim is still a power relations discourse, given the nature of the balance of power and influence between a nation such as New Zealand, and the island states of the Pacific.

Conversely, New Zealand is also a nation within which a number of social groups occupy positions of social and cultural marginalisation, Māori and Pasifika in particular. Margins have been conceptualised as the socio-cultural positions of the disempowered and disenfranchised in relation to the theoretical centre wherein power and privilege are located. More than 6.9% of New Zealand’s total population identify with at least one Pacific heritage and are collectively referred to by New Zealand’s Ministry of Education (MOE) and other national institutions as “Pasifika”. Of these, a significant proportion is marginalised in terms of their socio-economic-political location (Samu, Mara, &

Siteine, 2008). Hooks, however, offers an alternative more empowering conception of marginal positioning, as a “site of radical possibility, a space of resistance...a central location for the production of a counter-hegemonic discourse that is found not just in words but in habits of being and the way one lives” (1988, p. 157). This is the understanding underlying the use of the term Pasifika Margins. The Pasifika Margins is a theoretical space from which the iterative development of a counter-hegemonic discourse to the New Zealand Ministry of Education’s Pasifika education discourse is occurring. It draws on the RPEIPP’s “Tree of Opportunity” conception and applies it to the education of Pasifika peoples in New Zealand.

So when I travel into the Pacific Region to work with the educational leadership of a specific nation, inevitably funded by either NZAID or AUSAID, I am in essence a representative enactment of New Zealand’s bilateral partnership with said nation. I am an outsider expert. However, my years as a lecturer in diversity and Pasifika education, and my current research – identifying and developing ways to resist the (negative) power effects of the dominant discourses relating to diversity, including Pasifika education – within the context of New Zealand education system positions make me an insider. The reflections I share in this paper are from two situated positions: the main one being as an “insider” educator located in New Zealand, working primarily in response to issues and concerns relating to the education of Pacific peoples within this country – that is, “for the Pacific by the Pacific” within the context of New Zealand. The other situated position is as an “outsider” education consultant from the Pacific Rim (New Zealand) who periodically returns to the Region to work on curriculum and teacher development projects.

The Tree of Opportunity

The metaphor describes the purpose of Pacific education as assisting in “the survival, transformation and sustainability of Pacific peoples and societies”; the primary goal of education to “ensure all Pacific students are successful and that they all become fully participating members of their groups, societies and the global community”; Pacific education as a process “firmly rooted in the cultures of Pacific societies” which

will “permit incorporation of foreign elements” in ways that maintain Pacific learners’ identities; and a process that must scrutinise the values and assumptions underlying formal education and development (IOE, 2002, p. 3).

I first encountered the Tree of Opportunity metaphor when I began to critique discourses of Pacific and Pasifika education within the national policies of Aotearoa/New Zealand. Pasifika peoples are growing rapidly in terms of population size. This unique demographic profile has significant implications in terms of the national economy and social balance (Samu, Mara, & Siteine, 2008), particularly within the metropolitan area of Auckland where 70% of Aotearoa/New Zealand’s Pasifika peoples reside.

While the use of the term “Pasifika” is problematic (Manu‘atu & Kepa, 2002; Perrot, 2007; Samu, 2006), it is useful for distinguishing between Pacific peoples located within the nations of the Pacific Region and the Pacific-heritage communities of New Zealand (Mara, 2006; Samu, 2006; Tongati‘o, 2010). Furthermore, the New Zealand Ministry of Education (MOE) uses the term to distinguish Pacific-heritage groups from others in New Zealand, especially given New Zealand’s self-identity as a Pacific nation.

Although Pasifika peoples have comprised a significant part of this society since the mid-1960s, it was only in the mid-1990s – following damning Education Review Office reports on the quality of education that Pacific and Māori students were receiving in certain schools – that the MOE significantly increased resourcing for targeted research and development (with projects such as SEMO and AIMHI). Response took a different turn at the beginning of the 21st century. The MOE released its first five year education plan for Pacific peoples in 2001, establishing a national policy framework connecting all sectors of education. The first plan and its successors, and the Pasifika-specific components of other national education policies (such as the Tertiary Education Strategy) clearly establish the education of Pasifika peoples in New Zealand as a strategic priority.

However, despite being actively involved in the education system

and welcoming these developments, I began to feel concerned about complacency in the attitudes of Pacific educators such as myself (Samu, 2010). If we become too comfortable with developments in policy and practice, and develop uncritical habits of mind, then initiatives intended to enhance participation engagement and achievement of young Pacific learners may be ill-conceived and designed. For guidance to a process of intellectual critique that is authentically Pacific I turned to the work of Pacific academics and scholars such as Albert Wendt and Epeli Hau'ofa. After engaging with these radical Pacific progenitors of contemporary oceanic thought, I was persuaded that reflexive analyses of our own actions and condition as Pasifika/Pacific peoples are vital (Samu, 2010), and that these need also to be inclusive of the structures (such as policies) in which we as educators are implicated.

I consider the MOE's Pasifika education discourse (reflected in national policy) to be problematic. It does not reflect a vision informed by Pasifika aspirations and perspectives. This discourse now contains certain "truths" about the education of Pasifika learners, truths related to the pressing urgency to secure New Zealand as a knowledge economy. It is a discourse influenced by Pasifika peoples' demographic profile, and the implications of Pasifika population projections, particularly in the Auckland Region (arguably the nation's economic engine). The international comparisons from the OECD's international testing programme (PISA), beginning in 2001, provided evidence of the over-representation of Māori, Pasifika, special needs, and child poverty in the tail-end of New Zealand's school learners. What was known before (underachievement in the mid-1990s) is understood and responded to in different ways in the 21st century.

I recognised in the Tree of Opportunity metaphor the potential for transformative shifts in thinking. It seemed to reflect "a more holistic perspective in which things are seen in the totality of their relationships" (Hau'ofa, 1993, p. 7). It certainly met my need at the time – the need for conceptions that could help me think in uniquely Pacific ways which were rigorous and challenging. My colleagues and I believed that as Pasifika educators in New Zealand the most important outcome of the RPEIPP colloquium of 2001 was this "rich and robust conceptualization" which potentially could be used to inform policy and practice for Pasifika

peoples in New Zealand “because it is informed by Pacific aspirations, and perspectives” (Samu, Mara, & Siteine, 2008, p. 147).

Reflecting on Practice: New Zealand and Beyond

In 2007, my colleagues and I wrote a book chapter introducing Pasifika education to final year Bachelor of Education students. We drew on the Tree of Opportunity model to conceptualise Pasifika education in New Zealand for the 21st century. It was our “Pasifika hybrid”. The stated purpose of this conceptual adaptation is our survival as Pasifika peoples (citizens, residents) in this nation. Pasifika education must enhance the transformative capability, as well as the success of learners, so that they can better serve their families (via increased earnings and employment security and the enhancement of social, spiritual and cultural dimensions) and contribute to New Zealand society. Such an education must be grounded in our cultures (including contemporary cultural formations) and ensure consistent critique of the values and assumptions underlying education policies – those that specifically target Pacific peoples, as well as those that are more generic and directed to all (Samu, Mara, & Siteine, 2008).

When I began to return to the Pacific to serve as an education advisor, I drew on my knowledge of the Tree of Opportunity framework (rather than the Pasifika hybrid) to develop guiding principles, even a set of professional ethics to inform my perspective and subsequent efforts as a consultant with a commitment to education and development within the Pacific Region. Such an ethos helped develop self-awareness and humility – important pre-requisites for serving (not “consulting”). The question now is: can the core conceptualisations of RPEIPP – exemplified by the Tree of Opportunity (IOE, 2002) and the hybrid manifestation (Samu, et al., 2008) – be refined, and sharpened, particularly given the counter-hegemonic nature and purpose of the conceptions?

Re-thinking some of RPEIPP’s Key Concepts

I believe the Tree of Opportunity model and the Pasifika hybrid can be theorised further, thereby strengthening the capacity to provide practical concepts to assist with critical analysis and self-review.

With specific reference to the Pasifika hybrid (Samu, et al, 2008), and being mindful (based on experience) of the complexities of context, I contend that insiders in New Zealand, who have been active within their own settings and contexts for some time, are at risk of allowing unsupportable assumptions to escape testing and critique because uncritical habits of mind have developed and become entrenched. I like to think I can recognise and prevent undesirable “foreign or external elements” (IOE, 2002, p. 3) being grafted into an education initiative for Pasifika learners – but what if those elements do not originate from “the Other”, and instead, they have Pasifika origins? What if they are based on narrow, unproblematic, and uncontested conceptions which have escaped testing and critique because, somehow, we have internalised “for the Pacific, by the Pacific” (or “for Pasifika, by Pasifika”) to mean that when the origins are in our own Pasifika leaders and thinkers in education, or derived from dominant discourses within our own professional communities (Samu, 2007), we must give it unconditional acceptance?

As a radical intellectual voice in the decolonising Pacific, Albert Wendt argued that individual dissent was important because “without it our cultures would drown in self-love” (Wendt, 1976, p. 52). A milder, 21st century equivalent to self-love is self-satisfaction or complacency, the danger of which is dysconsciousness, or uncritical habits of mind (King, 1991). Such mindsets unintentionally justify inequity because the existing order of things is accepted. I cannot assert that this is a problem that has relevance to education within the Pacific Region. I am not situated to comment. What I do offer, as a consequence of what I have learned in my own context, is a set of conceptual guidelines with which to critique. It consists of three components: (i) assertive critique; (ii) conceptual precision and transformation; and (iii) agency, even oceanic agency. This set of concepts could be likened to the assessment process a farmer undertakes in order to decide which grafting technique is the better for the trees. Factors such as the type of tree, and the nature of the problems that have begun to manifest, as well as the farmer’s desired outcomes, would inform the decision.

I will now describe and discuss the concepts, using as an illustrative example, the complex relationship of Māori and Pasifika in education.

Assertive Critique

Assertive critique is required if one is an insider entrenched within one's professional and cultural networks of relations. For example, I have begun to question the discourse of tuakana-teina, advocated by some Pasifika academics and leaders in education as being the ideal conception to shape the working relationship between Māori – the indigenous people of Aotearoa – and Pasifika (Airini, Anae, & Schaaf, 2008). Tuakana-teina is the Māori conceptualisation of the relationship between older siblings (tuakana) and younger siblings (teina). Older siblings lead, guide, and mentor younger siblings. Younger siblings listen, show respect, defer, and follow.

This, in itself, is not foreign to Pasifika peoples in New Zealand because it is a deeply-rooted cultural value within many indigenous cultures in the Pacific. Because Māori trace their ancestry to the islands of the Pacific, it is not uncommon in formal ceremonies for Pacific visitors to be welcomed and greeted as tuakana or elder siblings (Teaiwa & Mallon, 2005). However, according to Teaiwa and Mallon, outside of formal occasions, and “beyond the romanticised narrative of mythic Polynesian kinship, in the reality of ‘immigrant’ incursions on finite local and national resources” (2005, p. 210), the relationship is one of “ambivalent kinship”, the roots of which are “issues of precedence, rights and equality” (2005, p. 208). The ambivalence results at different times and situations in “a denial of kinship; or an assertion of seniority within the kinship model; or it may produce moments where the representation of a ‘united happy family’ may feel the most comfortable and appropriate” (Teaiwa & Mallon, 2005, p. 208).

One way of operationalising the tuakana-teina conception is that Pasifika situate themselves as teina (the younger sibling), and therefore must relate in terms of passive respect and deference to their tuakana (Māori as older sibling). Until recently I never questioned this. I have a personal obligation (I am Māori through my mother) and a professional commitment to honour the Treaty of Waitangi, and support Māori efforts towards achieving equity and social justice for themselves as the indigenous people New Zealand or Tangata Whenua. I concur with Foliaki (1994) that “the push for Māori rights has benefitted Pacific

Island people” (p. 102). But does this mean that such support must be uncritical and unconditional? Does it also mean that I must prioritise Māori initiatives and, only when these are in place and functioning smoothly, pursue a Pasifika agenda?

In reality, this relationship is not a simplistic binary. There are times when Māori and Pasifika are located within state-funded initiatives intended to enhance education success for both. There are also times of tension between Pasifika and Māori interests within education organisations. The common denominator of both scenarios is an external adjudicator or decision-maker – the mainstream funding source and/or institutional authority. More often than not, this is Pakeha or European. Many years ago, Foliaki expressed the following view:

I think whatever advantages Māori people, or attempts to address disadvantages, also advantages Pacific Island people down the line. So my support for Māori issues is not only because Māori are right, and I believe it is right to address injustice, but it is in the best interests of Pacific Island people both now and in the future. I suppose some Pacific Island people say. ‘Why further down the line? Why not at the same time?’ The answer to that lies with those who have the power to make decisions. It is not Māori who are holding up decisions. (1994, p. 102, emphasis added)

A key feature of such complex shared spaces is that overall decision-making, even setting the terms of engagement, lies with the external adjudicator.

I contend that the tuakana-teina conception at times creates a perceptual stalemate for Pasifika, in which the Pasifika peers and colleagues of Māori within a shared institutional space may feel prevented from moving forward, because they perceive (rightly or wrongly) that the pursuit of their own agenda may place their tuakana at risk. This can result in slowness to take action until we as Pasifika have ensured that our desired course of action will not impact negatively on Māori and undermine their status within that shared space. Furthermore, external adjudicators, as a reflection of their commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi, may feel obligated to consult first with Māori about Pasifika-

related proposals and initiatives, before approving. This is entirely appropriate within the tuakana-teina conception, but it involuntarily silences Pasifika. The very nature of such action is disabling, and even oppressive. This raises several questions: does this mean that critique and analysis has no place in the tuakana-teina relationship? And what about the presence of the decision-makers and holders of the purse strings of both Māori and Pasifika education and development? The dilemmas are multi-level, cultural, and structural.

Conceptual precision and transformation

There are times, as revealed in the previous illustration, when there is a need to create appropriate space and structures to enable rigorous theorising of some of our more complex relationships. New complexities with equity implications are emerging in the context of Pasifika education which polite, respectful deference on our part cannot address. There is a need for conceptual clarity, not uncomfortable, awkward silence in public forums accompanied by privately muttered expressions of frustration. We need to develop and apply sharper conceptual tools and language for the kinds of discussions that are needed. We need to have a voice, because to be involuntarily silenced is oppression. The outcome of assertive critique creates opportunities for precision in understanding and articulating the phenomenon that a concept refers to. When such conceptual precision is enhanced, then a transformative change in attitudes and underlying values and beliefs can occur – and different ways of thinking, seeing, and articulating our complicated, changeable world can take place. For example, there is an urgent need to rethink and reconceptualise relations between Tangata Whenua and Tangata Pasifika (Pasifika peoples in New Zealand) in order to develop relevant, practical, and equitable foundations for decision-making. New ways of working together need to be conceived; these may not necessarily be based one on Western democratic lines but perhaps along the more ancient lines of whanaunga (genealogical relationships). Even more importantly, such conversations should be held directly with Māori – forthright, honest conversations held away from the gaze of The Other –in order to develop a better understanding of not only our differential obligations and responsibilities to the Treaty, but our mutual responsibilities as whanau (family, relations). The Māori

concept of whanaunga offers possibilities to those Māori and Pasifika committed to working together as brothers and sisters of Te Moana Nui-a-Kiwa (the Pacific).

Oceanic Agency

In New Zealand, control of the structures for the overall provision of education and research do not lie in the hands of Pasifika communities although many of such structures and processes provide opportunities for Pasifika consultation and even management at high levels. So how can Pasifika peoples respond and exercise agency? Particularly in ways that shape and influence the processes that affect their education and development in New Zealand, at least at the level of individuals and collectives? In other words, how might Pasifika peoples' capacities be empowered to take charge of their own social and economic development?

According to Quanchi (2004), research by several Pacific and non-indigenous scholars on “locally valued ways of thinking, learning and organising knowledge” has focused on how these might contribute to the social and economic development of Pacific communities in the Pacific Region (p. 2). These researchers are keen to “affirm not only that indigenous epistemologies are alive and well, but also that they are relevant and useful to the societies and peoples to whom they belong” (2004, p. 3).

Pasifika scholars have made similar efforts in the quest for valued ways of thinking, learning, and organising knowledge in and for the context of Aotearoa. The efforts of Samu, Mara, and Siteine (2008) to adapt the Tree of Opportunity conception and the efforts within this paper to theorise it further is an example. The value of the conceptual work of Pacific scholars is in “the promotion of indigenous epistemologies (where) there is strong emphasis on Oceanic agency and its potential application in development policy and practice” (Quanchi, 2004, p. 3, emphasis added). Oceanic agency, therefore, involves the development and use of contextualised epistemological frameworks to rationalise and enable proactive, meaningful engagement with education processes and practices. It is shaped by conceptual precisions and transformation

that occurs as a consequence of assertive critique. Oceanic agency does more than facilitate ownership – it results in empowerment.

Conclusion

The RPEIPP Symposium held in December 2011 was “an opportunity to bring the RPEIPP Vaka ashore to take stock, mend sails, re-set directions and find fresh winds” after ten years. Whether one is an insider or an outsider, taking stock should include re-thinking the familiar and the taken-for-granted. Deep and critical analysis can open our eyes to not only that which needs repair, but also that which might need replacement. This could lead to new relationships and new ways of relating to others on similar journeys. Yes, directions may require re-setting – hence the need to be alert and ever watchful of complacency. In order to “find fresh winds”, astute theoretical lenses from both the West (Other) and Pasifika/Pacific settings need to be used and applied so we may continue the journey in our different spaces and places, with humility, integrity, clarity, and wisdom.

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MENDING SAILS

Investigating journal authorship to instigate discussions on Pacific Islands Educational Research

Jeremy Dorovolomo

Abstract

This study aims to explore characteristics of authorship and papers published in Directions: Journal of Educational Studies from 1978 to 2005. As an exploratory study (Creswell, 2003), it incorporates a quantitative approach. The study found that most authors to the journal are male; an overwhelming number of them are single authors; that non-Pacific Islanders publish more on the journal than Pacific Islanders do, and that there is a high presence of opinion papers rather than empirical studies. This paper suggests that in order that educational research in the Pacific region gains increasing credibility and impact, empirical studies that are collaborative, driven and directed by Pacific Islanders need to dominate the Pacific research landscape.

Background

Academic publication productivity is measured commonly through the number of publications achieved, usually in refereed publications. Scholarly publications are tangible evidence of such productivity (Fox & Mohapatra, 2007; Rothman, Kirk, & Knapp, 2003). There are many ways to measure research output and each may have a significant impact on conclusions drawn on academic performances. Different university expectations of staff, for example, in the areas of teaching, research, and service, also affect outcomes (Rice, Cohn, & Farrington, 2005; Stephen & Geel, 2007). What is clear, however, is that publishing on a regular basis is becoming increasingly important for promotion, rank, and salary purposes. It is the published outputs of academics that provide a good indicator of their research productivity (Prozesky, 2006).

Academics may be denied promotion or salary increases and face

career disruption or job loss if their publication level is deemed below par (Stephen & Geel, 2007). Highly ranked academic programs have maintained scholarship as their preeminent purpose and the most important factor in promotion and tenure decisions (Green & Baskind, 2007). In the United States and Canada, in particular, research and journal publications play a major role in decision-making, although these may not play a major role in other parts of the world where a more inclusive, broader view of what constitutes research contributions exists. Researchers who nevertheless publish extensively are more likely to be granted promotion and secure tenure (Dennis, Valacich, Fuller, & Schneider, 2006).

In the developing Pacific Island countries, no empirical study has explored characteristics of authors and their contributions in educational research or related areas, indicating the significance of this investigation. This study aims to explore characteristics of authors and their contributions to one key education journal in the Pacific region, published by the University of the South Pacific (USP). It is worth noting that although refereed scholarly journals are only one outlet for research dissemination, it is generally regarded the most important criterion for evaluating the researcher's productivity (Prozesky, 2006). Yue, Wilson, and Boller (2007) have also reinforced that journals are not the only means by which academic communities contribute to knowledge base, but they are a very strong means by which scholars compete for prestige and recognition. Chapter contributions are not given particular recognition in terms of prestige and promotions, compared to article authorship, especially in refereed journals (Rothman et al., 2003). Moreover, while books, presentations, and grants are useful measures of publication productivity, refereed academic journals is perhaps the sine qua non of scholarship, representing the field's most current thoughts and critique of its established paradigms. This makes journal publication studies important as they provide a useful barometer with which to gauge department excellence and productivity (Rachal et al., 2008).

Methods

This study examined *Directions: Journal of Educational Studies* from its

first issue in 1978 to 2005. This journal is a publication of the Institute of Education at the USP. The USP is a regional university owned by 12 small Pacific Island countries, from Niue with a population of about 1500 people, to the largest of them being Fiji Islands at around a population of 800,000. Other member countries – Cook Islands, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu – have populations in between. The author chose the journal as it is a major education journal in the Pacific region that publishes specifically on Pacific Island educational issues. The journal was established to provide educational networking in the region so that ideas and innovations are shared, relevant, and meaningful. In terms of this research process, it involved recording from hard copies of the year, volume, issue, institution, gender, institutional rank, single or multi-authorship, unit affiliation, and country of origin for each article. The author's name was not recorded but their country of origin was, such as being Solomon Islander, Fiji Islander, or Tongan.

Authors outside of Pacific Island countries are classified as expatriates, rather than their exact nationality, as the main focus of the study is on the characteristics of Pacific Island authors to the journal. It is important to record authors whose nationalities are outside the Pacific Islands in order that a comparison can be made with regional authorship. Only full-length articles were included. Excluded were book reviews, editorial announcements, advertisements on conferences, and replies and responses. There were cases in some of the journal issues where the gender of the author is not clear, as the journal did not state it in its biographical description of authors, especially with various island and cultural names. In such cases, the name was checked with someone from that country or ethnic group, to verify gender and nationality.

Results

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyse descriptive and contingency table analysis on collected data. There were 362 authors who published in *Directions: Journal of Educational Studies* between 1978 and 2005, of which 67.4 per cent (n=244) of the authors were male and 32.6 per cent (n=118) female. Furthermore, of the 362 authors 75.7 per cent (n=274) were single

authors while 24.3 per cent (n=88) of the authors were involved in multi-authorship of papers. Notably, in terms of the nationality of authors, 58.6 per cent (n=212) or more than half of the authors, were non-Pacific people. This meant that collectively Pacific Islanders made up only 41.4 per cent of the total authorship. Overwhelmingly, 72.7 per cent (n=263) of the authors wrote essay or opinion papers; 17.7 per cent (n=64) wrote articles based on quantitative research; 7.7 per cent (n=27) wrote articles based on qualitative research, and 2.2 per cent (n=8) wrote papers based on mixed method approaches to research. Combining the latter three of these meant only 27.3 per cent of the articles published were based on empirical research studies.

A contingency table analysis was conducted to establish whether there was a significant relationship between the nationality of authors and the focus of their papers. The focus of the papers here meant whether it covered contents that are regional in nature, one that concerned only a particular country, or articles that were general such “real communication in English lessons” or “the community as a resource”. A significant relationship appears to be found but with a very low computed chi-square significance value, < 0.0005 , the actual value was not very informative. Therefore, a layer or control variable, residence of authors, was added to the cross tabulation. Of all nationalities, the variable “expatriates” had a significant value, X^2 (D.F. = 36, n=362), 53.638, $p < .05$, revealing that these researchers focused on all Pacific Island countries in their publications, except for Tuvalu and Guam. Non-Pacific researchers published papers focused solely on Fiji (18.4%), Papua New Guinea (5.2%), Solomon Islands (3.8%), Samoa (3.8%), Tonga (2.4%). Furthermore, Vanuatu, Cook Islands, Marshall Islands, Nauru, and Niue with percentages of less than 1 and expatriate articles with a general or regional focus were at 23.6%. This is in contrast to those of Pacific Island nationalities who wrote more on their own countries than others. For example, Solomon Islands authors wrote on the Solomon Islands (70%), on Fiji (10%) and articles of general and regional focus (20%), while none published specifically on the other island countries.

Discussion

The first result shows that of the 362 authors to *Directions: Journal of Educational Studies* between 1978 and 2005, 67 per cent of the authors were males and 33 per cent females. The difference in publications in this journal between the sexes may be a reflection of a broader cusp between the publication levels of the genders. This may be the case as in a study between 1996 and 2000 in Spain in the life sciences it was revealed that female scientists had a lower publication productivity than males (Maulen et al., 2008). Fox and Mohapatra (2007) between 1993 and 1994 studied 1,215 academics in doctoral-granting departments, revealing that the male gender is positively and significantly associated with higher numbers of articles published. Furthermore, Shabani, Carr, Petursdottir, Esch, and Gillett (2004) found that the majority of authors in ten behaviour analysis journals from 1992 to 2001 were males, mostly from American Universities. Such gender difference in publication output is no different in educational research. In the Australian context, for example, 80 per cent of most cited educational research publications were authored by men and this has barely changed over time (Phelan, 2000, p. 182). There is an argument that female academics may be excluded from informal networks at male-dominated institutions, the gender differences can be in personal characteristics and structural positions. Moreover, competing demands, male gate-keeping in journals, and marital as well as parental status may also help explain females lagging behind males in publication (Grant, 2000; Phelan, 2000; Prozesky, 2006; Smeby et al., 2005).

Another finding of this study reveals that 76 per cent of the authors of *Directions* are single authors while only 24 per cent are involved in multi-authorship. There may be nothing wrong with a predominance of single authors, but there is a trend toward increasing co-authorship today (Aggarwal et al., 2007; Cruz et al., 2006). In the field of social work, for example, there are higher rates of multi-authored publications in recent years (Green et al., 2007). Among communication scholars, single-authored articles have fallen significantly (Stephen et al., 2007). In Australia, 90 per cent of research publications by Australian scientists have more than one author (Barlow, 2006). It is increasingly the case that multidisciplinary research is essential in many fields,

because academics may not know enough to work and write alone (Greene, 2007). The low co-authorship in this study suggests that Pacific Island educational researchers need to be more involved in collaborative research, including international collaborative research with countries that are ahead in educational research. While Pacific Island educational researchers can publish alone, it is also important that they are not isolated researchers who do not collaborate within the region and internationally. Reinforcing this also is that there is significant relationship between non-Pacific researchers and their focus of research. Non-Pacific researchers, as a group, authored papers on all Pacific Island countries except for Tuvalu and Guam. On the other hand, Pacific authors wrote more on their own countries rather than others. This further suggests that Pacific Island educational researchers should engage in more regional collaborative research and publication, as well as international collaboration.

In fact, collaboration, and particularly international collaboration, is related to higher research productivity and impact. Smeby and Try (2005) in their study in Norway found that international collaboration has a greater impact on the number of articles published than domestic collaboration. The scientific community may see international collaboration as a more attractive partnership. Since internationally co-authored articles are cited more than single-country papers, international collaboration may therefore be an indicator of quality. Moreover, international collaboration was a reason suggested for the recent increase and impact of Estonian research outputs. In a study comparing Estonia with other former Communist bloc countries over 11 years from 1997 to 2007, it was found that papers published by Estonian scientists had the highest impact in comparison to Hungary (7.83), Latvia (5.92), Lithuania (4.95), and Russia (3.98). Estonia's research productivity still lags behind world-leading research and development (R&D) countries, but for a country of 1500 actively publishing authors this was remarkable. A reason attributable to this was Estonia's diligence in co-authorship with colleagues from countries who are further ahead in research intensity and impact than them. They do this more with Sweden, Finland, Germany, and the United States (Allik, 2008).

Noteworthy also is that collaboration is one of "star" researchers'

characteristics. Star researchers tend to work collaboratively and so are able to have more time to devote to a greater number of projects and manuscripts than would have been possible working alone. There is a relationship between research productivity and collaboration, as most productive researchers tend to also have several co-authors on their papers (Cruz et al., 2006; Fox et al., 2007). This supports the need for being part of “intellectual communities” characterised as disciplinary tribes, an important element in research advancement that allows “intellectual synergy” to occur (Smeby et al., 2005). Moreover, it implies that there is need to establish a good network and try to capitalise on the synergy of each other’s expertise (Aggarwal et al., 2006).

Overall, Pacific Island educational researchers make up 41 per cent of the authors in the journal. Approximately 59 per cent of the authors are non-Pacific people. Clearly, non-Pacific Islanders, including Australians and New Zealanders, authored more articles in the journal than did Pacific Islanders. This could be an indication of non-Pacific Islanders writing about Pacific Island educational issues more than Pacific Islanders are doing on themselves. Taufe‘ulungaki (2001), a Tongan scholar, stressed that most of the writing and research on the Pacific Islands, is carried out by outsiders. Even though research on Pacific Island educational matters should never be the realm of Pacific Islanders alone and others can and should participate vigorously, Pacific Islands educational researcher must display active synergy, direction, and collaboration on educational issues. In any case, educational researchers need to perform more than they do at the moment. Kennedy (1997) and Phelan (2000) warn strongly that educational researchers really need to build their credibility. Without this credibility, funding agents and governments will reduce educational researchers to the bottom list of research budgets. In the USA in 1998, for instance, of the USD\$300 billion education budget, only 0.01 per cent was for educational research (Burkhardt et al., 2003, p. 12), indicating that educational researchers have to be much more involved than they are currently, to attract both credibility and funding.

