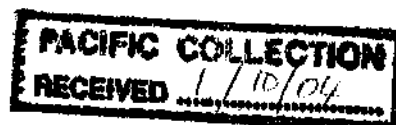THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC
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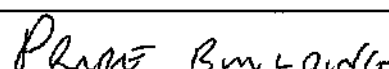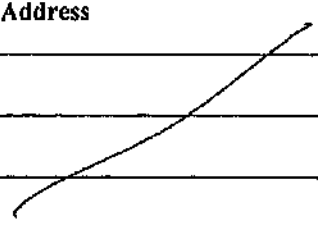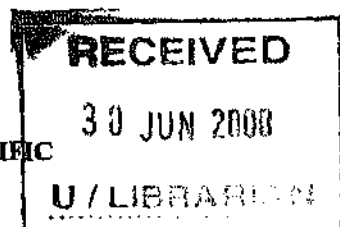Thesis Title : _Affirmative Action and Racial Inequality_
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AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND RACIAL INEQUALITIES IN EDUCATION: THE CASE OF FIJI

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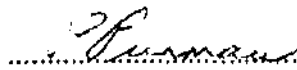
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I certify that this thesis is my own work except those sections which have been explicitly acknowledged. I also certify that this thesis has not been previously submitted for a degree at this or any other university or institution.

Priscilla Qolisaya Puamau

DEDICATIONS

This thesis is dedicated in memory of my grandmother, Sera Qolisaya Naulumatua: *e sa qai oti tu, Bubu. Vinaka vakalevu na veitokoni kei na nomu loloma. Au na sega ni guilecavi iko.*

It is most especially dedicated to my mother, Eileen Maureen Lidise (nee Simmons): you always knew I could do it and gave me unconditional love. Your nurturing support and unshakeable faith have been uplifting and inspirational.

It is also dedicated to my brothers and sisters: Joeli Kete Lidise, Sera Lockington, Debbie Lidise and Kenny Lidise and their families, especially my nieces and nephews. My namesake, Maria, Sisilia, Silina, Vesi, Dianne, Sereima, Wiliame and Joeli - aspire always for the highest things.

And to my husband and children: Sowane, Seini, Lai, Eileen and Manoa - reach for your dreams, nothing is impossible. Strive always for what is good: qualities such as patience, perseverance, tolerance and a desire to help others. But above all, walk in God's way and seek His wisdom and His truth.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABSTRACT

This thesis is concerned with explaining why Indigenous Fijians in Fiji consistently underachieve in formal schooling. It is particularly concerned with why affirmative action policies have not helped to narrow racial inequalities in education. It utilises the conceptual resources provided by postcolonial theory to critique the devastating impact of colonialism, to unpick written texts that claim to represent Fiji's history as well as to deconstruct the interview data. Interview data was collected in Fiji over a fifteen week period in the latter part of 1996 from 74 informants in the following six categories: Politicians, Bureaucrats, Community Representatives, Academics, Principals and Teachers. Questions asked included informants' perceptions of the way affirmative action is thought about, implemented and its consequences as well as explanations for the underachievement of Indigenous Fijians in schooling.

To frame and categorise explanations for racial inequalities in schooling, I have grouped the data into three categories: socio-cultural deficit models, psychological-deficit models and historical structural models. For the first explanatory category, spatial disadvantage (rurality), home background and cultural deficiencies and school disadvantage were reported as significant determinants of Indigenous Fijian underachievement in schooling. Psychological-deficit models posited shortcomings in Indigenous Fijian attitudes to education and psychological problems that arise when Indigenous Fijian students live away from their immediate family as two important factors. Historical structural models point to the negative impact of the colonial experience, manifested in neocolonial educational structures of the curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and the language of schooling.

Some key findings have emerged from the thesis. One is that mono-causal reductionist factors are inadequate explanations for why students fail in school. This is because racial inequalities in education are a consequence of the constant complex and multiple interactions of the dynamics of race, gender, class and rurality in the economic, political, cultural and historical spheres. The issue of rural spatiality has emerged as a key analytical category in explaining Indigenous Fijian school failure, unsettling the traditional analytical categories of race, gender and social class.

As illustrated in the interview data on affirmative action, issues of social justice which accord state-provided resources to specific groups in society are highly contested and controversial. I argue that affirmative action in Fiji was a strategically essentialist intervention on the part of a predominantly Indigenous Fijian government to bring about equality of access and opportunities for Indigenous Fijians who have reportedly been disadvantaged by a colonial history. Affirmative action in Fiji did not really result in significant material transformations for the Indigenous Fijian community: rather, the outcomes have been mixed. However, in arguing for a rethinking of affirmative action in Fiji, I make the important point that this rethinking needs to be mediated, contingent and historically specific. In other words, it needs to be grounded in the social, cultural and political realities and specificities of the Fiji context. A rethinking of affirmative action requires a reconceptualisation of the notions of race, success and merit, and hegemony. As part of this project, categories of class, place and space will be imperative in order to redefine social justice, social difference and social inequality.

The complexities, ambiguities, multiplicities and tensions evident in affirmative action in Fiji indicate that there are no clear-cut or easy answers to the problems that beset Fiji's educational system. I argue that the answers, indeed, cannot be based on idealist principles of justice and equality of Western academic discourse. Instead, the answers, whatever they may be, have to be practical, negotiated social and political solutions and compromises amongst the peoples of Fiji. I note, in particular, that spaces for radical coalitions, in some cases unprecedented, have begun to open up at the political level for this to occur. The challenge is how to fill those spaces so that people are empowered, are given agency to think and act so that a collective consciousness for the common good becomes the creed for decisionmaking.

LIST OF INFORMANTS

NAME	CATEGORY	CURRENT (as at December 1996) & PAST POSITIONS	ETHNICITY	GENDER
1 Taufa Vakatale	POL	• Minister for Education • Senior bureaucrat at the Ministry of Education; Permanent Secretary in various ministries (Industrial Action, Prime Minister's Office, Foreign Affairs, Tourism, Information) • School Principal and teacher	FIJ	F
2 Dr Ahmed Ali	POL	• Director, Policy Analysis Unit, Prime Minister's Office • Fiji's Ambassador to Malaysia, 1993-95 • Minister for Education, 1982-86 • Senior Academic at the University of the South Pacific	IND	M
3 Joeli Kalou	POL	• Government Whip and Member of Parliament • Minister of Education, mid 1995-mid 96 • President, Fijian Teachers Association, 1976-82 • Vice President, Fiji Trade Union Congress • School Principal and teacher	FIJ	M
4 Viliame Saulekaleka	POL	• Member of Parliament • President, Fijian Teachers Association Credit Union • President, Fijian Teachers Association 1985-92 • Headteacher and secondary school teacher	FIJ	M
5 Ilai Kuli	POL	• Member of Parliament • Industrial Relations Officer, Fijian Teachers Association • Senior Education Officer, Curriculum Development Unit (1988-89) • School Principal (1976-87) and teacher	FIJ	M
6 Krishna Datt	POL	• Member of Parliament • President, Fiji Teachers Union • School Principal (1982-84) and teacher	IND	M
7 Josevata Kamikamica	POL	• Leader, Fijian Association Party • Director, Fijian Holdings • Minister of Finance 1987-92 • General Manager, Native Lands Trust Board, 1975-92	FIJ	M

8 Adi Kuini Speed	POL	• Chairperson, Executive Council, Fijian Association Party • Member of the Great Council of Chiefs • Chairperson, Naikoro Tikina Council • Former Leader, Coalition Party (Fiji Labour/National Federation Party) • Senior Bureaucrat, Public Service Commission	FIJ	F
9 Ratu Mosese Tuisawau	POL	• Rewa High Chief • Former Member of Parliament	FIJ	M
10 Sakeasi Butadroka	POL	• Leader, Fijian Nationalist Party • Member of Parliament four times between 1972-93 • Senior Officer, Cooperative Department – retired 1971	FIJ	M
11 Amraiya Naidu	BUR	• Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education • Served in other senior positions at the Ministry (Deputy Secretary for Education - Admin. and Finance, Divisional Education Officer - Central, Acting Chief Education Officer - Primary) • School Principal and teacher	IND	M
12 Hari Ram	BUR	• Director, Institute of Social and Administrative Studies, University of the South Pacific • Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, 1986-March 93 • Served in other senior positions at the Ministry of Education (Chief Education Officer - Research and Development, Deputy Secretary for Education - Professional) • Inspector of secondary schools 1961-67	IND	M
13 Winston Thompson	BUR	• Managing Director, Telecom • Ambassador in New York, 1985-91 • Permanent Secretary in various ministries (Public Service Commission 1983-85, 1992-94, Finance 1978-83, Agriculture 1973-78)	P/EUR	M
14 Emi Rabukawaqa	BUR	• Deputy Secretary - Professional, Ministry of Education • Chief Education Officer, Curriculum Development Unit	FIJ	F
15 Kolinio Rainima Meo	BUR	• Deputy Secretary - Administration & Finance, Ministry of Education • Chief Education Officer, Technical and Vocational Education & Training, Ministry of Education 1987-95 • Senior Education Officer (Industrial Arts) 1978-85) • Acting Vice Principal, Head of Department (Industrial Arts) and teacher	FIJ	M

16 Adi Litia Qionibaravi	BUR	• Chief Accountant, Ministry of Fijian Affairs • Acting Deputy Secretary, Corporate Section, Ministry of Fijian Affairs	FIJ	F
17 Ratu Jone Madraiwiwi	BUR	• Permanent Arbitrator, Ministry of Labour • Arbitrator, Sugar Industry Tribunal • Roko Tui Bau • Government lawyer	FIJ	M
18 Sereima Lomaloma	BUR	• Director, Department for Women	FIJ	F
19 Lavenia Kaurasi	BUR	• Retired, Deputy Secretary - Administration & Finance, Ministry of Education • Chief Education Officer Secondary, Ministry of Education • School Principal and teacher	ROT	F
20 Tahir Munshi	BUR	• Chief Education Officer Secondary, Ministry of Education • Served as Principal Education Officer and Senior Education Officer • School Principal and teacher	IND	M
21 Sefanaia Koroi	BUR	• Chief Education Officer Primary, Ministry of Education • Director, Youth Employment Opportunities and Sports, 1994 • Principal Education Officer, FEU, Ministry of Fijian Affairs 1988-91 • Senior Education Officer, CDU (Physical Education) 1974-85 • Teacher	FIJ	M
22 Alumita Taganesia	BUR	• Chief Education Officer, Technical and Vocational Education & Training, Ministry of Education • Principal Education Officer (TVET) 1987-95	FIJ	F
23 Emasi Qovu	BUR	• Manager, Workforce Planning and Scholarships, Public Service Commission • Served in other positions at PSC July 1985-94 • Principal, Vunisea Secondary School 1978-82 • Headteacher of various schools 1966-75	FIJ	M
24 Mere Tora	BUR	• Principal Education Officer, Secondary Education, Ministry of Education, 1978-1982	FIJ	F
25 Filipe Jitoko	BUR	• Principal Education Officer, Research and Development, Ministry of Education	FIJ	M
26 Saula Koroinivalu	BUR	• Senior Education Officer, Fijian Education Unit, Ministry of Education	FIJ	M

27 Isireli Koyamailbole	BUR	• Chief Economic Planning Officer, Policy Analysis Unit & Fijian Commercial Development Unit, Prime Minister's Office	FIJ	M
28 Prof Asesela Ravuvu	ACA	• Director, Institute of Pacific Studies • Pro Vice Chancellor, University of the South Pacific • Lecturer, Nasinu Teachers College	FIJ	M
29 Prof Tupeni Baba	ACA	• Head, Department of Education and Psychology, University of the South Pacific • Registrar, University of the South Pacific	FIJ	M
30 Prof Konai Thaman	ACA	• Head, School of Humanities, University of the South Pacific • Chair in Pacific Education and Culture • Pro Vice Chancellor	TON	F
31 Prof Randy Thaman	ACA	• Reader and Professor in Geography, School of Social and Economic Development, University of the South Pacific	EUR	M
32 Dr Vijay Naidu	ACA	• Head, School of Social and Economic Development, University of the South Pacific • Pro Vice Chancellor	IND	M
33 Dr Nii-Plange	ACA	• Head, Department of Sociology, School of Social and Economic Development, University of the South Pacific	GHA	M
34 Dr Ropate Qalo	ACA	• Lecturer in Sociology, University of the South Pacific	FIJ	M
35 Cliff Benson	ACA	• Director, Institute of Education, University of the South Pacific • Head of English in secondary schools and teacher	EUR	M
36 Joseph Veramu	ACA	• Lecturer in Education, University of the South Pacific • Head of English in secondary schools and teacher	FIJ	M
37 Dr Michael Monsell-Davis	ACA	• Lecturer in Sociology, University of the South Pacific	EUR	M
38 Filipe Tuisawau	ACA	• Lecturer in Management and Public Administration, University of the South Pacific	FIJ	M
39 Dr Jimione Samisoni	PRI	• Dean, Fiji School of Medicine	ROT	M
40 Alifereti Cawanibuka	PRI	• Principal, Fiji College of Advanced Education	FIJ	M
41 Jagdish Singsh	PRI	• Principal, Rishikul Sanatan College • President, Fiji Teachers Union	IND	M

42 Dewan Chand	PRI	• Principal, Bhawani Dayal High School • Vice President, Fiji Teachers Union • Former President, Fiji Principals Association	IND	M
43 Bessie Ali	PRI	• Principal, Yat Sen Secondary School	CHI	F
44 Arthur Crane	PRI	• Principal, Gospel High School	EUR	M
45 Veniana Lovodua	PRI	• Principal, Adi Cakobau School	FIJ	F
46 Sister Genevieve Loo	PRI	• Principal, St Joseph's Secondary School	CHI	F
47 Peceli Rinakama	PRI	• Principal, Naitasiri Secondary School	FIJ	M
48 Setareki Delana	PRI	• Principal, Sila Central High School • President, Fiji Principals Association	FIJ	M
49 Inosi Naga	PRI	• Principal, Latter Day Saints Technical College	FIJ	M
50 Joeli Nabuka	PRI	• Manager, Academic Services, Fiji Institute of Technology • Vice President, Fijian Teachers Association • Principal, Lautoka Teachers College, 1988-90	FIJ	M
51 Tokasa Vitayaki	TEA	• Senior Education Officer, History, Curriculum Development Unit	FIJ	F
52 Tamarisi Yabaki	TEA	• Senior Education Officer, Social Science, Curriculum Development Unit	FIJ	F
53 Merewai Owens	TEA	• Senior Education Officer, Primary English, Curriculum Development Unit	FIJ	F
54 Asinate Gadolo	TEA	• Education Officer, Primary English, Curriculum Development Unit	FIJ	F
55 Tuipolotu Vugakoto	TEA	• Senior Education Officer, Fijian language, Curriculum Development Unit	FIJ	F
56 Mere Nakaora	TEA	• Education Officer, Rotuman language, Curriculum Development Unit	ROT	F
57 Ameen Sahu Khan	TEA	• Senior Lecturer, Centre Co-ordinator, Centre for Professional Development, Fiji Institute of Technology	IND	M
58 Fesi Fesaitu	TEA	• Head, School of Social Science, Fiji College of Advanced Education	ROT	F
59 Davindra Nath	TEA	• Assistant Principal, Mahatma Gandhi Memorial School	IND	M
60 Ledua Waqailiti	TEA	• Head of English, Nabua Secondary School	FIJ	F
61 Aloesi Vucukula	TEA	• Senior Lecturer, School of Social Science, Fiji College of Advanced Education	FIJ	F

62 Una Nabobo	TEA	• Lecturer, School of Education, Fiji College of Advanced Education	FIJ	F
63 Rev. Dr Ilaitia Tuwere	COM	• President, Methodist Church of Fiji	FIJ	M
64 Sir Len Usher	COM	• Mayor of Suva 1966-70, 1975-76 • Editor, Fiji Times 1958-1977 • Headmaster 1932-1943	EUR	M
65 Mere Samisoni	COM	• Managing Director, Samisoni Enterprises Ltd	FIJ	F
66 Esther Williams	COM	• Librarian, University of the South Pacific	FIJ	F
67 Esiteri Kamikamica	COM	• Volunteer Consultant for women and youths • Advisor to FAB on Fijian education in 1980s • Former Secretary for Education Department, Methodist Church • President, Fijian Teachers Association 1977-79	FIJ	F
68 Susana Tuisawau	COM	• President, Fijian Teachers Association	FIJ	F
69 Pratap Chand	COM	• General Secretary, Fiji Teachers Union	IND	M
70 Ted Young	COM	• General Secretary, Fijian Teachers Association	FIJ	M
71 Richard Wah	COM	• Head of Distance Education, University of the South Pacific • Deputy Director of University Extension	FIJ	M
72 Biman Chand	COM	• Lecturer in Economics and Extension Lecturer at Fiji Centre, University of the South Pacific	IND	M
73 Cema Bolabola	COM	• Coordinator, Continuing Education, Extension Services, University of the South Pacific	FIJ	F
74 Valekuta Mateni	COM	• Project Education Officer, Fijian Teachers Association	FIJ	M

KEY

ACA	ACADEMIC	BUR	BUREAUCRAT
CHI	CHINESE	COM	COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE
EURO	EUROPEAN (Includes American, Australian, New Zealander)		
FIJ	INDIGENOUS FIJIAN		
FEM	FEMALE	GHA	GHANIAN
IND	INDO-FIJIAN	M	MALE
P/EUR	PART-EUROPEAN	POL	POLITICIAN
PRI	PRINCIPAL	ROT	ROTUMAN
TEA	TEACHER	TON	TONGAN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF APPENDICES

A. Mission Statement by the Ministry of Education for the Education of Indigenous Fijians

B. Listing of Overseas Programmes for FAB Scholarship Awardees by Country

C. Postgraduate Awards by Discipline for Students on FAB Scholarships

D. Provincial Distribution of Local FAB Awards, 1984-96

E. Provincial Distribution of Overseas FAB Awards, 1984-96

F. Provincial Distribution of FAB Local Graduates, 1984-95

G. Provincial Distribution of FAB Overseas Graduates, 1988-95

H. Criteria for Selection of FAB Scholarship Awardees

I. A Quantitative Estimate of 'Wastage' of FAB Local Awards at USP, 1988-95

J. A Quantitative Estimate of 'Wastage' of FAB Overseas Awards, 1990-94

K. Sample of Letter to Interview Informants

L. Administrative Activities Conducted Prior to Fieldwork

M. General Interview Guide

N. Detailed Interview Guide

O. Written Questions to Ministry of Fijian Affairs on the Implementation of the Fijian Education Fund

P. Letters to Informants After Interview

ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Affirmative Action
ACS	Adi Cakobau School
ALTA	Agricultural Land and Tenant Agreement
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
CDU	Curriculum Development Unit (Fiji)
CSR	Colonial Sugar Refining Company
FAB	Fijian Affairs Board
FCAE	Fiji College of Advanced Education
FEC	Fijian Education Committee
FIT	Fiji Institute of Technology
FSLC	Fiji School Leaving Certificate Examination
FTA	Fijian Teachers Association
FTU	Fiji Teachers Union
LTC	Lautoka Teachers College
MFA	Ministry for Fijian Affairs
MOE	Ministry of Education
NZSC	New Zealand School Certificate Examination
NZUE	New Zealand University Entrance Examination
PAFCO	Pacific Fishing Company Limited
PSC	Public Service Commission
QR	Qualitative Research
RKS	Ratu Kadavulevu School
USP	University of the South Pacific

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter has three parts. In the first I provide the background context for the study. In particular, I outline the way racial inequalities in education have been framed and the policy background of affirmative action in Fiji. The second part details the rationale for the present study. Here, I discuss the aims of the study, the theoretical frameworks and research methodology that inform the study, and the assumptions and personal standpoints I bring to the thesis. I also explicate some of the reasons this study is significant. In the final part of the chapter, I outline the thesis organisation.

The Background

Race-based affirmative action (henceforth abbreviated to AA) began in Fiji as an educational strategy in the early to mid-1970s. This was in response to the 'Fijian education problem', defined by both colonial and postcolonial governments in terms of an educational gap between Indigenous Fijians on the one hand, and 'other' ethnic communities on the other. The underachievement of Indigenous Fijian students in formal schooling compared to other ethnic groups has been identified as a persistent problem since the 1910s (Education Department Annual Reports 1920-1969; Education Commission, 1926; Mayhew, 1937; Stephens, 1944). Half a century later, the 1969 Fiji Education Commission Report highlighted the large educational gap that existed between Indigenous Fijians and 'other' racial groups in terms of numbers accessing the higher levels of education and the large attrition and failure rates at the secondary and tertiary levels.

In order to get a better picture of AA and racial inequalities in education in Fiji, an understanding of the historical basis of the current educational system is necessary. The historical documents point out that Fiji was a British colony from 1874-1970. An enduring legacy of colonialism is the institutionalisation of formal education. Education systems are shaped not only by the physical and cultural milieu in which they function but also by social and economic histories. Education can indeed be an insidious and cryptic survivor of colonialism, a residual institutional memory, while older institutional systems pass into neocolonial configurations (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 1995).

Written colonial historical records indicate that Western education was introduced to the indigenous population soon after the arrival of the first missionaries in Fiji in 1835. Initially, the people were required to read the Bible which had been translated to the vernacular language. But English soon became (and still continues to be) the language of formal schooling, official communication, administration, politics, commerce and law. Some 160 year later, despite decolonisation, the curriculum is still Western-based with an emphasis on academic-type subjects. English language, English literature, Science and Social Science subjects still form the main disciplinary bases for schooling. During colonial times, a Western-type education was imposed on the colonial subjects and so began a process that would ensure that the colonised subjects became as 'Western' as possible. This process has continued unabated since formal decolonisation occurred and demonstrates to a large extent the profound psychological impact of colonialism.

Thus, when Fiji attained political independence after almost a century of colonial rule, the new nation remained shackled with the legacy of British educational institutions and practices. This educational inheritance is manifested in the selection and training of local elites to implement government policy, the establishment of government and provincial schools in selected areas, the provision of 'imported' curriculum from other colonial social contexts, and the development and deployment of a network of examinations as selection and screening devices (Bhindi, 1988). To this day, the pedagogies of the school, school organisation and management are British-based (Mangubhai, 1984; Thomas and Postlethwaite, 1984) with the institutionalisation of the colonial language English as the language of schooling.

As a discursive effect of the material processes of colonialism, the category 'Fijian' is ambiguous. On the one hand, this could refer to the "Melanesian population" who are the "original inhabitants" of the Fiji group: that is, the Indigenous Fijian populace. This is how the Government of Fiji defines this category (Bureau of Statistics, 1989: 3). On the other hand, this category could encompass any person who is a resident or citizen of the country, including Indigenous Fijians.

The normalised use of the category 'Indian' is also problematic. Not only are the people included in this category varied, but they also have varying degrees of historical, contemporary and generational identification with people of the Indian sub-continent. In other

words, the heterogeneity that reflects diversity and differences within, as much as across, cultures is overlooked when one invokes the binary categories of Fijian or Indian - categories which, this thesis will show, have dominated educational and social policy debates.

During colonial times, the Indian people who were brought in as indentured labourers to work the European-owned sugar plantations and their descendants were categorised by colonial administrators as "Fiji Indians". After decolonisation, the Fiji Government referred to "the population who are of Indian descent" and "descendants of the indentured labourers and free settlers of the early part of the twentieth century" as the Indian people (Bureau of Statistics, 1989: 3). As mentioned above, the use of the category 'Indian' is problematic because the Indian people are varied, comprising of various sub-categories contingent on their religion and the state/region (to note but two) from which they originated. In Fiji, for instance, the Indo-Fijian population "comprises the major religious and ethnic groups of Northern Hindus, Southern Hindus, Moslems, Sikhs and Gujaratis" with Northern Hindus forming the majority of the Indo-Fijian population (Chandra, 1990: 12). The diaspora of the people who can trace their ancestors back to the Indian sub-continent across many countries of the world has created complex issues of identity. The question of how much allegiance, familiarity or identification they have with the Indian sub-continent is a complex and far from self-evident issue. For the purpose of this thesis, the indigenous people of the Fiji Islands will be referred to as Indigenous Fijians and the people who have origins in the Indian sub-continent as Indo-Fijians. Yet I do so fully aware of the dangers of categorising heterogenous groups, knowing also that I may not have their consent.

Discriminatory educational practices were the norm during the period of colonial rule. As experience has shown in other colonised countries, the Colonial Government was mainly concerned with the education of European children. For this purpose, government schools were established for Europeans with the best of qualified teachers, facilities, resources and supervision. Several government schools were established initially to cater for sons and daughters of the chiefly Indigenous Fijian elite. Apart from this, the Colonial Government left the education of non-European children very much in the hands of missions, Provincial Councils (Indigenous Fijian schools) and local management committees (mainly Indo-Fijian schools).

In his 1944 study of education in the colony of Fiji, Stephens argued that educational development was characterised by lack of policy and planning resulting in chaotic conditions (Stephens, 1944). The annual reports of the Education Department (1920-1969), Special Government Reports and Development Plans (since the 1950s), and Ministry of Education Annual Reports (1970-1996), all highlight the fact that the education of Indigenous Fijians has always been beleaguered with many problems. The more serious of these were identified as inadequate numbers and quality of teachers, inadequate school facilities and educational necessities (e.g., textbooks and science laboratories), lack of professional supervision and the irrelevance of the curriculum to the daily lives of the students (Puamau, 1991). Consequently, primary education was of low quality, especially in the village, district and provincial schools. This has had negative implications on the number and academic calibre of Indigenous Fijian students entering the secondary system.

The colonial records show that despite making a late start on the educational scene, Indo-Fijian students were not only catching up in terms of numbers - by the late 1950s more Indo-Fijians were enrolled than Indigenous Fijians in the school system (Puamau, 1991) - but their standard of attainment had surpassed that of Indigenous Fijians (Education Department, 1946). The colonial records and statistics consistently indicate that Indigenous Fijians had low retention rates and a significantly higher failure rate at the upper secondary level which had implications for access to tertiary level. These were identified as serious national problems by the new predominantly Indigenous Postcolonial Government when decolonisation occurred in 1970. Colonial discriminatory practices had left huge gaps in the quality of non-European education.

At the point of decolonisation, the new Government openly acknowledged the presence of an imbalance between the educational attainment of Indigenous Fijians and that of 'other races'. One of the long-term aims of the Government's Sixth Development Plan (Fiji Government, 1970: 67) which it hoped to achieve by the mid-1980s was "a marked improvement in the education of Fijians". Five years later in 1975, the Government emphasised the need for special measures if the nation was to "produce enough qualified Fijians to occupy a due share of top and middle level positions in the public and private sectors of the economy" (Fiji Government, 1975: 184). The "special measures" translated into AA

policies. The educational gap between Indigenous Fijians and 'other' ethnic communities in Fiji, thus, was central to the development of AA policies in education.

Explanations for the underachievement of Indigenous Fijians typically have been attributed to some shortcoming on the part of the Indigenous Fijian learner, be it psychological (Stewart, Mulipola-Lui and Laidlow, 1980; Basow 1982; Kishor, 1981, 1983) or socio-cultural (Tierney, 1971; Thomas, 1978; Nabuka, 1984; Elley, 1982). Institutional factors such as poor quality of teachers and lack of resources (Fiji Education Commission, 1969; Baba, 1983; Bole, 1989) are other explanations posited for underachievement. Logistical issues such as isolation from urban educational centres and the related issue of distance have also been raised to explain the relatively poor quality of education in Indigenous Fijian schools (Education Department, 1967; Naisara, 1974; Ministry of Education, 1992), the bulk of which are situated in rural areas. Poor economic conditions in the rural areas are another factor that has been posited as contributing to poor educational performance of Indigenous Fijians (Kallam, Rika, Rustam and Tukania, 1980; Baba, 1983).

What AA strategies have been put in place to affirm the education of Indigenous Fijians? Government documents (Ministry of Education Annual Reports, Development Plans) acknowledge that soon after decolonisation in 1970, the Government instituted a number of AA policies. One of these was the development of junior secondary schools in the rural area to provide Indigenous Fijians with access to a secondary education. Another was a public relations campaign through Fijian language radio and newspapers to assist Indigenous Fijian parents to recognise the value of an education for their children. However, the two significant AA policies focal to this thesis are the reservation of 50% of all government scholarships for Indigenous Fijians since the mid-1970s and the provision of an annual fund of $3.5 million since 1984. The latter policy has had two foci: provision of tertiary scholarships as well as the capital development of Indigenous Fijian schools with emphasis placed on infrastructure, facilities and resources. Since 1994, however, the focus has been almost exclusively on scholarship provision as a mode of human capital development. It is interesting to note that in terms of scholarship provision, the category Rotuman[1] has been added to Indigenous Fijian as

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[1] Rotumans are the indigenous people of the island of Rotuma. Rotuma became part of Fiji during the period of colonial rule. As a category, Rotumans have been included as beneficiaries in the Fijian Affairs Board administered scholarship fund since its inception in 1984. Appendix D shows that in the 14 year period from 1984-1996, 69 local scholarships and 19 overseas awards have gone to Rotumans.

beneficiaries of AA.