Educational research needs to be informed by systematic inquiry. This study reveals an outcome contrary to this. Seventy-three per cent of the authors in the studied journal wrote essay or opinion papers, while only

27 per cent of the authors had disciplined, empirical studies published. Opinion papers play a role in drawing attention to certain issues of concern, but if overdone can lead to misleading assumptions. Empirical and disciplined research is very important in that it allows relevance and correctness. As Stanley (1991) stressed, without good educational research to inform judgements, “superstition prevails” (p. 5). Superstition here refers to when decision-making, policy, and practice are not based on researched evidence. When superstition prevails, a bandage could be put on the right arm when the left is the injured limb. When a bandage is put on the wrong arm it can be fatal and as Rokicka (1999) correctly states in developing countries, “considering the scarcity of resources and the acuteness of the educational problems, the need for informed decision-making is an even more urgent matter” (p. 7). The peculiarities of the Pacific region have to be taken into account, and such disciplined inquiry will help exert a decisive influence on the quality, correctness, and relevance of any planned programs and activities. Disciplined research is pertinent to understanding and better serving a region made up of scattered, small, and fragile Pacific Island countries.

A limitation pertains to analysing a single Pacific educational journal. While there may be a paucity of journals publishing specifically Pacific Island materials, a comparison with another University of the South Pacific journal such as the *Journal of Pacific Studies* could have highlighted new dimensions to research in the Pacific Islands. For example, there could be comparison with the publications of another faculty within the university since the journals are housed in different sections of the university. Furthermore, the journal being analysed had not released anymore issues since 2010. Another limitation and one that should be implemented in any forthcoming study, is to also keep personal tallies for authors. In this study, an author may have published more than once but it is only counted for sex, the focus of the paper, paper type, origin, and institution. The final limitation may not necessarily be of the study but a reflection of the milieu with which educational research has to contend in the Pacific Islands, affected by poor research leadership and the lack of enthusiasm to elevate Pacific Islands’ educational research at Pacific Islands’ higher education institutions.

Conclusion

Clearly, if education research in the Pacific Islands is to be more useful, influential, relevant, and better funded, it must change. It must recognise and reflect and be responsive to Pacific Island society's priorities. This can only happen if regular and consistent empirical research and investigations are conducted. Opinion papers do have a purpose, but will not form "hard" evidence in creating a new Pacific future, whereas empirical and disciplined evidence can, if it is the basis of decision-making. If opinion papers dominate the discussions on a particular area of education, it will eventually be mere assumptions, and assumptions can be superstitious. When decision-making is based on superstition, it can be costly and detrimental to the progress of Pacific Islands. It is up to Pacific Island educational researchers, then, to set the standard for educational research. Educational researchers in the USP have a responsibility to lead the region in disciplined and directed educational research. Effort needs to be directed towards broadening research networks and allow "intellectual synergy" to occur, within the region and beyond. Since the USP has recently made research and increasing outputs a major initiative, it is important to develop and sustain a vital and productive research framework that would realistically stimulate faculty research and publication. More needs to be done concerning the lag in female publication levels in the Pacific region and relevant actions employed. There is not only the female lag, but the fewer Pacific Islands' authorship to *Directions: Journal of Educational Studies*, when compared to non-Pacific Islanders. More non-Pacific people are contributing to the journal than Pacific Islanders. While researching on Pacific educational issues must never be the province of Pacific Islanders alone, Pacific educational researchers should continually build rigour, intensity, and credibility.

The Rethinking Pacific Education Initiative (RPEI) has contributed to the increased engagement of Pacific educators to interrogate and debate issues that affect education in the Pacific Islands, including a gamut of publications. These are mostly provided by Pacifica academics, who are at the Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. Pacifica education academics, who work at Pacific Islands-based higher institutions, moving into the coming decades, must do more to

increase the intensity and impact of Pacific educational research. At the USP, when I attend the Author's Tea Party, which I do each year, the difference in the number of deposits of research outputs to the library from the three faculties is quite telling; that is, the Faculty of Science, Technology and Environment (FSTE); the Faculty of Business and Economics (FBE); and the Faculty of Arts, Law and Education (FALE). The FSTE consistently outperforms the FBE and FALE. In other words, the FALE is persistently the faculty that makes the least research output deposits to the library, the Faculty in which education is a part. For example, in 2012, of the 127 publications that were deposited, more than sixty were from the FSTE, establishing already half of the outputs. The FBE deposited more than thirty and the FALE just over twenty publications (USP library, 2012). In another example, in the awards for high impact publications for the USP in 2011 being awarded in 2012, of the 32 awardees (USP, 2012) only two were from FALE, one of whom is the author. The only good news is that the two are education staff. However, it is absolutely unacceptable that FALE representation on the awards and award celebration attendance were poor. These and other examples depict the need for the FALE to bolster its research mechanism and culture that permeates structures, not merely on paper and policy. Educational researchers in Pacific Islands' higher education institutions, and their associated faculty and schools, must be able to show that they can publish and participate in rigorous research and publications. Otherwise, we will continue to be at the bottom of the pile.

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School leadership preparation and development: The cases of Fiji and the Solomon Islands

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Abstract

This paper focuses on school leadership preparation and development. Since it is increasingly being recognised that the quality of leadership contributes significantly to schools' success, the small island states of the Pacific would do well to pay considerable attention to the preparation and development of school leaders. For too long, these countries have allowed incumbents without any specific leadership preparation to head schools. Only recently have some countries embarked on leadership preparation. This chapter highlights two cases, Fiji and Solomon Islands. This paper also draws on international literature on leadership preparation and development, stressing the need for on-going training and development of school leaders to ensure improvement in educational provision. For principal stakeholders in the region's national education systems, the issue of school leadership certainly warrants serious thinking and rethinking.

Introduction

In the contemporary context, it scarcely needs mentioning that improvement in the quality of learning-teaching requires increased expenditure on the provision of well-qualified teachers and suitable resources. Beyond this, the recent literature highlights yet another critical factor that can make a significant difference in achieving school success: sound leadership (Cardno & Howse, 2005; OECD, 2006). When school leadership is favourable it can have a positive impact on school improvement and effectiveness (Cardno & Howse, 2005; Southworth, 2002). Conversely, poor leadership is likely to have negative impacts on all functions and operations of the school, in turn making the school spiral downwards. In light of this, school leaders must have the

knowledge, skills, and ability to effectively undertake their leadership role. However, in most developing contexts, scant attention is paid to leadership training and incumbents tend to assume leadership positions without any induction, mentoring, or training (Cardno & Howse, 2005). Clearly, in such contexts school leaders would find it difficult to cope with the ever-changing demands of work placed upon them. This should be of concern, not only to the principal stakeholders, but also to all those who have a vested interest in children's education. Since leadership is a critical issue in school improvement, all countries in the Pacific need to rethink their strategies for preparing and developing school leaders, to ensure that schools keep up to date with the pace of social, economic, and technological change as they work to prepare their students meaningfully for a future that is scarcely imaginable to today's senior leaders.

This chapter draws on international literature to illustrate the need for and potential benefits of training school leaders. In doing so, it highlights some training programmes put in place in developed countries to prepare school leaders for their positions. In addition, the recurring issue of leadership preparation in the Pacific is discussed on the basis of local literature and the authors' work experience. The final part of the chapter draws on two cases from the Pacific – Fiji and Solomon Islands – that have embarked on leadership training. By implication, this discussion draws attention to the need for other countries in the region to implement or rethink leadership development programmes for the long-term benefit of their education systems.

The Literature

In this rapidly changing world, pressure on school heads to provide more effective schooling is mounting. Current research literature illustrates that the work of school heads keeps intensifying and, at the same time, they are faced with myriad demands of work together with pressure from multiple stakeholders to perform better (Billot, 2003; Gronn, 2003; Leithwood, 1999; Moorosi & Bush, 2011). The ongoing expansion in school heads' role arises from continued growth and increasing complexity in school organisations (OECD, 2006). As the twenty-first century proceeds, we are likely to see school heads' role becoming

ever more challenging and demanding. Already, a variety of additional responsibilities – such as school strategic planning and reaching out to the community – has been added to their traditional roles, for the most part without any professional preparation for undertaking them.

The growing complexity of the work of school leaders (Boyd, 1999; Cranston & Ehrich, 2002) underscores the need for more attention to their preparation and development. The employing authorities need to consider ways and means to develop these people for effective leadership and management of schools for changing times. Nor is the need for a development programme confined to newly-appointed school leaders; suitable programmes should also be put in place for them at different stages of their careers (Weindling, 1999). In fact, school leaders need on-going professional development because of the continuous changes in the nature of school work and the rising expectations of the stakeholders. Recent studies have shown the need for leadership development in all contexts, the more so in the developing countries such as those in the Pacific region (Cardno & Howse, 2005). Also, there is a need for more locally-conducted research on education leadership specifically in the countries of the Pacific, to inform their policy and practice (Sanga, 2012).

Not only do the school leaders need professional upgrading but they also require management training, and management orientation and support to undertake their ever-changing role effectively (McMahon & Bolam, 1990; Rudman, 2002; Woodall & Winstanley, 1998). On-the-job training as well as externally-driven training and education are vital for the professional development needs of the school leaders. The literature clearly spells out a range of models that could be effectively utilised to meet the development needs of school leaders (Griffith & Taraban, 2002; Martin & Robertson, 2003).

When designing professional development programmes for school leaders, it would be sound to consider Woodall and Winstanley's (1998) suggestion for career-long development at various stages, such as grooming, induction, competence within the role, and team effectiveness. Grooming and induction include preparation, socialisation, orientation, and induction to the leadership position, whereas the other two phases

are associated with management development that aims to build on both personal competence within the role and team effectiveness dimensions (Cardno & Howse, 2005; Woodall & Winstanley, 1998). Overall, international literature suggests that it would be best to have training programmes that are context-specific so that the development needs of the school leaders are well catered for (Moorosi & Bush, 2011). For example, within a single country, the development needs of rural and urban school leaders are likely to differ quite widely. Therefore, training programmes should be designed to cater for the particular sociocultural context. The idea of one size fits all is not the most productive way forward in leadership preparation.

Leadership Development in Developed Nations

Generally speaking, most developed countries undertake school leadership development seriously and embark upon training their school heads throughout their professional careers. As far back as the 1990s, Harvard (1992) reported that the Scottish education system carried out a nation-wide management training programme for all school leaders. This programme consisted of eight modules: the principles of management, personnel management, managing the curriculum, management of resources, financial management, monitoring school effectiveness, the school and the community, and education and the law. In any education system, acquisition of knowledge and skills related to these dimensions is vital for a positive impact on educational leadership and management practices. In particular, knowledge and skills in the last area mentioned – that is, on education and law – are crucial for school leaders in all contexts. The burgeoning complexity of school organisations and the rapidly changing world demand that leaders be aware of the impact of laws governing education, so that they avoid any action that may bring disrepute to the school organisation and the education fraternity as a whole.

England, too, has a number of training programmes for the development of school leaders; for example, the Headship Induction Programme, the creation of the National Professional Qualifications for Headship, and the establishment of the National College for School Leadership (OECD, 2006). Likewise, Australia has established a National Institute

for Quality Teaching and School Leadership. In the United States, Goldstein (2001) reports training programmes in place for prospective principals. The programmes in each of these countries emphasise various dimensions of leadership based on the requirements for the position in the specific jurisdictions. In the case of the Swedish education system, there exists a career-long training programme: recruitment of those who want to become school leaders; induction for those newly appointed; a national professional development programme after two years on the job; and on-going career development, such as university courses and extensive support from professional associations of school leaders (Johansson, 2002). In developed countries, such as the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom, and New Zealand, a strong emphasis in training is on financial management. This is the result of central authorities giving more powers to schools to be self-managed and self-governed. As such, the schools become responsible for budget allocation and staff employment. For example, in the United Kingdom a series of legislative acts was passed in the 1980s and 1990s, which gave schools full control of their budgets including teachers' salaries, an area hitherto retained centrally by the local education authorities (Power & Whitty, 1999). Training in financial management matters is needed not only where self-managed school arrangements apply, but also in centralised systems, because school leaders deal with school funds.

It is apparent from the review of literature that developed countries, by putting in place training programmes to develop them, have realised the critical role school leaders play in improving the performance of schools.

Leadership development in the Pacific

Developments in education require new knowledge and skills to facilitate all dimensions of the school organisation. Recent changes in the school work in most of the countries in the region require school leaders to be better prepared for their role. As in the developed nations, the environment of Pacific schools and school systems is changing very rapidly. Many new demands, expectations, and other educational changes have emerged during these past decades. All these transformations have an impact on the role of school heads, which continues to evolve.

For too long, countries in the Pacific such as Fiji have relied on the experience of the incumbents appointed to the position (Tavola, 2000). Given the magnitude of change, reliance on experience or years of service alone may not guarantee success. In our island states, existing school heads who are leading our educational institutions and educational systems are classroom teachers by training and experience. The new role is outside their professed experience and skills and, as such they are technically unqualified to head schools. They may perform well in their instructional role but this is not the only dimension of their work. Even in terms of the instructional role a lot of changes have taken place, such as in the areas of learning-teaching, assessment, and curriculum. In our work experience in the Pacific, we have observed that school heads are reasonably successful in effectively maintaining the day-to-day running of the school and they could do more and better provided they were professionally prepared for the role.

In fact, in the Pacific Islands countries limited opportunities are available for the professional development of school leaders. Generally, they are chosen to become secondary school principals or primary school head teachers on the basis of seniority. Since the leadership position is a virtually a second career that classroom practitioners embark upon, they need to undergo suitable professional development programmes in order to perform effectively in their new multi-functional role, including the extended professional responsibilities they are expected to shoulder from time to time. For example, recent research conducted by Aleta (2010) on school leaders in Tokelau, found several barriers to effective execution of their duties and responsibilities: “The principals in the case study schools lack the capacity to effectively fulfil their duties and roles due to the lack of pre-preparation and training for principalship. The lack of pre-preparation is often overlooked in the appointment of principals in Tokelau” (p.157). The provision of education in this small island state could be further affected by not having school leaders prepared for the most important role. Provision of suitable development programmes will surely sharpen their skills and develop their abilities in effective leadership and management practices of school organisations. In what follows are snapshots of the school leadership situation in two countries of the Pacific region, namely Fiji and Solomon Islands, before the introduction of some training programmes in the two countries.

Solomon Islands

In the case of Solomon Islands, Sanga (1992) reported that for many years those incumbents who were selected to lead schools generally failed to meet the minimum qualification as stipulated in the advertisements for the positions. He reported that at that time such appointments were normal, further pointing out that in Solomon Islands, “The responsibility of developing principals or potential principals professionally has never been an issue to question. No one had the resources to talk or do anything about it. One’s own staff development used to be one’s own responsibility” (1992, p. 4). Sanga (1992) went on to describe the range of work expected of school leaders in Solomon Islands in the early 1990s, some of which was clearly extraneous to the central role: “Being a Secondary Principal in the Solomons requires much more than just being the administrative head of a school. Because our schools are mostly boarding and co-educational, principals often play the roles of Community Chief, Government Agent, Community Adviser, Pastor and a ‘big man’” (p. 4). The findings of later studies about school leadership in Solomon Islands illustrate that the situation described by Sanga still persists (Malasa, 2007; Ruqebatu, 2008). Without adequate preparation for the job, the incumbents are likely to face a lot of challenges in effectively managing and leading the schools. Malasa (2007) and Ruqebatu (2008) suggested the need to put strategies in place for leadership preparation and development. In a recent study conducted by Lingam (2011), one of the most emphatic findings, endorsed by all of the participants, was that they experienced difficulties in effectively managing the various spheres of their school organisation. Some of the broad categories identified were organising the school, time management, managing human resources, fostering accountability, managing change, and community participation in education. It is patent that school heads’ failure to manage these important areas of school organisation effectively could not help but have negative effects on children’s education.

Fiji Islands

To give an idea of the work of school leaders in secondary schools in the Fiji context, the job description prepared by the employer, the Ministry

of Education (2004) is included here. The range of duties expected of secondary school principals is indicated:

- Educational and professional leaders who enhance staff and student performance. They are also expected to undertake “some” teaching duties
- The chief executive of the school operating within government policies and the legal framework of the Education Act
- Accountable by reporting to Ministry of Education Officers and also reports to the school’s Board of Governors or Management Committee as the incumbent is accountable to them for fulfilling their educational aspirations and expectations
- Responsible for the performance of all staff and direct supervisor of the Vice Principal, Heads of Department, Counsellor, teachers and ancillary staff
- Responsible for fostering and maintaining positive collegial relationships among staff members and maintaining cordial relationships with the wider community
- Equal to meeting the challenge of providing quality education requiring the principal to have vision, wisdom, creativity and professionalism

Accountable specifically for:

- i. Planning and policy – both formulation and review
 - ii. School management and implementation of a school development plan
 - iii. Controlling, regulating and reporting teaching and learning
 - iv. Staff management and development
 - v. Positive relationships
 - vi. Instructional leadership
 - vii. Maintaining a healthy, safe, supportive environment
 - viii. Eliminating discrimination and harassment
 - ix. Behaviour management (codes for student and staff).
- (Ministry of Education, 2004, p. 1)

Given the range and variety of work expected of secondary school principals in the Fiji Islands, one can rightly ask whether they are professionally prepared to contribute effectively to all the areas mentioned

in their job description. Effective contribution towards various areas of the job description, such as in terms of staff performance, maintaining relationships with staff and with the community, accountability to the Ministry of Education, School Education Board or Management Committee, and to operate the school within the ambit of government policy and the Education Act, requires suitable sophisticated knowledge and skills in a full range of leadership and school management practices. Without appropriate professional preparation and development for the multi-faceted nature of their role as school leaders, the incumbents cannot be expected to perform at a high level. They are likely to experience a lot of difficulties in effectively executing the numerous duties inherent in the position. The job description entails a heavy responsibility and it can be clearly seen that the role has varied expectations and these are likely to escalate and intensify with the passage of time.

Tavola (2000), reporting on the situation in Fiji, highlighted that because of poor leadership schools were not geared towards improving the quality of education. She emphasised the need for better trained head teachers, principals, and even education officers so that they can provide better performance at work. She went on to state that the problem is aggravated by the shortage of suitable candidates for the school heads position. For example, the following was highlighted: Many of the low-achieving schools are led by principals who lack motivation, initiative and direction and are often overwhelmed by the school situation they are confronted with. They have a defeatist attitude from the start. Unfortunately, our rural Fijian secondary schools fall into this category (Tavola, 2000, p. 98).

This is no doubt a significant contributory factor in the poor learning outcomes of children in rural schools. Even though the report accorded a high priority to the training of principals, details about the facilitation of such training and the standards to be met remained futile for many years. For example, Tavola highlighted that most principals in Fiji had no specific training for the job and emphasised the need for training of principals in a wide range of areas such as “coping with the bureaucratic demands of the Ministry of Education, dealing with inter-personal relations and pastoral care of staff, curriculum issues, monitoring teaching, managing crisis and solving problems” (2000, p. 98). In fact,

to bridge the gap between rural and urban children, rural schools need better prepared leaders. Otherwise, the rural children compared with their urban counterparts will continue to be negatively affected in their learning outcomes.

In the cases of both Fiji and Solomon Islands, qualified and experienced classroom teachers constituted the pool of candidates for leadership positions in schools. Most of the incumbents have limited knowledge and skills for the position. They may be good teachers, but this is not an indication that they will be effective school leaders (Bush & Oduro, 2006). In contemporary times this practice is unsound and should be discontinued. In most developed countries prospective principal candidates are required to complete leadership training courses or take advanced degrees in school leadership. On the other hand, Fiji and Solomon Islands are examples of Pacific-region countries that do not require mandatory or specific qualification for promotion to a headship position. Generally, school leaders are appointed on the basis of their teaching record and experience rather than leadership potential, which is similar to the practice in most parts of the African continent (Bush & Oduro, 2006). However, excellent teaching ability does not necessarily indicate that the person appointed will be an effective principal or head teacher. Recent research into the perceptions of professional development needs of principals in Fiji found that principals have indicated skills for effective leadership and management as extremely important to their role and expect to see a balanced approach to their professional development (Cardno & Howse, 2005).

What then emerges from the school leadership literature is the concern for the preparation and development of school leaders. Particularly pertinent is the adoption of a training programme that is consistent with the current trends of leadership training and development. Added to this is the need to ground the training programmes in the particular sociocultural context, to suit the development needs of the school leaders therein.

Some developments in leadership preparation

Some positive developments in school leadership have taken place in

Fiji and Solomon Islands in the 2000s. In the case of Solomon Islands, through the New Zealand Aid programme, the Ministry of Education in partnership with the University of the South Pacific has mounted leadership programmes. So far, the University has completed providing training to three cohorts of current school leaders, each cohort consisting of about 30 school leaders. The training component consisted of the following courses in the educational leadership programme: Educational Decision-making and Problem Solving; Educational Project Planning; Introduction to Curriculum Development; School Organisation and Management; Educational Planning and Development; Educational Research; Educational Leadership and Supervision; and Issues in Educational Administration in the South Pacific. After successful completion of these courses the students were awarded USP's Diploma in Educational Leadership, which qualifies these incumbents to head school organisations. This is a good start by the Ministry of Education and plans are in place for the training of more current leaders for leadership positions in both primary and secondary schools. In view of the changing times, more training programmes are vital at different stages of headship to meet the changing demands of their work (Gronn, 2003).

With reference to the training programme mounted in Solomon Islands, the findings of a study by Lingam (2011) illustrate that the school leaders perceive the training programme positively, finding that it helps them to acquire much needed support in terms of knowledge, skills, beliefs, and values in improving their schools' overall performance. For instance, some of the comments demonstrate this satisfaction:

- The course has enlightened me towards my path to quality leadership.
- To be honest, the course has broadened my knowledge on some of the contributing factors that will hinder achieving quality education in our schools...it's high time that we must work on school leadership to improve school organisation and management in order to achieve quality education.
- Now after going through this course on school organisation and management, I have the courage and ideas of how to minimise the difficulties and I wish I could go back to 1987 to start again especially after going through this programme.

- Studying this course it really helps a lot. The course gives me new ideas of dealing with different kinds of situations in school. The course helps me to be confident in my school responsibilities...it helps me know how to manage a school properly and in a wantok or relative system.
- Since I have gone through the course I have learnt a lot from it especially about leadership and management. Managing human resources, maintaining healthy partnership with parents and communities... To be honest I really gained a lot of new knowledge, skills, and techniques from this course. I will try my best to put into practise what I have learnt to achieve the goals of my school.
- I am learning quite a lot of good things from this course and it will certainly help me in my school leadership, children in school and my community (Lingam, 2011, p. 7).

The leadership training in Solomon Islands, then, has certainly benefited the participants in heading their schools.

In the case of Fiji, the Ministry of Education secured financial and technical aid from AusAID and embarked on a leadership and management training project (Fiji Ministry of Education, 2009). The programme catered for the training of not only current school leaders but also aspiring school leaders. Instead of using the programme offered by the University of the South Pacific, the project had its own programme, which consisted of the following modules: Developing Personal Leadership Skills, Financial Management and School Improvement using Standard Monitoring, and Change Management, School Planning and Policy.

According to the Ministry of Education report (Ministry of Education, 2009), the purpose of the leadership and management training programme was to develop leadership capacities for the successful operation of the school organisation. The initiative to engage and improve leadership and management skills for current school principals is a welcome move. The current and aspiring principals from both primary and secondary schools who attended the same training programme went through a series of workshops, each lasting for four days.

Table 1: Schedule for the Leadership Training Programme, Fiji, 2004–2009

Phase	Module	Year of Offer	School Division
1	Developing Personal Leadership Skills	2004 2005	Eastern/Western Central/Northern
2	Financial Management and School Improvement using Standard Monitoring	2004 2005	Eastern/Western Central/Northern
3	Change Management, School Planning and Policy	2004 2005	Eastern/Western Central/Northern

Source: Lingam, 2012, p. 20.

A recent study on the training programme found that its impacts on school leaders in their work were positive (Lingam, 2012). In particular, the participants indicated the training programme enhanced their leadership knowledge and management skills. For example, the feedback from the school leaders who participated in the training programme demonstrates this:

- The most important aim that the programme had was to develop the capacities in heads of schools in leadership and management and this had a lot to do with time management, qualities of leadership. A lot of this was aimed at capacity building and exposing leaders to new approaches or approaches that would be appropriate in working smart. It helped me to re-look at ways to manage school, manage the team which is made up of human resources, and set directions together with the team.
- The training programme had a lot of new ideas, new thinking, and new approaches to leadership and management. It was in four categories. [The] most important thing, it strengthened what I had based on in my experience and previous knowledge and training.
- Basically the training programme empowered us to be better leaders and how to manage the school in a better way. Whatever I learnt in that training, I came back and had professional development with my teachers and trained them to make their own plans on lesson preparation and teaching and learning (Lingam, 2012, pp. 54–55).

These comments clearly illustrate the potential that appropriate and effective training programmes can have for school leaders' professional work. It can build their skills, knowledge, and attitudes to lead schools effectively. Its effects on their self-confidence are also apparent. The comments suggest that without any preparatory training, school leaders are unlikely to lead and manage schools effectively and confidently.

Concluding remarks

In the main, the provision of educational services depends on the quality of school leaders. Where the school leader is capable and competent, the general performance in all facets of the school improves. Conversely, where the school leader has significant shortcomings, the provision of educational services is likely to suffer much damage. Thus, school leaders play a prominent role in the provision of quality educational services. The snapshots of the two countries' training programmes should provide the remaining countries in the Pacific with some cause for rethinking on the need for leadership preparation. For Fiji and Solomon Islands, it is a significant step and reflects the commitment of the education ministries to provide appropriate training to school leaders as they are one of the crucial factors in school improvement and effectiveness.

Generally, school leadership in most of the countries of the Pacific region deserves a lot more attention to ensure school improvement and effectiveness. From the authors' observation and work experience in the region, leadership and school management practices are still more attuned to the past than to contemporary times. This is a sad state of affairs and could be primarily due to the absence or lack of adequate preparation and development of school leaders. This implies school leaders lack creativity, and new approaches to lead school organisations to meet the demands of the twenty-first century. On the other hand, the principal stakeholders – that is, the education authorities – have been complacent about the situation for too long and as a result schools continue to be managed by people who are technically unqualified for the role.

As noted in the preceding discussion, some governments in the Pacific

region have embarked on leadership preparation, but they still have a long way to go in their efforts to prepare individuals for the role. Besides, countries still have the tendency to mount training programmes as a one-shot affair, rather than running training programmes on an ongoing basis. Lack of appreciation of the urgency of the matter appears to be the key issue and this requires serious rethinking in order for the Pacific region to be on track on school leadership preparation for the benefit of children's education.

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Tongan parents' conceptions of schooling in New Zealand

Mo'ale 'Otunuku

Abstract

This article reports the findings of a focus group of Tongan parents with children at secondary school. It was conducted to gather preliminary and exploratory information about the Tongan parents' conceptions of schooling in the context of the New Zealand school system. It was assumed that a comprehensive understanding of these conceptions of schooling will add to the national efforts to raise Tongan students' achievement in the New Zealand school system. The focus group, using talanoa, an indigenous method of data collection, found Tongan parents' conceptions for their aims of schooling, their responsibilities, their choice of schools, reasons for Tongan students' underperformance, assessment, teaching and teachers, and learning.

Keywords: Tonga, talanoa, obligations, discipline, assessment, achievement

Introduction

Over the past few decades, Indigenous Research Methodology (IRM) has been promoted as an alternative paradigm for doing research that involves indigenous people and issues. In New Zealand and the Pacific, this promotion has seen the recent emergence of scholarly writings from small but strong groups of Pasifika, Māori, and non-Pasifika academics on educational issues aiming to de-construct and to re-claim Pasifika indigenous education. They propose a policy and methodology underpinned by the cultural systems of indigenous peoples.

The push for a new agenda in IRM saw the development of the Kaupapa Māori research and principles to guide research that involve

Māori. Māori principles such as self-determination, validating and legitimating cultural aspirations and identity, incorporating culturally preferred pedagogy, mediating socio-economic and home difficulties, incorporating cultural structures which emphasise the “collective” rather than the “individual”, and shared and collective vision/philosophy were appointed to guide research that involve Māori people (Smith, 1990).

In 2004, the Health Research Council of New Zealand (HRCNZ) released the *Guidelines on Pacific Health Research* to assist research with Pasifika peoples in New Zealand. Though aimed specifically for health research, the guiding principles for maintaining ethical relationships are relevant to other researchers on different aspects of Pasifika peoples. These guiding principles – relationships, respect, cultural competency, meaningful engagement, reciprocity, utility, rights, balance, protection, capacity building, and participation – need to be developed, cultivated, and maintained when researching with Pasifika peoples (Health Research Council [HRC], 2005).

The Study

Using focus groups, this study explored the experiences of schooling for Tongan parents and caregivers of secondary school students. The aim was to obtain a baseline qualitative description of how a sample of Tongan parents understood New Zealand schooling experiences. This qualitative research was undertaken using a Pasifika approach (*talanoa*) to focus group discussions. The responses from the participants were examined for conceptions and metaphors used by the Tongan communities about the purposes and characteristics of schooling.

After reviewing issues in Tongan education overseas, as well as drawing on the researcher’s insights as a Tongan parent and a teacher, these issues were identified as featuring strongly in connections with Tongan people schooling abroad – aims of schooling, parents’ responsibilities, parents’ school choices, and parents’ reasons for their students’ underachievement. Assessment, teaching, and learning were also included in the discussions. Data from the focus group discussions were analysed under these seven domains and the results are reported below.