AA policies, then, have been in place since the early to mid-1970s to assist Indigenous Fijians (and Rotumans) who had been identified as disadvantaged in education and, by implication, to counter their underrepresentation and lack of participation in the professions, business and in the private and public sectors of the economy. In a previous study (Puamau, 1991) entitled *Fijian Education - An Examination of Government Policy: 1946-1986*, I concluded that AA policies had a negligible effect in closing or narrowing the educational gap between Indigenous Fijians and 'others'. I thus am interested to explore why these policies had not made a significant impact on the underachievement of Indigenous Fijians. Was it because the policies were poorly conceptualised in the first place? A matter of poor implementation? Was AA misdirected? Was it too simplistic to assume that pouring in resources would result in profound changes to the underachievement equation? Was the problem of underachievement too complex for AA to make a significant difference? What role did Fiji's colonial history and consequent neocolonial educational inheritance bring to bear on the question of underachievement?

The Research

My main research question is: *Despite more than two decades of AA to assist Indigenous Fijians in education, why are these students still underachieving compared to the non-indigenous population?* This research question translates into four main aims for the study.

First, I want to explore reasons for the underachievement of Indigenous Fijians in schooling. Why do Indigenous Fijians fail? Second, I want to explore possible explanations for the ostensive failure of AA policies to narrow the educational gap between Indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians in the manner that the first Postcolonial Government had defined it. Why did AA fail? Third, I want to expand the dimensions of the debate on the concept of AA, especially in relation to theoretical perspectives that have arisen since the inception of AA in Fiji. Relatedly, I want to explore whether the Fiji context offers new perspectives on AA in decolonised sites, particularly when the indigenous beneficiaries have had numerical and political control since decolonisation.

While developing an empirically documented and theoretically innovative study of AA is the visible focus of this thesis, it remains a project fraught with the problems and potentials of any postcolonial academic intellectual work. Thus, its fourth and perhaps most significant aim is to make a broader contribution to the deconstruction of Fiji's colonial history with the purpose of reconstructing, re-inventing or reclaiming indigenous voice, space and dignity which had been silenced or negated during the period of colonial rule. Throughout this study, I have asked: Is it possible to write a thesis that would be heard over and above the representations of indigenous people in colonial historical and imaginative accounts, and material and discursive practices?

The two theoretical frameworks that underpin the thesis are previous scholarly work on AA and postcolonialism (See Chapter Two). In terms of the latter, two concepts are particularly salient: *strategic essentialism* and *voice*. This thesis itself has come to be an exercise in strategic essentialism. Here, I take up a strategic positionality to claim there is a material essence in the concept of an Indigenous Fijian, that there is a 'reality' of Indigenous Fijian cultural identity. This thesis, therefore, is an attempt to give Indigenous Fijians a voice to write and talk back to colonialism. Not only is my voice being heard but just as importantly, this project is a forum for the Indigenous Fijians who are the subjects of the study. If there is silencing of other ethnic communities in Fiji, this is neither intentional nor done in malice. This deliberate strategy of essentialism sets out to generate agency for Indigenous Fijians to recover their historical voice and to assert their postcoloniality.

However, at the same time, I recognise and wish to expand understanding of the heterogeneity of Indigenous Fijians. Colonial administrators wrongly assumed that Indigenous Fijians were a homogenous group. They (mis)appropriated this mythical homogeneity for their own purposes, mainly for ease of administration. Previous colonial (and postcolonial) policies were based on an unstrategic essentialism, one intended to keep the two major ethnic groups in Fiji separate and apart. I will show how difference or diversity within, and across Indigenous Fijian populations, is highlighted and problematised as a key unresolved issue in AA.

Where I stand in the world, my values and attitudes and my thinking on matters that concern indigenous people, were influential in my choice of research topic, aims, questions, methodology, analysis and interpretation. For me, there is no such thing as an impartial,

value-free scientific educational research. What we are, our gender and our social positions, our cultural backgrounds, our belief systems and attitudes - taken together, these contribute to the way we approach research. They influence what we see and hear - our interpretations and our textual representations. I am not advocating the common, yet romantic, view that we should control against bias in research. Rather, what I am saying is that bias is unavoidable, particularly in a research method that utilises the researcher as *the* principal research instrument or tool.

I am an Indigenous Fijian woman and this standpoint is central to this project. The formulation of my research question arose not only out of personal and political interests, but also out of the theoretical interest that had been roused in my first year of studies. At the personal level, I was concerned about why students of my 'race' consistently continue to do badly in the education system, particularly as reflected in their high failure and attrition rates at the upper secondary and tertiary levels. I was concerned at the way the policy documents, Development Plans, Education Department Reports and the media consistently portrayed Indigenous Fijians as underachievers in the school system. I am a recipient and 'product' of AA policies, a beneficiary of the policy of awarding 50% of government tertiary scholarships to Indigenous Fijians that enabled me to complete two degrees at the University of the South Pacific (USP) in Fiji.

At the political level, I wish to generate collective thinking at the institutional, local and national levels to find solutions. My main readers, hopefully, will be Indigenous Fijians in key positions of power, authority and influence in government, academic and private organisations. This text is a deliberate attempt to raise critical issues that may influence political discourse and, ultimately, political will.

At the theoretical level, postcolonial discourses have led me to reconsider and reframe. Initially, I had not considered that colonialism might be an explanation for the underachievement of the indigenous students in schooling. It was only after reading some of the postcolonial literature that I began to seriously consider how neocolonial educational structures such as curricula, school organisation, pedagogies and assessment systems may be contributing factors to the underachievement of Indigenous Fijians.

This research study, therefore, is a product of these interests. Added to these is the intellectual or academic interest that becomes the all pervasive focus when one embarks on a

PhD study. In fact, some of the burning questions that agitated me for months in my first year of studies were: Why am I studying in a Western university when I could obtain a PhD from a local Pacific university? Who told me that studying in Australia was the best way to go? Why am I doing a PhD anyway? Why is this paper credential of importance in my life and in the life of my country? Who decided for me that this was the best way to go? If I decided this, what and who influenced me to think this way?

On contemplation, I came to realise that I had been conditioned through written English texts, through formal schooling modelled after Western educational structures and traditions, through the media and generally through the way institutional life was organised in Fiji. Our psyche was still very much colonised by neocolonial structures that the leaders continued with after Fiji became politically independent. We might have been politically independent in the literal sense that the people of Fiji could decide for themselves what they wanted, but in every way we remain colonised particularly where it counts most—in our thinking. For me personally, doing this PhD study is symbolically a deconstruction of this colonial mentality and a reconstruction of who and what I am in the bigger picture of the thesis. The issue of identity is, therefore, preeminent.

While I realise that my personal standpoint will influence every facet of the thesis, I am also aware that this will be influenced and mediated at every turn by the rigid academic standards required by this very Western institution of thesis production. While I may strain at the noose of Western academia with its almost totality of focus on theoretical knowledge, while I may groan at the precision required, again by Western standards, of PhD research and all the other guidelines required by this Western institution - I am aware continually that if I want to attain a Western PhD, I will have to undergo the 'test' the Western way. On the other hand, by utilising interviews of people in key positions of power and authority in Fiji and by privileging their voices in this thesis, I hope to open the way for the emphasis of Western theses to move from purely analytical pieces to the privileging of narratives (see Chapter Eight).

I consider it critical to discuss these self-reflexive issues to lay the groundwork that would enable the reader to situate and locate this particular research project. In claiming a strategic essentialism, I foreground my personal, political and theoretical interests in the

research study. It is these that influence the genesis, development and production of this thesis. I now turn to explain the significance of this text.

No detailed research has been carried out on AA policies in Fiji. The present study is the only piece of work that systematically critiques AA in Fiji. It argues that AA in Fiji is a postcolonial response to social and educational inequalities that British colonialism left in its wake. In providing a richly textured and detailed description and analysis of AA in a specific historical micro-context, this study hopes to yield a broader comprehensive understanding of AA in decolonised, postcolonial societies.

This research study has theoretical and practical implications (See Chapter Eight) that are important in enabling better policy, practice and decision-making. Just as importantly, I hope to show through this research that colonial representations of Indigenous Fijian underachievement need to be critiqued and dismantled. I am living proof, as are other Indigenous Fijians who have attained professorship, doctoral and masters level qualifications, that many Indigenous Fijians can indeed act as role models. At this historical juncture, Indigenous Fijians are showing that they can perform and work on par with other citizens in any arena of social and economic life.

This study, as noted, is a piece of Western intellectual work. But in utilising postcolonial critique, it constitutes a strategy for talking and writing back to colonial representations. It is a strategy of providing a voice for Indigenous Fijians (See Chapter Eight), with Indigenous Fijian informants. Apart from its function in university credentialling, its main readership will be Indigenous Fijians in positions of power and authority who affect the life trajectories of many people in Fiji. Yet the thesis itself is certainly not a subaltern text: it is both an act of power and resistance (See Chapter Eight), with substantial political and social consequences. I need to make the point that epistemologically, the thesis is not written from a colonial or decolonised perspective; neither does it take the standpoint of indigenous nationalism leading up to and after the coups of 1987. Instead, the epistemological standpoint of the thesis is that of a Fiji in New Times (Hall, 1996c). It is a postcolonial thesis, one writing of Fiji in the late 1990s, on the eve of the new millennium as it faces the prospect of redefining itself and its peoples yet again.

The Organisation

The thesis comprises eight chapters. Chapter Two, "Theoretical Framings", explicates the theoretical frameworks that underpin the thesis, namely postcolonial and AA discourses. I argue that traditional notions of viewing AA in the West are limited and that postcolonial conceptual frames are more appropriate for understanding AA in decolonised sites. First, I explicate the meaning of AA, discuss the philosophical debate on AA, explore the concepts of educational opportunity, equality and inequality and outline the limitations inherent in traditional notions of AA. Second, I define those postcolonial concepts that are particularly salient to these issues: concepts such as neocolonialism, hegemony, Other, voice, identity, strategic essentialism, hybridity, and then turning to redefine the postcolonial curriculum. Third, I compare the way AA is used in the West and in Fiji. Accordingly, I conclude Chapter Two with a discussion of the value of this research in terms of a better understanding of AA in decolonised, postcolonial conditions, particularly in instances where the indigenous population holds political and numerical control.

In Chapter Three, "Contextualising the Study: Pre-Colonial, Colonial, Postcolonial Fiji", I provide an account of Fiji's colonial history in order to set the groundwork that would lead to an understanding of the state of Fiji's educational system and the thinking that led to the development of AA at the point of decolonisation. There are five emphases in this chapter. First, to counter the forceful presence, impact and authority of colonial historical representations and discursive practices, I provide space and voice for Fiji's pre-contact history and an explication of resistance to colonial rule. Second, I argue that Fiji is a colonial construct. Political decolonisation occurred almost four decades ago but colonial political, economic and social structures and institutions are sustained in neocolonial hegemonic configurations. Third, the education system is an instrument of colonial control with colonial reproduction continuing in neocolonial formations at this historical juncture. Fourth, I provide a detailed analysis of AA in Fiji. In my view, AA is a counter strategy by indigenous people to negate the effects of their colonial history. It is my contention that AA in Fiji was a strategically essentialist intervention on the part of a predominantly Indigenous Fijian Postcolonial Government to assert its postcoloniality, to counter the social and educational inequalities that colonial rule left in its wake. Fifth, I provide an overview of contemporary conditions in Fiji.

Chapter Four, "Methodological Considerations", provides a description of the research methodology utilised in this study. First, I review the literature on qualitative research, particularly the case study approach and the interview method of data collection. This is followed by a review of the literature on policy analysis. I then provide an account of the decisions and explanations for the decisions made during the gathering of the interview data. In the final section of Chapter Four, I describe the processes of transcribing, analysing and interpreting the interview data. In total, I conducted 74 interviews with six categories of informants: Politicians, Bureaucrats, Academics, Community Representatives, Principals and Teachers. The data from these interviews formed the basis for Chapters Five, Six and Seven— the main data chapters of the thesis.

In Chapter Five, "Explanations for Racial Inequalities in Schooling", I explicate my informants' representations of Indigenous Fijian underachievement in schooling. They provided three explanatory models: socio-cultural deficit, psychological-deficit and historical structural. Under socio-cultural deficit models, spatial disadvantage (rurality), home background, cultural deficiencies and school disadvantage were identified as major determinants of Indigenous Fijian underachievement in formal schooling. In terms of the second explanatory category—psychological-deficit models, Indigenous Fijian attitudes and the impact on children when they live away from home when attending school were identified as two important factors to explain school failure. The third explanatory model—historical structural—refers to the negative impact of the colonial experience which is manifested in neocolonial educational structures of the curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and the language of schooling.

There are several key findings emanating from the data in Chapter Five. First, explanations for underachievement cannot be reduced to mono-causal, essentialist arguments. Racial inequalities in education are a consequence of the constant, complex and multiple interactions of the dynamics of race, gender, class and space in the economic, political, cultural and historical spheres. Second, the issue of rurality or spatiality has emerged as a key factor that problematises the usual categories of race, gender and social class. A third key issue is the reproduction of hegemonic colonial representations of Indigenous Fijian underachievement in decolonised sites. These last two points are further discussed in the final chapter.

Chapter Six, "AA Policies: Conceptualisation, Implementation, Outcomes", explicates the informants' representations of the way AA policies in education were conceptualised and implemented. There were significant contradictions and ambivalences in views of Indigenous Fijians and the non-Indigenous Fijians on AA. While all the informants supported the principle behind the development of AA, the emergent consensus is that AA needs to be reviewed. A key finding of this chapter is the view that AA needs to change from race to class.

There have been many criticisms of the way AA policies have been administered. One reported explanation for the ineffectiveness of these policies is to do with their conceptual limitations. Furthermore, poor implementation of AA policies was cited as another reason why they were ineffective in reducing the educational gap that existed between Indigenous Fijians and other ethnic groups. Consequently, according to the informants, the outcomes of AA for Indigenous Fijians have been rather mixed. Chapter Six also explicates what informants have identified as positive and negative outcomes of AA.

In Chapter Seven, "Reforms: School, Policy and People", I explore the descriptions of the informants of desirable changes in AA policy redirections, pedagogical practice as well as people-change. Adult or community education has emerged as an important agent for the change of Indigenous Fijian cultural orientations, epistemology and value systems. There is recognition that if there is to be a curriculum overhaul, a change in teacher-training curriculum and pedagogy also needs to be considered. Informants acknowledge that any policy redirection or curriculum reform is difficult to carry out unless there is a national vision and the necessary political will on the part of leaders.

The implications of the study on a postcolonial methodology, policy, pedagogical practices, leadership, research and theory are discussed in Chapter Eight. In particular, the issues of voice(s), mine and those of the informants, and the creation of speaking and writing spaces are discussed under the heading of a postcolonial methodology. Moreover, the implications of the study on AA policies are spelt out. This is followed by a detailed examination of implications for pedagogical practice. In particular, I provide an alternative view to curriculum reform.

CHAPTER TWO
THEORETICAL FRAMINGS

In this chapter, I discuss the theoretical frameworks that underpin and inform the thesis. The chapter has three sections. The first examines traditional ways of thinking about AA in education in Western capitalist democracies with the principal purpose of demonstrating their limitations in understanding AA in the Fijian context. First, I examine the way AA has been defined and the ethical debate surrounding the discourse on AA. I then focus on AA in education as it is described in the literature on equality of educational opportunity and racial inequalities, particularly those studies that have tried to explain underachievement in formal schooling. This section concludes by drawing out the limitations in the way AA has traditionally been viewed.

There is a need to broaden the notion of AA. For 'Third World' nations or 'postcolonial' societies[2] like Fiji, recent postcolonial theory may provide conceptual and analytical resources and insights that are useful in providing a comprehensive notion of AA that is more appropriate. The second section of this chapter, thus, examines the literature on postcolonial theory/discourse with specific emphasis on key concepts that play an important role in this research project. Neocolonialism is one such concept. Although many postcolonial nations have gained decolonised status, a new form of colonialism (neocolonialism) demonstrates the continuing power and authority that ex-colonisers have over their ex-colonies. The concept of hegemony explains how and why 'domination by consent' continues in the postcolonial moment. This is particularly relevant to contemporary education, for instance, where educational structures such as the curriculum, the pedagogies of the school, the assessment systems and school organisation continue in neocolonial hegemonic formations after decolonisation occurred.

The concepts of strategic essentialism, voice and the 'Other' are also examined because of the salient role they play in understanding the response of colonised people to being 'othered' by the essentialist discriminatory and racist institutional, material and discursive practices of colonialism. An examination of the concepts of cultural identity and hybridity is also undertaken. The search for a cultural identity (whether ethnic/racial

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[2] I don't know what to call nations like Fiji. Concepts like 'Third World', 'Developing' or 'Underdeveloped' assume some lack or otherness. The concept 'postcolonial' is also unsatisfactory because it implies the necessary presence of the colonising agent. Given that there is no better replacement, I will use the term postcolonial to describe ex-colonies.

or national) is intensified in postcolonial nations to counter the hybridising processes of colonialism, westernisation and globalisation.

The third section of this chapter attempts to draw the two theoretical frameworks together by explicating the value of the current research in a broader understanding of AA. In particular, I discuss the value of the research study in terms of the contribution it hopes to achieve in an understanding of AA in decolonised states where the indigenous people are the beneficiaries of AA and where they hold numerical and political power.

Theorising Affirmative Action

I am aware of and sensitive to the dangers of uncritical acceptance of the American literature on AA (Bacchi, 1996). However, it needs to be remembered that American models of AA have been imported to postcolonial sites like Fiji. Here, I discuss traditional ways that Western capitalist nations have thought about AA. First, I provide a contextual background to the concept of AA before providing an analysis of the ethical and moral rationale of AA. In so doing, a discussion of the concept as it applies especially in the United States of America, will ensue as well as an examination of the theoretical positions for and against AA. This is followed by a description of the way AA is thought about in education and a critical review of studies that have attempted to provide explanations for educational inequalities (both empirical and theoretical). The last section will address the limitations in traditional ways of looking at AA.

The Concept of Affirmative Action

What is affirmative action? AA in the Western construction entails some deliberate action or intervention taken by a government or private institution in response to material disadvantage faced by minority racial/ethnic groups and women that has arisen out of past and/or current discrimination. As feminist Roberta Johnson (1990) has put it,

> Affirmative action is a generic term for programmes which take some kind of initiative either voluntarily or under the compulsion of law, to increase, maintain, or rearrange the number or status of certain group members usually defined by race or gender, within a larger group. (p. 77)

This thesis is concerned specifically with AA developed for racial/ethnic groups. In the United States, it was acknowledged that Afro-Americans had historically been discriminated against by the legal and institutional legacies of slavery (Taylor, 1989;

Graham, 1992). The Civil Rights Act of 1964 recognised the oppression of slavery and attempted to make legal amends (Graglia, 1994). It is interesting to note that in the United States, the indigenous people - the American Indians - are silenced and marginalised in all the debate about AA because of the prominent political positioning and lobbying of Afro-Americans and ethnic migrant groups. Indeed, American Indians are subsumed under the general category of 'minorities'.

Initially, AA meant to "seek out and prepare members of minority groups for better jobs and educational opportunities"; that is, early efforts involved advertising (Glazer, 1975: 197). But as Glazer explains, in the early 1970s AA developed to set statistical requirements and quotas based on race, colour, and national origin for employers and educational institutions. "Preferential treatment", "hard affirmative action" or "reverse discrimination" are terms that have been used to describe AA with "special rights", "racism", "quotas" and "qualifications" additional terms repeatedly invoked in discussions on AA (Tierney, 1997). In her study of gender-based AA in six major Western countries reputed to be leading the world in AA - the United States, Australia, Canada, Norway, Sweden and the Netherlands - Bacchi (1996) notes that many policy activists and administrators outside of the United States have distanced themselves from the American terminology because of the negative connotations associated with the experiences with AA in the United States.

Why is AA deemed to be necessary, even desirable? AA is a reaction against racial inequalities that exist in society. The main reason behind the need for AA lies in "the perceived under-representation or under-utilisation of the affected groups in certain occupations, professions, statuses and positions and their over-representation among the unemployed" (Edwards, 1995: 7). The main step therefore for AA arises "with the recognition of the part that systemic discrimination plays in creating and replicating the relative deprivation of some groups by denying access to goods and services, and by compromising opportunities that ought to be equal to those of the majority members" (Edwards, 1995: 3). Inequality of opportunity and access for groups as well as social and economic disadvantage are the results of this systematic discrimination, be it direct, indirect, intentional or unintentional. The basic purpose of AA, therefore, is "to shift the balance of burdens and benefits between morally arbitrarily defined groups in society" (Edwards, 1995: 154). Or as philosopher Iris Marion Young (1990: 198) has put it, the primary purpose of AA is to "mitigate the influence of current biases and blindnesses of institutions and decisionmakers". For the American context, AA is thus a remedial

strategy whose ultimate purpose is to reestablish the elements of fair competition that are embedded in the ideal of equality of opportunity (Feinberg, 1996).

The Moral and Philosophical Debate

The critical question that has been asked is what moral, philosophical and ethical justification can there be for government policies that benefit specific minority groups at the expense of the majority? What are the moral reasons for the existence of AA policies given the many arguments that run counter to the perceived benefits accruing from AA? Despite the perceived injustice of AA to the white/dominant population, why are AA preferential policies still being pursued, especially in the United States?

Race-based AA is a policy that is highly controversial (Bacchi, 1996; Mills, 1994) particularly with regard to whether a group of people should benefit from taxpayers' money to the exclusion of those who fall outside of the beneficiary category. Western nations, like the United States, place a lot of emphasis on the rights of the individual (Dovidio, Mann & Gaertner, 1989; Goldman, 1979). The thinking that every individual starts life with equal chances and that one can be successful through hard work and the sweat of one's brow is prevalent in egalitarian societies which assess the success or otherwise of an individual on his/her efforts (Smith, 1991). For this group of people, it would be anathema to give any individual or group of individuals what they may perceive to be a head start in opportunity and access. This group of critics (e.g., Goldman, 1979; Glazer, 1975) feel that AA is unfair to groups not protected by the policy and that this works against the establishment of a race-blind society (Tierney, 1997). Tierney has identified two other groups of AA critics: those who feel that AA is in fact harmful to the beneficiaries of AA (e.g., Carter, 1991; Steele, 1994) and those who argue that AA has diluted standards by admitting into the higher educational institutions unqualified individuals (e.g., D'Souza, 1991). On the other hand, those who favour AA, especially with regard to preferential treatment, believe that it is an appropriate and effective social justice strategy to give disadvantaged groups of people an opportunity to catch up with the dominant group in terms of providing the former with more opportunity and access to material societal benefits, such as employment and education (e.g., Green, 1981; Pincus, 1994).

Much of the debate on the morality of 'hard' AA or preferential treatment has occurred in the United States where AA is legally compulsory in some states[3] . Ezorsky (1991) argues that the benefits of AA for the Afro-Americans can be examined from both a forward-looking and backward-looking moral perspective. The purpose of AA in the forward-looking perspective is to facilitate "occupational integration" by the reduction of institutional racism. This would not only enable many Afro-Americans who had been discriminated against by the impact of a racist history to access employment benefits but would enable the easier acceptance that Afro-Americans did not automatically belong at the bottom of the employment hierarchy. The backward-looking perspective - compensatory justice - believes that Afro-Americans have a moral right to compensation for past injustice brought about as a result of slavery. The institutionalised and legal discrimination they faced for centuries would give them the moral claim to compensation for the discrimination and injustices they faced at the hands of the dominant white population. Ezorsky (1991: 94) claims that preferential treatment is essential as "opportunities created by preferential treatment should symbolise an acknowledgment of such injustice and a commitment to create a future free of racism".

On the other hand, Glazer (1975) has argued against the necessity of preferential treatment because of the inherent conflict over justice for the individual as opposed to that of a group. He points out that there is increasing resentment against that group of people benefiting from AA by the disfavoured groups. Nevertheless, Glazer does concede that there is great morality in the application of preferential treatment to compensate the Afro-Americans for past discrimination and injustices brought about by the institution of slavery. Compensatory justice therefore is one moral argument that is put forward by proponents of preferential treatment or 'hard' AA as a remedy for past societal discrimination.

Moens (1985), in discussing AA programmes for Australian Aboriginals, ethnic minorities and women, contends that compensatory justice does not seem as superior as the social utility argument (called the "forward looking" argument by Ezorsky, 1991). As Ezorsky and Moens have noted, the social utility argument views preferential treatment as necessary not only to improve career prospects of beneficiaries but also to bring about proportional representation. Moens' key argument is that "the key issue involved in the affirmative action debate is the attempt by policymakers and legislators to replace the

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[3] California abolished AA in 1997. Some other states in the United States are thinking of following California's example.

ideal of equality of opportunity with the ideal of equality of results" (Moens, 1985:15). He also notes that the debate on AA has been on the legal, ethical and philosophical aspects of two forms of 'hard' affirmative action: namely, in preferential admissions (higher education) and hiring programmes (employment). Moens argues that preferential hiring does not contribute to an "ideal" society. He believes that the argument for preferential hiring for an "ideal" society is flawed because it is inconsistent with the equality of opportunity principle. Rather, he argues, the proponents of preferential hiring pretend to be implementing the equality of opportunity or anti-discrimination principle when in fact they are replacing the equality of opportunity principle with the equality of result principle. The crux of this argument, therefore, is that preferential treatment would discriminate or provide inequality for individuals outside of the target groups.

Nevertheless, as Edwards (1995) has noted, proponents of race-related AA policies have argued for their necessity, giving the following reasons as worthwhile goals: they promote equality of opportunity as a means to greater minority representation; they promote diversity; they enhance the general status and quality of life of minorities and, in so doing, enhance distributive justice and racial equality. And as Cornell West (1994: 95) describes it, AA should be viewed as neither a major solution to poverty nor a sufficient means to equality but rather "as primarily playing a negative role—namely, to ensure that discriminatory practices against women and people of color are abated". Put another way, then, the rationales for the creation and implementation of AA have included: compensation which addresses past discrimination; correction which refers to the correction of present discrimination; and diversification which is concerned with the importance of creating a multicultural society (Tierney, 1997). These rationales have provided the moral justification for race-based AA.

I have laid the groundwork by defining AA and discussing some of the arguments put forward by proponents and critics of race-based AA. Opponents of AA have based their arguments against the morality of AA by drawing on the principle of justice which states that meritocracy should be the criteria for the distribution of social benefits. As I.M. Young (1990: 195) has put it, "Those who oppose affirmative action policies usually do so on the ground that they discriminate. For them a principle of equal treatment, a principle of nondiscrimination, has absolute moral primacy". For these critics discrimination occurs when what they term non-relevant criteria such as race, gender, religion and so on are used as the basis for decisionmaking in matters of public policy. The perception of AA as a group right as opposed to an individual right, is another area

of contention in the AA debate. On the other hand, supporters of AA have posited their moral arguments based on righting a wrong, whether it was caused by past discriminatory and oppressive practices or by correcting present inequalities. An additional moral argument forwarded is that distributive justice promotes diversity and the celebration of difference in the public (and private) sphere of society. Having thus explicated the philosophical debate on the morality of AA, I now turn to a discussion of AA as it relates specifically to education.

Equality of Educational Opportunity

How has AA been applied and theorised in education? What do we mean when we talk of educational equality and educational inequality? Are the terms equality of opportunity and AA synonymous? Smith (1985) has pointed out that the notions of educational equality and educational inequality are difficult concepts to define precisely because different Western researchers/writers use them differently. Additionally, different discourses are used for the two concepts (Smith, 1985; Tyler, 1977). For instance, the assertion has been made that sociologists have defined educational inequality as inequality of opportunity (Smith, 1991). Suffice it is to say that to talk of attaining educational equality is to assume that inequalities exist.

What does equality of educational opportunity mean and does it have the same meaning as AA? To answer this question, it is important that we understand the way equality of opportunity is understood in Western democratic states. In so doing, we need to be aware that the concept of equality of opportunity has been variously interpreted at different times by different people (Goldman, 1979; Sadurski, 1985). As Goldman explains, there are extremes to the way this concept has been interpreted. At one end of the scale is the belief, in its most conservative form, that equality of opportunity can ameliorate great inequalities in the status quo distribution of goods, while at the other extreme, the radical egalitarian view is a call for equal chances at goods or advantages. In fact, there seems to be an inherent contradiction in the concepts of equality of opportunity and AA.

On the one hand, equal opportunity means not discriminating against a particular group because of that group's race, sex, religion, ethnicity, disability and other categories (Holloway, 1989). On the other hand, AA does just that: it is based on racial preferences to ensure that particular groups are not disadvantaged by the principle of nondiscrimination inherent in the principle of equality of opportunity. Holloway explains

that AA goes beyond doctrines of equal opportunity. As Clayton and Tangri (1989: 177) have put it, AA policies "are perceived to violate two basic principles underlying individual achievement in American society: equal access to opportunities and equitable assignment of rewards based on individual merit rather than on immutable status characteristics". Iris Marion Young (1990) also points out that AA challenges the primacy of a principle of nondiscrimination and the conviction that persons should be treated only as individuals and not as members of groups. We can see, then, that equality of opportunity is not the same as AA (Holloway, 1989; Hacker, 1994). In fact, we might say that AA is a strategy that attempts to bring about equality of opportunity by providing those disadvantaged groups with a head start to counter their disadvantage and hence equalise their opportunities. As Goldman (1979: 200) has put it, the avowed purpose of many AA programmes is to "ensure present and future equality of opportunity for women and minority-group members".