Methodology and Method

Focus groups have the potential to provide in-depth information in a relatively short period of time. While the validity of results will be high, there will be questions about the reliability of data due to chance artefacts associated with using a small number of participants. The number of participants in a focus group is small, so a critique of such intensive, qualitative data collection is its weak basis for generalisations and for detection of differences at the group level. However, regardless of the weakened ability to generalise from the results, a focus group has real strengths. These include the ability to collect large amount of data on a topic in a limited time, the opportunity for a great variety of interactions with the participants, and the chance for the moderator to encourage and to ask for elaboration and clarifications.

Talanoa

A recent IRM development is *Talanoa* (Halapua, 2002; Vaioleti, 2003), a combination of two Tongan words – tala which means to tell or to talk, and noa which means anything or nothing in particular. Generally, it is a Tongan term for people who engage in conversation. Talanoa allows group conversations to develop over a considerable time period in which the focus is determined by the interests of the participants. The nature, degree, direction, place, and time of the talanoa are determined by the participants themselves and their immediate surroundings and worldviews. It is a dynamic interaction of story-telling, debating, reflecting, gossiping, joking, sharing families' genealogies, food, and other necessities. It is talking about everything or anything that participants are interested in.

When employing talanoa as a research instrument, the researcher should invest considerable time over several sessions in order to cover the research agenda. Two important aspects of talanoa; (i.e., an absence of a timeframe and deviation from the focus) meant that making connections between researchers and participants either through family, relatives, school mates, place of birth, or shared acquaintances took a lot of time. This is a Tongan way of positioning one's social standing within the socio-spatial worlds of the talanoa gathering. It is this locating of one's

identity in space and in relationships that enables the talanoa to move forward. This is very important for the talanoa process because the strength of those relationships, positions, and connections determines the degree of honesty and transparency in sharing information, opinions, and attitudes.

Talanoa is consistent with the Pasifika research guidelines that suggest the best research methodologies for Pasifika people are sensitive to contemporary Pasifika contexts, capable of embracing existing Pasifika notions of collective ownership, collective shame, collective authoritarian structures, and capable of withstanding the test of time (Anae, Coxon, Wendt-Samu, & Finau, 2001). This is also consistent with the ethical research principles listed by the Pacific Health Council; in particular the principles of respect, cultural competency, meaningful engagement, and reciprocity (HRC, 2005).

Talanoa methodology was employed in the Tongan parents' focus group using the participants' own language. The participants had been informed about the reasons for the talanoa and therefore had the "focus" of the discussion in mind. As a Tongan, the moderator was able to facilitate the non-focus parts as well as the focus parts of the talanoa which helped the dynamics of the discussions and the interactions. The discussions were conducted in Tongan, transcribed as Tongan, and then translated into English.

Procedure

The focus group with the Tongan parents used talanoa methodology that allowed the participants to interact and communicate in the Tongan language. The use of the participants' own language built relationships not only among participants but also with the research assistants and the researcher. Participants felt that they were connected to everybody else on a personal level and these connections built up trust and confidence among the group participants.

Instrument

Pre-established themes were identified to be the focus of the discussions. Three themes – assessment, teaching, and learning – were adopted from established inventories that have been used to elicit students and teachers’ conceptions. The small amount of literature on Tongan education and the researcher’s personal insights as a Tongan parent and a teacher were also used to create the other themes for parents and caregivers’ focus groups. These other themes were aims of schooling, responsibilities, school choices, and reasons for not achieving in the classrooms.

Data Collection

The data was generated through audio-taped *talanoa* sessions which captured most verbal exchanges. Research assistants (two Tongan teachers) helped by taking field notes during the discussions. This allowed for the transcription of the data and offered the possibility of conducting reliability checks on the encoding of the data. Additionally, this allowed for numerous reviews of the sessions in order to obtain additional insights. Permission to record the sessions was obtained from participants.

Findings

The analysis of the data from the Tongan parents’ focus group found these categories for the seven domains.

Domains	Categories
Aims of schooling	Secure a better future, fulfilling obligations, development of the complete person
School choices	Making good relationships, teaching moral/Christian values, passing many students, enforcing strict discipline, schools closest to homes
Responsibilities	Provide children school needs, discipline children, teach children Tongan culture

Reasons for not achieving	Parents not knowing how to best support children, too much time away from children, lack of communication & understanding between parents and children, nothing is wrong (its normal)
Assessment	Assessment is good
Teachers and teaching	Need more Tongan teachers, role models, quality communication and feedback, discipline students
Learning	Valued memorisation, pay utmost attention to teachers, lack of confidence and commitment, need parental supervision, allocation of study time and space, quality of students' exercise books

Discussion

The information and data collected from this focus group was of high quality because the whole process of talanoa was conducted in a familiar setting, observing all the appropriate cultural practices, and a moderator who understand the participants' culture. In addition, the discussions were conducted in the strongest language of the participants: Tongan. Without observing the research principles and values of the participants, the process of collecting valid quality data and the quality and information may not be generated. The fact that I am a Tongan who understands the principles and values as well as the metaphorical references used by the participants made the whole process meaningful and successful.

After analysing data under the parents' aims of schooling these three sub-categories were found: (1) securing a better future, (2) fulfilling obligations, and (3) development of the complete person (tangata kakato). Tongan parents' aims of schooling centred on promoting children to be good citizens and to do what is expected from them: securing a better future, fulfilling obligations, and the continuing development of the total person (tangata kakato). The development of the tangata kakato came out strongly. Tongan ontology views human development as a holistic and balanced process where the physical, the intellectual, and the spiritual domains must develop equally as a whole and are very much connected to each other. Tongan parents believe that schools are responsible for their children's development of this tangata

kakato. That is why they see teachers as role models for their students, send their children to private (church) schools, and some parents send their children back to Tonga for their secondary education. Schooling as a means to improving life standards is also a strong aim for Tongans' education.

All these aims are interconnected. Lee (2003) reports that one of the main reasons for Tongan migration overseas is the belief that the overseas education system will give their children a better education, and generally, a good education leads to a well-paid job and a financially secure future. Fatongia practices operate on all levels of Tongan society whether within or outside of Tonga. At the national level, remittances, which are a form of fatongia, have been an important source of Tonga's gross domestic product (GDP) every year. Remittances to Tonga in 2006 were worth \$200 million which was 37% of GDP (World Bank, 2006), a fact which prompted some scholars to use phrases such as "dispersed family estates", "transnational corporations of kin", and "family firm" to refer to this. Tongan people who reside overseas send money and goods to their relatives back in Tonga because they feel that is part of their familial obligation.

However, Morton (1996, p. 54) claims that "the desire to improve the life chances of the immediate family operates in tension with the sense of obligation to kin remaining in Tonga; as we will see, remittances can be a significant drain on a migrant family's income. The way some migrants lessen this tension is to assist as many family members as possible to migrate themselves so that they can seek their own opportunities".

Tongan parents' criteria for choice of schools found five sub-categories: (1) making good relationships, (2) teaching moral/Christian values, (3) passing many students, (4) enforcing strict discipline, and (5) schools being situated closest to homes. Tongan parents believe strongly in disciplining their children. This belief is strongly connected to their belief about being good students leading to being good citizens later on in life, and to their beliefs about teaching and learning. They believe that teaching is a transmission process and if students are not disciplined to be quiet and attentive to teachers then they will miss out.

It was obvious that all participants want their children to be successful academically and at the same time morally acceptable. They want a school that can do both of these for their children. Some parents choose to send their children back to Tonga because their beliefs about schooling are better served in the Tongan schooling system than in the context of the New Zealand education system. Other parents send their children back because they have no other option; the New Zealand school system is not working for their children. Recently, there have been an increasing number of Tongan parents who sent their children back to Tonga for their schooling. Schoone (2002) in his narrative study of New Zealand-born Tongan “youths at-risk” who were sent back to Tonga to stay with relatives and to attend secondary schools there found that:

The New Zealand-born youths’ time in Tonga was successful in re-scripting their personal narratives to the extent that they demonstrated few of the ‘at-risk’ behaviors that their families reported in New Zealand. The research findings suggest that the youths were scripted into *anga faka-Tonga* to the extent they were recognized as ‘being a Tongan kid’.
(p.8)

Tongan parents believed that their responsibilities were to: (1) provide for children’s school needs, (2) discipline children, and (3) teach them Tongan culture. Parents’ responsibilities are strictly in the homes; they know very little what is going on at schools for their children. Although the teachers are well qualified more Tongan teachers are needed if Tongan language and culture needs to be taught at schools to remind the children of their roots. Participants identified parents and the students as being responsible for, or to blame for, the low achievement. Parents need to be taught how to successfully support their children’s schooling as there is a lack of communication between the parents and the children at homes; parents’ low socio-economic status being the main reason raised for low achievement.

Tongan parents’ reasons for their children underachieving were: parents not knowing how to best support their children; too much time away from children; lack of communication/understanding between parents and children; and that students’ achievement or lack of it was normal.

Surprisingly, some participants believed that there is nothing wrong with their children's achievement. Some suggested the need to emphasise blue collar jobs because Tongan people are physically built for such jobs. Some saw that most Tongan homes lack a study programme or quiet space for the children. The participants also realized after the focus group that they need to do much more to support their children's schooling than what they were doing at the moment. A serious finding was the fact that the parents were totally unaware of what their children were doing at school. They trusted and expected the schools to educate their children, believing that the parents' place is in the home. Both parents and caregivers need to be educated and supported in order to understand that they should be actively participating in their children's schooling. This participation involves regular visits to the schools, asking questions of teachers, a deep understanding of the school system and the assessment frameworks their children are doing at school, and what they can do to best support their children's schooling. Consequently, they asked me for a faikava to learn more about schools and the NCEA framework.

Generally Tongan parents view assessment very positively, respondents saying that assessment is good. In the main, Tongan parents' understanding of assessment was of a one-off examination and as central to their children's schooling. It was clear that the parents accept that assessments, and specifically examinations, are good. Most Tongans do very well academically, and this is partly in response to the strong effort they make to do well in examinations.

However, a Marxist analysis of this emphasises the critical and segregation theory where school is used by the elite to retain their status. This interprets parents as victims of state and elite hegemony around how assessment is used to select students to the few elite schools and school opportunities. It is possible that the whole of the Tongan community has been deceived by the importance of examinations to keep people in their place. Such argument is likely to be dwarfed by the fact that good education has broken the strict stratified social structure that existed in Tonga and provided platforms for an upward social elevation for many common Tongans.

Kavaliku (2007, p. 11) reaffirms Tongans' high priority for education, stating that Tongans "value education not only for itself – producing an educated person – but also for two other reasons: means for employment and a means for upward mobility. An educated person has status in the Tongan society and the more educated (i.e. measured in terms of diplomas and degrees) the higher the statuses".

Tongan parents drew up these four sub-categories for teaching: need more Tongan teachers, teachers as role models, quality communication and feedback, and student discipline. The desire to have Tongan teachers and Tongan discipline are connected because the Tongan parents were themselves brought up in the school system with predominantly teacher-centred teaching. They believe that students are "empty vessels", and that learning involves the teacher filling the students with knowledge and that this can only happen if students pay the ultimate attention to teachers. This is in direct contrast to the New Zealand classroom where teaching is student-centred with students taking more responsibilities for their learning.

Tongan parents' data for learning drew up these sub-categories: memorisation, pay uttermost attention to teachers, lack of confidence and commitment, need parental supervision, allocation of study time and space, and quality of students' exercise books. In Tonga, most parents and children are familiar with the notion of rote-learning factual, analytic, and numerative information. That situation is one where primary school students memorise most of the materials they are taught, such as English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and General Knowledge in order to pass the national entrance examination that allows them to enter secondary school (Manu'atu, 2002). This is the examination that decides which secondary schools a student can enrol at; most parents would like their children to graduate to any of the government high schools because they believe that those schools offer better academic opportunities for their children. It is unclear whether Tongan parents in New Zealand understand the lesser role of memorisation, and importance of critical and independent thinking for success in the New Zealand curriculum.

Conclusion

This preliminary exercise exploring participants' conceptions of schooling shows these conceptions may have grown out of their own schooling experiences, usually in Tonga. For Tongan parents, then, some of these conceptions have originated outside the context of schooling in New Zealand but have helped shape their beliefs about schooling, therefore having implications for their children in the New Zealand context. Tongan students who were born into this melee have their own conceptions. The challenge is to align these conceptions (Tongan parents, their children's conceptions and New Zealand school administrators and teachers) to ensure a better understanding of Tongan parents' conceptions about schooling in New Zealand. New Zealand has been trying to improve Pasifika students' achievement and there is no better way to do that than to understand what Pasifika people think about schooling. Possible intervention programs can be developed to change the mind-sets of Tongan parents to improve their children's academic performance. It is hoped that this exploratory exercise reported here contributes to a better understanding of the Tongan community beliefs about schooling experiences.

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Pacific postgraduate research in education done at the University of the South Pacific: Another site for rethinking Pacific education

Greg Burnett and Govinda I. Lingam

Abstract

Most Pacific postgraduate students in education are experienced mid to late career teachers and administrators who know their education communities intimately and, after study, return to contribute, often in more influential ways. This paper examines the flow of new educational thinking back into Pacific communities over several decades to the present as a result of postgraduate research done by students at the University of the South Pacific (USP) in Fiji. Some comparison with Pacific students completing MAs and PhDs in New Zealand's universities is also made. The paper reports on analyses of the USP library's thesis collection. Basic trends such as what aspects of education are being researched and where in the region new thinking about Pacific education is going are identified. More importantly, however, the paper identifies trends in how Pacific education is being theorised by returning educators; that is, Guba & Lincoln's (1998) "matters of faith" about how the Pacific world should be. It is educational research thinking at this fundamental level that impacts most on Pacific education systems once postgraduate students return to their respective workplaces.

Introduction

Postgraduate research in education done by Pacific students has for several decades been a significant site for re-thinking education in the Pacific region. Education postgraduate students are generally experienced mid-career educationalists bringing to their research intimate knowledge of their home countries' education, social, economic, and cultural contexts. On completion of their research, their return to their education sectors represents a conduit for new knowledge, more developed theoretical

perspectives on Pacific education issues, and potential for change (Mullins & Kiley, 2002). What then are the educational ideas at the paradigmatic level flowing into education communities after research completion? Paradigmatic thinking is the worldview that students possess or adopt to guide their research and emerges from researchers' beliefs about "the nature of the world, [their] place in it and the range of possible relationships" (Guba & Lincoln, 1998, p.107) in that world. Students' beliefs concerning education are challenged and changed in complex ways by the academic supervision relationship (Manathunga, 2009). Nevertheless, these "matters of faith" (Guba & Lincoln, 1998) form the basis of research questions that can be legitimately asked and the methodologies mobilised to generate new knowledge.

Basic research trends

Forty two education-related postgraduate research theses (four PhDs & 38 MAs) produced at the University of the South Pacific (USP) between its establishment in 1968 and 2009 were found in USP's library at the time of the study. Most have been completed within what is currently known as the School of Education, with one completed in the School of Language, Arts and Media (Robie, 2003). Growth in postgraduate education research has been considerable since 1968: from 1970 to 1979 only one thesis was produced; from 1980 to 1989 there were five; from 1990 to 1999 there were 11; and from 2000 to 2009 at least 25.

Analysis of thesis titles, abstracts, acknowledgements, contents pages, and references indicates that over 75 percent of research focuses on Fijian education, and most appear to have been completed by Fijian students who have returned to work in some capacity within the Fijian education sector. The Fijian research bias possibly reflects the greater stake Fiji has in USP: economically, in terms of financial contribution; physically, in terms of location in Fiji's capital; and numerically, in terms of the largest enrolment (Crocombe, 2001). Research focus ranges across primary, secondary, and tertiary sectors and targets diverse issues with some concentrations in literacy, vocational education, and human resource planning.

Changes in postgraduate supervision trends are significant. In the early

decades, many supervisors were expatriates on short term contracts at USP (see Bennett, 1974, p. vii) and the supervisory pool appeared diverse, with supervisors responsible for only one or two postgraduate supervisions. From the 1990s however, the supervisory pool narrowed, comprising long-term Pacific academics, four of whom have supervised more than 50 percent of the overall total. While postgraduate students researching in an environment familiar with Pacific education issues might logically have an advantage over students who are supervised outside of these discourses, this may not necessarily be more beneficial in terms of outcomes. Based on Singh's (2005) model of international students studying in the inter-cultural contact zone for global citizenship local Pacific educational challenges may be more advantageously researched and supervised outside of designated Pacific research frameworks.

Paradigm positioning and transformative potential

At the paradigmatic level, Lather's (2006) four-part framework for theorising research – positivism, interpretivism, emancipationism, and deconstructivism– is a useful tool for analysing research in a Pacific context. The framework provides a nuanced means of thinking about research fundamentals beyond what Lather argues are “tired binaries of a monolithic West and some innocent indigenous culture” (Lather, 2006, p. 42). Lather is sceptical of Eurocentric research traditions, but at the same time argues that research theory and practice need to move beyond simple cultural essentialisms that link authority to research with specific nations, cultures, and identities. It might also be added that the framework, briefly described below, moves research thinking beyond other binaries including the qualitative/quantitative methodologism that dominates social inquiry, particularly postgraduate research training.

Positivism and knowing

Educational research conducted within a positivist paradigm primarily asks what is true and what can be known? It most often involves statistical analyses of collected data which are used to make truth statements about children, their learning, teaching approaches, assessment and so on. Positivist research assumes knowledge is attainable through the

rigorous application of empirical data-collecting methods. There is little concession made to the wider Pacific social and historical context within which the phenomena being researched is set, nor the uneven power relations between subjects, either Pacific or non-Pacific, to which the other paradigms concede in varying degrees.

Interpretivism and understanding

Interpretivist research asks what can be understood about the social world. There is a concession to multiple realities; that is, a Pacific sociality based on unique epistemologies, ways of knowing, pedagogy, and often a non-Pacific sociality based on oppositional characteristics. Research within this paradigm makes cultural difference its starting point and seeks to create a space whereby that which has been lost through colonisation and its “modern manifestation”, globalisation (Thaman, 2002, p. 234), might be re-asserted. Ethnography and phenomenology are the methodological means toward highlighting difference; however, it is difference often along culturalist, ethnicist, or nationalist lines only. Unlike emancipationist research, discussed below, there is little concession to an uneven distribution of privilege as a result of historical and contemporary differences within colonial and Pacific systems of education.

Emancipationism and transforming

Emancipationist research asks what is just and what can be done to transform. Subjectivity becomes politicised once research moves from interpretivism to emancipationism. Such research is concerned with critical social theory, power, equity, and social justice. This article argues that where this research is manifest in postgraduate education research, it is in critiques of the uneven power relationships inherent in colonial systems of education imposed on the region and the resultant benefits for non-Pacific people and the erasure of Pacific knowledge and teaching systems. There is, however, little emancipationist research that casts a critical gaze within Pacific education systems.

Deconstructionism and critiquing

Deconstructionist research draws on post-foundational ideas (Ninnes & Burnett, 2004) to ask how truths are constructed and analyses or deconstructs meta-narratives that purport to explain social conditions. In Pacific education research it involves questioning the taken-for-granted truths about schooling, knowledge, and so on. It is research that is concerned with disrupting the simple binaries of dominance and oppression, Pacific and the West, and attributes a degree of agency to Pacific subjectivities. Deconstructive educational research in the Pacific would question not only Western and colonial education practices and beliefs but also Pacific educational practices and the culturalism that underpins many of the recent rethinking Pacific education debates and initiatives.

There are some important cautions, however, in considering research within such a framework. The first concerns a necessary resistance to categorising research too rigidly. The framework certainly provides a useful means of thinking about research but it must not be used reductively. Those who author, supervise, and consume research need to find a careful balance between a “longing for” and a “wariness of” a paradigmatic home (Lather, 2006, p. 40). The second concerns resisting a teleological approach to thinking about the paradigm types. Movement across the spectrum is not a developmental progression in terms of sophistication, capacity to explain, or rigour and validity. As mentioned before, the categories represent instead Guba and Lincoln’s (1998) matters of faith about how the world of research and, indeed, Pacific education is generally perceived.

To determine the paradigm positioning of each research project with a reasonable level of accuracy, a simple discourse analysis of the research intent statements in thesis abstracts was undertaken according to Lather’s (2006) four-part model. Based on similar research into theoretical perspectives used in comparative education (Ninnes & Burnett, 2004), assertions about research intent were also supported by key theorists identified in thesis reference lists. Where research intentions did not match well with the theorists cited a more nuanced approach was taken with the use of in-between categories of paradigm positioning. It was

possible for a project to appear positivistic in its intent stated in the abstract but to have listed some references to interpretivist theorists for support. Similarly, the boundaries were sometimes blurred between interpretivist and emancipationist projects. This slippage is consistent with Lather’s (2006) cautions (above) and does not detract from the intention to identify broad trends in how students are researching their Pacific education worlds.

Interpretivism and seeking to understand

The overall results indicated in Table 1 suggest that 37 of the 42 theses examined contain elements of *interpretivist* research; that is, their main goal is to understand a specific pedagogical or educational problem, most often from the relativist perspective of participants involved in that problem.

Table 1: Postgraduate research by broad paradigm position – USP (1968-2009)

Paradigm positioning	Number of theses
Positivist	4
Positivist/interpretivist	5
Interpretivist	22
Interpretivist/emancipationist	10
Emancipationist	1
Emancipationist/deconstructivist	0
Deconstructivist	0

Of the 37 projects containing interpretivist elements, most contained research aims such as to “provide an historical overview” (Kapavai, 2006); “to attempt to understand” (Aveau, 2003); “to investigate the effects” (Lee-Hang, 2002); or “to examine the effectiveness” (Maebuta, 2003). Some projects also made their interpretivist framework explicit; for example, “adopting a phenomenological perspective” (Aveau, 2003) and “this is an ethnographic study” (Likuseniwa, 1999). In all of these projects semi-structured interviews and observations were the main data-collecting methods. Common to all of these projects is an

almost complete lack of socially critical theorists used to help with the analyses. Instead, they employ a range of similar studies in other Pacific or non-Pacific contexts as well as research methodology texts such as Wiersma (1986), Burgess (1985), Cohen and Manion (1980), Denzin (1978), Burns (1990), Bogdan and Biklen (1982) – or later editions of these texts– to support the qualitative framework employed.

Robie's (2003) journalism PhD, investigating links between the way journalism is taught and the journalistic outcomes that result when graduates are working within media organisations in the Pacific region, is the only project that could be classified as being undertaken within an emancipationist paradigm. Explicit goals of the research include: "analysis [of] political economic frameworks" from a "critical political economic perspective" with "outcomes ask[ing] serious questions about the autonomy of journalists in a South Pacific democracy" (Robie, 2003, p. x). Critical theorists employed include Habermas (1989) and Hall (1982). A further 10 projects contain emancipationist elements, marked by the identifiably critical theorists used in the analysis of data. These include: Koya-Vaka'uta's (2002) use of Freire (1972) to explore cultural identity in Fijian youth; Nabobo's (1996) use of Apple (1979, 1983), Freire (1972), and Fanon (1967) to critique development theory in Fijian higher education; Suluma's (2005) use of Ball (1992) to critique Fijian special education policy; and Thaman's (1988) PhD research using Apple (1979, 1983), Freire (1972) and Giroux (1983) to investigate Tongan epistemologies. Positivist research examples are also few in number – four before 1994, with a further five containing positivist elements before 1997. These projects are largely concerned with measuring competence and making comparisons in aspects of literacy education (see Fujioka-Kern, 1994) and achievement (see Kishor, 1981).

Conclusion

The analysis demonstrates that 22 examples of interpretivist postgraduate education research and a further 15 containing interpretivist elements were completed at USP up until 2009. From a total of 42 postgraduate research projects this suggests a large flow of interpretive ideas and understandings back into Pacific regional education communities as a

result of that research. Reasons for interpretivism in the postgraduate research experience demand further investigation in areas such as: USP's institutional capacity and the areas of expertise it makes available for postgraduate supervision; the kinds of pedagogical relationships that develop between supervisor and student; the historical trajectories of knowledge production and research emphases generally in the Pacific; and the lingering discourses of colonialism that shape contemporary schooling as well as the research that informs that schooling. This interpretivist flow of educational thought, with the emphasis on understanding educational phenomena, may not be immediately conducive to educational and social transformation.

There has only been a slight tendency toward emancipatory thinking about Pacific education, beginning with Thaman's (1988) PhD research into Tongan epistemology. It is research, or rather the worldview of key individuals, positioned within such frameworks that enables the greater possibility of social transformation in Pacific communities marked by unique climatic, political, and social challenges. Thaman's (1988) example clearly describes the transformative potential of such research, emphasising the capacity to bring about change via a return to education work after completion. Thaman's writing, teaching, and educational consultancy and advisory work with international bodies such as UNESCO and regional initiatives such as the Rethinking Pacific Education Initiative over more than 20 years have been extensive. The socially critical perspectives emerging from this research that contest lingering colonial discourse in Pacific education and advocacy for Pacific epistemologies are widely known by Pacific educators and educational researchers around the Pacific rim. Fifty percent of education theses completed at USP after 1990, regardless of paradigmatic positioning, cite Thaman's research.

Without diminishing the importance of such research, it is important, however, to issue a caution. Emancipatory oriented postgraduate research, where it does exist, tends toward cultural difference analyses only. As previously mentioned, this has emerged in response to perceptions of loss and erasure via what Teairo (2007) terms "exogenous" education and knowledge systems. The resulting advocacy for Indigenous Pacific epistemologies in both education and research tends to ignore

an educational discourse concerning equity and access in Pacific education as articulated in the recent Pacific Education Development Framework (Forum Ministers, 2009). A body of criticism informed by poststructuralist, postcolonial, and critical anthropological theories has emerged that questions the culturalist assumptions of a simple re-indigenisation of Pacific education and the research that informs it (see, for example, Burnett, 2007; Ninnes, 1998). These are the very theoretical perspectives that comprise Lather's (2006) deconstructivist research paradigm, which are yet to influence postgraduate research in education at USP and feature only minimally in Pacific higher degree education research in New Zealand (Burnett, 2011). This criticism suggests that emancipatory theorising at times tends toward the anti-colonial rather than the postcolonial (Hickling-Hudson, 1998). Anti-colonial approaches to educational research often employ over-determined categories of difference between Pacific and non-Pacific epistemologies and pedagogies. Such approaches do not often consider the uneven distribution of privilege within imagined groups such as "the Pacific" or a Pacific ethnicity, for example "Fijian", as a result of educational practice.

Postcolonial approaches to educational research have greater explanatory potential to account for increasingly complex Pacific social conditions, where, as Chow (1993) maintains, people simply refuse to stay in their frames. There is in such research a concession to Pacific peoples' agency, for example, in terms of appropriating imagined non-Pacific knowledge and pedagogies rather than having their minds colonised by them as some Pacific educators have argued (Puamau, 2005a). Postcolonial approaches to educational research concede to creative cultural discontinuity and hybridity rather than seeking to "recover an alternative set of cultural origins not contaminated by the colonising experience" (Hickling-Hudson, 1998). Pacific education's role in seeking solutions to Pacific environmental, political, and economic problems are perhaps more likely to be achieved as a result of emancipatory and deconstructive rather than interpretivist and positivist approaches to education research. The flow of socially critical perspectives back into Pacific regional communities, and the creation of links between education and Pacific problems have the most transformative potential. However, potential for change is more likely

where approaches to education are directed beyond the often reductive colonial binary of Pacific and non-Pacific, and extended to include processes of social marginalisation at multiple levels, including those within Pacific communities.

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SEEKING NEW DIRECTIONS

Development of early childhood education curriculum in the Solomon Islands: Valiuim Smol Pikinini Blong Iumi

Ali Glasgow

Abstract

This discussion investigates early childhood curriculum development in the Pacific and provides examples of curriculum development from the Solomon Islands context. It explores ideas and discourse around curriculum development, with commentary on aspirations, directives, and responses by Pacific communities, and the Solomon Islands community in particular. Pacific early childhood education, strengthened by Indigenous and socio-cultural theory, has enabled the emergence of culturally authentic education programmes for children and families and in some way works to enhance cultural and linguistic maintenance for Pacific nations. Pacific early childhood education has increased in prominence in the last decade. The growth of initiatives reveals the heightened interest and research conducted in the early childhood education sector. A systematic approach by Pacific nations' governments has assisted the development of early childhood policies, programmes and curricula, teacher training, and in-service professional development.

Keywords: early childhood curriculum, culture, language maintenance

Rationale

A question raised at the inaugural Re-thinking Pacific Education Initiative for and by Pacific Peoples (RPEIPP) colloquium in 2001 was whether our education systems provided our children with the values, knowledge, and skills they needed to become fully functional members of their communities as well as citizens of the world (Pene, et al., 2002). This question has underpinned many discourses around development

of Pacific education, including the provision of quality early childhood education.