In terms of education, AA is the strategy that reduces educational inequalities by providing disadvantaged groups with educational opportunities to equalise their situation. Equality of opportunity has been defined as "the right to be socially successful if one is able to" (Shklar, 1986: 22) and the educational system is the means whereby everyone has an equal chance "to compete for the national cake" (Patterson, 1978: 22). As Green (1981: 204) has put it, "Affirmative action is necessary to combat not only the cynicism or hopelessness of the disadvantaged but the expectations of assured success of the advantaged: in other words, to put everyone on an equal footing".

Race-related AA policies in education in the West have been a response to the perceived educational disadvantage faced by people of colour/minority populations. In other words, disadvantaged racial/ethnic groups were identified as facing educational inequalities while AA was defined as a strategy to promote equality of educational opportunity by reestablishing the elements of fair competition, as Feinberg (1996) has argued. In a recent commentary on AA and higher education, Tierney (1997) maintains that AA in America was a result of the fact that American campuses were White, male centres of learning. The purpose of AA, according to Tierney, was to help not individuals but groups who had been discriminated against. Tierney makes the point that throughout this century, public higher education has been perceived as a central vehicle for increasing equity in society. For those who have been disadvantaged by societal circumstances, education, then, is conceived as a major vehicle to equalise relations by

expanding opportunity. Access to higher education, therefore, has been seen as a major path to expand access and equality of opportunity for the disadvantaged.

It is interesting to note that apart from quotas in student admissions and faculty employment, AA in education historically has been class-based. For instance in the United States, Project Headstart, which was first implemented in 1965, was aimed at changing children and their families in order for them to adapt better to the school culture (Smith, 1991). In this government initiative in education, children from economically and culturally deprived backgrounds took part in a comprehensive pre-school programme presumably to break the poverty cycle. In Britain, the establishment of Educational Priority Areas was intended "to break into the vicious circle of deprivation" and was an attempt to "overcome perceived problems in one environment (the family) by initiating changes in another (the school), i.e. using the school to compensate for perceived deficiencies in the family" (Smith, 1991: 29). In Australia the establishment of the Disadvantaged Schools Program in 1975 saw funds being allocated to both government and non-government schools which served the greatest concentration of poor children (White and Johnson, 1993). It is interesting that these policies were not really race-based AA but were more class-based. Nevertheless, it would be fair to say that the beneficiaries would have included children of colour or those from disadvantaged ethnic groups.

Commenting on class-based AA in the American context, Smith (1991: 30) maintains that "official reform programs like Headstart did not directly address the problem of working-class or minority group poverty and oppression nor did they critically examine the structure of the school, its programs and resources of schools in the poorest neighbourhoods". She argues that "The resources allocated for reform were inadequate and the content of the programs succeeded only in enmeshing the poor in yet another layer of welfare bureaucracy, and in subjecting them to sociological scrutiny which blamed them for being failures" (Smith, 1991: 30).

Educational inequality has been a major focus of research for several decades with the main focus placed on the impact of poverty, social class, gender or ethnicity on the educational opportunities and outcomes of young people (Angus, 1993). Tyler (1977) highlights the ambiguity inherent in the term 'educational inequality' and identifies six different definitions of this term. He lists the first four as inequality in achievement, in educational background, in aptitude or ability, in school environment, identifying these as unequal inputs. The last two definitions are to do with unequal outcomes in terms of inequality in credentials and in life chances (which relate to status and income).

The debate on educational inequality has centred around two opposing positions. The first is that of 'nature', the traditional viewpoint, which identifies the most significant input variable as inherited aptitude or ability. This viewpoint sees school success as largely a result of innate intellectual capacity which is affected by a learner's home background. On the other hand, the 'nurture' position maintains that environmental factors (economic, cultural and school) are important to school success (Smith, 1991). In general, explanations for inequality in schooling have been posited by mainstream (conservative and liberal) educators as well as neo-Marxist and radical neo-Marxist sociologists (McCarthy, 1990). Mainstream educators, who Smith above has referred to as proponents of both the 'nature' and 'nurture' viewpoints, have argued that biological or cultural deficiencies on the part of the underachiever were adequate explanations for racial inequalities in schooling. In other words, what Smith and McCarthy are pointing out here is that mainstream educators blame the victim in some way for failure in school. Some innate deficiency either in intelligence or social, economic and cultural environment (i.e., family circumstances) was responsible for underachievement.

On the other hand, neo-Marxists theorists have argued that inequalities in society are reproduced and perpetuated in schooling. McCarthy (1990: 58) notes that dominant themes in the literature in the late 1960s and 1970s centred on "the contradiction between capital and labor and the role of schooling in the maintenance and the reproduction of the economy". Bowles and Gintis (1976), for example, formulated the correspondence thesis which posits that a "structural correspondence" exists between the social relations of schooling and the social relations of production. In her study of the hidden curriculum, Kathleen Lynch (1989) observes that many conflict theorists have deliberately ignored issues of race and gender when analysing the school's hidden curriculum because they consider class relations as the major factor in the reproduction of inequalities. Similarly, as McCarthy (1990: 134-135) has pointed out in his commentary on race and the curriculum, neo-Marxist educators "have tended to subordinate racial inequality to what they see as the more general problem of class oppression, thereby suppressing the importance of race in the project of social emancipation".

However, there are serious limitations in these conceptions of racial inequalities in education. McCarthy sums up the debate succinctly by arguing that essentialism and dogmatism are two characteristics of current debates in the educational literature on the theoretical status of racial inequality. He notes:

Mainstream educators reduce the problem of racial inequality to the issues of underachievement and minority social and cultural deficits—in some ways blaming minorities themselves for the problems associated with race and social disadvantage. Neo-Marxist educators, on the other hand, have tended to subordinate racial inequality to what they see as the more general problem of class oppression, thereby suppressing the importance of race in the project of social emancipation. (McCarthy, 1990: 134-135)

It is pertinent to note that AA policies for ethnic/racial minorities in the West are developed and implemented based on some lack or deficiency on the part of these minorities. Even the critics of AA operate on the paradigm of whether the policies work or not. Western measures are then used to assess the relative success of the policies according to whether the policies succeed to do what they set out to do in a quantitative fashion. How are AA policies framed, what assumptions do they bear and how are they implemented in Fiji? How effective have they been? What criteria are used to measure their effectiveness? Are the AA policies in Fiji a historically appropriate response to Fiji's colonial history? The answers to these questions will be fully discussed in Chapters Three and Six.

This far, I have engaged with the discourse on equality of opportunity in education. I have argued that AA was a response to educational inequalities faced by minority groups in the form of equality of opportunity (and access). I have pointed out that AA in education in Western democracies has basically been class-based with the exception of race-based higher education quotas in student admissions and staff employment. In the next section, I review some of the literature on underachievement in formal education, both in the 'Western' and Fiji contexts.

Explanations for Racial Inequalities in Schooling: the Western Context

There does not seem to be a coherent, satisfactory theory to explain the reproduction and persistence of racial inequality in schooling in the educational literature of Western nation states such as Great Britain, the United States and Australia. Rather, racial inequality in education has been explained either in terms of social and cultural deficit models or in terms of class oppression. However, despite this limitation, Western theorists themselves have attempted to retheorise racial inequalities in education and have produced various alternatives (e.g., Hatcher and Troyna, 1993; McCarthy, 1990).

Racial/ethnic groups, including indigenous groups, have faced problems of underachievement and have been marginalised and alienated from an academic core

curriculum. Examples of these groups are the Indigenous Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in Australia as well as migrant minority groups such as the West Indian children in Great Britain and the Maltese background students in Australia. It is obvious that the persistence of racial inequality cannot be attributed to a single variable but should be viewed as a complex, multi-causal phenomenon.

In what follows I discuss two key studies that explain why minority children have failed in schooling in other distinctive contexts, the first of West Indian children in Britain and the second of Maltese-background children in Australia. They have been selected as key studies because of potential correlation in the findings of these studies with the situation in Fiji. First of all the situation is similar viz a viz a post-independent people coming to terms with an imposed Western-oriented curriculum. In the case of Fiji, the indigenous people are subjected to a neocolonial curriculum of their own choice (people in power had the choice to develop different curricula content but chose not to); in the case of minority children in Britain and Australia, their parents have no say in what their children learn in school. In both contexts, however, Western forms of cultural knowledge, pedagogies and assessment play a dominant role in identity formation and in deciding which student should pass and which should fail. In both cases, the students are marginalised and disadvantaged by the Western (-type) educational system in place.

Second, these two studies were selected because they both reiterate the point which McCarthy (1990) makes that studies which reduce explanations for racial inequalities in education to single causes are essentialist and dogmatic. Third, Sultana's 1993 study is important because he clarifies the concept of "symbolic violence", a concept first introduced by Bourdieu and Passeron (1977). I argue in Chapter Five that education systems which deliberately exclude the knowledge systems, cultural values and language of a group, particularly of indigenous origins, are guilty of symbolic violence.

Parekh (1986) summarises the literature on the underachievement of minority children in Britain, particularly West Indian children. First, he undermines the genetic intellectual inferiority explanation, pointing out that IQ tests as well as the concept of intelligence are too problematic to be valid. He points out that some West Indian students perform as well or even better than their white counterparts. He notes as well that the academic performance of middle-class West Indian children is much better than that of white working-class children and they perform almost as well as white middle-class children. Parekh demonstrates that the notion of underachievement is complex and can be class-contingent.

The traditional structure of the family is the second conventional explanation cited for the underachievement of West Indian children. Specifics include inconsistent patterns of discipline, acute inter-generational conflict, lack of commitment to and willingness to make sacrifices of time, energy and money for children's education, and failure to provide a supportive environment. Parekh critiques these findings, commenting that while the family is an important factor, it should not be exaggerated. He examines research that demonstrates the significance of the school and argues that students who have high achievements whilst at boarding school demonstrate the higher significance played by the school rather than the family. Parekh (1986: 117) contends that much of what is said relating to the structure of the West Indian family is "either mistaken or unrelated to education".

Material and cultural disadvantage associated with poor socio-economic conditions of the West Indian home is an additional explanation for the underachievement of West Indian children. The majority of West Indians have been identified as "relatively poor, ill-educated, engaged in low-paid, dull and unskilled jobs, working at odd hours and living in over-crowded houses" (Parekh, 1986: 111). Parekh agrees that the socio-economic conditions of the family are of significant importance with much research demonstrating the significance of class to educational performance. However, he cautions that while class in an extremely important variable, it is not the most important. Racism, as well as school factors (e.g., teachers, school ethos), mediate the influence of class.

The structure and ethos of the school is another explanation Parekh picks out from the literature review. Parekh (1986: 120) agrees that this is another very important factor but claims that "the socio-economic conditions of the child, racism, etc., exert independent influence on the school, and foster or frustrate its academic ethos". As well, the failure of educational authorities to identify and meet the basic educational needs of the West Indian child has also been posited as a cause of underachievement. Parekh responds to this argument by saying that that is an important but limited explanation for the overall underachievement of West Indian students.

Parekh concludes that socio-economic conditions, racism in the school, and the academic ethos of the school, "in their complex interaction explain to a *considerable* degree why the *bulk* of West Indian children underachieve" (1986: 121). This study is important in that it is highly critical of studies which attribute failure to succeed at school to a single factor. This is an important point that I will take up later, when I argue that

26

studies in Fiji that have attempted to correlate underachievement to one factor/variable are methodologically flawed. They fall into the category of the "fallacy of the single factor", to use Parekh's terms.

Sultana's (1993) paper on the education of Maltese students in Australia emphasises that underachievement cannot be reduced to simplistic, reductionist causes. Like Parekh, he repudiates the theories held by researchers that explained underachievement in terms of "deficiencies in intelligence, genetic stock of a particular race or group, cultural environments, diets or parenting" and maintains that these views were useful "to those who sought to legitimise their colonial, imperial, class policies by referring to 'objective' and 'scientific' findings!" (Sultana, 1993: 3).

Sultana suggests that in order to understand why racial inequality persists in schools, we need to examine the institutional and social contexts in which the learning process takes place. He argues that schools which do not value the "realities, language and dignities" of their students are guilty of "symbolic violence". These schools are violent and powerful in their labelling of who is a school failure and thus, provide experiences which marginalise and exclude. Borrowing the term from Bourdieu and Passeron, Sultana defines symbolic violence as:

> ...the violence perpetrated by systems which unilaterally impose themselves, representing as they do the dominant frame of reference, on one and all. You either accept this curriculum, this pedagogy, this world view, this language, or else you are labelled a failure. It is violent because, so powerful are the people who do the labelling, that we end up internalising those labels, and become deeply convinced that we are, indeed not capable of ever achieving anything in life. It is a powerful form of violence because the rules of the game are set by the system itself according to its own criteria, and thus it becomes difficult to resist. (Sultana, 1993: 5)

I believe that this study is an important one too because it reiterates the important point that studies that explain school failure in terms of one variable are seriously flawed and do not deserve any serious attention. Moreover, this study is important in that it explores a feature that is prominent in all imposed educational systems—the symbolic violence perpetrated against minority and indigenous populations by a system that is based on a foreign material and cultural world view. My understanding of symbolic violence is the imposition of colonial (and neocolonial) views of 'reality', 'truth', 'rationality' and language on a society. Symbolic violence occurs in schooling when the "realities, language and dignities" of students are not valued by schools, as Sultana (1993) argues. It occurs when those who do not adapt or conform to standards required

by the dominant ideologies and practices are labelled as failures. Western schooling, thus, because it is based on a foreign world view, is symbolically violent when those subjected to the system internalise the label of failure. I will revisit Parekh's (1986) and Sultana's (1993) studies in Chapter Five.

Studies on Racial Inequalities in Schooling in Fiji

In this section, I review studies on Indigenous Fijian underachievement in Fiji. My concern here is whether they have been essentialist and dogmatic in their findings (McCarthy, 1990). Do they suffer from the "fallacy of the single factor" as Parekh (1986) has described it? Indeed, do these studies place the blame on the underachiever and his/her social, economic and cultural circumstances?

Tupeni Baba (1982) recommended three categories of variables for use by interested researchers as the bases for investigations on racial inequalities in education in Fiji. They are: psychological factors (e.g., motivation/aspiration, need achievement, locus of control, cognitive style), social-cultural factors (e.g., individualism/cooperation, cultural conflicts, tradition of academic scholarship) and institutional factors (e.g., urban/rural, facilities, teacher quality). The areas that attracted a great deal of investigation were the psychological and institutional domains.

In terms of psychological studies, Basow (1982) and Kishor (1981; 1983) have concluded that Indigenous Fijians have lower levels of self-concept and a more external locus of control than Indo-Fijians. Kishor also found that Indigenous Fijians valued education less than Indo-Fijians and had lesser academic motivation. In relation to the socio-cultural research domain, Tierney (1971) concluded from his ethnographic study that cultural explanations for the low academic achievement of the rural Indigenous Fijian students lay in these areas: lack of privacy in the home, lack of desire for competition due to societal preference for cooperative individuals, lack of mobility, and pressure for conformity. Veramu (1990), working within an ethnographic paradigm, found that rural Indigenous Fijian students had low self-esteem and that their parents did not seem to be committed to their children's education. Veramu also noted two institutional explanations for the poor performance of Indigenous Fijian students: boring and seemingly irrelevant content coupled with the insensitivity and brutality of teachers.

Another study which sought socio-cultural explanations is Joeli Nabuka's (1984) study of ten home background variables to explain racial inequalities in schooling. Nabuka concluded that the most significant variables which differentiated Indigenous

Fijian and Indo-Fijian students were the people with whom students reside whilst at school (a significant proportion of secondary-aged Indigenous Fijians students lived with relatives in urban centres or in boarding institutions compared to Indo-Fijians), the educational level of the student's father or guardian, the availability of reading books in the student's home (Indigenous Fijians had significantly fewer story books) and the availability of the prescribed text books for the students. On these factors, Nabuka emphasised that Indigenous Fijians came out negatively. Nabuka, like Elley (1982), concluded that Indigenous Fijians have more disadvantages in their home circumstances than Indo-Fijians.

Baba (1983) summarised the institutional variables which could explain the poor performance of Indigenous Fijians, particularly in the science, mathematics and commerce disciplines. First, he identified a lack of qualified teachers teaching in these disciplines. Second, Indigenous Fijian secondary school principals were less experienced than their Indo-Fijian counterparts. Third, Indigenous Fijian schools offered an integrated science compared to the pure sciences offered in Indo-Fijian schools. Finally, the infrastructural development of Indigenous Fijian schools was not so adequate in terms of laboratories, library and supportive office equipment. What is clear from Baba's summary is that Indigenous Fijians are also disadvantaged when it comes to issues of quality – in teaching, school leadership and resources.

It would seem that explanations for racial inequalities in schooling may be essentialist and dogmatic in that explanations for Indigenous Fijian underachievement have been sought in one domain (e.g., either psychological, institutional or socio-cultural). To my knowledge, there has not been one study in Fiji that recognises and acknowledges the complexities associated with underachievement. This research project will attempt to fill this vacuum.

Given the inadequacies of many explanations for racial inequalities in education, what could be an alternative theoretical model? McCarthy offers the parallelist position theory to explain racial inequalities in education (See Figure A). The parallelist position

> ...presents us with a theory of *overdetermination* in which the unequal processes and outcomes of teaching and learning and of schooling in general are produced by constant interactions among three dynamics (race, gender and class) and in three spheres (economic, political and cultural). (McCarthy, 1990: 80)

Spheres		
Economic	Cultural	Political
Dynamic of Class			
Dynamic of Race			
Dynamic of Gender			

(Source: Adapted from McCarthy, 1990: 81)

Figure A: The Parallelist Theory to Explain Racial Inequalities in Schooling

In this chapter, I have explored the way AA is viewed in Western contexts, such as the United States, and discussed the debate between proponents and critics of race-based AA. I then narrowed the framework to a discussion of the way AA has been viewed in relation to education, particularly in terms of equality of educational opportunity. This was followed by a critical review of studies that attempt to explain racial inequalities in schooling. In particular, I focussed on two studies in the West explaining why minority students have failed, the first of West Indian students in Britain and the second of Maltese-background children in Australia. I followed this with a brief review of the literature on explanations for the poor performance of Indigenous Fijians in Fiji. Then, based on McCarthy's work, the parallelist theory to explain racial inequalities in schooling was outlined. This theory posits that racial inequalities in schooling are produced by the constant interactions among the dynamics of race, gender and class and in the economic, political and cultural spheres. I bring these sections together by now outlining the limitations in the traditional Western way of thinking about AA to set the groundwork for the next major section of this chapter which is an explication of the theoretical resources that may provide a more appropriate and comprehensive notion of AA in decolonised, small island states like Fiji.

Limitations

There are some limitations in the way AA is traditionally thought about in Western liberal democratic nations. These arise out of the assumptions made about AA which make problematic their application to decolonised societies like Fiji.

AA is a postwar phenomenon. This arose out of the principle of redistributive social justice which was facilitated by the expansion of the welfare state. In the United

States, for instance, an expanding economy, sufficient tax bases and welfare infrastructures made possible the redistribution of capital (Dworkin, 1998). The first assumption, then, that underpins AA is the notion that states have unlimited resources that can be spread around to benefit disadvantaged groups. Western capitalist states like the United States, Great Britain and Australia, which have significant natural and material resources, are better able to afford large financial outlays for AA programmes

By contrast, Fiji is a small island state with all the challenges that beset nations of this status. Distinctive local problems include: development and over-concentration, open economies and overdependence, high public expenditure, distance costs, the dominance of public employment, problems of finance, aid dependency, and patronage and nepotism (Bacchus & Brock, 1987: 2-4). Agriculture, notably sugarcane, forms the backbone of Fiji's national economy with tourism following very closely. The country has limited natural resources and a very small industrial base. Consequently, the gross national product is minimal compared to Western industrialised states. Fiji's economy is, therefore, more dependent on the vagaries of the global market economy. This reflects the vulnerability of small island states to external socio-economic world forces. The problems associated with smallness that encourage dependence may help explain the continuation of neocolonial hegemonic structures in Fiji after political self-rule became a reality. Fiji's status as a small island state thus emphasises its lack of resources. For national resources, therefore, to be set aside for AA for a particular group would demonstrate the view that AA in Fiji was perceived to be an urgent national need that had to be addressed.

However, the point needs to be made that within globalisation and these new times, it is becoming increasingly obvious that internally, governments are moving to economic tightening with the resultant reduction in the distribution of resources. Historically, we have hit a period where countries in both 'developing' and 'developed' worlds follow the rationale of economic rationalism, where there is tighter management of national budgets. And with fewer taxation bases, there are less resources to redistribute. Notwithstanding the global trend of economic rationalism, it must be noted that small island nations like Fiji are extremely vulnerable, not only environmentally but more particularly in economic terms.

A second assumption that underlies AA in Western liberal capitalist states is the notion that nations which institute AA have considerable control over their sovereignty. Again, large industrial nations which carry the status and prestige of 'developed'

industrial states like the United States, England (and maybe Australia) are sovereign states that even have the capacity to provide financial and other aid to less fortunate 'underdeveloped' or 'Third World' societies. The historical fact is that these Western industrial countries have managed to maintain their sovereignty through the process of colonialism where they amassed great wealth and appropriated many resources from their colonies to run their economies. As Albert Memmi (1965: 149) has put it, "Colonization is, above all, economic and political exploitation". After all, capitalism and its worldwide spread through the process of colonialism "instilled in the white men a constant yearning for the material benefits and power which they believed money alone can bring" (Gladwin, 1980: 26-27).

When decolonisation of British, French and German colonies occurred after the first world war, these countries had firmly established not only their sovereignty, but also neocolonial power and control over politically independent states through the process of foreign aid and financial assistance/loans. Gladwin (1980) argues that foreign aid is such a powerful weapon that no Western government is keen to abandon it. He maintains that many 'Third World' countries carry substantial foreign debt on foreign aid which mostly comes in the form of loans from international financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, various regional development banks, and agencies of the United Nations. Fiji depends for its economic existence on loans from international financial institutions as well as economic and other aid from 'big brother' 'developed' countries like Australia, New Zealand and Japan. A United Nations report in 1977 estimated that by the end of 1978, servicing the foreign debt of 'developing' countries would cost the equivalent of 25% of the total export earnings of these same countries (Gladwin, 1980). Given that foreign aid and loans are primarily tools of control and economic exploitation, and not simply business transactions as Gladwin puts it, how then can small island states like Fiji maintain their sovereignty given their economic vulnerability? In fact, if economies like the Asian economic 'tigers', Indonesia and Malaysia that were internationally perceived to be invincible can collapse, as the events of 1997-1998 have demonstrated, what does this reflect about the fragility of small island states like Fiji and their supposed control over the affairs of their countries?

An additional factor that demonstrates quite clearly the vulnerability of small island states is the emergent power of multinational and transnational corporations. These corporations not only have the mandate of their governments to spread their

capitalistic tentacles but also hold much control over 'Third World' countries. As Gladwin (1980) has argued:

> The national interest of the industrialized countries is indeed intimately linked with that of the multinational corporations. These corporations are the spearhead of the new imperialism, able to reward or punish Third World countries for their behavior, providing an intelligence network to watch them, and convincing both leaders and their people that the home country is their best friend, their model to copy, and their protector. (pp. 66-67)

Additionally, the income from many of these corporations easily outstrips many 'Third World' economies (Castells, 1996). Castells seems to be describing the Fiji context quite aptly when he notes that "countries that are left exclusively to the impulses of market forces, in a world where established power relationships of governments and multinational corporations bend and shape market trends, become extremely vulnerable to volatile financial flows and technological dependency" (Castells, 1996: 89). Examples of multinational corporations in Fiji include the ubiquitous MacDonalds and Coca Cola. Supermarket chains include Woolworths and petrol stations include Shell, Mobil and British Petroleum. Asco Motors also operate in Fiji. Multinational corporations also have a hand in garment factories, brewery, cigarette, hotel chains and insurance companies. Given the financial power that these multinational companies wield, how can the sovereignty of a small island state like Fiji be maintained?

Third, another limitation in the traditional way of thinking about AA in Western liberal capitalist democracies is the development of social movements which assume equal representation before the state. The rise of new group-based social movements associated with left politics such as feminism, Black liberation, the lesbian and gay movements and the peace and green movements have challenged traditional conceptions of justice (I. M. Young, 1990) and indeed as Yeatman (1990) has argued, these new social movements have placed new political claims on the democratisation of social, economic, political and cultural resources of the state. In arguing for the need for the state to recognise and affirm group difference as well as specific representation of oppressed groups, Iris Marion Young (1990: 160) points out that oppressed groups "have seen self-organization and the assertion of a positive group cultural identity as a better strategy for achieving power and participation in dominant institutions". Iris Marion Young notes that in attending to group-specific needs and providing for group representation, the state would be promoting social equality and providing the recognition that undermines cultural imperialism. Or as Laclau and Mouffe (1985: 191)

have argued, the discourse of radical democracy is one where new social movements are representative of a "polyphony of voices, each of which constructs its own irreducible discursive identity". In arguing for a radical democracy, they note:

> Juridical institutions, the educational system, labour relations, the discourses of the resistance of marginal populations construct original and irreducible forms of social protest, and thereby contribute all the discursive complexity and richness on which the programme of a radical democracy should be founded. (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 192)

The potential for a new hegemony that arises out of the formations of coalitions of these new social groups poses challenges for those in power. It is this hegemony that can constitute a fundamental tool for political analysis on the left. And as Laclau and Mouffe (1985: 192) have also noted, this hegemony is only possible when the "open unsutured character of the social is fully accepted, when the essentialism of the totality and of the elements is rejected".

We can see, then, that in Western liberal states like the United States, Great Britain and Australia, equal representation before the state is something that is constantly negotiated by new political movements who want some stake in state resources and as Yeatman (1990) has put it, the state has been unable to cope. As Yeatman explains, it is the multiplication of these claims which have put a lot of pressure on the state, prompting top-down styles of state management. However, with regard to small, supposedly sovereign states like Fiji, the issue of equal representation before the state is one that cannot be assumed. For one, the population is too small (the total population is three quarters of a million) for the development of radical social groups and two, even if these groups were developed (e.g., gay and lesbian movements), the populace (and the government) is too conventional to be as justice-oriented as Western liberal nations. And three, the indigenous people currently hold political and land power so the context which arises in Western nations regarding oppression of, and the resultant protest by indigenous or the Black movement, does not apply. The multiplication of claims by social movements on the state as Yeatman puts it is a rare occurrence in small island societies like Fiji.

The fourth limitation of traditional notions of viewing AA is the assumption made by its critics that everyone is equal and should be judged strictly by a 'neutral' standard like merit (Tierney, 1997). Iris Marion Young (1990), a proponent of AA for marginalised groups, argues persuasively against the merit principle. She questions two

assumptions which underlie discussions on social justice and equal opportunity. She first criticises the assumption of "a hierarchical division of labor with scarce positions of high income, power, and prestige at the top, and less privileged positions at the bottom" which is assumed as a given and therefore not unjust (I. M. Young, 1990: 193). She also criticises what she describes as the "myth of merit" which assumes that positions are distributed according to merit "by measuring the individual technical competence of persons and awarding the most competitive positions to those judged most qualified according to impartial measures of such competence" (I. M. Young, 1990: 193). Iris Marion Young argues that is not possible to use criteria that are normatively and culturally neutral since criteria used to evaluate individual performance are normative and cultural rather than neutrally scientific. She maintains that the basic purpose of AA is "to mitigate the influence of current biases and blindnesses of institutions and decisionmakers" (I. M. Young, 1990: 198). The assumption of traditional notions of AA that merit should be the basis for AA is, therefore, problematic.

At the onset of this chapter, I pointed out the problems associated with an uncritical acceptance of AA from one socio-historical site like the United States to Fiji. Here, in this section, I have identified four specific difficulties that arise when we try to transport the assumptions of AA to the Fiji context. These are: the notion of unlimited resources, the notion that states have control over their sovereignty, the rise of social movements which introduces heterogeneity, thus resulting in complex confusion, and the notion that merit and AA are incompatible and mutually exclusive.

Clearly, these assumptions are problematic if they are literally transposed to decolonised vulnerable small island sites. First, Fiji does not have unlimited resources. Second, because of its substantial dependence on foreign aid/loans and the significant impact of multinational corporations, Fiji does not have control over its sovereignty. Third, the population in Fiji is too small for the emergence of new social groups to demand a rethinking of the notion of social justice. And fourth, the notion of merit as an argument against AA is problematic because the assumption that merit is a scientifically neutral phenomenon is a misnomer. However, the point needs to be made that Western democracies do not have unlimited resources or absolute control over their sovereignty. As well, not all social groups within them are 'large enough' to gain recognition nor are all large groups (e.g., women) duly recognised. In this section, then, I have established that traditional notions of viewing AA are inappropriate in understanding AA in the Fiji context. Given the limitations in traditional ways of thinking about AA, I now turn to the

theoretical framework that may provide a more appropriate way of broadening the notion of AA in decolonised or postcolonial societies.

Theorising the Postcolonial

Underpinning the whole study is the conceptual and analytical lens provided by postcolonial theoretical resources that will be utilised to theorise and critique the failure of AA to make a significant inroad into the underachievement in education of Indigenous Fijians in Fiji. Specifically, it will use postcolonial conceptual resources to critically analyse the interview data. As well, these resources will be used to critique texts on Fijian history (see Chapter Three) and curriculum and government documents.