The last decade has seen an increased profile for early childhood education across the Pacific. At the beginning of the decade the call was for transforming education; for worthwhile education that advances traditional, cultural, and linguistic knowledge, and life skills (Taufe'ulungaki, in Pene, et al., 2002). A seminal work underpinning the process of educational reform is The Dakar Framework for Action which was developed during the World Education Conference (26-28 April, 2000). In adopting this framework participants reaffirmed the vision of the World Declaration on Education For All. The declaration supports the rights of all children, young people, and adults, to have an education that will meet their basic learning needs; an education that will improve their lives and transform their societies (UNESCO, 2000). The guidelines proclaimed a collective commitment to action; a timely message for nations seeking such measures as equity and accessibility to quality education. A key goal identified was the expansion and improvement of comprehensive early childhood education and care, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children. Pene et al. (2002) identified the development of Pacific early childhood education as a priority for Pacific education. Approaches included expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood education and achieving equitable access, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children. These directives served as a strong motivation for Pacific nations to increase and strengthen the early childhood sector; initiatives included the development of curriculum documents that are culturally embedded and determined by Pacific Nations.

Curriculum Development

Thaman (2009) identifies two issues to consider in curriculum development: (1) to make the curriculum more inclusive of the students and their home cultures, and (2) to address important national and global issues. Historically curricula have been Eurocentric with little consideration of the socio-cultural contexts of children's, families', and teachers' lives.

In many Pacific countries the colonial and missionary styles of teaching remain entrenched and this has meant teachers have little opportunity to engage in new ideas based on traditional approaches. Within the Eurocentric framework other possibilities for education are given little regard and considered less worthy. This is the legacy of colonial influences where Western policies and practices impose their control over other nations, even within that nation state (Gibbs, 2006). Given this continued influence, Teairo (2009) questions whether the desire for a culturally inclusive Pacific curriculum is sufficiently strong to spur people into action.

In the early 1990s a group of Pacific educationalists and curriculum personnel discussed a values-based approach whereby the curriculum would be shaped by core values (implicit or explicit) derived from society. They acknowledged that values were influenced by beliefs and were important in curriculum decision-making; that students learned values through modelling and discussion; that curriculum was often asked to promote spiritual, moral, and cultural values; and that knowledge itself was a cultural construct and could not have universal features (Young, 1971 cited in Thaman, 2009). Thaman (2009) asserts the importance of Pacific educators in creating a synthesis of the best of their home cultures and that which they have learned in schools.

Much discursive, wide-ranging debate, reflection, and critique has occurred on the trajectory of Pacific education. Calls are made for curriculum that espouses indigenous values and knowledge (Teairo, 2009) and the re-examining of traditional epistemologies and integrating indigenous pedagogies and processes in the curriculum (Nabobo-Baba, 2009). This discourse has provided strong motivation from within Pacific nations to construct Pacific educational programmes immersed in Pacific cultural and pedagogical paradigms. One such initiative is the development of the Solomon Islands early childhood education curriculum.

Early childhood education curriculum initiatives

Debate and discourse surround the evolution of Pacific education. Collective themes of culture, traditions, languages, and indigenous

knowledge guide discussion, raise challenges, and prompt further provocations around curriculum planning and implementation. The play-based early childhood curriculum model, such as Te Whāriki, the early childhood curriculum of Aotearoa/New Zealand (Ministry of Education, 1996), makes strong links to wider social and cultural backgrounds, and espouses holistic learning and development. Pacific early childhood education discourse and investigation is critical. For example, contemporary neuro-scientific research informs that the optimum period of connections within the brain is in the first three years of life and educators recognise this period of human development as crucial, particularly in developing social relationships (Atwool, 2002).

In Aotearoa/New Zealand, the play-based approach encompassed in Te Whāriki, (Ministry of Education, 1996) has not always been readily adopted by teachers and management in the wider Pacific early childhood context. Many practitioners were initially trained as primary school teachers and the legacy of primary-based teaching may still permeate teaching practice, with directive, adult-led teaching taking precedence over child-centred, credit-based teaching. The difficulty has been that children are entering early childhood programmes at increasingly younger ages and are ill-equipped to cope with long periods of directive teaching. The development of Te Whāriki (Ministry of Education, 1996) in Aotearoa/New Zealand and Te Api'i Tamariki Potiki (Ministry of Education, 2005) in the Cook Islands has provided early childhood pedagogical models for other Pacific nations to emulate.

Early childhood education models continue to develop in nations across the Pacific. An example is the Vanuatu Education Master Plan (EMP) which aims for all children to have access to pre-school education. Its national policy on ECE seeks a close relationship with parents and community, and increased government involvement in licensing and other governance matters. Priskul asosiesen blong Vanuatu (PSABV), Vanuatu preschool association, has 52 branches throughout Vanuatu. There is an increasing growth in Vanuatu early childhood education, with issues such as training, programme and curriculum development, and community awareness as areas of further growth (James, 2004).

Solomon Islands early childhood education

The Solomon Islands is a geographically diverse nation, comprising over 900 islands spread over 1.6 million square kilometres of sea. There are more than 80 indigenous linguistic and cultural groups, with over 80% of the population living in villages and approximately 16% living in the urban centres. Most of the population is located on the six main islands of Guadalcanal, Malaita, Makira, Choiseul, Santa Isabel, and New Georgia. The lingua franca of the Solomon Islands is pidjin.

In 2002, Roughan described the international and national economic juggernaut which determined the way that Solomon Islands curriculum must travel. Since that time, policies and practices have evolved to enable far greater input and involvement from the local Solomon Islands education community. From this position educators, policy developers, and ministry officials have greater access to decision-making and power to implement culturally responsive educational programmes.

Early childhood education in the Solomon Islands covers the ages of three to five years. Originally the first early childhood centres that were established were initiated by individuals, groups, and voluntary organisations in urban settings such as in the Solomon Islands capital Honiara, as well as Gizo and Auki. The Honiara Preschool association was established in 1981. This base provided a strong foundation from which the Solomon Islands early childhood curriculum framework was developed.

Valiuim smol Pikinini Blong Iumi (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2009) – the Solomon Islands early childhood curriculum – was developed in Honiara by a curriculum development panel consisting of Solomon Islands educationalists, Ministry of Education and Human Resources officials, aid agency officials, and academic staff from the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE). The provinces were each represented with experienced and highly-regarded teachers contributing their expertise to wide-ranging panel discussions about values and beliefs related to Solomon Islands early childhood education.

The Solomon Islands has been very pro-active in driving educational initiatives in the early childhood sector. The development of an early childhood curriculum and the broad representational composition of the development panel reveal the importance placed on this process and the ownership by the local indigenous community in the curriculum's inception. The diverse skills and expertise that participants contributed was hugely significant. For example, several panel members had many years' experience working in their respective provinces providing guidance and training for field-based early childhood trainee teachers and untrained teachers seeking professional advice and support. A panel member's knowledge about the "Child Friendly Schools" philosophy proved useful in discussions about the transition to school process. SICHE academics provided a strong theoretical base, so contributing contemporary knowledge of Indigenous and Western education. From this pooled expertise the draft model, Valiuim Smol Pikinini Blong Iumi (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2009), was crafted. The curriculum was implemented in 2009 with practitioners in the field receiving support and guidance in using the document in their settings.

The Solomon Islands early childhood curriculum aspires to develop citizens who are secure in the knowledge that they make a valued contribution to Solomons' society and the wider world. This aim is reflected in the Policy Statement which states that the Early Childhood Curriculum must enable all young children to acquire the necessary skills, knowledge, values, and attitudes for meaningful participation in Solomon Islands society (Solomon Islands National Early Childhood Policy Statement, 2008, p. 2). Principles to support the curriculum are: unity, values, customs, traditions and cultural beliefs, indigenous languages and dialects, holistic development, empowerment, family and community, relationships, and interactions.

From these principles stem the strands of identity, involvement, communication, exploration, and contribution. Whilst all of the principles, strands, and goals are important, I have selected the principles unity and holistic development to provide a contextual picture of Solomon Islands early childhood education.

Unity

Unity sits at the forefront of the principles for Solomon Islands early childhood education. The curriculum development panel regarded its inclusion in the framework to be essential. The importance of achieving harmony was acknowledged recently by Associate Professor Kabini Sanga – a Solomon Islands academic based at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand – on Radio New Zealand, 27 May, 2012. Sanga declared that a real challenge for the Solomon Islands nation is achieving unity.

The inclusion of the principle of unity in Valiuim smol Pikinini Blong Lumi (Ministry of Education, 2009) reflects the notion that education enables children to engage in topics that require reflective thinking about social and moral issues. A primary goal for a curriculum is to enable education to transform and empower children in environments that engender learning on issues of equity, inclusion, and anti-bias. Transformative education challenges accepted practice and seeks to revise established theories and principles (Banks, 2006). Within a transformative framework, children are encouraged to become reflective, moral, and active citizens in an interconnected nation and beyond into the global arena. “The world’s greatest problems do not result from people being unable to read and write, they result from people in the world being unable to get along, and work together to solve the world’s problems of climate change, poverty, racism, sexism and war” (Banks, 2006, p. 62). When we teach children how to critique injustice in the world, we should also help them to formulate possibilities for action to change the world: to make it more democratic and just (Freire, 2000). This enables children to gain greater insight; to become “literate” about social and cultural issues they encounter.

Within this culture of raising awareness, children are encouraged to question and combat issues of bias. The anti-bias curriculum (ABC) (Derman Sparks, 1989) was developed to assist children to engage with difficult issues such as difference, stereotypes, bias, and discrimination. The ABC recognises, values, and incorporates the differences that children bring to the early childhood setting in ways that enhance learning opportunities. It acknowledges children’s early attempts

to construct identity and attitudes, directly addressing the effects of stereotypes, bias, and discrimination. The aim of anti-bias education is inclusion and positive self-esteem for all and empathy and activism in the face of injustice. Within the principle of unity, children, teachers, and others in the early childhood community can engage in issues in order to transform and effect positive change.

Holistic development

Koya's (2009) compelling discussion of a holistic curriculum, and the lack of such an approach in Pacific countries, relates to engendered debate amongst the panel on the inclusion of holistic development as a fundamental principle for the Solomon Islands curriculum. Within the context of the Solomon Islands, the principle of holistic development encompasses these overlapping dimensions which are recognised and practiced in terms of children's learning and development: social, emotional, physical, cognitive, spiritual, linguistic, cultural, and creative (Pere, 1988). The metaphor of Te Wheke (the octopus) contains eight dimensions: spirituality (wairuatanga), cognitive development (hinengaro), physical development and wellbeing (tinana), family and community (whanaungatanga), uniqueness (mana ake), vitality (mauri), cultural heritage (ha a koro ma a kui ma), and emotional wellbeing (whatumanawa). Te Wheke reflects the notion that a curriculum should ensure that educational programmes support and nurture all eight "tentacles" of the child's development for holistic development to occur (Pere, 1988). Another indigenous approach, Nga Pou Mana (Durie, 1998), also comprises a framework of interacting values and beliefs: family (whanaungatanga), cultural heritage (taonga tuku iho), the physical environment (te ao tūroa), and one's land base (tūrangawaewae) provide support for social, cultural, spiritual, emotional, and physical nourishment and wellbeing. These Māori models align with a Pacific Indigenous world view which strengthens the theoretical framework underpinning the notion of holism.

Social and cultural wellbeing

A contemporary view of literacy is that it is a social practice which acknowledges that the meanings represented in oral, written, and visual

texts are socially and culturally constructed and situated. This view of literacy argues that literacy is a tool with which our values, attitudes, aspirations, opinions, dreams, goals, and ideas about the world are constructed and conveyed (Jones Diaz, 2008). Questions about literacy and what it means to be literate are often confined to reading and writing. A narrow focus on literacy isolated from social practices, institutions, and ideologies from which it is constituted ultimately limits our understandings about literacy itself and about the diverse ways we engage in literacy practices. Such views of literacy fail to account for the variety of ways in which we read and interpret situations differently and how we share, convey, and construct meanings about the world. Apple (1999, cited in Jones Diaz, 2008) claims that meanings about literacy are varied and often reveal something about the social and political agendas used by different groups applying competing definitions of literacy. The traditional view of literate or non-literate uses a Western, Eurocentric lens and therefore privileges the use of alphabetic writing, so marginalising those from perceived non-literate societies.

The role of the early childhood teacher is a critical component of this democratic project in their daily work with children and their families (Robinson & Diaz, 2006). Koya (2009) stresses the importance of teachers developing multicultural competencies. Teachers are the interface between the children and the education system. Much work has been conducted at the level of policy and theory; it is now time for this to be transformed into practice. Crucially, teachers need to be delivering the highest quality, culturally responsive teaching. Bel hooks (in Gibbs, 2006) describes teachers allowing their pedagogy to radically change by recognising diversity so transforming teaching consciousness and praxis. Gibbs (2006) suggests that for this to occur a range of characteristics is required. Teachers need an understanding of their own beliefs, attitudes, and actions in terms of the cultural diversity. Teachers' pedagogy should include an appreciation and fostering of diversity through their teaching and in learning experiences they provide.

Culturally responsive teaching

The role of the teacher and the quality of teaching practice is pivotal to

the process of curriculum implementation. Other considerations include teaching philosophy and the values and beliefs of teachers. Teachers are the interface between the education system and children and families. Teachers, therefore, play a pivotal role as agents of social change; in the early years children are encouraged to become socially and culturally literate. A sociocultural perspective highlights the significance of ensuring early childhood programmes are contextually appropriate and that teaching is culturally sensitive and appropriate (Woodhead, 1998). This position counters traditional deficit or cultural deprivation theories which have influenced the development of educational policies whereby cultural practices outside the dominant Western educational framework are not seen as important for learning. The cultural capital of the colonial powers is perceived as more valuable than the traditional practices of the communities in which individuals lead their traditional lives. Consequently, education systems teach the marginalised that their culture is deficit and that academic failure in these groups is due to cultural deficiencies. Minority groups doubt their own traditional ways and embrace Western hegemony. This hidden curriculum reveals preferential social customs and behaviours and what learning is valued. It demonstrates the power of educational policies, practices, institutions, and teachers to perpetuate a system that maintains the status quo of the dominant culture (Gibbs, 2006).

Leaupepe (2011) found that early childhood teachers in the Cook Islands' context were frequently conflicted and held views that were contradictory to the early childhood curriculum, *Te Api'i Tamariki Potiki* (Ministry of Education, 2005), which was based on contexts of learning which embraced a more holistic view of child development and employed a "play-based" learning model. Leaupepe (2011) emphasised that children's play is meaningful learning, and urged teachers to seek out and value the learning possibilities that arose from children's spontaneous play episodes. Teachers retained an entrenched view of education that valued a transmission style of teaching and compartmentalisation of learning into separate curriculum areas, in contrast with a model which weaves in learning in authentic and meaningful ways based on the dispositional learning of children. Teachers were ambivalent about the value of play and the perceived learning outcomes for children engaging in play-based learning.

Te Ava, Airini, and Rubie-Davies (2011) suggest a culturally responsive Pacific pedagogy within the Cook Islands context involves a blend of culture, values, teaching, and learning. This may provide an exemplar model that can be modified according to context by other Pacific Nations. Bishop and Gynn (1999, cited by Gibbs, 2006) note that teachers employing cultural relevant pedagogy consciously create social interactions that focus on cultural competence as well as academic success and critical consciousness. Icons, symbols, rituals, and routines used in teaching and organising teaching space need to reflect and include the cultural groups of children in the setting (Gibbs, 2006).

Teachers must believe that they are agents of social change and that social justice for children must be at the forefront of their thinking. Teachers' self-efficacy influences how they teach and their use of innovation and instructional practices. They are seen to be predictive of students' performance and influence teachers' optimism, how they work with students, the effort they invest in teaching, and their persistence and resilience in the face of obstacles. Teachers' self-efficacy will be instrumental in taking affirmative action in curriculum, programmes, policy, and practice, to provide fair treatment without discrimination based on race, colour, religion, sex, gender, or national origin (Gibbs, 2006).

Teacher efficacy and quality teaching practice are prime foci for optimum delivery of the early childhood play-based curricula. This is an area which demands further attention if we are to move past the feelings of doubt and ambivalence on the part of Pacific early childhood or pre-school teachers (Leauepepe, 2011). A closer inspection of the cultural understandings of play is imperative to eliminate a largely Western lens from which play contexts are viewed. An investigation of culturally relevant Pacific play contexts is now timely as is the role of the teacher in implementing authentic and values-based educational programmes.

Conclusion

The wide-ranging discourse and rhetoric around Pacific education has triggered many responses within Pacific nations to revisit education and review existing curricula and educational programmes. Following

publication of the seminal work *Tree of Opportunity: Rethinking Pacific education* (Pene, Taufe'ulungaki, & Benson, 2002) a decade ago, interest in all aspects of Pacific education has flourished. The Solomon Islands early childhood education sector is an example of a nation taking ownership and crafting a curriculum based on values, traditional knowledge, and culture. While it is based in the Solomon Islands context, it may be of value to other nations seeking to review and construct early childhood curricula. The call is now for teachers to review their teaching practices and philosophies to reflect Indigenous, traditional ways of teaching. It is timely for ongoing, in-service professional development to support for teachers in the field as well as pre-service student teachers to reflect and critique their practices. A conceptualisation of play within a Pacific cultural framework and how children learn using traditional methods in the early years needs further consideration. This current research leads to further scope for research, such as comparative and participatory studies with other nations in the Pacific region. Exploration of cross sector alignment between early childhood, primary, and secondary curriculum models would enhance understandings and collaboration between sectors. This work adds to the growing body of research on Pacific early childhood education. This work for education in the Pacific will continue to strive to gain appropriate research-based data which will influence policy and curriculum development.

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‘ILUVATU: An Indigenous Framework

Sereima Naisilisili

Abstract

This paper is an overview of the ethnographic experience of the author using ‘Iluvatu, an indigenous research framework developed for the author’s doctoral thesis. The paper is aimed at providing some lessons learnt from the fieldwork experience that allowed the ethnographer to capture and document indigenous knowledge and ways of learning in the vanua of Cu’u, a remote and rural community in the northern part of Fiji. The framing of ‘Iluvatu as a research methodology is guided closely by two discourses: post-colonial critiques of knowledge as well as the worldwide attempt to question the dominance of certain knowledge framings in research and writing that provide an alternative way of looking at the world. The author shares how she connected into a web of relationships that mattered to the community studied. The process of connecting involved, among other things, respecting boundaries and upholding community values. The author discusses how the values of inclusiveness, respect, family, cohesiveness, uniqueness, reciprocity, and spirituality were embraced in the process of research.

‘Iluvatu: Indigenous research framework

This paper highlights some lessons learnt from the application of ‘Iluvatu, an indigenous research framework that guided an ethnographic study of the people of Cu’u, an indigenous Fijian community in the northern part of Fiji. The framework uses the metaphor of the mat, ‘Iluvatu (a special mat identified with people from the *vanua* of Cu’u), for the cultural values of the community studied. The approach allows the researcher to be a “cultural insider” discussing issues from the indigenous worldview. Such a stance provides important guidelines for ethical discourses in academia. The report is written in the first person to allow the author to tell her story from such a position.

It was Saturday the 23rd December, 2009 that marked the beginning of my fieldwork for a PhD study when Seveci (husband), Manasa (son), and I arrived in Cu'u, my tugalala home; tugalala being a settlement away from the main village of Waini'a. The concept of living in tugalala settlements was introduced by colonisers in the hope of helping indigenous Fijians with economic pursuits. I had particularly asked my husband to accompany me to present my sevusevu as I was now coming from his vanua (a term that refers to a people, their social structure, environment, history, their territorial spheres, their spirituality, and all relationships embraced within it) to live in Cu'u for a while. *Sevusevu* is an entry protocol to a vanua or family – this normally requires the presentation of *yaqona* (*pipermethysticum*) by visitors. According to Fijian customs, a Fijian woman becomes part of her husband's vanua as long as he is alive. Seveci's role in presenting the sevusevu indicated his approval and support of my seven month ethnographic study away from our home in Suva.

The *sevusevu* was received by my brother, Epi Voro, who was also the Tui Cu'u (chief) of the Yavusa of Cu'u at the time of research. In accepting the sevusevu, Epi expressed his appreciation for the kind gesture of *veiva'aturagata'i* (showing respect) and that he was pleased to accept the sevusevu for the people of Cu'u. The sevusevu was the entry protocol that paved my way into the vanua, allowing me to study my relatives' way of life for the first time, using the lens of an ethnographer.

Since my intention was to provide a detailed, in-depth description of everyday life and practice of the people of Cu'u, it was important for me to fit into the community as a participant observer and became part of the daily activities of the vanua. This was a smooth process. The community simply knew me as Divolivoli, the name that connected me to the community of my birth. The name reminded me that I belonged and I was a daughter of the vanua of Cu'u. Many years ago, the alienating arms of schooling separated me from my relatives and formalised my identity as Sereima, which is my birth-certificate name, with the addition of my husband's name, Naisilisili, later as my surname. Now that I was back with my people, my "community name" denoted that I was an insider although I was also a researcher.

In the community, I soon fitted into a web of relationships that mattered to my relatives and the community of my study. It was important to connect myself to these relationships in order to provide an accurate account of my people and their thoughts and feelings. The process of connecting involved appropriate actions that respected social boundaries and community values. As an insider, I had learnt that the people of Cu'u uphold the values of inclusiveness, respect, family, cohesiveness, uniqueness, reciprocity, and spirituality. These values were soon embraced in the process of research as I connected and interacted with individuals in the community as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: 'Iluvatu Framework – the research process



(Source: Naisilisili, 2012, p. 86; also in Nabobo et al., 2012, p. 118)

In the next section, I shall discuss each of these community values using various features of the 'Iluvatu as metaphor. The values defined the boundaries of my fieldwork and data collection processes.

Na Raba ni 'Iluvatu: Size for Inclusiveness

'Iluvatu is a mat designed for use in large spaces; large enough to include everyone present. I have chosen the large size of the mat to depict the value of inclusiveness. The principle of inclusiveness sustains and maintains relational ties in the Cu'u community. In planning a family function for example, one is obliged to inform and include every relative. Excluding a family could result in impaired relational ties and tensions between families. Inclusiveness reminds people that one "belongs" to the family, tribe, or vanua of Cu'u. Belonging has been noted by previous researchers as an important aspect of Fijian well-being (Nabobo-Baba, 2006; Ravuvu, 1987).

The principle of inclusiveness influenced my fieldwork. There were times when I felt like an outsider who was disrupting the normal processes of village life. I remember being caught up in a situation when some cloth gifts had to be shared amongst the community and I was allocated about five metres of the bales as my portion, simply because I was present. The inclusive nature of the community regarded it appropriate to include me in the distribution, although the gifts were meant to reciprocate a function held before I began my fieldwork. Despite my resistance (as expression of humility), I was obliged to accept the length of material, which became a reminder of sensitivity to the inclusive nature of the people. For the rest of the fieldwork, the principle of inclusiveness influenced the type of events that I attended. Inclusiveness also influenced the change made to my original sample size. My initial plan to interview thirty people had to change to accommodate an extra ten who expected to be interviewed. Although I was mindful of my objectives and research questions throughout the field experience, I used such opportunities to validate, reaffirm, and also tap into new deposits of knowledge that were freely offered by people in the community.

Na Loma ni 'Iluvatu: Space as Expression of Respect

The large space characterised by the 'Iluvatu mat is not only inclusive, but also denotes a culture that uses "space" to show respect. There are two main ways this space may be observed; through the physical

and the relational spheres. The physical space in the middle of the mat separates a chief from his subjects, or visitors from the locals in a seating arrangement, to show respect. Likewise, the relational space created by the *veitabu'i* – relationships such as maternal cousins, in-laws, and between niece, nephew, and uncles – demands a space of “no-talking” and “no-contact”, as expressions of respect.

Both forms of space formed the boundary around the information collected in my fieldwork. As an insider, the community knew me not only as *Divolivoli* but also as the older sister of the *Tui Cu'u*, as explained earlier. Although I tried to keep the spaces as narrow as possible, my status allowed me to experience only certain strata of the community, especially when things ceremonial mattered with women. My seating space amongst the women folks, the activities I participated in, and the people I interacted with were all defined by who I was in the *Cu'u* community. The distance between me and other members of the community comprised a distance of *veiva'aliuci* (others first), *veiva'amenemenei* (pampering others) and *veiva'aturagata'i* (uplifting others to chiefly status). All were expressions of respect.

Na i Lawa: The Basic Units – the Family

The starting strands of the *'iluvatu* define the quality and success of the mat. The best *pandana* leaves are chosen very carefully in the beginning, as wrong selection could affect the durability and strength of the *'iluvatu*. In the same way, young families, being the basic unit in the social structure, are carefully nurtured into *vanua* values and behaviours. The nurturing process normally requires adults (usually the parents) who have gone through family experiences themselves, to guide the young family through. The families provide the tapestry that the *Cu'u* culture represents to the world today.

In this research, the different family units in *Cu'u* provided the diversity and range of information collected. During the interviews, I had the privilege of not only accessing important knowledge but also experiencing the diversity of realities in the field. There was diversity in the interpretation of values, family goals, important knowledge, and the upbringing of children. In addition, diversity was visible in family

sizes, economic structures, and also rawa ‘a (material acquisition). All these added to the rich data collected during my fieldwork.

Talitali: Interlacing for Cohesiveness

An ‘iluvatu is constructed by interlacing two or more strands to form the typical large and durable mat. It is the multiple strands and interlacing patterns that provide durability and cohesiveness; qualities that contribute to the long-lasting nature of the mat. Likewise, the sustainability and cohesiveness of the Cu’u culture is based on the principles of interaction and integration. As I mingled around in the community, I witnessed first-hand, how the society allowed every individual of all ages, young and old, to integrate and be an important part of the whole community structure. I further realized that each person, including those not included in my samples, played a unique role in the community and would have an important contribution to make towards my work. This allowed me to interview people from a wide age range, from 10 to 88 year olds.

Apart from the individual interviews, other valuable observations included verbal utterances, silences, spaces, body language, interactions within different cultural settings – all provided richness to the data I collected.

Cohesiveness is a value that regards talents, skills, or knowledge to be an integral part of the vanua. As an educated insider, the community expected me to be endowed with a lot of these qualities to benefit the community. A few times I was asked to write formal letters in English or give advice on issues pertaining to education, business ventures, leadership, and spirituality. While the community recognized me as an important individual contributing to their needs, I realized how much I had gained as I kept linked to the community in the process.

To’avolavola: Uniqueness through Woven Designs

The ‘iluvatu is a unique mat in the sense that its decorative design is woven into the mat during the weaving process. The resulting designs are distinctive to the ‘iluvatu only. As I went about my research, I was

fascinated with unique aspects of the Cu'u culture. I had gathered knowledge from passed down oral history about an event known as the vonu gaga. The tragedy involved mass dying of people after eating an apparently poisonous turtle. While the grave sites are still evident today, the mass death dispersed the Cu'u people to the four villages included in this study. The story is one of migration that involves 'awa (geneology) and is not confined to provincial boundaries. It is a story of connectedness through blood ties within the Cu'u community and beyond.

Another unique feature of the culture is the way people relate to one another through a powerful yet light-hearted humour known as veiloso. This type of humour carries deep meanings and is normally directed by the opposite sex to vulagi's (visitors) for the purpose of making them feel at home. While veiloso has a romantic connotation, it could cause discomfort to wives or husbands who are not from the Cu'u tribe. These unique features shape people's worldviews today and I was fortunate to capture some of them through interviews.

'Ilu: Reciprocity

The edge of the 'iluvatu mat is completed by 'ilu, the process of returning the pandanus strands into the edges of the mat. The 'ilu process locks and smooths the edge of the mat and ensures that the strands do not unravel easily. Likewise, 'ilu is a significant phase in that the people of Cu'u are expected to reciprocate back to the vanua, the "arms" that have nurtured them through life. Reciprocity may be provided in the form of identifiable projects, donations, and taking on responsibilities for other members of the family. This is why youths are obliged to look after their parents when they grow old.

Mature members are also expected to reciprocate through reflecting on their past strengths and weaknesses and use this to guide younger members to do better. Significant data for this study was collected from reflections done through va'asala 'awa (tracing genealogy), recollecting past events, and merely providing opportunities for the younger generation to ask questions about life issues. The 'ilu phase is critical in ensuring that the indigenous culture remains intact and sustainable.

Tura: Spirituality as Secret to Success

Tura is a concealed strand of twisted pandanus that forms the straight strong edge that is characteristic of the 'iluvatu mat. The Cu'u culture, like other indigenous cultures (for example see Nabobo-Baba, 2006; Ravuvu, 1987), is framed by a spiritual dimension. The values and belief systems of Cu'u are embraced in the unseen realm of the spiritual. The culture uses the spiritual as a standard against which everyday activity is measured. In a way, my contribution towards the tura activities helped me to settle in and blend into the web of relationships in Cu'u. My role as a Methodist preacher as well as a bible study teacher allowed me to tap into the inner core of indigenous knowledge that was not always available through informal talanoa sessions.

The principles discussed above provided a platform for me as an ethnographer and participant observer to participate in vanua activities and become immersed in the normal activities of the people in the vanua, in the church, and in other social activities. They also formed the basis of ethical behaviour through establishing good relationships. According to Vaioleti (2011), good relationships with God, the land, nature, and each other contribute to the success of Pacific research. The 'Iluvatu Framework ensures the legitimacy of the Cu'u people's knowledge and culture as the researcher and ethnographer ventures into the world of the vanua with every step of research guided by appropriate community ethics.