The theoretical discourses that arise out of postcolonial issues such as universality and difference, representation and resistance, hybridity, language, history, education as well as production and consumption of postcolonial literature underpin the thesis. The issue of textual representation and resistance of non-Western people, for example, is an important one— language and written history in the form of texts are two instruments of control of colonised subjects which continue long after countries gain political independence. Education is another form of control institutionalised as part of colonialism. A neocolonial curriculum assures the maintenance of dominant Western values. The production and consumption of texts is particularly critical given that the proliferation of texts on non-Western cultures has taken place in metropolitan capitals.

Language is indeed a critical domain of power because the colonial process itself begins in language (Ashcroft et al., 1995). Written history by the West of the non-West in the language of the coloniser, not only presented the non-West with the way they should view themselves and the West, but legitimised and institutionalised myths and misconceptions of the West that became regarded as the gospel truth by the non-West. Edward Said, in his much acclaimed text *Orientalism*, illustrates this point very aptly by emphasising the power of Western discourses which invented the Orient. In Said's words, Orientalism is "a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (Said, 1978: 3). The Orient in Said's case refers to the East, to the racial 'Other' of the West. I would argue that the Orient can be extended to the Pacific, or the South Seas as the Western literature so romantically called the region, because it was Western literary discourse that invented and created the myths and misconceptions associated with the way this region was (mis)represented. In terms of discourse, Allan Luke (1995-1996: 38) makes the point that for minority categories such as indigenous peoples and women, "the

36

historical movement has been from an outright namelessness and invisibility to an inclusion in public discourses and human sciences as colonised, deficit human subjects". What is clear from this discussion is that Western discourses reflected in the use of language is an effective instrument of control to keep the 'native' subjugated and within knowable grounds, even after the point of decolonisation.

The issues of universality and difference are important also in considering "the similarity of colonialism's political and historical pressure upon non-European societies, alongside the plurality of specific cultural effects and responses those societies have produced" (Ashcroft et al., 1995: 56). The remainder of this chapter may be taken then as a postcolonial interrogation of what the literature says about the key concepts used in the thesis: hegemony, neocolonialism, the 'other', voice, strategic essentialism, identity, hybridity and the postcolonial curriculum.

The issue of recovering voice is an important one to negate the essentialist representation that colonial discourse had instituted about the 'natives' or 'others'. In the project of recovering voice, it is sometimes necessary to utilise essentialism as a strategy in order to be heard above the silences and contradictions caused by colonial representation of the 'others'. At the point of decolonisation, the emphasis on Indigenous Fijian cultural identity, for instance, was spurred by nationalistic aspirations as a response to the hybrid identity that had been mediated by the colonial experience and the attendant processes of change. Another response to the hybrid identity 'created' by colonialism is the need to re-create a postcolonial curriculum that would not only affirm the cultural identity of Indigenous Fijians, for example, but also would accommodate the hybridity in cultural practices of 'New Times' (Hall, 1996c).

Hegemony

Antonio Gramsci, an Italian Marxist theorist, is credited with first using the concept of hegemony. In an examination of Gramsci's political thought, Joseph Femia (1981: 24) points out that hegemony is where the supremacy of a social group or class manifests itself through "intellectual and moral leadership", *not* through domination or coercion. In this case, hegemony is "the predominance obtained by *consent* rather than force of one class or group over other classes" which is "attained through the myriad ways in which the institutions of civil society operate to shape, directly or indirectly, the cognitive and affective structures whereby men perceive and evaluate problematic social reality" (Femia, 1981: 24). Not only should hegemony be ethico-political, "this

ideological superiority must have solid economic roots". Femia (1981: 25) further argues that for Gramsci, hegemony is conceived purely in terms of ideological leadership, that when Gramsci speaks of "political hegemony" or "political leadership", he means *"the consensual aspect* of political control".

A simpler way of defining hegemony is "'moral and philosophical leadership', leadership which is attained through the active consent of major groups in a society" (Bocock, 1986: 11). In any given historical situation, hegemony is only going to be found as "the partial exercise of leadership of the dominant class, or alliance of class fractions" in only some of the following spheres "but not in all of them equally successfully all the time": in the economy, factories and offices, law and the legal process, state educational institutions, civil society, mass media and the arts, and in religions (Bocock, 1986: 94).

Mouffe (1979: 181) contends that for Gramsci, hegemony is not simply a question of political alliance "but of a complete fusion of economic, political, intellectual and moral objectives". This fusion, according to Mouffe, "will be brought about by one fundamental group and groups allied to it *through the intermediary of ideology* when an ideology manages to [quoting Gramsci] 'spread throughout the whole of society determining not only united economic and political objectives but also intellectual and moral unity'" (Mouffe, 1979: 181). She points out a hegemonic class is one which "has been able to articulate the interests of other social groups to its own by means of ideological struggle" and according to Gramsci, the nature of hegemony is not totally antithetical to working class interest (Mouffe, 1979: 181). Similarly, Bocock (1986: 37) points out that:

> Hegemonic leadership involves developing intellectual, moral and philosophical consent from all major groups in a nation. It involves an emotional dimension too, in that those political leaders who seek hegemonic leadership must address the sentiments of the nation-people and must not appear as strange or alien beings who are cut off from the masses.

Other theorists have analysed Gramsci's use of the concept of hegemony and have tried to apply it to other contexts apart from Gramsci's original usage of hegemony in terms of legitimating the privileged position of one economic class over another. For example, Laclau and Mouffe (1985) examined the concept of hegemony in their search for a radical democratic politics. According to Bocock (1986: 109), the most important element of Laclau and Mouffe's analysis of hegemony is their move away "from

economistic and politically oppressive, versions of communism, towards radical political issues" which "entails reconstructing a socialist dimension to the fundamental values in radical liberal philosophy: justice, equality, liberty, freedom of expression, peace, and the enjoyment of life". Laclau and Mouffe view the possibility of radical coalitions, then, as a positive feature of this new hegemony. In a similar fashion, Michael Apple (1996: 15) argues that while hegemonic relations have usually been considered in terms of class, and it is important to continue to think of hegemony along these lines, it is also "essential that we always recognise the multiplicity of relations of power surrounding race, gender, sexuality and 'ability'".

Raymond Williams' analysis of hegemony is very useful. Pointing out that Gramsci's contribution provided an insightful emphasis on hegemony, Williams (1976: 204-205) notes:

> [H]egemony supposes the existence of something which is *truly total*, which is not merely secondary or superstructural, like the weak sense of ideology, but which is *lived at such a depth, which saturates the society* to such an extent, and which, as Gramsci put it, even constitutes the limit of common sense for most people under it sway, that it corresponds to *the reality of social experience* very much more clearly than any notions derived from the formula of base and superstructure....This notion of hegemony *as deeply saturating the consciousness of a society* seems to be fundamental. And hegemony has the advantage over general notions of totality, that it at the same time emphasizes the facts of *domination.* (italicised versions my emphasis)

This notion, then, of domination by consent is critical in an understanding of the working of hegemonic processes in education. Williams (1976: 205) makes the important point that "educational institutions are usually the main agencies of the transmission of an effective dominant culture, and this is now a major economic as well as cultural activity". In his discussion of the curriculum and ideology, Apple (1979: 5), who draws heavily on Raymond Williams' analysis of hegemony, emphasises that hegemony "refers to an organized assemblage of meaning and practices, the central effective and dominant system of meanings, values and actions which are *lived.*" (sic) Apple (1979: 6) stresses that schools not only process knowledge, they also process people by acting as "agents of cultural and ideological hegemony". He asks the following pertinent questions regarding the supposedly "legitimate knowledge" that is taught in schools. Whose knowledge is it? Who selected it? Why is it organised and taught in this way? Why is it taught to this particular group? (Apple, 1979: 7). He further makes the point that one should be guided by linking the answers to these

39

questions to "competing conceptions of social and economic power and ideologies" in order to get a clearer picture of "the linkages between economic and political power and the knowledge *made available* (and *not* made available) to students" (Apple, 1979: 7).

Apple (1979) argues that a critical examination of the following questions also needs to be undertaken: How does a student acquire more knowledge? Why and how are particular aspects of the collective culture presented in school as objective, factual knowledge? How may official knowledge concretely represent ideological configurations of the dominant interests in a society? How do schools legitimate these limited and partial standards of knowing as unquestioned truths? These questions are all in response to the inescapable fact that schools are agents of social and economic reproduction and are consequently "agents of cultural and ideological hegemony", as aptly put by Apple (1979: 6).

This section has examined the concept of hegemony as it applies, particularly in education, in terms of the hegemonic curriculum which is selected and framed by a particular dominant group. The next section will examine the literature on neocolonialism. It is pertinent to note that the concepts of hegemony and neocolonialism are related as will be demonstrated in the next section.

Neocolonialism

Altbach and Kelly (1978: 29-40) identify neocolonialism as the "highest stage of colonialism" where a politically independent nation that was once under colonial rule, continues to be bound, whether voluntarily or through necessity, to a European or American society, or to a Western derivative society such as New Zealand or Australia. Neocolonialism can range from the open distribution of foreign textbooks to the more subtle use of foreign technical advisers on matters of policy as well as the continuation of foreign administrative models and curricular patterns for schools with very little alterations to the curriculum that was in place before independence (Altbach, 1995: 453). The most insidious element of neocolonialism is that relatively little change to the education system occurs after ex-colonised nations attain political independence.

While making the point that the concept of neocolonialism is difficult to describe and analyse, Altbach (1995: 452), nevertheless defines the concept in two ways: first as a continuation of old practices and second as "a planned policy of advanced nations to maintain their influence in developing countries". Both these conceptions of neocolonialism apply in nations which were once colonised, particularly in the

educational system. "Education is perhaps the most insidious and in some ways the most cryptic of colonialist survivals, older systems now passing, sometimes imperceptibly, into neo-colonial configurations" (Ashcroft et al., 1995: 425). In this sense, educational apparatuses can be described as hegemonic because education occurs through "domination by consent", in Gramsci's terms. Once structures such as the curriculum, assessment and school organisation become entrenched and institutionalised, they have a totalising effect on the society. Education deeply saturates "the consciousness of a society", as Williams (1976: 40) emphasises, and becomes unquestionably what parents want for their children. The formal education structures that were put in place during colonial rule become the norm with the society not really critically questioning whose knowledge it is and whether it is relevant at a particular point in time.

I argue that Fiji is in a neocolonial condition, despite decolonisation occurring in 1970, because of its continued dependence on the hegemonic social, political, economic and educational structures that had been instituted during the period of colonial rule. These structures were maintained and perpetuated by the local elites who had power after political independence was attained. In any case, it is important to realise that these local elites had no other models to work from/with. Ninety six years of colonisation is more than enough to allow colonial hegemony to saturate the consciousness of any society.

It is pertinent to note that the works discussed in the section on hegemony are written in the contexts of capitalist liberal nations such as in the West/Europe/America. While they may be applicable to the situation in what is known as the Pacific Islands, defined as 'developing' or 'underdeveloped' by the West, it may be appropriate at this stage to discuss some of the questions raised specifically in a colonial or postcolonial educational context.

In a volume entitled *Schooling in the Pacific Islands*, Thomas and Postlethwaite (1984: 15-17) ask fourteen important questions regarding educational institutions alongside six dimensions:

Dimension I: The Purpose or Role of Schooling:
1. Who determines the purposes?
2. From what culture are the purposes derived?
3. Whose welfare is served by the purposes?
Dimension II: The Administrative Structure of the Education System
4. Who determines the administrative structure?
5. From what culture does the structure derive?
Dimension III: Educational Personnel
6. Who decides what system will be used for recruiting, training, and promoting educational personnel?

7 What influence do people's ethnic or cultural origins have on their chances of being recruited, trained, and promoted?

Dimension IV: Composition of Student Population

8. Who decides what system will be used for selecting and for channelling students through the school system?

9. What influence do youths' ethnic or cultural origins have on their opportunities to be selected and channelled?

Dimension V: Curriculum and Instructional Methodology

10. Who determines the nature of the curriculum and teaching methods?

11. What are the cultural sources of the curriculum and teaching methods?

12. Whose welfare is served by the curriculum?

Dimension VI: Financing the Education System

13. Who determines how the system will be financed?

14. What influence do people's ethnic or cultural origins have on their role in financing education?

These questions enable Thomas and Postlethwaite (1984) to compare those countries that are still colonies with those that have obtained independent status. In theory, after independence the residents of the region, through their selected representative, are to make the decisions. However, in a case like Fiji where political decolonisation occurred peacefully rather than the conflictual decolonisation processes that occurred, for example, in India and Algeria, these questions are important. They are important because the complexities associated with neocolonialism make it difficult to give definitive answers to these questions. Maybe it is more a question of a continuum rather than a binary yes/no.

Perhaps it is not so much an issue over what the answers are to these questions but, more importantly, how these questions get reframed so they are more appropriate for the postcolonial moment. It is pertinent that Thomas and Postlethwaite asked these questions regarding educational institutions in 1984. Since then, there has been a shift in postcolonial theorising. As well, there have been substantial material changes in postcolonial conditions. It is therefore appropriate to find out what these questions will look like in the postcolonial moment. Will they remain the same? Will they be significantly reframed to counter the effects of colonialism? Given that the curriculum should take cognisance of postcolonial and postmodern conditions, will these questions significantly change? In short, how can these questions be reconceptualised and reframed in order to be appropriate for postcolonial conditions? This set of questions will be dealt with in the section on the postcolonial curriculum and in Chapter Eight.

Frantz Fanon (1967b), in *The Wretched of the Earth*, warns of the pitfalls of national consciousness when the local elites which Fanon calls the "national middle

class" or "national bourgeoisie" take over the hegemonic control from the imperial power at the point of decolonisation and then replicate the conditions they had rebelled against in the first place. Fanon (1967b: 119) cautions:

> National consciousness, instead of being the all-embracing crystallization of the innermost hopes of the whole people, instead of being the immediate and most obvious result of the mobilization of the people, will be in any case only an *empty shell, a crude and fragile travesty* of what it might have been....*These are the cracks in the edifice* which show the *process of retrogression* that is so harmful and prejudicial to national effort and national unity. We shall see that such retrograde steps with all the weaknesses and serious dangers that they entail are the historical result of the incapacity of the national middle class to see into the reasons for that action. (italicised sections my emphases)

Fanon describes so aptly the process of neocolonialism whereby the local elites, who may be the intellectuals or the national middle class, assert the same kind of hegemonic control over the masses in a similar way to the domination that the coloniser had asserted over the colonised subjects. The "cracks in the edifice" highlight the "process of retrogression" which is what happens when the "national middle class" fails to mobilise the people at the point of decolonisation because of the powerful impact of neocolonialism. Fanon (1967b: 36) also describes these local elites as vigilant sentinels ever so ready to defend "the essential qualities of the West". In a neocolonial situation then, it is a case of one of the 'other' othering the others. Thus, all "post-colonial societies are still subject in one way or another to overt or subtle forms of neo-colonial domination" with the "development of new elites within independent societies, often buttressed by neo-colonial institutions" and independence has not solved this problem (Ashcroft et al., 1995: 2).