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Re-thinking Citizenship Education (CE) in the Solomon Islands

Billy Fito'o

Abstract

This study explores the ways good and active citizenship may be motivated and enabled through school curricula in the Solomon Islands. The curriculum policy is relevant and contextually connected to the life ways of local people, a factor which is currently missing in most curriculums. This research was undertaken to assist in finding answers to the issues and problems currently faced in the Solomon Islands. It was premised on the assumption that past and current school practices did not prepare students adequately on how to conduct themselves and effectively relate to their diverse neighbors and live as good and active citizens within the complex and dynamic national social environment of the Solomon Islands. It found that participants agreed to teach moral values but questioned the sources of those values. They also agreed that in order for Citizen Education (CE) to be successful, virtues and moral values must come from cultural and religious values common to most Solomon Islanders.

Introduction

CE is an instrument used by Democratic states to prepare their citizens for the challenges of this new century (Print, 2008). In the Solomon Islands, challenges are numerous and complicated: “ethnic intimidation, forced eviction, murder, rape, arson, and open warfare among certain ethnic groups” (Sanga & Walker, 2005, p. 7). The authors note that these events occurred among conditions of deep social inequalities including corruption; crises in the justice, legislative, and bureaucratic systems; and a general lack of respect for diversity. Moreover, the state lacked the capacity to unite people of different ethnic groups. In

situations of contesting multiple identities unity is challenged, thereby resulting in a shaky national identity and a reduced capacity for social acceptance (Rueda, cited in Torney-Purta, Schwille, and Amadeo, 1999). In the Solomon Islands, such long-standing issues have become the subject of much debate among education reformers, politicians, civil society, women leaders, youth, and the general population. Therefore, citizenship is an important component for Solomon Islands curriculum. The relevant and contextual values of citizenship when integrated in the national curriculum may solve the challenges of ethnic relationships, unity in diversity, national identity, and respect for the social and physical environment.

Education context of Solomon Islands

Under the provisions of the National Education Act 1978, Solomon Islands schools are established to meet the goals of education for the country. The education system is centralised with all functions determined by the state including the designing, developing, and financing of the curriculum.

In the postcolonial period, the academic tradition imposed by the colonial government of training students for paid employment has been retained (Solomon Islands Education Strategic Plan, 2005). This has caused considerable challenges which might not be easily solved by the government.

While the secondary education system has been rapidly expanded to accommodate the high population growth rate – currently estimated to be around 2.7% (Dorovolomo, 2005) – the highly competitive exam-oriented education system has prevented many students from reaching the final stages. Where do the rest of the students go? What do they do next? Are they prepared for life after school? How do they respond to the needs of the society? Rather than answering these I merely raise them to illustrate an important issue for the educational situation in the Solomon Islands.

Citizenship Education

Herbert & Sears (2006, p. 1) define CE as “the preparation of individuals to participate as active and responsible citizens”. CE has always been intended to help integrate diverse populations into a single national culture based on the principles of liberty, equality, fraternity, and human rights (Herbert & Sears, 2006; Osley & Stakey, cited in Wylie, 2004). CE is the teaching of values that consider citizenship knowledge based on governance, rights, and responsibilities (Deuchar, 2007), so developing good citizens who are law abiding, work hard, and possess good character. Advocates argue that the teaching of values should be the fundamental principle of schooling if the state or individuals want harmony among citizens (Lynch, 1999).

What constitutes an effective and adequate model for CE may be contested, however. While rights (entitlements) and responsibilities (duties and obligations) are regarded as basic components, CE may also be regarded as enabling participation in political arenas and/or active involvement in politics (Lawton, 2001, cited in Adeyami, Boikhuso, and Moffat, 2003). Consequently, the notion of CE is far from static (Heater, 1999; Ross, 2006) because the term is defined contextually.

Some consider CE to be the most effective means to imbue children with values that stabilise the society (Heater 1999) through loyalty to the state. To provide equal recognition to all citizens loyalty has to be nurtured among challenges and dangers of discrimination. Loyalty requires its citizens to demonstrate values and disposition of character that are acceptable and proper under the jurisdiction of the state. All individuals are obliged to act and behave in ways that show tolerance to one another for the good of “human-human and human-environment harmony” (Lynch, 1999, p. 27).

The study participants

The observations in this paper are based on a study conducted to explore the meanings and understandings attributed to the term “citizenship” by a group of twenty-one purposively selected Solomon Islanders comprising two Ministry of Education officers, and students, teachers,

and principals from one rural and one urban school. Individual and group interviews focussed on exploring participants' understandings of the term citizenship.

Methodology and Method

This research employed a qualitative research design, which studied things in their “natural settings and making sense of, or interpreting phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring with them” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008, p. 4). A vital implication of this choice is that the research was placed in a natural setting where the researcher was able to access sites and participants, using methods that were “interactive and humanistic in order to build rapport and credibility with the individuals in the study” (Creswell, 2003. p. 8). The study focused on observing a variety of perceptions to allow for multiple sources of evidence to be obtained from participants (Creswell, 1994). The researcher was able to explore the phenomena in their natural settings (Anderson, 2002) and to make sense of, or interpret, the phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring with them (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994).

The participants were either interviewed as a group or as individuals due mainly to availability. The one-on-one interview was used for the two Ministry of Education officers, one curriculum officer, and each of the two school principals. Wilkinson and Birmingham (2003) maintain that interview is not an easy option, because it involves a conversation between two people. The vital aspect for the interview is the way it obtains information about a topic or subject. “It has been said that while other instruments focus on the surface of the elements of what is happening, interviews give the researcher more of an insight into the meaning and significance of what is happening” (Wilkinson & Birmingham, 2003, p. 23).

Data coding and analysis

A tape recorder was used to record the interviews. Burns (1994) suggests tape recording to be the best method as “raw material will remain for later studies while not taking notes enables the researcher to take part in conversations in a natural way” (p. 284). The data was transcribed

from Pijin (a borrowed national language or lingua franca made from a variety of languages including English) to English. The scripts were then coded using “sign posts” (Barbour, 2008). They were indexes that represented the data. This is an inductive process of narrowing data into few themes (Creswell, 2001, cited in Creswell, 2008). In line with the coding guidelines suggested by (Creswell, 2003, cited in Creswell, 2008) the following coding steps were used: To obtain a sense of the whole picture, I read all transcripts and noted ideas as they came to mind. I began the process of coding by identifying text segments, placing a bracket around each and assigning a code word for it. The codes were grouped together into patterns to provide an answer to the questions that are used in the field work. The purpose is to find themes that form the base of the analysis. It gives the researcher clear direction. As Grbich (2007, p. 25), points out, it will provide “deeper understanding of the values and meaning which lie therein”. The importance of this preliminary analysis was to highlight and identify emerging issues important for the study. The data was visited many times to ensure that nothing was missed out.

Findings

Respondents defined CE as the teaching of values that aim to unify through developing new relationships among people with diverse cultures. The reasons given for such a definition are that Solomon Islands’ society is drastically changing due to modern influences and people have different perceptions when observing and interpreting their surrounding world. One education officer described CE as the provision of knowledge that educates people about right and honourable behaviours with responsibility, developing informed citizens who have the capacity or knowledge to judge based on moral values. This includes the teaching of values that prepare students for their future.

A principal defined CE as knowledge taught in schools that develops students to be good and active citizens, asserting that what is significant is the teaching of values that are culturally and religiously relevant to people’s way of life. Another principal explained that the values that stabilise families and communities are practiced by elders, “big men”, and recognised by society as morally relevant and important for our

society. He observed that in today's societies developing students to become good citizens is quite difficult due to the changes in behaviour and lifestyle found among youths. Therefore, using the formal school system as the resource to disseminate citizenship knowledge, values, and skills is fundamentally important.

One teacher described CE as formal learning of the concepts of citizenship, another as the teaching of values to conserve the environment, building relationships with people of differing cultures, and formal teaching of moral values. It is common knowledge that among the daunting issues in the Solomon Islands is the deliberate destruction of the physical environment by large-scale logging activities. The environment as a whole has not been well cared for, resulting in infertile gardening areas, contamination of drinking water, and pollution of waters from which people gather food. One MOE respondent pointed out that it is imperative to educate people about the values that create a safe environment for people to live in and enjoy.

Students also indicated support for the notion that values necessary for Solomon Islands should be included in the teaching and learning environment.

CE to educate students to become good citizens requires the teaching of values in both formal and non-formal settings. This is due to concern over behaviour that undermines the modern rule of law, cultural values, and religious values. In Solomon Islands' social environment, the changing nature of behaviour among youths can be seen after the recent social unrest. A teacher expressed this sad truth as being due to the respect which was commonly practiced in the country declining to a devastating degree, detrimentally affecting the structures of all sectors of the society.

The teaching of values in citizenship is seen as important for social stability. Participants asserted that we have to introduce citizenship values into our school systems – particularly the teaching of ethics and virtues – to solve issues of disrespect, immorality, dishonesty, hatred, and instability which currently disrupt the society. In such a chaotic environment, the teaching of CE based on moral values seems vital.

However, there are mixed reactions to the teaching of moral values: some see them to be contradictory to democratic values, while others note the changes of behaviour have cost the country significantly.

The preferred values, knowledge, and skills

According to participants, the most appropriate values for CE in the Solomon Islands are those that can unite people and create a safe and enabling society. People have seen the rise of social problems, violence, disunity among different ethnic groups, and disrespect to leaders, family values, cultural values, church rules, and the rule of law.

While respondents view the promotion of virtues and moral values in schools as highly desirable, they retain reservations about the source of the values to be taught. Some insist that virtues and moral values must derive from the cultural and religious values common to people in the Solomon Islands. These include respect for one another, culture and religion, the environment, and people's background. The inclusion of values that engage students to be responsible citizens is vital. These include moral values, which hold respect, honesty, and teaching of relationships to unify the geographically, culturally, ethnically, and religiously diverse people of Solomon Islands. A teacher explained that cultural and religious values are important teaching components for Solomon Islands formal education system because the rules that have traditionally governed people are no longer respected. The social environment of Solomon Islands is very complex, particularly when numerous issues undermine the people's or state's capacity to satisfactorily resolve everybody's issues. In such a complex environment the inculcating of common cultural values and religious teachings is seen as a unifying instrument. One teacher noted that these moral values existed and continue to exist among people despite the challenges the country has gone through. The teaching of moral values is considered relevant to people's way of life because people of the Solomon Islands value their cultural norms and religious principles immensely and with pride.

However, it could be argued that the reason that Solomon Islands has experienced so many social problems is because people are becoming

reluctant to uphold their cultural values. As one principal said:

We think that sending students to schools will develop them to become good citizens. But this is not happening. If those traditional values can be promoted in the school systems, it would help to address our current volatile situation. Honesty, respect, ethical and truthful practices, and acting with a clear conscience are important values that need to be taught in schools, as is teaching about faithfulness, building relationships, showing moral behaviours, and living according to the principle of justice. However, young people increasingly consider only skills and knowledge of subjects that will give them formal careers as important.

One student said, “Learning about moral values does not give me knowledge to have formal employment in the future”. Some teachers shared this view, “Students equate education with formal employment and take for granted having moral behaviours, never considering moral values as respect, care, and honesty as fundamental to unity which is the prerequisite for a safer living environment”. Such a perspective is very worrying in the Solomon Islands. One MOE officer lamented, “It is a drastic setback to Solomon Islands to note that young people nowadays see the teaching of good values as something primitive or of the village.” Similarly, one respondent noted that in city schools the control of student behaviour is becoming very difficult: rules to govern students are not respected, there is a drastic decline in moral behaviour, students are challenging the school authorities about their rights, and parents in urban areas are finding it difficult to control their children. Teachers supported this view, stressing that the teaching of values on virtues would solve current behavioural problems, change students’ perceptions regarding education, and improve current social chaos. The preferred common values for CE include respect, honesty, care, accountability, and ethical leadership. It was particularly stressed by some that the value of respect is eroding.

However, in contrast to the perspectives presented above, it is encouraging to see that some students have retained respect for traditional values. According to students, the relationships people have with each other and the respect rendered towards people and

elders are the marks of a good citizen. One student describes a good and active citizen as someone who demonstrates leadership qualities among people, shows moral character to those they lead, and shows good respect to others in the community. Another student expressed that moral values such as respect for one another, public properties, and the rule of law is significant for Solomon Islands.

Values considered for Solomon Islands Citizenship Education

Participants identified the following knowledge, values, and skills as appropriate for promoting good relations and unity amongst the diverse population of Solomon Islands.

Rights

According to respondents, selection of values has to be carefully considered. Some values, although important, contradict people's culture and customs. One such value is that of individual rights and freedom. One MOE respondent observed:

The teaching of rights may conflict with our cultural and religious values. In urban areas in our country it is confusing for parents. The conventions of rights of the child are based on individualism while the cultural understanding of rights is collective. Maybe people who support individualism do not know how to handle their child and think the law will correct their child. That is not true, therefore we should be careful when we try to preach the concept of rights.

In relation to the difficulties experienced by urban schools, one principal expressed that the concept of rights is now becoming dominant among people and institutions. However, rights are related to respect and responsibility, not just individuality. Rights that do not incorporate respect should not be promoted in schools. If rights are to be taught in schools this must be done with clear guidance and taught alongside responsibility.

Responsibility

One principal pointed out that the teaching of duties and responsibilities is relevant for Solomon Islands because the cultures of the country are founded on the notion of responsibility. Each person is responsible for his own and others' lives, expressed in the Solomon Islands as the "wontok" system. While wontok literally means "speak one language", this refers not to just the spoken language; it also means having concern for people of the immediate family, extended family, community, ethnic group, and even the immediate country when you are abroad. It contains an understanding of shared responsibility, obligation, and care.

The wontok system is founded on duties that people render and the responsibility that one is entrusted to carry out in order that people may provide trust, confidence, and respect. In this regard students need to be inculcated with values that develop them to become responsible beings. Principals perceive that trust, confidence, and respect are eroding in the Solomon Islands societies: people no longer demonstrate accountability to themselves, their neighbours, institutions, and the environment. The teaching of duties and responsibilities would uphold the values of culture including reinforcing the communal framework.

Respect

The value of respect refers to treating others with consideration and regard. Respect is an important value in all cultures in the Solomon Islands. Teaching the values common to all will cause people to respect and understand each other, their neighbours, and how the social environment lives together peacefully. As stated, a system of values of citizenship already exists; the challenge is to effectively incorporate it into the education system. MOE staff advocated a moral values-based approach to Citizenship Education.

Care

The value of care concerns having a sense of caring for both yourself and others and acting with compassion. The direct opposite of the value of care is what is often practiced in the Solomon Islands today.

According to one teacher, “Young people do not have any regard for themselves and others, or the state institutions, including the rule of law, property, and their neighbours”. Young people develop a caring attitude towards others from teachings of national and local institutions: therefore, educating students with values from our culture and religion will enable them to develop character that demonstrates care.

Tolerance and Understanding

The values of tolerance and understanding concern the acceptance of people’s differences and being aware of others. According to a MOE respondent:

Changes in our societies have caused people not to understand each other. Many things have come as a point whereby Solomon Islanders lack the knowledge to understand and fail to relate to each other, (then) they break the law and the law punishes them... Since we are in the process of rebuilding Solomon Islands, it is timely to develop a curriculum that promotes values to maintain the unity of the nation.

Ethics and Honesty

Honesty is the ability to be truthful, to be sincere about finding and expressing the truth, and requiring truth from others. According to MOE staff, the “teaching of honesty is very critical to today’s Solomon Islands society”. One principal noted, “The structure of local and national institutions are violated by dishonesty and then justifying the act as relevant to cultural values or “wontok system”, when in fact it is a deliberate violation of modern structures. A teacher said, “People who are honest in their dealings with people should act as role models. People must be role models in their own settings”. One MOE staff member expressed, “In order for our societies to live up to the standard of honesty and ethical behaviour, it is very important to promote honesty and ethical values in formal systems as well as at home and in the communities as part of the CE programme”.

Cooperation

Cooperation is about working together to achieve a common goal, providing support to others, and engaging in peaceful resolution in conflicts. In a diverse country like Solomon Islands the need to emphasise unity and other cultural values which create respect and cooperation to build relationships is vital. Although they are diverse, Solomon Islanders are one people under the modern rule of law. It requires teaching the value of cooperation to unite people of different cultures and ethnicity.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to find ways in which CE may contribute to solving the challenges faced by Solomon Islands. It is evident that CE may help to avoid a repeat of what was experienced in the country from 1998 to 2003. The fear is that Solomon Islands could once again erupt into violence.

The key to the overall effectiveness of any CE initiatives will be the extent to which what is taught in class translates to how students live their daily lives. CE has always been equated with the knowledge, values, and skills that families, communities, and nation states use to promote behaviour that is acceptable and to merge people with differing backgrounds. The principal focus of the CE concept is to eliminate injustices commonly found among people because of differences in ethnicity, status, and ownership of resources. In addition, it links to the knowledge, values, and skills that empower people to play a part actively and ethically in the process of nation building, development, and harmonious living.

Therefore, it is recommended that CE be embedded in the formal curriculum of the Solomon Islands. The process recommended is to review the curriculum to identify parts which need amendment to cater for any approved policy statement that includes Citizenship Education. Any programme of citizenship has to include knowledge, values, and skills on rights and freedom. These concepts in the Solomon Islands have often been misinterpreted. For example, Solomon Islanders have

little understanding of the notions of (individual) rights and freedom as promoted by democratic societies. Such misconceptions need to be addressed formally while students are young. Equally important are concepts relating to duties and responsibilities, national identity, social cohesion, and the themes of moral values and social virtues.

Finally, in a country with diverse cultures, languages, and ethnicities, notions of citizenship vary from province to province, community to community, and family to family. The most significant aim of CE is the promotion of solidarity and unity.

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A first look at an indigenous Pacific ethical system and its implications for research

Kabini F. Sanga

The ethical concerns of indigenous peoples about research are better appreciated if we understand their ethical systems. Towards this end, this chapter offers a first look at an indigenous Pacific ethical system and discusses its implications for research.

The chapter has five sections. The first introduces the need for rethinking research as it relates to indigenous peoples, including Pacific Islands peoples. An initial scrutiny of conventional research shows its differences with the ethical systems of indigenous peoples. In the second section, I describe the landscape of ethics as a way of conceptually problematising the challenge of ethics in research. In this way, I justify the need for an examination of an indigenous ethical system and encourage sensitivity to multiple world consciousness. In the third section, I offer a contextual discussion including a statement of the position from which this chapter is written. By doing so, I acknowledge the limits and assume responsibility for the limitations of this work. The fourth section describes an indigenous Mala'ita ethical system. More specifically, I explore key underlying features of this ethical system based on my membership, knowledge, research, and leadership of a Mala'ita tribe in Gula'alā (East Mala'ita, Solomon Islands). In addition, I describe the research implications of this ethical system to show the nature and extent of the need for rethinking research ethics for indigenous Pacific peoples. Finally, in the fifth section, I restate the need for rethinking and offer suggestions of key research tasks for Pacific educator-scholars who would dare embark on a journey of shifting the consciousness of people.

Need for rethinking research

In this section, two basic points are made to demonstrate the need for

rethinking the research enterprise as this relates to Pacific peoples. First, in recent years, numerous global (CIHR, 2007; Indigenous Peoples' Health Research Centre, 2004; Walters, 2008) and Pacific (Nabobo-Baba, 2006; Prescott, 2008; Sanga, 2011) voices have drawn attention to a mismatch between conventional research and indigenous peoples. The concerns have been wide-ranging and include the non-alignment of research to indigenous peoples' aspirations (Abdullah & Stringer, 1999), philosophical paradigms (Hart, 2010), epistemological worldviews (Gegeo, 1998; Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2001), community values (Cochran et al., 2008), methodologies (Nabobo-Baba, 2006), methods (Anae, Coxon, Mara, Wendt-Samu, & Finau, 2001) and more. As well, as expressed by Smith (1999), a serious concern relates to the historical unequal power relationships between research and indigenous peoples who are often the subjects of research.

Second, and more specifically, numerous ethical concerns have also been raised. These have included claims of systematic neglect by research ethics committees to collective rights and community consent (Glass & Kaufert, 2007) and privileging of a Western-biased ethical system that assumes individual rights as paramount (Brew, 2001). Moreover, apprehensions have also been expressed over the application of inappropriate ethical codes when researching indigenous knowledge (Castellano, 2004), the disenfranchising of indigenous ethical processes (Worby & Rigney, 2002), and the unethical encroachment on indigenous peoples' knowledge systems (Maddocks, 1992). As concerns from peoples of the Pacific, these have included issues of cultural validity of ethical decisions by university and professional research organizations (Mead, 2003), claims of imposition of such ethical principles as autonomy, beneficence, and non-maleficence (Hudson, 2005), and inappropriateness of ethical frameworks to capture unstated indigenous knowledge (Sanga, 2011).

These expressed concerns have exposed two immediate challenges. First, indigenous peoples are challenged to reclaim their indigenous knowledge and ethical systems and their rightful places within a global knowledge economy. In the Pacific region, evidence of an up-take of this challenge is seen in the works of Māori (Bishop, 1998; Smith, 1999; and others) and Island (Gegeo, 1998; Manu'atu, 2009; Nabobo-

Baba, 2009; Taufe‘ulungaki, 2009; Teaero, 2009; and others) scholars. Second, Western research institutions are challenged to recognise the value, contributions, and legitimacy of indigenous knowledge systems and to renegotiate an approach to research that is ethically appropriate, dignified, and respectful.

To ascertain the nature of these two challenges requires a brief exploration of the landscape of ethics.

The landscape of ethics

This section describes the landscape of ethics as a way of conceptually problematising the challenge of ethics in research. This description takes the form of (1), a discussion on the major categories of ethics, and (2) a brief introduction of the types of approaches to ethics. By showing the complex nature of ethics as a subject matter, this invites indigenous Pacific peoples’ consciousness to matters of indigenous ethics in research.

The subject matter of ethics is complex and to the vast majority of people, including myself, the discipline of ethics has an unfamiliar language. However, rather than shy away from this unfamiliar territory, I shall attempt to provide a brief overview of this discipline of study. In doing so, I am borrowing from many scholars (such as Kagan, 1998; Knight, 1980; Rae, 2000; and more) including ideas I have learnt over the years and teachings on the subject of ethics by my mentor (Professor Keith Walker). As caveats, I say the following: This discussion is not a historical or theoretical account of the discipline. As well, neither the ideas shared nor the ways of expressing these ideas are the most clear, comprehensive, or authoritative. However, these ideas and conceptualisations are presented as a starting point for Pacific educator-scholars to begin a talanoa – a conversation on indigenous ethics in Pacific research.

Categories of ethics

First, there are three major categories of ethics: descriptive ethics, normative ethics, and prescriptive ethics. Descriptive ethics is the

discipline of ethics that attempts to show the morals of a people or group (Rae, 2000). Descriptive ethics describes what is good or right and what is bad or wrong. For instance, a family might say that certain actions or behaviours are morally right or good, while others are wrong or bad. A cultural group will make certain moral claims and assert particular moral norms, which might be totally different from the moral claims of another culture. A university research committee will say which research practices or protocols are good and which are bad. A parliament might pass laws to mandate what is good or right or a court system might arbitrate the beliefs and behaviours of right or wrong, for people. These are examples of descriptive ethics because they are about what a group (and not others) considers good or bad, right or wrong.

To restate, from the perspective of descriptive ethics, what is considered right, wrong, good, or bad is all relative. In other words, an ethical action or behaviour is deemed to differ in different contexts, at different times, and for different peoples. Consequently, what is considered right or wrong is multiple in nature and not universal. Of course, none of these views of ethics is beyond critique; however, as I have restricted this overview to a general description, space does not permit the incorporation of a critical input.

A descriptive view of ethics has three obvious implications, as follows: Firstly, because ethics is seen as relative, this requires some acceptance of the idea of diverse ethical systems. Secondly, with diverse systems, comparative examination of the different systems of right and wrong or good and bad can be made. Thirdly, a view of ethics as relative permits an observer to see the moral claims of people against the actual standards by which they live.

The second category, normative ethics, refers to the grounds, warrants, or justifications of right or wrong and good or bad. According to Kagan (1998), normative ethics is the discipline of ethics which produces moral norms as its end product. In other words, in normative ethics, we ask, “what is right or wrong?” or “what should our moral values be?” In this way we are trying to figure out the right moral choice or the good moral action either on the basis of principles or in light of their consequences.

To restate, when we use certain moral standards and argue over which ones are justifiable and which are not, this is normative ethics. The complex societal debates over abortion, civil union, and euthanasia are examples of normative ethics. Where these debates are good, diverse views might start with their own morality standards (descriptive ethics). As a good debate progresses, the debaters will then work through the bases, justifications, and warrants for supporting particular interpretations of what is good, right or proper (normative ethics). In other words, normative ethics prescribes certain norms (often as principles) which are then applied generally or specifically to particular moral situations.

Within normative ethics, there are three main ways of establishing moral standards, as follows: When we assume that what is right or good is principle-based, this is referred to as deontological ethics. However, when we argue that rightness and goodness of certain actions are due to their consequences, this is called teleological ethics. Finally, when we think that having good virtues (such as kindness or generosity) will make people morally good, this is called virtue ethics.

The third category, prescriptive ethics, is the “ought to” or the “should be” of what is right, good and ethically proper (Walker, 2011). Prescriptive ethics prescribes what is good or right, based on the grounds, warrants, and justifications of normative ethics. In prescriptive ethics, the moral choice is made, based on the theoretical justifications of that choice. In other words, prescriptive ethics guides us towards what is considered as morally desirable. This is achieved by (a) establishing the standard or morality of goodness or rightness, and (b) identifying the principles for adoption if we are to attain our moral goodness or rightness. Prescriptive ethics assumes that all rational people can be ethical. Hence, prescriptive ethics subscribes to the idea that universal morality is possible.

Approaches to ethics

Within the broad categories described above, ethics is commonly approached in three ways, as follows: retrospective ethics, introspective ethics, and prospective ethics. In the following paragraphs, these three approaches are briefly described.

First, a retrospective approach to ethics is the realm of obligations and duties such as laws or rules. In other words, this approach to ethics is rule-based. For instance, unethical past conduct such as warfare, genocide, or murder is “made right” retrospectively, using appropriate laws. To restate, retrospective ethics deals with moral wrongs that have already been committed (such as sexual conduct, not obtaining informed consent, war crimes, historical injustices to people, groups etc.).

Second, an introspective approach to ethics is the realm of virtues and character. This is an inside-out view of ethics. This view of ethics focuses on the virtues from within the hearts of people, together with the tendencies of people to be dependable, over time. An introspective approach to ethics focuses on the moral agent (the virtuous person) and not the moral action of the person. This is an ethic of character and not duty.

Third, a prospective approach to ethics is the realm of consequences and ends. The concept of consequence refers to the morality of an action being contingent on the action’s consequences. Hence, if the outcomes of an action are bad, then that action is deemed morally bad. The principle of ends requires that people are treated, not as mere means but as an end in themselves.

In concluding this section, it is obvious that even with a surface exploration of the landscape of ethics, the discipline is complex. In the applied field of research within indigenous Pacific contexts, the importance of ethics cannot be overstated. As seen in the concerns expressed earlier in the chapter, moral authority in research is a contested field which is not likely to be reconciled or subside soon. With the advancement of science and technological innovations, the ethical tensions in research and their associated bewilderment appear to be more challenging than previously. If indigenous Pacific Islands scholars are to participate in wrestling with issues of ethics in research, we must be exposed to a foundational understanding of ethics. What better place to start than an exploration of the underlying understandings of indigenous Pacific Islands ethical systems?

The context and my position within

In this section, I describe the context of the indigenous ethical system discussed and my own positioning within this setting. The backdrop for this discussion is Mala'ita Island, Solomon Islands, where I was born and grew up as a Gula'alā speaking member of the Gwailao tribe in East Mala'ita.

Mala'ita, in the central part of the archipelago of the Solomon Islands, is the most populated of the islands that make up the modern state of Solomon Islands. Linguistically, Mala'ita has the following groups: Sa'a, Are'are, Kwarekwareo, Langalanga, Kwara'ae, Kwaio, Gula'alā, Fataleka, Baegū, Toabaita, Baelelea and Lau. Spread unevenly within these linguistic communities is 100 or more tribal groups. Among the Gula'alā linguistic group, for instance, there are seven distinct tribes living in fewer than a dozen villages and hamlets.

As indigenous societies, Mala'ita tribes are theocratic and are thus ruled by priests. The tribes' indigenous religious system involves paying homage to the spirits of ancestors. Like other Melanesian societies, Mala'ita tribes are socially egalitarian, without an obvious hierarchical chiefly system. Instead, it is the fataabu baita (high priest) who oversees the affairs of the tribe. While there are other spiritual (wane foa), civic (aofia/alafa) and war (ramo) leaders in Mala'ita tribal settings, among the Gula'alā, it is the fataabu who holds the most power over certain things and people. Today, due to the influence of Christianity, the majority of Mala'ita tribes do not have practising fataabu except for pocket communities in Kwaio, Baegū, and the Lau regions. The absence of fataabu rule, however, has not relegated indigenous Mala'ita ethics to the named communities only.

Mala'ita tribes are also socio-economic-political units. This is to say that each tribe is an integrated community, with daily living primarily revolving around the tribal theocratic belief system.

The indigenous Mala'ita ethical system is a living system; it is not a prehistoric ethical system. Mala'ita society, both tribally and as contemporary communities, has complex sets of tagi (Gula'alā for a

system of morality) which are categories and levels of conventions, laws, benchmarks, and associated processes that distinguish right from wrong, define good from bad, and reward and punish. Mala'ita society has clear dispositions, with tendencies to influence members to behave in certain ways. Tribal groups in Mala'ita have specific character traits for resolving moral dilemmas and cultivating virtue. Today, this ethical system operates daily with and beyond the systems of Westminster democracy as well as Christian churches.

In writing this chapter, I have drawn on my background, cultural upbringing, and in the last decade and a half, research of Mala'ita and its people. The linguistic terms I use are in Gula'alā. While similar concepts exist in other parts of Mala'ita, the words are not necessarily shared. Because this is a first piece, I am speaking generally about Mala'ita in the hope that in future times, more specific scholarships can be done on the different people or groups in Mala'ita, the Solomon Islands, and in the wider Pacific region.

In considering this topic, I was mindful of the collective guardianship of indigenous Mala'ita knowledge; hence I initially hesitated to delve into a public discussion on the subject matter of this paper. Yet, being fully cognisant of the need to confront concerns of ethics in Pacific Islands contexts, I chose to engage in this task. However, I caution that the descriptive knowledge that I share, together with any interpretations I make, are personal views, for which I assume responsibility.

An indigenous ethical system

This section focuses on two issues. First, I explore an indigenous Mala'ita ethical system, highlighting a number of key underpinning features of this system. Inspired by Rae (2000), this is a first exploration, a starting point for conversations on indigenous Pacific Islands ethical systems. Second, I discuss the implications of this ethical system for research in, of, and for Mala'ita. This exploration of implications is not intended to be comprehensive. Rather, as earlier stated, this discussion is to show the need for rethinking research ethics in Pacific Islands contexts.

The first underlying feature of the indigenous Mala'ita ethical system is

this: the Indigenous Mala'ita ethical system is tribal. At one level this means that the ethical system belongs to a linguistic region (e.g. Are'are, Kwaio, Fataleka). At another level, this means that the ethical system overlaps with the (blood) tribe. In this latter sense, each Mala'ita tribal group has its own indigenous ethical system. While there are parallels and similarities between the ethical systems, each is distinct. Often, the nature and extent of overlaps are explained by regularity of contact, linguistic connections, heritage relationships, and historical factors.

As stated, Mala'ita tribes are theocracies. Each tribal unit is engulfed by its religious system. Consequently, the socio-economic-political-ethical worlds of tribes are integrated with their religious worlds. These worlds overlap into a single whole. For these Melanesians, being good or bad and doing well or not has potential to result in the survival or death of the tribe. Morality is directly linked to Mala'ita belief systems which, according to Sanga and Walker (2012), are not just human and physical but spiritual, and metaphysical as well. Consequently, unethical conduct by a member of a tribe can be fatal for the entire tribe. To restate, the indigenous Mala'ita ethical system is interwoven into its tribal religious system, around which people live their daily lives.

Given a tribally-bound ethical system, what are some implications for research? In answer to this question, a number of observations are made. In the first instance, any interpretation of research ethics must correspond with an indigenous Mala'ita ethical system. As pointed out by Wax (1991), conventional research is unlikely to be commensurate with indigenous contexts primarily because of differences of value systems, worldviews, and ethical systems. To heed this warning, externally-instigated research ethics cannot assume homogeneity, relevance, monopoly, or authority in indigenous Mala'ita.

As well, research on, of, and in Mala'ita requires a prior knowledge and an accurate understanding of the different Mala'ita tribal and clan groups as well as their ethical systems. Researchers of indigenous Mala'ita knowledge also need to take cognisance of the fact that Mala'ita ethics is managed by Mala'ita tribal communities according to their own knowledge management rules, processes, and legitimisation criteria. Such implications demand recognition by universities, research

agencies and governments and a preparedness on their part to negotiate more equal power relationships with tribal knowledge communities, prior to undertaking research. On the part of tribal groups, they need to mobilise themselves as partners in what is now a new global knowledge economy. Tribal knowledge holders cannot afford to sit back in disinterest or apathy. They must now fully engage in the new knowledge economy.

A second underlying feature for noting is this: in Mala'ita society, there is an overlapping relationship between personal and societal ethics. In other words, the distinctions of private morality and communal morality are blurred. That is to say, there is little distinction between what is good or right for an individual as against what is right and good for the tribe. More often than not, communal tribal ethics will mandate and obligate individual ethics. To understand such privileging of the group requires appreciations of Mala'ita ontological, epistemological, cosmological, and axiological assumptions of nature (Sanga & Walker, 2012). A key insight in this understanding is that the Mala'ita individual is a principal vehicle of representation for the tribe; one is not dialectically opposed to the other.

What does such an understanding of personal-communal ethical fusion mean for research? A number of methodology-related observations are made, as follows: as noted by the Canadian Indigenous Peoples Council on Biocolonialism (2000), where tribal ethics defines and advances communal identity, research notions such as respect for human dignity, consent, and representation will look differently at how conventional research defines these. Moreover, according to Peterson (1982), in societies where communal ownership of knowledge is advanced, this means no ownership. Additionally, in societies where there are overlapping individual-communal ethics, research practices of anonymity and confidentiality are either suspect or cannot be unilaterally applied.

In practical terms, what this means is that where conventional research ethics privileges the individual (in matters of attention, consent, confidentiality) without due regard for the group (possibly via appropriate normative ethics), this is ethically inappropriate in

indigenous Mala'ita context. Appropriate care is therefore needed. On the part of researchers, the care needed relates to the commitment to refrain from hasty action while seeking to insightfully understand the nuances of Mala'ita descriptive ethics before and when undertaking research. On the part of Mala'ita tribal people, the care needed relates to the protection of individual tribal members, particularly weaker ones (children, women, unschooled, disabled etc.), to ensure their individual dignities are protected and maintained when communal morality is applied.

A third underlying noteworthy point of indigenous Mala'ita morality is this: in indigenous Mala'ita ethical system, abu (holiness or tapu in Māori and other Polynesian societies) is a unifying principle. In other words, abu is the principal glue that binds the indigenous Mala'ita ethical system. According to Sanga and Walker (2012), abu is the culmination of integrity and a central normative aspect of Mala'ita ethics.

To briefly explain the concept of abu, I say the following: in Mala'ita society, abu is part of Mala'ita metaphysical cosmology. Anthropologically, abu influences Mala'ita falafala (kastom and worldviews) on a daily basis. To the Mala'ita mind (Sanga & Walker, 2012), abu refers to being set apart in behaviour, action, and worship. Abu reflects goodness, rightness, and credibility to honour horizontally and vertically. Abu mediates and gauges what is deemed right, fair, just, or otherwise. Abu explains relationships, protocols, and spaces of purpose, connection, and separation between members and nature-neighbours. Abu limits and constrains humans from being “bad” and from assuming absolute power or abusing power. By restraining people, abu points people to spirit-gods or God. In this way, in Mala'ita cosmology, abu compels people to relate to other humans as co-dependents in a wider complex universe.

Given the centrality of abu in Mala'ita ethics, what are the implications for research ethics in Mala'ita? A few observations are offered, as follows: at a philosophical level of consideration, given the centrality of abu to the Mala'ita mind (Sanga & Walker, 2012), any conceptualisations of Mala'ita research that assume an objectivist framing are deemed incommensurable and ethically suspect. As it relates to principles, an

abu-held ethical system negates the freedom of researchers to access or disseminate certain knowledge. In other words, as observed by Maddocks (1992), such an ethical system stops outside researchers from unwarranted research encroachment into indigenous peoples' intellectual spaces.

At a practical level, appreciation of abu will require researchers to carefully consider issues of timing and duration of research, whom to contact and how, and who or what the knowledge sources are. As well, embracing abu should commit researchers to seriously include the spiritual dimensions of knowledge and to accept, as Mala'ita people do, that knowledge is also inspired, is metaphysical and spiritual, and not merely created or discovered. On the part of Mala'ita tribes, it is critical to know that conventional research capacities (such as researchers, universities, and agencies) cannot deal with an abu-held knowledge system. Consequently, Mala'ita tribes must develop their own capacities to ethically manage their knowledge systems, especially to engage with outside researchers.

The fourth underlying feature of the indigenous Mala'ita ethical system is this: the indigenous Mala'ita ethical system privileges the principle of *rō lā* (obedience) more than other important values. To elaborate on this point, it is worth noting that in their descriptive ethics, people or groups would normally privilege certain values (more precisely, principles) over others. In theocratic Mala'ita, *rō lā* or obedience is an act of worship, a means of submission and a way of demonstrating loyalty to the other, particularly to authority. In Mala'ita religious understanding, to be obedient is right-doing. Particularly when loyalty to spirit-gods is at stake, the obedient action by an adherent clan member is considered an ethical action.

By contrast, the indigenous Mala'ita ethical system does not privilege certain other important principles. For example, if obedience to tribal interest is weighed against fairness, then the Mala'ita mind easily leans towards obedience (as loyalty) over fairness. Or, if autonomy of the individual is weighed against obedience, a Mala'ita person is likely to give up autonomy and uphold obedience. Or, as an extreme example, if life (or dignity of an individual or group) is balanced against obedience,

then the Mala'ita mind will lean towards obedience (as a form of worship or ultimate surrender to higher authority). It is this privileging of obedience that explains the old kastom (cultural) "random" killing of individuals, the powerful conversions to Christianity, or the desecration of tribal shrines by former tribal members who have become Christians. Given this emphasis on the principle of obedience in the Mala'ita ethical system, how does this impact research? Briefly, the following may be stated. First, sensitivity to a more insightful reading of the Mala'ita context is needed by all. In this way, institutional ethics committees, researchers, and scholars can also begin to appreciate the complexities of Mala'ita descriptive ethics, including its prioritised and down-played values. Second, because rō lā or obedience is also a religious action in the Mala'ita context, a view of research ethics which integrates the spirit and spiritual realities is essential. Third, at the level of application, the credibility of knowledge gathered in Mala'ita research is linked to a myriad of variables as people juxtapose value tensions and priorities. Until understandings of the indigenous Mala'ita ethical system are established within the research community, Mala'ita tribes must be alert to ensure that they play active roles as research partners in all Mala'ita research. Much opportunity abounds for innovative work in this area by Mala'ita scholars.

In summary, an indigenous Mala'ita ethics is an integrated social-economic-political-religious system. Because Mala'ita is theocratic, indigenous ethics is fundamentally linked to the tribal religion. The underpinning understandings of this system of ethics seem to suggest that Mala'ita ethics is predominantly deontological, with aspects of teleological and virtue-based ethics as well.

Concluding observations

In this final section, the need for rethinking ethics in Pacific research is restated. This is followed by suggestions on possible opportunities of doing so through further research.

When a closer scrutiny is made of Pacific region research, the resultant picture mirrors indigenous global research (Indigenous Peoples Health Research Centre, 2004) as follows: first, where Pacific governments

offer research contracts, these are not generally accompanied with clear ethical guidelines. Second, where international donors and lenders fund or undertake research, these are always silent on matters of ethics. Third, where national, regional, and other universities undertake research, these often include institutional ethical guidelines but without monitoring of how research is undertaken in Pacific contexts. Fourth, where non-state actors (including Churches) and Pacific regional organisations are commissioning research, these are often silent on ethical requirements. Fifth, where professional research associations undertake research, the guidelines for members may be included but often without monitoring. On the basis of this picture, attention to rethink ethics in Pacific research is needful.

For Pacific educator-scholars who would dare embark on a journey of shifting consciousness, what might the key research tasks be for them? More specifically, if the goal of rethinking involves research, what opportunities exist for Pacific educator-scholars?

Here are four suggestions:

- Establish indigenous Pacific ethical systems as a field of study. Undertake research to find out what theories might emerge from this field of study. Also, find out what unique conceptual frameworks for ethics might arise from this field of study.
- Undertake research on different indigenous Pacific ethical systems. In the first instance, find out what empirical evidence exists of these ethical systems.
- Undertake research on the ethical and methodological behaviours of research in indigenous Pacific knowledge systems. What has been experienced? Why? How? By whom? To what effects?
- Undertake research to improve indigenous Pacific knowledge communities and on the enhancement of their ethical systems and research capacities.

Finally, in summing up, I restate that in this chapter I have presented the underpinning features of the indigenous Mala'ita ethical system. As seen, this system is different from the one upon which conventional research ethics is based. Consequently, one set of criteria and processes of research ethics cannot be universally applied. The task implications

are two-fold: in the longer term, much work is needed to be done by Pacific educator-scholars. Through talanoa (Prescott, 2008), and the creation of ethical spaces (Poole, 1972), together with using strategies as the middle ground (White, 1991), collaborative initiatives might be jointly explored by researchers, policy-makers, legislators, and tribal leaders. In the shorter term, Pacific educator-scholars must provide leadership to shift peoples' consciousness not just from Western thinking but to indigenous Pacific knowledge forms as well. A first step to take is through a focused research agenda as suggested herewith.

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CATCHING FAVORABLE WINDS

Putting Ancient Winds and Life into New Sails: Indigenous Knowledge as a Basis for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) – A Case Study of the Return of Marine Biodiversity to the Vanua Navakavu, Fiji¹

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Introduction

2005-2014 was declared the “United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development” (UNDESD). In this website UNESCO, the lead agency for UNDESD, states:

Education for Sustainable Development allows every human being to acquire the knowledge, skills and values necessary to shape a sustainable future.

Education for Sustainable Development means including key sustainable development issues into teaching and learning; for example, climate change, disaster risk reduction, biodiversity, poverty reduction, and sustainable consumption. It also requires participatory teaching and learning methods that motivate and empower learners to change their behavior and take action for sustainable development. Education for Sustainable Development consequently promotes competencies like critical thinking, imagining future scenarios and making decisions in a collaborative way.

¹ Pacific Regional Symposium on “A Decade of Rethinking Pacific Education 2001-2011

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This paper explores many aspects of indigenous knowledge of the Vanua of Navakavu related to the realization of the vision of what Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) should be. It stresses that there is a need for rethinking and re-orienting education and research to promote development that builds on, rather than marginalizes, time-tested biodiversity traditions and associated traditional knowledge as a basis for addressing some of the more pressing development challenges. Such may include biodiversity loss, climate change, poverty reduction, and promoting the ability to imagine future scenarios and lifeways making decisions in a collaborative way. With such an approach it might be possible to avoid the vicious circle of resource depletion, environmental degradation, loss of biodiversity and the resultant economic and cultural breakdown that has doomed so many developing and “developed” countries to a future of collapsed financial institutions, political instability, bio-bankruptcy, and abject poverty (Thaman, 2009).

Background

This paper is based on a case study of changes in marine biodiversity over the past 50 years in the Vanua Navakavu, Fiji. Emphasis is placed on the importance of marrying indigenous and modern knowledge of biodiversity and the participation of local communities in research, with specific emphasis on addressing the collapse of fisheries and the loss of marine biodiversity. This is a crisis that has arisen out of our inability to balance the demands of the cash economy and urbanization with environmental and cultural sustainability. It argues that the recognition, conservation, and application of indigenous knowledge – in this case the knowledge of “marine life” (marine biodiversity) – can be one of the most relevant and exciting ways of breathing “time-tested ancient winds” into new sails on our voyage to rethink and re-enrich Pacific education and research priorities as a basis for ESD; in this case as a basis for promoting the conservation and sustainable use of fisheries resources.

The study is based on the correlation of the knowledge and taxonomies of older male and female fishers of observed changes over their lifetime given factors such as overfishing, a 1953 tsunami, pollution, other stresses, and the establishment of a marine managed area over a decade

ago in 2001. In the process, the local indigenous names of over 1000 organisms were recorded, many of which are names unknown to the current generation and which had not been previously recorded (Thaman et al., 2008). Results show that the reduction of unsustainable fishing practices and the successful establishment of a locally managed marine area are largely responsible for the return of many species not seen for decades and the increasing abundance and/or size of a very wide range of finfish, invertebrates, and other marine organisms. The results also show that the marriage of local indigenous and modern scientific taxonomic knowledge may be the only way of really assessing the condition of our environment, the sustainability of current development initiatives, and the long-term impact of marine conservation. It also suggests that the incorporation of such culturally rich but highly threatened information into the curricula of formal education, and the involvement of older knowledgeable persons as resources people in curriculum development and teaching constitute a unique, but fleeting opportunity to enrich ESD. In this context, the paper discusses:

1. The seminal importance of biodiversity and knowledge about biodiversity, particularly indigenous knowledge, as a basis for sustainable development and ESD
2. The seriousness of the biodiversity crisis, with particular emphasis on overfishing and loss of marine biodiversity as one of the most serious developmental crises of our generation
3. How the marriage of local indigenous and modern knowledge of biodiversity, particularly taxonomic knowledge, of marine biodiversity, and the use of the best mixture of modern and traditional bioinformatics can enrich education and research as a foundation of effective ESD in the Pacific Islands
4. The richness of this knowledge in Fiji and how it has been used to assess the return of marine biodiversity and the success of marine conservation
5. Suggested best practices for involving local expertise in the gathering, analysis, and authorship and sharing of research results, and ways that this indigenous knowledge can be used to enrich ESD
6. And how we can ensure that the knowledge can play enhanced roles and take ownership as navigators of their increasingly crowded canoes as we chart our respective voyages and cast

our nets more widely to promote ESD on the uncharted seas of globalization.

Brief Literature on Marine Biodiversity and Sustainability

Sustainability or “sustainable development” is the ability of nations or communities to acquire the income needed to purchase material and non-material goods from the modern cash economy that are needed to make life healthier, easier, more productive, and more enjoyable, but at the same time, doing so without destroying the natural and cultural capital needed for the material and cultural survival of future generations. It is about balancing these two, often conflicting, objectives about achieving the right balance between subsistence and cash economies, between self-reliance and dependency, between resource depletion and conservation, and between traditional and modern knowledge, science and education. For many traditional and indigenous peoples, sustainability is not so much about “production”, but rather about the “reproduction” and survival of the cultures and communities that have proved relatively sustainable for millennia (Thaman, 2009). For most Pacific Island nations, their biodiversity (the diversity of ecosystems – e.g., forests, mangroves, rivers, coral reefs, lagoons, gardens and towns – the living things in these ecosystems, and the goods and services they provide) and their “ethnobiodiversity” (knowledge and ways of sharing knowledge about biodiversity) constitute perhaps the most important natural and cultural capital underpinning future sustainability and, thus, should be made core focal elements of ESD in the Pacific Islands (Thaman, 2004, 2005, 2008ab).

The importance of biodiversity as a foundation for sustainability is encapsulated in the theme of the UN International Year of Biodiversity (IYB) – 2010: “Biodiversity is Life, Biodiversity is our Life” – a reality known for millennia throughout the Pacific, an island world where, because there are few opportunities for modern urban, industrial, and commercial development, there is an obligate dependence on island biodiversity for economic, ecological and cultural survival (Thaman, 2010a). However, many “modern” educationists, scientists, conservationists, economists, and the development elite do not seem to have internalized this message. As stressed by Knudtson and Suzuki in

Wisdom of the elders (1992, p. 159), modern science, “has so far been incapable of reliably instilling in people a deeply felt environmental conscience.” And, despite its “success in our lifetime granting modern industrial societies unprecedented power it has left those societies dissociated from their natural surroundings and spiritually adrift.” They suggest that:

Even if science is silent on the subject of human beings’ moral obligations to the biosphere, it can offer illuminating insights into the moral choices that confront us. It can alert individuals, scientists and nonscientists alike, to the awesome complexities and unities of the physical universes. By so doing, it can help awaken human hearts to the visceral sensibility for the whole. And perhaps in Native perspectives on nature we will begin to find morally responsible “sacred ecology” to complement our conveniently human-centered, “value-free” secular and scientific one. (ibid)

It is suggested here that we, as educationists, scientists, and conservationists, strongly embrace the IYB theme and Knudtson and Suzuki’s plea to more closely engage local indigenous communities in their attempts to preserve their biodiversity and associated indigenous knowledge as a foundation for effective conservation and sustainable habitation of their islands. To do so, we may need to change the way we operate; our academic education and conservation (Thaman, 2004, 2008ab).

Ethnobiobiodiversity, Taxonomy, Parataxonomy, and Bioinformatics

As suggested above, our knowledge about biodiversity is here referred to as “ethnobiobiodiversity”, more precisely: the knowledge, uses, beliefs, management systems, language and “taxonomies” that a given culture, including the modern scientific community, has for its biodiversity – its natural and cultural ecosystems, the plants, animals, and microorganisms in these ecosystems and the products and services they provide. Taxonomy, as part of ethnobiobiodiversity and a sub-discipline of biological science, is defined as the science of describing, identifying, classifying, naming, and understanding the interrelationships between organisms or groups of organisms (taxa) as a basis for correctly

identifying ecologically and culturally important and rare or threatened organisms, which in turn forms the basis for the informed conservation and informed biodiversity education. A taxonomist, in the modern scientific sense, is a person who is formally trained or has the level of expertise required to describe, identify, classify, and officially publish this information. A parataxonomist, although less qualified, is someone (often a local indigenous person) who has developed sufficient expertise and experience to be able to assist, or replace taxonomists, in studies of biodiversity. The training of both taxonomists and parataxonomists is of critical importance, because, without them, studies of biodiversity and marrying this knowledge with local indigenous or traditional taxonomies and including relevant information in the formal education system will be problematic. “Bioinformatics” is the science of recording, compiling, processing, and making this information available to the widest range of users. These concepts are, however, NOT new and NOT the exclusive preserve of modern research scientists or educators. For millennia, ethnobiodiversity, taxonomy, and bioinformatics have been the basis for sustainable habitation of Planet Earth (Thaman, 2010ab). As Knapp (2010) points out, taxonomy and naming is probably a universal and ancient practice, and all cultures, including the Fijian cultural community that is the focus of this study, have their own taxonomies and bioinformatic systems. They are, however, like biodiversity itself, highly threatened, creating a parallel “ethnobiodiversity extinction crisis”. As suggested in the title of an earlier paper, “Name it, record it, or lose it. If we lose ethnobiodiversity and the ability to transmit it (including through ESD), we will probably not have the knowledge or understanding required to save biodiversity and the sustainability it underpins (Thaman, 2010c, p. 60-61).

The Worldwide Crisis of Overfishing; the Loss of Fisheries Knowledge in Fiji

The disappearance, or declining abundance, of fish and other marine organisms that used to thrive in our seas constitutes one of the most serious crises of our generation. It is a worldwide crisis, driven, first and foremost, by overfishing, but also, by pollution, habitat degradation, and the lack of knowledge (or lack of acknowledgement) of how bad it really is, and that we must address it now! In a recent review of books

on fishing, “No net gain from empty seas”, Renton (2008) stresses that, by the end of WWII, when the Pacific was really “discovered” and the outside exploitation intensified, we already had the technology to “catch and eat all the fish”! He says that the greatest and most ancient of all mass fisheries, the mass swarming of cod off Newfoundland that the European fleet had fished for over 500 years, collapsed and was closed in 1992; the number of large fish is down by 90% worldwide; and that if current fishing effort continues there will be no exploitable stocks of fish by 2048!!

Jeremy Jackson and a team of the world’s top marine scientists underlined the seriousness of overfishing in a 2001 Science journal article (293 p. 629-638) on “historical overfishing and the recent collapse of coastal ecosystems, including pollution, degradation of water quality, and anthropogenic climate change.” They say that overfishing has led to the collapse of marine ecosystems and the “ecological extinction” of larger, economically valuable species that were present in the past. They also stress that because of the complex ecological relationships between different species, there are long lag times between actual overfishing and the final collapse of ecosystems, because, in the short-term, other target species commonly replace the overfished species until they are, in turn, overfished or succumb to other pressures. This is often referred to as “fishing down the food chain.” They stress, based on palaeological, archaeological, and historical evidence, that it can take decades or centuries between the onset of overfishing and consequent collapse of ecological communities (Jackson et al., 2001). Conversely, it can be also argued that it may also take decades, or even longer, for coral reef communities to recover after conservation initiatives have been put in place.

This was certainly the situation in Fiji by the early 1990s, after over 20 years of a “development cry” of “catch, sell and export more fish” promoted by the fisheries department, regional organizations, and the private sector. New gear, boats, engines, markets, and outer island fish centres were promoted. There was virtually NO emphasis on the promotion of sustainable fishing, except for some emphasis on the promotion of deepwater snapper and tuna fishing (and even shark finning!) in the 1970s and 1980s to take pressure off inshore areas! The

live coral, live reef fish, and aquarium fish trades were also expanding then.

This “philosophy” had, by as early as the 1970s, led to an increasingly depleted fishery and degraded marine environment, which by the early 1990s had begun to reach the crisis stage. Domsday predictions were clearly seen in the rapid disappearance of many cultural and economic species in Fiji’s diverse multispecies fishery. This ranges from larger fish like the bumphead parrotfish, humphead wrasse, large grouper, trevally, and sharks, which had virtually disappeared from most nearshore waters. Furthermore, a very wide range of crabs, shellfish, bêche-de-mer, sea urchins, eels, smaller finfish, other invertebrates and seaweeds had also disappeared or were in very reduced numbers.

This seems to have been a worldwide trend, with Roberts (2007) pointing out that both national and international authorities have not only addressed fish stock depletion, but have consistently set quotas 15-30% higher than is recommended!! As stressed by Gillett and Moy (2006) in their study of spearfishing in the Pacific Islands, as nearshore stocks plummeted, it was only those fishers using superior and longer-range boats for night diving and scuba diving to fish (often illegally) less accessible offshore reefs with impunity who could still provide markets with the high-quality large species.

This has happened because, as suggested by Roberts in his *Unnatural history of the sea* (2007), it appears that not many people, including experts, understand the extent to which exploitation has changed the oceans. Further, most people have only experienced the current highly depleted reef ecosystems that we have become accustomed to seeing over the past generation or more. Roberts stresses that knowledge of what the seas were like, even in the relatively recent past, is quickly forgotten and that people normalise what they have experienced themselves, setting targets focussed on preventing further decline rather than on restoration. He stresses that clear knowledge of changes and of what has been lost is essential to arresting further decline.

FLMMA and Actions to Address Fisheries Collapse

This is the depleted fisheries landscape that confronted local communities and greeted a fledgling Fiji Locally Managed Marine Areas Network (FLMMA) in the mid-1990s. FLMMA is a partnership between Fiji national and provincial government agencies (including fisheries), NGOs, private industry, The University of the South Pacific (USP), and international funders, such as the Macarthur, Packard, and Total Foundations and, first and foremost, local fishers and communities who had personally witnessed and been involved in the decimation of their fisheries. As stressed by Aalbersberg (2005), LMMAs in Fiji have, over more than a decade, led to impressive improvements in reef ecosystems and gains in marine biodiversity. He stresses that participatory management planning “involving communities in all phases, including monitoring, helps to ensure that communities maintain their enthusiasm for carrying out their marine management action plans (p.62)”. Fortunately, unlike the situation in many developed countries described by Roberts (2007), where few people really appreciate how much ocean resources have deteriorated, most local communities in Fiji still had older male and female fishers who had memories of what their reefs and fisheries used to be like, what species used to exist, what they used to catch, what had disappeared, and what fishes and other marine organisms are returning or being seen for the first time by the current generation or are increasing in abundance and/or size since the implementation of marine conservation interventions in 2001.

Goven’s (2009) study of the status of LMMAs in the South Pacific clearly underlines their value, with over 500 communities spanning 15 independent countries having established community managed areas, most of which include some form of “closed” marine protected area (MPA). They stress that the main motivation behind this has been the “community desire to maintain or improve livelihoods, often related to perceived threats to food security or local economic revenue (p.6)”. Throughout the world, and particularly on islands, marine protected areas (MPAs), at many scales and levels, have been shown to be one of the most successful interventions to address overfishing and other threats to marine ecosystems (Lutchman et al., 2005).

In Fiji, more than 200 villages have established LMMAs. Most anecdotally report rapid and appreciable increases of marine resources within closed areas, and an increasing body of literature seems to confirm these observations. Among the initial results of FLMMA efforts was the dramatic return in abundance and size of ark clams or kaikoso (*Anadara* spp.), the most important commercial species and local totem of Ucuivanua Village, one of the first FLMMA sites in Fiji (Tawake et al., 2007).

A Fiji Case Study

Vanua Navakavu Study Area and the Establishment of the LMMA

Background

Vanua Navakavu, the focus of this study, includes the traditional fishing grounds (iqoliqoli) and tribal lands (vanua) traditionally owned by the people of Navakavu on the Muaivuso Peninsula some seven kilometres to the west of the Suva Peninsula in southeastern Viti Levu, Fiji (Fig. 1). The area includes five villages (Muaivuso, Nabaka, Waiqanake, Namakala and Ucinamono) with a total estimated residential population of about 836 in 2011. The total area of the iqoliqoli is 18.5 km², which includes extensive areas of reefs and reef flats, mangroves, seagrass and algal beds, lagoons, “blue holes”, reef channels, and open ocean, most of which have Fijian names (Figure 2). The Navakavu iqoliqoli is one of the most renowned fishing areas in Fiji and the source of a significant percentage of the marine food products sold in Suva. A study by O’Garra (2007) estimated that the total economic value (TEV) of the coastal ecosystems within the Navakavu iqoliqoli ranged between FJ\$3,034,460 and \$3,073,442 (US\$1,764,221-\$1,786,885) per year; the present value of the coastal ecosystems, over a 20-year period, ranged between FJ\$28,793,197-29,164,050 (US\$16,740,231-\$16,955,843) using a 10% discount rate; and that fisheries in these coastal ecosystems made up about 45% of this value.

Figure 1. Site map of the Muaivuso Peninsula, 7 km west of Suva, the capital of Fiji, and the associated traditional fishing grounds (iqoliqoli) of the Vanua Navakavu and the area designated as a marine protected area (MPA) (vanua maroroi) (Map from Meo 2003).



Figure 2. Google Earth image of the Vanua Navakavu showing the Muaivuso Peninsula and the marine fisheries area (iqoliqoli) with the names of villages, important reefs, bays, islands, reef passages and other geographic features (by S. Bukarau), 2009.



Declining States of Fishery – Studies and Interventions

In the mid-1990s, serious problems emerged in relation to the sustainability of fishing in, and the health of the Vanua Navakavu iqoliqoli. Because of its location near, and down-current from, Suva, its fishery had been among the most highly impacted by overfishing, market access, poaching, residential, industrial and maritime pollution, and flotsam and jetsam. The senior author had personally experienced this dramatic, and rapid, loss of biodiversity after snorkeling and collecting beautiful cowries, cone shells, and other seashells on the nearby Lami Reef in 1969, only to return to the same reef in the mid-1970s to find it completely dead – a graveyard containing a only algae-covered, dead shells!!

The clearly declining state of the Navakavu fishery in the mid-1990s resulted in formal approaches to the Institute of Applied Sciences (IAS) of USP and FLMMA for assistance and the development of a Marine Conservation Management Action Plan. The plan was completed after identification of serious issues and appropriate interventions through a series of community-based workshops, surveys, awareness campaigns, and technical assistance. The Navakavu Locally Managed Marine Area (LMMA) and associated marine protected area (MPA) (vanua maroroi) were subsequently formally established in 2001, although the actual MPA was relocated in 2003 so benefits would spread more equally to all five Vanua Navakavu communities. The MPA covers an area of some 3.3 km², which is equivalent to approximately 18% of the total fishing ground area of 18.5 km² (Fig. 1). The LMMA is managed by a committee of representatives from the five Vanua Navakavu villages. The partner institution facilitating the project is IAS on behalf of the FLMMA (Meo 2003; Sikolia et al. 2007).

The original survey, community-based workshops, and current study identified the major threats to the iqoliqoli as including: 1) overfishing; 2) nutrient, chemical, and solid waste pollution; 3) infestation of reefs with brown seaweed (*Sargassum* sp.); 4) death and bleaching of coral reefs; 5) mangrove degradation; 6) erosion and sedimentation of reefs and lagoons; 7) lack of awareness of conservation and sustainable development issues; and, 8) loss of traditional knowledge and practices

(Meo 2003; Sikolia et al. 2007; Thaman et al., 2008). Overfishing, which has changed over time, has included: 1) intensified commercial artisanal fishing for larger finfish, turtles, marine invertebrates, and seaweeds; 2) bait-fishing for the skipjack pole-and-line fishery in the late 1970s; 3) deepwater snapper fishing; 4) dynamite fishing from the 1960s to 1983; 5) widespread use of rotenone fish poison; 6) use of small-mesh gill nets; 7) sale of shells to tourists and handicraft markets; 8) commercial night diving and scuba spearfishing, using faster, longer-range boats; and 9) illegal fishing and poaching. By the early 1990s, overfishing had led to a seriously depleted and unsustainable fishery and a badly degraded reef ecosystem, a tragedy clearly recognized by local fishers, which led to the establishment of the Navakavu LMMA in 2001.

Many of these issues have been addressed, over the past ten years, through the work of the communities of Navakavu in collaboration with the IAS and FLMMA. Groups of USP undergraduate and postgraduate students have, through their project work in local communities, also played an important role in increasing the awareness of the issues. Research in the area has included GIS habitat mapping (Roelfsema and Phinn, 2010); an economic valuation of the iqoliqoli (O’Gara, 2007); and a compilation of the finfish (ilava) names of the Vanua Navakavu (Thaman et al., 2008).

Effort was also placed on monitoring change with LMMAs (Comely et al., 2006); Hubert, 2007). Comely et al, (2006) carried out a comparative study for four monitoring systems to compare differences of species abundance between actively harvested and MPA sites within the Vanua Navakapu iqoliqoli. These included four monitoring methodologies (the FLMMA Community; Reef Check; Coral Key Conservation; and USP MSc student, Akuila Cakacaka’s, methodologies), all which employed varying belt transect underwater censuses with target indicator species lists, ranging from 5 and 9 indicator species for the FLMMA and Reef Check to 82 and 147 species for the Cakacaka and Coral Key methodologies, respectively. The FLMMA indicator species included emperors (Lethrinidae), groupers (Serranidae), goatfishes (Mullidae), parrotfishes (Scaridae), and butterflyfishes (Chaetodontidae). Reef Check, included butterflyfishes, groupers,

snappers (Lutjanidae), sweetlips (Haemulidae), parrotfishes and eels (Muraenidae) where Cakacaka included some of the same groups down to the species level, plus surgeonfishes (Acanthuridae), triggerfishes (Balistidae), damselfishes (Pomacentridae), mullets (Mugilidae) and breams (Nemipteridae). Coral Key added some additional groups, such as porcupine fishes (Diodontidae), a goby (Gobiidae) and an additional triggerfish. Whereas all target indicator species were only observed in the FLMMA surveys, in the latter three surveys, only 59 to 70% of the target species were observed. All studies showed differences between harvested and MPA sites, although only the FLMMA and Coral Key methods showed significant differences when multivariate analysis was carried out. When reducing resolution to the family level, the Cakacaka method showed significant differences between harvested and MPA samples.

Whereas the LMMA method is clearly easier to carry out, can be done by local communities involving younger fishers, and can provide evidence of increasing productivity and biomass within a LMMA, it is argued that there is also an important need for more in-depth data on a taxon by taxon basis, down to the species level, to determine in more detail changes taking place, or likely to take place, in the management of a depleted fishery, because, as suggested by Jackson et al., “baseline studies” conducted in overharvested areas are normally only a small sample of the skeletal remains of a much more diverse former fishery, and may not tell us much about what used to be and what might eventuate if the LMMAs and MPAs are maintained in the long-run.

In another study, Hubert (2007) reported on fishermen’s perceptions in the yearly FLMMA monitoring carried out at Navakavu between 2003-6, in which the indicator species included groupers, emperors, goatfishes, parrotfishes, bêche-de-mer, and cake urchin (*Tripneustes gratilla*), but in which only emperors and goatfishes were observed in sufficient numbers to indicate significant change. He stresses that such surveys have limitations because fish species that have been seriously overfished and are low in number may not show up as statistically significant in belt transect surveys or may not even be mentioned by the current generation of fishers, whereas wider, more intensive, reconnaissance surveys and interviews with older fishers may yield

valuable information about the return or increasing abundance of a wider range of species. He also stresses that there is confusion over the vernacular names of many fish and shellfish species, with many of the younger fishers not really knowing the correct names or that the same name may be used in different villages for different species. He also stresses that active fishermen often only mention those fish that they actively sell and do not mention smaller species that are consumed for local subsistence and that, because of this, size may be overestimated and total fish abundance or diversity underestimated. He stresses, however, that calling on fishermen's memories, "allows us to fill in a lack of data from past surveys (p.33)" and allows us to "go back in time several years to detect trends. Moreover, recent ones, as the perceptions (e.g., of increases in catch volumes) seem to deteriorate with the passage of time (p.33)". This was one of the main objectives of the current study, to call on the older fishers' memories!

The Current Navakavu Study

Aim of Study

The current 2009-2012 study of the Navakavu iqoliqoli attempted to determine, at the species level: 1) what marine taxa were present in the past, whether or not they have returned, and when, or if, they are increasingly abundant and/or increasing in size. The study depended almost exclusively on the memories and taxonomic knowledge of the best older fishers (both men and women). Many of these elders no longer fish; however, the attempt was to provide more in-depth taxonomic resolution on the effectiveness of conservation initiatives and the recovery and taxonomic restructuring of a seriously depleted fishery.

Methodology

The study methodology included: 1) regular visits, with older fishers, to selected study sites throughout the entire iqoliqoli by USP staff and post-graduate students; 2) fishing trips and diving throughout the iqoliqoli, over the four-year period, by co-author and masterfisher, Asakaia Balawa, commonly with other senior fishers; 3) in-the-field digital photographic

documentation of most taxa; 4) collection of voucher specimens of new taxa for photographing, identification, and curation in the USP Pacific Marine Reference Collection; and 5) database compilation of all taxa with associated information on their abundance over the past 50 years. These data have been combined with less-detailed data collected since the 1990s under the initial MacArthur Foundation studies before the establishment of the LMMA and the additional Total Foundation studies carried out prior to the current study.

Results and Discussion

At present, local vernacular names for over 1000 species have been recorded and the recovery status of almost 900 assessed. Preliminary analyses show that: 1) the Navakavu fishery was seriously degraded and a wide range of formerly abundant species, at all trophic levels, had virtually disappeared over the past 50 years: 2) their disappearance was driven mainly by overfishing, exacerbated by increasing population, habitat degradation, sedimentation due to inland soil erosion, and pollution from nearby settlements, a pig-rearing area, industries, and the port and city of Suva; and, 3) since the establishment of the LMMA and associated MPA in 2001, many species have returned or increased in abundance.

Whereas short-term conventional surveys conducted after the establishment of the LMMA and MPA in 2001 have documented increasing abundance of a range of finfishes and invertebrates and the virtual absence of larger consumer species (Comely et al., 2006; Hubert, 2007), the current survey has validated these findings as well as identifying a wide range of other taxa not normally targeted in conventional surveys, many of which are being seen for the first time in decades by older fishers, or, which, after many years are returning to abundance or are larger in size. Taxa returning to abundance, identified in previous surveys include emperors, small groupers, unicornfishes and butterflyfishes; and invertebrates, such as bêche-de-mer, giant clams, ark clams (*Anadara* spp.) and cake urchins (*Trineustes gratilla*). Few, if any, large carnivores, such as large groupers or coral trout, trevallies, barracudas, or sharks were reported in these previous surveys. As suggested by Jackson et al 2001), it may take decades or generations for

the marine environment to recover and these larger carnivores to return. “New” finfish and invertebrate species collected and photographed in the current survey which – according to older fishers, are being seen for the first time in 20 to 50 years – have returned more recently, or are clearly increasing in abundance and/or size class are listed in Table 1. Many of these “returnees” are lower trophic-level species, such as shellfishes, crustaceans, echinoderms, small fishes, and eels that were clearly very affected by practices such as the use of rotenone poison, small-mesh gillnetting, bait fishing, night scuba diving, and other unsustainable fishing practices, most of which have been progressively prohibited since the establishment of the Navakavu LMMA and MPA. Table 1 shows a summary analysis of 734 species of marine animals, within specified taxa, that have been seen for: 1) the first time ever or in 40 years or more; 2) the first time for 20 to 40 years; 3) the first time in the last 10 to 20 years; or, 4) are clearly increasing in abundance or size in the Vanua Navakavu fishing grounds (iqoliqoli) since the establishment of the Vueti Navakavu LMMA and MPA in 2001, based on surveys with, and field studies by, the oldest generation of male and female fishers of the Vanua Navakavu southeastern Viti Levu, Fiji Islands, 2009-2012.

Most spectacular have been the return of a very large number of smaller finfishes (including eels), gastropod and bivalve shellfishes, crustaceans (including about 61 crab species) and echinoderms, many of which have never been seen before by older fishers. Smaller finfish taxa, such as scorpionfish (Scorpiidae), cardinalfishes (Apogonidae), gobies (Gobiidae), blennies (Blenniidae), goatfishes (Mullidae), seahorses (Syngnathidae), pufferfishes (Tetraodontidae), lizardfishes (Synodontidae), sand perches (Pinguipedidae), and hawkfishes (Cirrhitidae) are particularly conspicuous in their return or increasing numbers. Larger species, such as batfishes (Ephippidae), and schooling small goatfish species (*Mulloidichthys* spp.), which had disappeared for over 30 years, are also beginning to be seen again, as are a number of the larger carnivores, such as the groupers or rockrods (Serranidae), some trevallies (Carangidae), a limited number of sharks and rays, and some of the larger herbivorous wrasses (Labridae).

Table 1: Summary Analysis of 734 Species of Marine Animals

Taxa (Animal Types)	1st time ever or first time in over 40 yrs	1st in 20 to 40 yrs	1st in last 10 to 20 yrs	Increasing Abundance &/or Size	Total Species
Sharks and Rays	1	4	2	2	9
Eels	14	7	3	4	28
Other finfishes	70	65	46	115	296
Gastropods	76	58	14	27	175
Crustaceans	49	13	13	21	96
Bivalves	20	13	2	21	56
Echinoderms	12	8	6	16	42
Nudibranchs, Seaslugs, Seahares	4	2		3	9
Cephalopods, Scaphopods	4	1		3	8
Worms	4		2	2	8
Anemones	2	2		2	6
Grand Total	256	173	89	216	734

Other notable returnees among the invertebrates include a range of mantis shrimps and shrimps (both crustaceans) and over 200 shellfishes (gastropods and bivalves), most of which had been overfished for local sale or, in the case of many seashells, for sale to the rapidly growing tourist market in the late 1960s and 1970s. Some such as the smooth box crab (*Calappa calappa*), have only returned since their disappearance after the 1953 tsunami. The return of a very wide range of smaller cryptic fish and crustacean species that would have been particularly affected by the widespread use of rotenone fish poisons in commercial fishing is also notable. Particularly dramatic have been the return of a wide range of cone shells (*Conus* spp.), cowries (*Cypraea* spp.), conches (*Strombidae*), murexes (*Muricidae*), auger shells (*Terebridae*), turban snails (*Turbanidae*) and a range of bivalves, all of which are both sold as shells to tourists or eaten locally. In many cases, the names for many of these species were not known by the current generation and were only recorded based on the knowledge of older ex-fishers, some

of whom have subsequently passed away.

The results support Jackson et al.'s (2005) contention that the restoration of reef ecosystems, just like their slow trophic collapse due to generations of overfishing, may take many generations to restore to health, even with the most judicious conservation interventions. The fact that both this, and other surveys still find few large consumers on any of the reefs, even after ten years of conservation, further reinforces the contention that trophic restructuring of nearshore marine ecosystems, just like their collapse, may take decades or generations and that ecological recovery must start from the lowest trophic levels; for example, small fishes, such as cardinal fishes, blennies, and gobies, smaller crustaceans and mollusks and other organisms that clearly make up the bulk of the diets of some of the mid-level consumers. Table 2 is an attempt to assess the extent of trophic restructuring of the Navakavu Vanua marine community based on a summary analysis of the prey or foods of 65 finfish families based on the reported gut contents of selected finfish by Randall (2005). The table shows that the more common prey include a wide range of smaller fishes, mollusks, crabs, and other crustaceans, echinoderms, and polychaete worms, all among the species that seem to be returning to the Navakavu iqoliqoli.

Table 2 shows a summary analysis of prey/foods of 65 fish families as a basis for assessing the role of trophic restructuring in the return or increasing abundance of a wide range of marine finfish species. Based on interpretations of accounts of the gut contents of selected species and taxa by Randal (2005). Notes: 1) +++ = over 25% of contents for some species in the family; ++ = <5% of the reported gut contents and/or % not stated or not interpretable; 2) for some taxa that are omnivorous, with no specific prey or food given, these are denoted as +++ under others; 3) not included in the analysis are a number of offshore, pelagic or deepwater species and some smaller seasonal fish families, such as sardines, anchovies, etcetera.

Table 2: Summary Analysis of Prey/Foods of 65 Fish Families

PREY/FOOD TYPE	+++	++	+	x/65
Fishes	16	13	3	32
Crabs	12	8		20
Hermit crabs		6	2	8
Other crustaceans	11	25	4	40
Gastropod molluscs	8	9	4	21
Bivalve molluscs	4	11	2	17
Urchins	1	2	5	8
Stars/brittle stars		3	4	7
Polychaete worms	1	12	3	16
Corals	6		3	9
Sponges	1	3	4	8
Forams		2	4	6
Algae and detritus	11	5	1	17
Zooplankton	10	2		12
Others*	8	10	6	24

*Others (mainly benthic invertebrates, include tunicates, echinoids, sipunculids, soft coral, polyzoa, ascidians, octopi, squids, tubeworms, anemones, nudibranches, opistobranchs, eggs, zooplankton.

Recommendations

The Way Forward: Marriage of Indigenous and Modern Biodiversity Knowledge as a Basis for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).

The Navakavu study shows that in-depth indigenous knowledge of biodiversity can provide time-depth information about the long-term sustainability of development that cannot be provided by short-term modern scientific field surveys and archaeological and paleological studies of drastically “changed environmental baselines” (Pauly, 1995). These include data on: 1) species composition and abundance and the state of the marine environment before the onset of overfishing and environmental change; 2) the nature, timing, and impact of overfishing and environmental change on different taxa; and, 3) what species are

returning and the potential for the long-term recovery of managed marine ecosystems. It is stressed that the survey has also recorded local names and other seriously threatened local taxonomic and ecological knowledge. These are all types of information that could be included as content in more appropriate ESD, the loss of which will seriously undermine future conservation and ESD efforts.

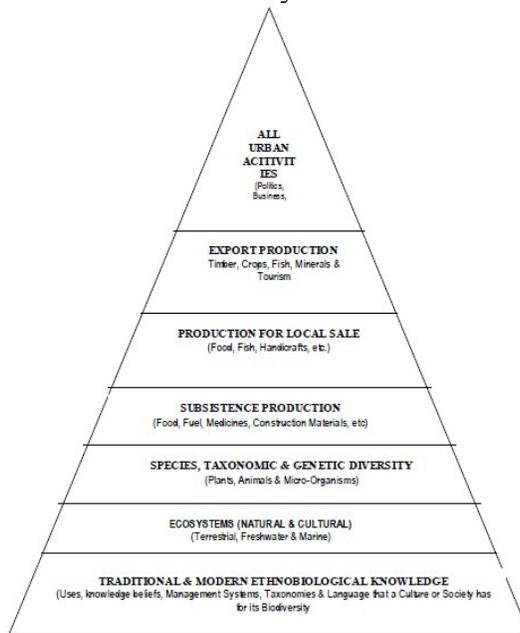
The “Pyramid for Sustainable Development Based on the Conservation of Biodiversity and Ethnobiobiodiversity” (Figure 3) is an attempt to graphically portray how such knowledge (ethnobiobiodiversity) constitutes the supportive base for the conservation and sustainable use of ecosystems and biodiversity and, ultimately, sustainable island development. It is argued that if local knowledge of biodiversity and ethnobiobiodiversity is not included in ESD, in appropriate ways, most development in the biodiversity-dependent small island developing states of the Pacific Ocean will ultimately fail. For over 200 years, most formal education systems have alienated Pacific Island peoples from their island and oceanic environment. This alienation has accelerated rapidly over the past 20 years with “communications revolution” and institutionalised globalisation of education. Sports, television, movies (including videos), and, most recently, the internet, have served to increasingly alienate our rapidly urbanising youth from their elders and their biodiversity traditions. Many youth know more about the biodiversity, ethnobiobiodiversity, and environmental challenges of countries shown on the “Discovery Channel” than they know about the living heritage of their own islands and oceans. Youth no longer have the time or interest to share the biocultural heritages that are irretrievably slipping away with each passing generation. They know more about sports and movie stars, foreign singers, and “American idols”, than they do about their own master fishers, hunters, gardeners, carvers, house builders, craft persons, medicinal practitioners, and indigenous scientists and leaders who are and were the repositories of the life-giving indigenous knowledge.

To address these threats, we must use innovative and culturally inclusive approaches and the best modern AND traditional technology (e.g., digital cameras, databases and oral tradition, community meetings, participant observation, hand-on practice, etc.) to protect, teach and

enrich education and research for people of all ages, all occupations, and all places. Only, thus, can we simultaneously address the current biodiversity and ethnobiodiversity extinction crises by marrying the best indigenous and modern science as a basis for ESD.

For developing countries and rural and outer island communities with no museums, no modern taxonomists, and often no connection to the internet, local and indigenous knowledge, taxonomy, and bioinformatics are particularly critical to biodiversity conservation and ESD. In these areas, the conservation and use of local taxonomies, where possible in concert with modern taxonomy, will be required, and bioinformatics may have to employ a synthesis of some of the most cutting-edge technologies and models with some of the most time-tested models, such as oral transmission, production of inexpensive guides or checklists in vernacular languages with associated digital photos, or putting solar powered laptops and digital cameras into the hands of local taxonomists, with the appropriate training and support, so that they can conduct their own productivity of their reefs, lagoon, rivers, forests and garden areas.

Figure 3: Pyramid for Sustainable Development Based on the Conservation of Biodiversity and Ethnobiodiversity



Best Practice, Initiatives, and Recommendations

There is an increasing number of recent initiatives or outputs that have clearly played a role in demystifying and mainstreaming indigenous knowledge in biodiversity conservation and ESD. Such initiatives, from a Pacific Islands perspective, include: 1) increases in undergraduate and postgraduate programs, in-service courses and workshops in culturally inclusive education, biogeography, conservation biology, invasive species management, taxonomy, bioinformatics, and biodiversity-based adaptation to climate, environmental, and economic change; 2) regional and local community-based initiatives on the inventory, conservation, and monitoring of terrestrial, marine, freshwater, and agricultural and forest biodiversity (such as the Navakavu study) involving local students and local community experts alongside expedition taxonomists and conservation experts; 3) publication/establishment of biodiversity guides, booklets, checklists, biodiversity data bases, videos, movies, websites, and other materials that combine both scientific and local vernacular taxonomics and other information and biodiversity; 4) increasingly effective biodiversity conservation and education partnerships between international and local NGOs, government, educational and scientific organisations, the private sector and, most importantly, local communities, including the use of traditional knowledge holders in both teaching and curriculum development.

There is insufficient space here to give credit to these efforts individually. Suffice it to say that we must use all avenues, within the context of ESD to: Ensure that our students, the general public, policymakers, and the developmental elite clearly know what biodiversity and ethnobiodiversity are; that they are seriously threatened; and that they constitute an important, but disappearing, foundation for ESD.

Create understanding and appreciation of the importance of taxonomy (both indigenous or traditional and scientific) among all ages and all at all levels in society as a precondition for addressing the biodiversity extinction. To do so we must train armies of parataxonomists (citizen scientists) with sufficient interest in, and knowledge of, taxonomy so that they can participate in the inventory and conservation of biodiversity. We must ensure that our children are interested in, and

begin to learn the names and types of, plants and animals and the ways ecosystems function. This could include requiring that all students take “natural history”, or perhaps, more appropriately “life history” courses that focus on the local and modern taxonomies and economic, cultural, and ecological importance of biodiversity, or there will be no pool from which we can derive potential future practicing taxonomists, conservationists, and ESD teachers.

Support local and indigenous taxonomists and traditional biodiversity users to record, preserve, strengthen, disseminate, and use their own taxonomies and “stories” as vital links between “our” and “their” taxonomies and bioinformatics and a basis for conservation and ESD. This would include working with traditional healers, fishers and reef gleaners, gardeners and horticulturalists, carpenters, craftspeople, shell sellers, marketers of fresh produce, and other persons involved in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and to assist them to produce guides, posters, checklists, videos, and other outputs to support local biodiversity conservation and ESD efforts.

Involve local students, local community members, and the best indigenous or local taxonomists and knowledge holders in our biodiversity surveys, expeditions, and teaching and curriculum development initiatives. Co-author and master fisher, Asakaia Balawa has, for example, over the past four years conducted classes about the marine and terrestrial biodiversity of Navakavu at the local junior secondary school.

Adapt bioinformatics as the open-access means for getting local and modern taxonomic information to stakeholders of all ages, all educational levels, the rich and poor, the rural and urban. This includes the publication/provision of taxonomic and biodiversity information and the results of biodiversity surveys in many different ways, so that stakeholders and practitioners, whether they be other taxonomists, researchers, conservationists, curriculum developers, school teachers, local communities, citizen scientists, or younger school children and even infants have appropriate materials/activities that serve as their windows to biodiversity and their biocultural heritages. This could also include increasing emphasis on guidebooks, biodiversity lists, popular publications, and curriculum materials (both in print as well as on DVD

and on-line), especially in on-line, open-access sources. Co-authorship with local informants and collaborators can also be promoted to ensure ownership and respect of intellectual property rights.

Promote and convince policymakers and educationists of the critical need for field and museum/biodiversity collections and/or conservation areas at many levels and scales, including at schools. These could include, for example, botanical gardens, tree groves or forest reserves, medicinal plant collections, model polycultural (rather than monocultural) food gardens, mangrove conservation areas, and even small marine protected areas associated with schools.

Hire more TEACHING taxonomists and bioinformaticians. Very few of our top taxonomists and bioinformaticians actually teach, particularly at the undergraduate level, not to mention in the schools. It is no wonder that so few local students embark on careers as taxonomists or parataxonomists that would allow them to connect with the traditional taxonomies and biodiversity of the Pacific.

Lobby for more funds/scholarship for degrees in culturally inclusive education, biology, marine science, biogeography, anthropology, environmental law, environmental science, with increasing emphasis on biodiversity and taxonomy and parataxonomy. This would include encouragement of all conservation NGO's to include, as integral components of their conservation project proposals, scholarship funding for the formal education of conservation taxonomists and other areas related to biodiversity conservation, ethnobiodiversity, taxonomy, bioinformatics, and ESD.

These are just some suggestions for mainstreaming the marriage the marriage of indigenous and modern knowledge systems as a basis for biodiversity conservation and ESD in the Pacific Islands. As stressed by Knudtson and Suzuki in *Wisdom of the elders* (1992, p. 159), we need to re-instill in our youth a sense of “environmental conscience” and their “moral obligations to the biosphere.” It is suggested here that we, as educationists, scientists, and conservationists, strongly embrace the IYB theme and Knudtson and Suzuki’s plea to more closely engage local indigenous knowledge as a foundation for effective conservation

and sustainable habitation of their islands. As argued in the introduction, the marriage of indigenous and modern biodiversity knowledge (ethnobiodiversity) may be one of the most relevant and exciting ways of breathing time-tested winds and life into new sails on our voyage to rethink and enrich ESD in the Pacific islands.

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Critical Discourse Analysis as Curriculum Development: Critical approaches to culturally relevant curricula in the Pacific

Kevin Smith

Abstract

In 2010, I conducted a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of a curricular document produced by the Welsh Government intended to provide teachers with guidance on how to enact a “Curriculum Cymreig” (a culturally relevant curriculum initiative) in schools in Wales. There is a multiplicity of postcolonial commonalities that have complicated curriculum development in both Wales and many Pacific Island countries, and it is through these shared dimensions that I believe CDA can be used by educators in re-thinking the interplay between culture and curriculum. Through a critique of discursive formations that give shape to concepts of education in the Pacific, teachers may be able to develop culturally relevant curricula that feature indigenous voices, beliefs, and educational aims that reflect the needs of their students and communities.

Introduction

In this paper, I propose that in regard to educational reform among Pacific island countries, curricula can be designed to represent indigenous knowledge and culture based on a perspective that is appreciative of the distinctiveness of Pacific cultures and incorporates a strength-based approach to educational development and capacity building. In addition to this approach, I argue that critical discourse analysis can and should be employed by educators in the Pacific as part of a curriculum development process that affirms and reforms the knowledge systems and cultures of Pacific island countries. For clarity, I do not limit curriculum development to activities prior to classroom instruction. Instead, I regard curriculum development as a multidimensional process that involves both teachers

and students in planning, monitoring, evaluating, reflecting upon, and recreating learning experiences. With this in mind, and in drawing from my experience in working with the Curriculum Cymreig (Welsh Government, 2012), I provide a comparative discussion of how CDA may be employed by Pacific educators to serve the educational and cultural needs of their students and communities, with a particular focus on the interplay between curriculum as an official representation of a culture and the development and sustainability of indigenous identities and culture through schooling.

In this discussion, I broadly draw upon two theoretical positions: Critical theory and postcolonialism. However, I do not conflate these discourses into a singular perspective. Critical theory and postcolonialism share a number of common concerns, but also have at their roots significantly different theoretical origins, assumptions, and motivations. While I acknowledge sympathies between the two discourses, I also am aware of the tensions and strains between them. For the sake of clarity, then, I emphasise that this paper is primarily a discussion of using critical discourse analysis as a method for framing curriculum development. The goals of such an exercise are discussed in detail later, but at the most basic level, the purpose of engaging in critical discourse analysis in development curriculum is to enable educators and students to identify discourses that contribute to how schooling, knowledge, and learning are organised and performed, with the intention that once these elements have been identified and assessed, they can be acted upon with the intention of transforming unjust educational practices and social circumstances into more inclusive forms of learning and living. This is a primary goal of a critique – to address the possibility, the hope, of human emancipation within particular social circumstances and contexts.

Such lofty goals are not associated with postcolonial perspectives. While postcolonial theorists may analyse the political and social strategies of hegemonic domination and control, they do not specifically include intentions to address issues of social justice and inclusion. With respect to this paper, I am primarily concerned with postcolonial critiques of representation – particularly how representations of “the colonised” are produced and reproduced by “the coloniser,” as discussed in Said’s

Orientalism (1978), and how such discourses exist as destructive forms of domination (Fanon, 2005) that immobilise the subaltern (Spivak, 2010) and definitively commit the other, the colonised subject, to “spaces of difference” (de Kock, 1992).

So, while the following discussion is primarily concerned with the goals and aims of a critical project – of social transformation and, to a degree, the elevation of human emancipation – it is not particularly a postcolonial discussion. In this paper, I frame the discussion of critical discourse analysis within a broad postcolonial orientation, and focus on sympathetic areas of representation, voice, empowerment, and autonomy shared by the two theoretical discourses.

Critical Discourse Analysis

As an approach to inquiry, CDA enables one to peer through the opacity of power relations found in the discursive practices and texts of social and cultural structures, and assists in informing us how the indistinct features of these relationships bolster the presence and alignment of power and hegemony (Fairclough, 1995). CDA is distinctive from other approaches to language studies because it involves mobilising a critical perspective that is intended to demystify and clarify ideologies present within social structures and the discursive practices exercised therein.

Discourse and Discursive Formations

In this paper, I define discourse as a form of social practice, discursive practice, and text that represents and calibrates one’s orientation to reality (Fairclough, 1995, p. 74). Discourses are produced by, and contribute to, social structures and exist as “a material form of ideology and language is invested by ideology” (Fairclough, 1995, p. 73). By analysing discursive formations we may reveal the ideological assumptions at play within social structures. In using the term, discursive formation, I refer to ways in which discourse produces “patterns of regularity in terms of order, correlation, position, and function” (Macey, 2001, p. 101).

Critical discourse analysis suggests that multiple discursive formations

are present within social institutions, and these formations contribute to the normalisation of ideologies which promote certain assumptions to the level of commonsense knowledge (Fairclough, 1995). From this perspective, CDA acknowledges that “structures are not only presupposed by, and necessary conditions for, action, but are also the products of action; Or, in a different terminology, actions reproduce structures” (Fairclough, 1995, p. 35). The objective of CDA can be described as the revealing of ideological assumptions that operate both explicitly and implicitly within written text and the spoken word (Fairclough, 1995), and through the unveiling of these assumptions we may recognise our subjectivity to certain forms of power and control, as well as ways in which we participate in the production and reproduction of power-laden discourse(s) and discursive practices. This speaks directly to the concerns of those working in the critical tradition in that they “identify the contradictions that exist between the way people make meaning of their world and the way the world is materially organized through the structures and institutions and codes of social life” (Quantz, 2009, p. 2).

Critical discourse analysis can provide a useful perspective from which one can investigate the interplay between curriculum and identity in that it provides educators with indispensable tools that enable them to see the ways in which ideological components of language work in obscuring power relations. In my study, *Developing the Curriculum Cymreig*, I utilised CDA in investigating seemingly commonsensical claims the text used in organising representations of Welshness. From this analysis, I intended to reveal new ways to approach and interact with concepts of identity, culture, and community for Welsh students.

Contextualising Critical Discourse Analysis

As a form of analysis, the foundations of CDA are firmly entrenched within discourses of inquiry formed through a predominately Western ontological and epistemological orientation. In addition, the majority of literature and research in the field of CDA involves analyses of English use with methods and strategies for navigating and investigating the particular grammatical elements of the English language. These factors have led to a significant number of CDA studies to be situated within a

Western context. Often, critical studies are regarded as an “un-Pacific” approach to inquiry. This is a false assumption. Forms and methods of critique are as varied as the cultural circumstances in which these efforts take place. As such, critical perspectives have the potential to take a myriad of forms in Oceania. Postcolonial and Pacific studies are two fields that readily come to mind in that they both engage in forms of cultural critique, or inquiries and analyses of power and representation. However, they do not particularly engage in calls for action in the transformation of unjust circumstances and practices. For CDA to be used as a meaningful approach to curriculum development, educators in Oceania can deconstruct Western dimensions of CDA and mobilise indigenous ontological and epistemological assumptions and approaches in operationalising a Pacific approach to CDA as an appropriate method of analysis in their respective cultures. Such an undertaking is outside of the scope of this paper, but one question that might guide this process is “How can educators in the Pacific honour and mobilise indigenous cultural constructs and onto-epistemological considerations in undertaking critical studies of the discourses which comprise the various curricula in the region?”

Critically Analysing Curricular Discourse

As mentioned above, I conducted a critical discourse analysis of *Developing the Curriculum Cymreig*, a document designed to assist teachers in Wales in providing culturally relevant learning environments for their students. In situating my analysis within a Welsh context, I sought to deconstruct my identity as a Welsh-American and to situate my inquiry within a specifically Welsh dimension. In undertaking this attempt to contextualise my research, the theme of “representation” became an important concept that would inform my study. In this analysis, I asked the following questions:

In what ways does the text establish its authority position in regard to its representations of Welshness?

In what ways does the text represent Welshness?

The purpose of this analysis was to investigate how ideology is used in manufacturing consent regarding the representation of Welsh culture and identity, and to “denaturalize” commonsensical assumptions

embedded within these representations. I analysed the organisational features of the text and its linguistic and grammatical elements. In particular, I emphasised the relational, expressive, and experiential values contained within the text. From this analysis, cogent themes regarding the representation of Welshness were identified and then interpreted within the theoretical framework of critical pedagogy.

In my findings, I addressed how the text utilises quotations from official government agencies, the national curriculum, and teachers in schools in foregrounding its rationale and authority regarding how the Curriculum Cymreig is to be implemented in schools. I also discussed how relational, experiential, and expressive values found in both the vocabulary and grammatical features of the document work in establishing an ideological common ground between the text and its audience. Furthermore, I provided examples of how the text frames the discussion of its goals and aims within a language heavily reliant upon the use of declarative sentences and truncated grammatical questions – processes which place the text in an active position of questioning and answering itself, with the result of this arrangement situating the reader as a dislocated observer and unquestioning recipient of information. I also discussed examples of the text’s theoretical orientation to the concept of Welshness. With an emphasis on experiencing “Welsh life,” and the determination that students will identify their “own sense of Welshness” from the meaning-making processes they employ during these experiences, I proposed the text situates Welshness within a constructivist discourse, and the process of identifying a sense of Welshness as a type of phenomenological method of inquiry and exploration. Simply put, Welshness was represented as something to be experienced, and students identified their own sense of Welshness through reducing their understanding of these experiences to their most essential – their most Welsh – component. In regard to how the text represents Welshness, I provided examples of how the text establishes what it regards to be the distinctiveness of Welsh culture and how this distinctiveness is something that is to be experienced by the students. These findings are important in helping teachers and students to understand the less-recognisable motivations and beliefs regarding Welsh culture held by the Welsh curriculum authority, as well as ways in which that authority organises discourse to enhance its position of

authority in regard to defining the concept of Welshness for educators and students in Wales.

Shortly after relocating to Tonga in 2011, I began to recognise familiar themes of identity, culture, and indigenous ways of “knowing” and “being” in my discussions with educators and members of the community. These themes resonated with postcolonial considerations and concerns I had while conducting my research in Wales. While Wales and Pacific Island countries seem to possess few commonalities, they do share long-lasting effects of what is commonly referred to as Western imperialism and colonialism. Both Welsh and the diversity of Pacific cultures have been subjected to the interventions of colonisation, which continues to impose significant cultural, social, economic, and political consequences. Embedded within these postcolonial dispositions are representations of identity that continue to shape and inform the dialectic of “self” and “other.” So, while Wales and the nations of the Pacific possess important distinctions from one another, they also share remarkable commonalities in regard to how representations of their culture are expressed through curriculum, why they are represented this way, and how these representations are to be understood by teachers and students.

Over the years, Pacific scholars have drawn attention to the concerns of educators and students by calling for a “re-visioning” of education in the Pacific consisting of strategies that situate indigenous philosophies and onto-epistemological elements at the heart of the development of culturally relevant and responsible curricula, concepts of educational leadership and contextually grounded aims and goals for organising and delivering education (Helu, 1995; Johansson-Fua, 2007, 2009; Manu‘atu and Kepa, 2003, 2008; Smith, 1999; Thaman, 1995, 1999, 2003a). In response, Pacific educators have engaged in work to promote and support indigenous content and perspectives in the development of curriculum, with much of this work promoting an emphasis on curriculum content and methods of teaching and instruction, including the medium through which teachers and students engage in schooling. These are important components of curriculum development, with the expectation being that students will positively respond to these components in ways that affirm the distinctiveness and relevancy of

a particular identity and place and resist the further marginalisation of their respective cultures.

The importance of this approach to schooling cannot be overstated, but at the same time, these cannot be the only considerations when developing culturally relevant curricula. Equally important to the actual cultural, curricular constructs are the representations, or more specifically, the discursive formations which stage, promote, and eventually hail student and teachers' orientations to such representations.

Critical Analysis as Curriculum Development

Said (1978) introduces the concept of Orientalism suggesting that the "Orient" is a representation of what the "West" considers to be the "Orient." It is not a description of the "other," but instead is a representation of the other as determined by a "Western" perspective. Thaman suggests that in applying the concept of Orientalism to the Pacific, we must recognise it has "been produced politically, socially, ideologically, and militarily by westerners" (Thaman, 2003b). Possibly the most effective form of political, social, and ideological production of the representation of the Pacific "Other" was manifested in colonial era schools and curricula, and continues in various iterations and degrees through the remnants of these educational systems. The revisioning of education by scholars mentioned above has largely been in response to the normalisation of, and the socialisation of students to, Orientalist discourses in Pacific schools through a diversity of discursive formations enacted and employed in contemporary educational practice. In recent years, donor agencies have supported this rethinking process by providing funds for localised curriculum development and teacher training, and the work undertaken by indigenous educators and their donor-partners has been beneficial in at least exposing the importance of indigenous knowledge and culture as necessary foundations for teaching and learning in Pacific schools. However, without a critical analysis of the discourses employed and promoted through these curricula, questions still remain: "To what degree do Orientalist discursive formations continue to shape and affirm commonsensical assumptions of the representation of Pacific cultures in curriculum?" and "To what extent have educators and students within a Pacific context been able to deconstruct, analyse, and

promote their own representation of culture and identity?”

These questions bring us to an important concept: hybridity. In this context, I use hybridity to describe the intermingling of the coloniser and the colonised (which are admittedly cumbersome and vague terms) in the production and dissemination of discourses that shape how these entities come to recognise, understand, and represent indigenous knowledge and culture. At this point, I must clarify my use of the terms “coloniser” and “the colonised.” I am not referring to a specific, historical relationship of military or political domination. Neither do I assert these are concrete signifiers possessing explicit and discrete values. Rather, similar to how Freire (2006) uses the terms “oppressor” and “the oppressed” in elucidating a subject/object dialectic, I use these terms as ideal-types to represent a hegemonic relationship between “external,” cultural, political, and social influences and “internal,” indigenous perspectives. I also extend the concept of hybridity to include practices through which indigenous educators and donor partners currently work in developing curricula. Hybridity encompasses a wide range of concepts: complicity, resistance, compromise – all of these qualities exist in one way or another in working relations between what we often refer to as binary opposites: indigenous and non-indigenous systems, or the coloniser and the colonised. However, as Bhabha (1994) has eloquently stated, the liminality of colonial relations disrupts the binary assumption of these interventions and provides a more nuanced, and admittedly, complicated understanding of these relations, as well as exposing ruptures within power structures that maintain those relationships. In referring to Thaman’s suggestion that Orientalism has been produced by “Westerners,” we must also recognise that this production continues through joint means in contemporary educational work and can include the efforts of those for whom the discourses of Orientalism are meant to represent.

Thus, while postcolonial theory is essential in analysing and interpreting how and why such representations exist, in terms of challenging these discourses – particularly within an educational context – I argue that CDA is an appropriate method for further analysis and meaningful action that is necessary to transform the discursive and institutional practices that currently limit educational experiences in the Pacific. While

much of this curricular work has focused on promoting an alternative, indigenous-based perspective to the Orientalist representation of indigenous knowledge, culture, and educational aims, without a critical perspective this process may also include mobilising and embedding significant discursive elements that continue to marginalise and subjugate discourses that challenge Orientalist representations of Pacific cultures in curriculum. In short, educators may inadvertently perpetuate a Western representation of Pacific cultures through the mobilisation of discourses that seem obvious or commonsensical. Therefore, a need exists for educators (and students) to not only analyse historical and contemporary discourse of donor-driven curriculum support, but also the discursive formations that arise from indigenous voices and practices currently giving shape to the discourse of curriculum and identity in the Pacific.

Critically Analysing Pacific Curricula

Critique is often discouraged – particularly in a public setting – throughout the Pacific. However, it continues to occur through a variety of discourses and practices emerging from the cultural contexts in which they take place. For example, in constructing a “taxonomy of silence” among cultural groups in Fiji, Nabobo (2006) describes how silence in specific circumstances can be employed as a form of resistance or dissent. In Tonga, Heliaki, or the use of metaphor, can be used to negotiate complex social relations in offering critique (Smith & ‘Otunuku, 2015). Often, critical stances are conceptualised as “in your face” expressions of resistance or dissent, but in the Pacific, socio-cultural norms have shaped the ways in which critique is conducted and delivered. Critical discourse analysis as curriculum development is an appropriate method of critique for the Pacific in that it does not require public displays of resistance or dissent. In addition, it situates critique as part of the learning environment which should serve as a safe space in which teachers and students can engage their intellectual curiosity and transgress borders in search of gaining and constructing new knowledge and meaning.

The question remains, “how does this type of critique take place?” To describe the process in general terms, teachers should have an

operational knowledge of critical discourse analysis. Then, they can orient students to the nature of critique. Students should understand what critique is, its positive and negative consequences, and why should they participate in it. Teachers can also provide analytical tools for the students, and when the analysis is completed, they can provide ways for students to discuss their results and to discover how the new knowledge gained from the exercise can meaningfully inform future action. Critics of the use of CDA in schools may argue that discourse analysis may be too difficult for certain students, and that this approach to learning can only be effectively used at the secondary level. Discourse analysis does not exist as a strictly defined set of analytical steps, and the various approaches to discourse analysis can be modified to meet the needs of those conducting the analysis. Others argue that such activities and concepts fall outside of the prescribed content areas for teachers – and to a degree this may be true, but this does not discount the educational and transformative potential of critical discourse analysis. A number of curricular disruptions occur at multiple levels in teaching and can be successfully managed by teachers, with many of those circumstances provided new and unintended opportunities for learning. Another important factor to consider is that teachers can incorporate these items step-by-step into the curriculum, and that CDA remains firmly situated within methods of teaching and learning – as a pedagogical process and not necessarily the object of study.

In what follows, I briefly describe how a teacher might begin to incorporate CDA into the classroom. For the sake of clarity, I situate this example as part of a Form 4 economics lesson in Tonga, but similar scenarios could be enacted in any Pacific island country. This example assumes that the teacher has gained an understanding of CDA, has shared that understanding with the students, and has provided them with tools to conduct their analysis (in this case, an understanding of nominalisations). In this particular lesson, the teacher explains the following learning outcomes to the students: (a) students will provide examples of economic resources, (b) students will demonstrate how economic resources are used to produce goods and services, and (c) students will identify different businesses and the resources they use to produce their goods and services. In addition to these typical learning outcomes for economics, the teacher adds the following

outcome: (d) students will critically analyse the text and identify how nominalisations might be used in discussing the relationships between business, consumers, and natural resources in Tonga.

In simple terms, nominalisations are processes that are converted to nouns. When this occurs, some of the meaning of the word or words is reduced, such as timing, agency, or responsibility (Fairclough, 2001). For example, a section of the students' textbook had the heading "Shrinking fish population problem,": this phrase takes a process – a reduction of the number of harvestable fish – and condenses it into a less complicated noun, "Shrinking fish population." It is a mystery. It exists ahistorically and without cause, and as a result, can be simply accepted as "just the way things are."

However, as part of their analysis, the teacher and students can begin to question the nominalisation in order to expand the concept once again. Through this questioning process, the teacher and students begin to consider processes for how fish populations are being reduced. Perhaps it is an environmental issue or perhaps it is an issue of over-fishing. Students can also begin to identify actors who were anonymous through the use of nominalisation, but are soon revealed through a critical analysis of the text. Who might be involved in the reduction of fish populations? Village fishermen and women? Tourists? Corporate fisheries? Questions open up new pathways to understanding the problem and provide students with a more sophisticated approach in achieving the stated learning outcomes of the lesson, such as "how businesses use natural resources in producing goods and services." In moving forward, the teacher and students pursue clues revealed through their analysis. Perhaps they find stories in the newspaper regarding corporate fishing companies lobbying for relaxed fishing regulations. With this information, students begin to investigate the minutes from parliament sessions and realise that the lobbying attempts were successful, and as a result, fishing companies were subject to less regulation and drastically increased their harvests. Suddenly, the mystical problem of shrinking fish populations, which when written as a nominalisation leaves little opportunity for explanation or engagement, becomes an understandable issue that is comprised of real people, decisions, and outcomes. More important, when understood in this way, the teacher and students can

then discover ways to take action. As the teacher and students understand the relationships once obscured through nominalisation, they can then formulate strategies to take action. Perhaps as an assignment in class, or even as an extracurricular activity, the teacher and students can, through the involvement of the community and other stakeholders, organise a response to the deregulation of fishing rights and seek to transform a potentially devastating reality into one that acknowledges the rights and needs of those less powerful and far more reliant upon natural resources. As teachers and students gain expertise in analysing the vocabulary, grammar, and structures of their curricular text, the teacher can begin to incorporate more analytical tools into the learning experiences of students. For example, larger, more encompassing concepts such as relational, expressive, and experiential values can be explored. According to Fairclough (2001), relational values may identify the perceived social relationship between the producer of the text and its consumers. Experiential features contain cues regarding the text producer's experience of the natural or social world. Expressive values provide insight into the producer's understanding and representation of their reality. These elements of CDA are particularly appropriate for Pacific discourse. For example, relational values of vocabulary can be considered through identifying formal and informal words. In Tonga, obvious examples include how words used in a text reveal if the actors are "common," noble, or royal. The relational values of grammatical features in a text (such as the pronouns "we" and "you") can also inform the reader about embedded power relations between the subjects of the text and between the subjects of the text and the reader. Expressive values in vocabulary are significant in Tonga (and the Pacific at large) particularly because of the prominent use of metaphor. In regard to the expressive values of grammatical features of a text, these are significant because they are concerned with modality – or the speaker's authority in the representation and evaluation of truth and their reality (Fairclough, 2001). Experiential values of vocabulary address concepts such as agency and responsibility. In regards to an analysis of the experiential values of grammatical features of text, the teacher and students can better determine if a sentence is passive or active, negative or positive, and how these characteristics relate to the subjects of the text (Fairclough, 2001). The example above, and the possible areas for further development of CDA in the classroom are

just one of many alternatives teachers and students may incorporate into their classrooms. The success of these approaches is reliant upon a number of factors including teacher preparation, student receptivity, age/cognitive-appropriate learning activities and outcomes, and the political character of the classroom, community, and cultural context in which the analyses take place.

Challenges and Recommendations

As mentioned previously, critique can be a complicated concept in Oceania. Its interpretation is often couched within a miasma of distrust, uncertainty, and/or fear. Questioning social power relations can often be regarded as an obsession with negativity and an expression of disrespect, and these reactions cannot be wholly discounted. However, a greater appreciation for the possibility of critique can be developed with a fuller understanding of the goals of critical studies and the motivation behind such inquiries. In the contemporary Western discourse of critical studies in education, prominent figures such as Freire, (1985; 2006), Giroux, (1983; 1997), Kincheloe and McLaren (2011) posit that at the heart of critical inquiry exists a form of love – or at least a recognition of the dignity of the human condition and a commitment to the emancipation of those whose dignity and agency to determine their own place in the world is weakened or withheld due to inequitable relationships of power exercised through the manipulation of the public and private spheres. In the Pacific, similar perspectives are held by noted scholars such as Hau‘ofa, (1993), Helu (1999), Smith (1999), and Wendt (1976; Suya, 1985; Va’ai, 1997). With this in mind, the purpose of critical analysis in curriculum is not to challenge power relations for the sake of disruption but – in the hopes of creating new avenues of understanding, expression, and emancipation – to expose ways in which inequitable power relations are kept. The act of critique in a context where such actions may be viewed as an attack on the social collective, or which “outs” the individual as rebel or misfit, is a labour of love when the labour is in line with the overall goals of seeking to discover ways to create a more just and equitable society.

As mentioned above, a key aspect of any culture with a postcolonial disposition is representation. Educators should be critically concerned

with the discursive elements of how a particular culture is represented. In addition to the previous example of CDA in the classroom, I suggest a number of questions that may prove useful in helping teachers in conducting a CDA of curricular materials as part of their lesson planning process. For example, who claims the authority to determine how their particular ethnicity or culture is represented, what are the significant discursive elements used in how that representation is established and maintained, and how might such a representation (or the power to produce it) benefit the producer? Educators (and students) should also think critically about how students become oriented to such representations. What are the significant features of discursive formations within a particular cultural representation, and how do those elements orient students' students' perceptions? There is an innumerable number of questions teachers can ask in conducting a critical discourse analysis of the curricula they use in teaching. I chose these because they were helpful in my study of the creation and promotion of cultural representations in curricula in Wales. Pacific Island countries face share similar concerns as teachers and students engage in the struggle to participate in educational experiences founded upon meaningful interactions of culture and identity, and how those constructs are represented in curriculum.

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Of Waves, Winds, and Wonderful things: A Way Ahead For RPEIPP

Konai Helu Thaman

*you say that you think
therefore you are
but thinking belongs
in the depths of the earth
we only borrow
what we need to know
(Thaman, 1999, p. 15)*

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Founded in 2001, RPEIPP advocates culturally appropriate analyses of Pacific education systems and assists Pacific educationists to re-focus their planning on Pacific values and knowledge systems. A specific goal of this initiative is to assist Pacific teachers in theorising their education as well as developing and using culturally inclusive content and

pedagogies through action research that emphasise the importance of Pacific values and Pacific thought as a foundation for Pacific education and development. Culturally inclusive teacher education is seen as central to the achievement of the objectives of RPEIPP. Advocacy, research, and leadership are also important foci of RPEIPP, and since 2001 many symposia and conferences have been organised in different PINs including Fiji, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, and Vanuatu. The proceedings of these, as well as other RPEIPP publications, have been widely distributed throughout the region.

We have come a long way since 2001 when a few of us sat a few doors from here contemplating the issues and challenges of Pacific education – our education – and agreed that these amounted to two major issues: lack of ownership and lack of vision. Since then, many of us have set about trying to operationalise the ideas and sentiments that were expressed at that first meeting here at USP. Today Vaka Pasifika is afloat and strong but we are here today because we believe that it can be stronger. Our impact through our advocacy, conferences, publications, teaching, and research has been considerable, even amazing, but there are new challenges ahead (and old ones are still here). We need to re-think RPEIPP, and create more spaces and places for our people. We particularly need to keep the voyagers together, think together, and share resources.

As we continue to re-think our education we must also remember acknowledge future generations of Pacific thinkers. They are learners, teachers, researchers, and leaders who will continue to live in diverse cultural contexts given that our region is one of the most culturally diverse parts of the globe. A good proportion of them, especially the youth, may not value traditional modes of learning and research, and may even look upon schooling as obsolete. And yet others will continue to live in rural settings and will have their own ways of thinking.

As well as the changing nature of Pacific re-thinkers, there are also other major changes that will impact the work of RPEIPP. There are changes that are taking place to Pacific education systems and structures (re-structuring has become the in-word in education now, and USP is contributing to this big-time); there are changes in the nature of students

and their expectations. An increasing proportion of these students is computer literate and prefers to study online. There is also the fast pace and immense growth of knowledge and information, fuelled by new development in ICTs. There is also increasing emphasis on a range of different (and often conflicting) accountabilities. There are other challenges still.

In light of the above as well as many other changes taking place globally as well as regionally, we may need to focus a little more on learning and the learner rather than schooling and other educational aspects as well as institutions. We need to learn not only about different learning contexts as well as different literacy needs – such as information, technological, cultural, economic, and political literacies. We need to encourage learning by doing and participating, especially among our young people as well as more experiential learning for mature learners. We need to use a variety of ways of sharing learning resources, information, and experiences and we need to conduct more research on Pacific indigenous/vernacular modes of learning, teaching, and wisdom. I had earlier suggested that RPEIPP must continue to create more spaces and places for Pacific educators. In this regard, we will need to continue to ask different questions of others, as well as ourselves, and seriously interrogate the value underpinnings of different Western as well as Pacific educational and research frameworks. Some of us should more closely study Pacific religious concepts and motivations that could be utilised to inform Pacific education. We need also to re-imagine Science especially its association with new ICTs and problem solving, to clarify its role and value in our re-thinking process. And last but certainly not least, we must continue to encourage creativity and thinking “outside of the box” among ourselves as well as our students.

Some of the more concrete activities that we may wish to strengthen include: further enhancing ownership processes especially through valuing our elders, who are living libraries as well as museums; engaging more with non-formal and informal education communities, where the majority of Pacific learners spend a good proportion of their lives; strengthening postgraduate teaching as a major source of research data as well as re-thinkers; engaging more with Early Childhood educators as well as primary school teachers, to build better foundations for learning

and valuing in the future.

Above all, we must make more effort to share our resources, knowledge, and experiences with others and make RPEIPP better known among fellow educators in the Pacific region and beyond. In this regard, we can take advantage of new technologies to enhance our work. For example, Web 2.0 technologies can become the new tools for RPEIPP. We can make use of social media such as Facebook, Google Plus, and Twitter; video hosting/creating sites such as YouTube; self-publishing tools such as Issuu and weblogs; photo sharing and storing sites such as Flickr; file sharing and storage such as Boxnet; social book marking sites such as Diigo; and sites that allow free collaborations, creating, and editing such as WikiEducator. All of these share certain common features. They are generally free of charge, can be used on many platforms (e.g. mobile phones and computers), are interactive, promote sharing and innovations, and encourage alternative ways of thinking and doing (Foliaki, 2011).

There will no doubt be other types of technologies that we do not yet know about, but which will help us realise our goals – to assist Pacific educators provide quality and meaningful education to Pacific young people so that they can live wise and sustainable lives. The Delors Report on Education for the 21st century described four pillars of learning which need to shape educational decision making in our various communities. They are: learning to know; learning to do; learning to live together; and learning to be. Perhaps a fifth pillar may be added in order to link these: learning to share. Sharing is such an under-rated and rare value (or commodity?) in this dog-eat-dog world of ours where educational institutions are becoming more like businesses than learning centres, and teachers and lecturers are more worried about their own KPIs than their students' health and well-being. However, the future of RPEIPP will depend to a large extent, not on its bottom line (although this is important), but on whether its members share resources and are inclusive in their performance and behaviour. I end with a little poem, inspired by the diversity of Pacific peoples who are, in the end, united in their hope for a better and more sustainable world for their children and those that will come after them.

The Way Ahead

*we cannot see
far into the distance
neither can we see
what used to stand there
but today we can see trees
separated by wind and water
and if we dare to look
beneath the soil
we will find roots reaching out
for each other
and in their silent inter-twining create
the hidden landscape of the future*
(Thaman, 2001)
Tu'a 'ofa atu

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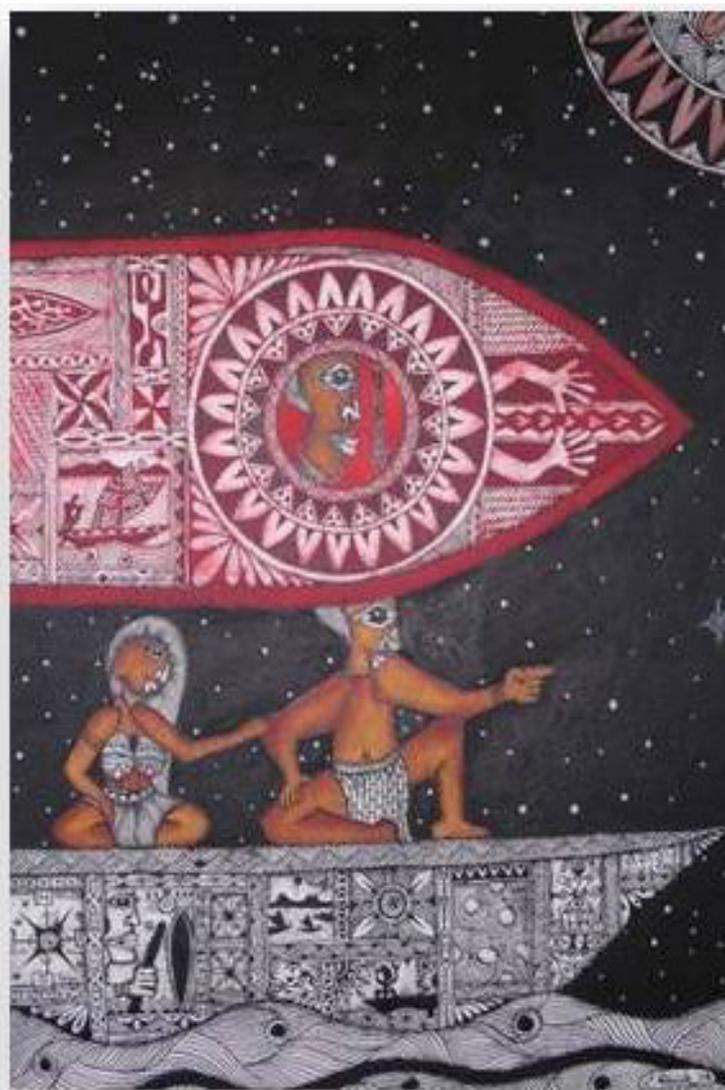
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