The 'Other'

Colonised people have always been considered the 'other' of Europe not only because of their difference but more importantly, in stressing the cultural and racial difference of the 'other', the colonisers asserted their domination and superiority over them. This occurred in every possible facet of the lives of the colonised. Not only was this evident in daily life in terms of (non)relations and (non)interactions between the two groups of people, but stereotyping and discrimination against the colonised people became institutionalised in the structures of colonial society. As well, the 'other' was captured in the coloniser's imagination and discursive practices. Ashcroft et al. (1995: 85) put it this way:

In both conquest and colonisation, texts and textuality played a major part. European texts - anthropologies, histories, fiction, captured the non-European subject within European frameworks which read his or her alterity as *terror* or *lack*. Within the complex relations of colonialism these representations were reprojected to the colonised - through formal education or general colonial cultural relations - as authoritative pictures of themselves. Concomitantly representations of Europe and Europeans within this textual archive were situated as normative. Such texts - the representations of Europe to itself, and the representation of others to Europe - were not accounts of different people and societies, but a projection of European fears and desires masquerading as scientific/'objective' knowledges.

Both Abdul JanMohamed (1995) and George Lamming (1995) emphasise the importance of colonial literary texts as sites of cultural control by colonialists. JanMohamed argues that the colonialist literary text is highly effective in determining the 'native' by fixing him/her under the sign of the Other. "Faced with an incomprehensible and multifaceted alterity" due to differences in race, language, social customs, cultural values and modes of production, the colonialist literary text "valorizes the superiority of European cultures, of the collective process that has mediated that representation" (JanMohamed, 1995: 18-19). With his military superiority, the colonialist "ensures a complete projection of his self on the Other: exercising his assumed superiority, he destroys without any significant qualms the effectiveness of indigenous economic, social, political, legal, and moral systems and imposes his own versions of these structures on the Other" (JanMohamed, 1995: 22). Through the text, the moral authority of the coloniser is articulated and justified by seeing the 'native' and representing him/her as inferior in every regard, what JanMohamed terms the Manichean allegory. JanMohamed contends that those in the category of Third World writers are in fact writing back in terms of negating "the prior European negation of colonized cultures" as well as the "adoption and creative modification of Western languages and artistic forms in conjunction with indigenous languages and forms" by these writers (JanMohamed, 1995: 23).

Zia Sardar, Ashis Nandy and Merryl Davies (1993) describe how colonised people were always defined as barbaric, uncivilised, savage, as 'them' rather than 'us' in the European colonial literature. They point out that the process of generating Otherness became a global project after Columbus first landed in the Americas in the late fifteenth century. The colonised people became more "distorted and fictional", the further they were from the European mainland. "Western tendency was to consider *terra incognita* as

being either empty or demonic" (Sardar et al., 1993: 40). These writers describe the encounter between Europe and the Others of Europe as deadly because "Europe's imposition of itself on the New World unleashed a myriad cultural and psychological forces, many of them not yet fully manifest even after 500 years" (Sardar et al., 1993: 83). They identify three such forces: one, the social engineering of the natives' culture and human nature to be as close to that of Europe in their manners, habits, mind and impulses. The second is identified as the West portraying itself as the measure for everything valuable both culturally and psychologically which the Others need to emulate for progress and development. Third, the sense of identity of the Others in the modern world has been displaced. Sardar et al. (1993: 90) sum it up this way: "In the modern world,...the others have now been confronted by a dual incomprehensibility: the difference between the West and their actual self; the difference between their actual self and the invented self Europe gave them". Gayatri Spivak (1995: 24-25) describes the Western project of constituting the colonial subject as Other as "epistemic violence".

It is interesting and altogether not surprising that in cases where the ex-colonised nation gains political independence, the non-indigenous people, if they are not the dominant group, are othered more or less in the same way that the 'natives' had been othered under colonial rule. After all, after many decades of being subjected to discrimination and the blatant and subtle displays of power and domination, once the roles are reversed for the colonised subjects, they in turn will display similar characteristics they had learned from their colonial 'masters'.

Voice

Who can speak for the oppressed, the suppressed, the exploited, the marginalised, the colonised? Who or what is the legitimate voice that can represent the history of a people, a nation? These are critical questions in postcolonial studies. Colonialism deliberately did not allow 'natives' or 'others', that is the colonised subjects, any space to speak for themselves and of themselves in any form, whether in material or discursive practices, in order to maintain domination and power over them. The postcolonial project, therefore, is to provide colonised subjects with 'voice' to speak, to talk back to the Western representation of them in the history books, in imaginary texts and in colonial discourse and to be heard above the silencing that is characteristic of colonial texts.

Commonwealth literature or Third World Literature for example, is a site where postcolonial writers can have voice and can speak back to colonial representations of them. It is also an important site for resistance to and subversion of colonial oppression. Postcolonial theory is another site where postcolonial subjects can write back. However, it is my view that the only ones privileged enough to get their work into print are those 'white' theorists and those 'black' intellectuals/writers who write from the metropolitan centres that had once colonised them. They are either exiles or diasporic migrants who have trained in the intellectual ways of the West. The privileging of text production, in my view, automatically marginalises those who reflect on matters postcolonial in disadvantaged production sites by denying them the written or speaking voice. But does this mean that there are no other voices out there than can be heard, that can speak?

Spivak (1995), in her breakthrough article "Can the Subaltern Speak" argues that the subaltern cannot know or speak itself because of its heterogenous identity. By "subaltern", Spivak meant the oppressed subject or more generally, those of "inferior rank" (Gandhi, 1998). Spivak says: "For the 'true' subaltern group, whose identity is its difference, there is no unrepresentable subaltern subject that can know and speak itself" (Spivak, 1995: 27). Spivak is concerned here with articulating the difficulties and contradictions associated with constructing a "speaking position" for the subaltern and for her, the subaltern is in no position to "know and speak itself' and if it did, it would amount to essentialist fiction (Ashcroft et al., 1995: 8).

In contrast, Benita Parry (1995) is very critical of Spivak's theorisation on the subaltern which disables the colonised and effectively renders him/her voiceless. She puts it this way: "Spivak in her own writings severely restricts (eliminates?) the space in which the colonized can be written back into history, even when 'interventionist possibilities' are exploited through the deconstructive strategies devised by the post-colonial intellectual" (Parry, 1995: 40). She adds "For Spivak, imperialism's epistemic bellicosity decimated the old culture and left the colonized without the ground from which they could utter confrontational words" (Parry, 1995: 43).

Dipesh Chakrabarty (1996: 223) problematizes "the idea of 'Indians' representing themselves in history". He argues that "in so far as the academic discourse of history - that is, 'history' as a discourse produced at the institutional site of the university - is concerned, 'Europe' remains the sovereign, theoretical subject of all histories, including the ones we call 'Indian', 'Chinese', 'Kenyan'" and by extension, 'Fijian'. He adds: "There is a peculiar way in which all these other histories tend to become variations on a

master narrative that could be called "the history of Europe". In this sense, 'Indian' history itself is in a position of subalternity; one can only articulate subaltern subject positions in the name of this history". What Chakrabarty seems to be saying is that all histories outside of Europe are subordinated to European 'history' and can never really stand on their own or have an 'authentic' position. It is clear to me that the hegemony that is present in this instance is just an additional example of the neocolonial practices that continue in ex-colonies despite political decolonisation but this time in 'natives' representing their own histories. What this seems to suggest is that the power and authority of Europe is still so subtly pervasive that one can only articulate one's voice within a European framework, never outside of this.

I am particularly concerned about the written or spoken voices of the once-colonised subalterns themselves who reside in their own countries. As Leela Gandhi (1998: ix) has pointed out, postcolonial theory currently addresses the needs of the Western academy and "what counts as 'marginal' in relation to the West has often been central and foundational in the non-West". For ex-colonised subjects, the insider/outsider and the self/other binarisms attacked and defended in Western academic discourses are ones I would like to critique. I would particularly like to examine these binarisms from the viewpoint of information and power and from the viewpoint of knowledge production, publication and dissemination. Is it possible for subaltern voices to be heard in the centres of intellectual debate such as England, America, New Zealand and Australia, for example? I have no doubt that if they pushed hard enough, they would be able to get their works published locally. However, in terms of making an impact on postcolonial theory from the margins of empire so to speak, in privileged publication centres, is it possible that works of indigenous intellectuals which are grounded in local contexts, for instance, can be recognised as contributing to postcolonial theory? Can this occur without using the weapons of the West such as the strict adherence to theoretical and rigidly analytical papers that appear in academic journals? Is it indeed possible for different ways of knowing and telling to be accepted in Western academic discourse?

For me, something of critical importance that I feel should be addressed by this Western discourse artefact called postcolonial studies or theory is for it to branch out from the academic arena to the public sphere. I would like to see people who are not academics or writers participate more in postcolonial discourse. I think postcolonial theory would have more credibility if, in addition to the theorising about the effects of colonisation, we actually hear the voices of those colonised. An example of this would

be indigenous people talking or writing about their life experiences or life histories, or specific excerpts which describe one particular experience. Of course, all this needs to be grounded in the effects and after-effects of the colonial experience. I think it is the moral responsibility of the intellectual, both locally and globally, to encourage, support and facilitate the dissemination of works on the margins of production to the centre.

I thus would like to see more tangible contributions from people talking or writing about the continual conflict in identity that they are undergoing as a result of the effect that colonisation and today, modernisation/globalisation has on their lives. I would also like to get the views of the older generation and their comparisons of the old and the new way of life. I would like to see the once colonised subject talking or writing their way through how they might in fact effect agency for themselves in order to understand:

* the process and effects of colonisation on their lives;
* how they have resisted this if at all (eg., subversion, hybridity, opposition, duplicity);
* that they are empowered to do something about it.

The issue of voice is one of critical importance in postcolonial discourse. As bell hooks (1989: 9) puts it, "moving from silence into speech for the oppressed, the colonized, the exploited and those who stand and struggle side by side a gesture of defiance that heals, that makes new life and new growth possible". While recognising the ambiguities and tensions that are inherent in questions of representations, my thesis is a deliberate strategy to create a space for speaking/writing voices for Indigenous Fijians on matters concerning their local contexts. I argue in Chapter Eight that this thesis is one that enacts hybridity, is one where the academic binarism of analysis/narratives needs to be dismantled, where it is possible, in fact, for indigenous voices to be spoken and be heard, both in local and international sites. For as Gandhi (1998: 4) has put it:

> Postcolonialism can be seen as a theoretical resistance to the mystifying amnesia of the colonial aftermath. It is a disciplinary project devoted to the academic task of revisiting, remembering and crucially, interrogating the colonial past. The process of returning to the colonial scene discloses a relationship of reciprocal antagonism and desire between coloniser and colonised.

It is the process of "interrogating the colonial past" to provide voice and space for colonial subalterns in Fiji that is one of my concerns in this thesis.

Strategic Essentialism

Gayatri Spivak (1990, 1995) is credited with the term "strategic essentialism". Essentialism is a characteristic that postmodernism shuns. In the multiplicities and complexities that abound in every aspect of the postmodernist moment, it is unfashionable to be essentialist, totalising or deterministic. So what does essentialism mean in postcolonial theory? "Essentialism is the assumption that groups, categories or classes have one or several defining features exclusive to all members of that category" (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 1998: 77). Peter Childs and Patrick Williams (1997: 159) identify three instances, the first to do with language having an essential meaning; the second where there is a need by postcolonial groups or nations "to achieve an identity uncontaminated by universalist or Eurocentric concepts and images"; and the third is in terms of Spivak's consistent questioning of essentialism as a "globalizing, ahistorical approach". With regard to the language example, Childs and Williams (1997: 159) note that essentialism is the belief that "language has an essential meaning—that there is a concrete, specific, unchanging meaning for a term such as 'British' or 'West Indian': as opposed to a belief that words take on their meanings through usage and discursive power". They add that "Such essentializing becomes the basis for exclusion and exploitation through a rhetoric of verisimilitude and authenticity that asserts what is 'real' or 'true'".

However, at some contingent, historic-specific moment, it may be strategic to be essentialist in order to effect agency or voice for disadvantaged or marginalised groups. Spivak (1990: 109), in an interview, puts it this way: "It is not possible to be non-essentialistic...; the subject is always centred". She adds that because of this point, a person "can self-consciously use this irreducible moment of essentialism as part of one's strategy" which can be used as part of a "good" as well as a "bad" strategy and "can be used self-consciously as well as unselfconsciously" (Spivak, 1990: 109). A strategy is not the same as a theory: it is directed, combative and particular to a situation (Childs and Williams, 1997). Spivak (1990) also argues that no representation can take place without essentialism.

Strategic essentialism is therefore "the political use of categories rooted in the natural and the universal" and Spivak's argument is that one can make a choice "when interrogating the border between the theoretical and the practical in certain situations" (Childs and Williams, 1997: 157). A strategic use of essentialism is when "You pick up

the universal that will give you the power to fight against the other side, and what you are throwing away by doing that is your theoretical purity" (Spivak, 1990: 12). However, a key problem for postcolonial theory and historiographical practice is as follows: "When almost all available accounts and documents are written by the colonizers, or an indigenous elite, how does the historiographer give a voice or an agency to those sections of the colonized who participated in anti-colonial resistance?" (Childs and Williams, 1997: 162). Notwithstanding this limitation, the strategic use of essentialism is one which postcolonial theorists (for example, a written speaking voice in academia) and the indigenous people, elite and otherwise (recovery of historical voice), can use to effect voice and agency for themselves in order to recover the voice, space and the dignity of what I would call "knowing themselves and of themselves by themselves".

Cultural Identity

A person can have different identities: personal, physical, social, cultural, economic, political and religious (Tagi, 1991). To these categories can be added ethnic, racial and national identities. Linnekin and Poyer (1990) make the distinction between Western nations and Pacific Island nation states regarding a person's identity. They argue that the Europeans and Americans tend to see ethnicity as a matter of 'blood' and ancestry (called the Mendelian model) whereas Pacific Island people generally identify themselves according to the environment, behaviour and performance of others (called the Lamarckian model). The latter is very much interactional and emphasises relationships with others whereas the Western "paradigms of group identity rely both on a biological theory of inheritance and on a psychological model of a discrete, bounded individual" (Linnekin and Poyer, 1990: 7). However, the processes of colonisation and westernisation have encouraged Pacific Islanders to define themselves according to the Western model when it comes to defining themselves as ethnic groups. We can say that the processes of colonisation, westernisation and now globalisation have produced (and will continue to produce) hybrid human subjects

By contrast, Stuart Hall (1996a: 2) responds in two ways. First, he makes the point that identity is a concept "operating 'under erasure' in the interval between reversal and emergence; an idea which cannot be thought in the old way, but without which certain key questions cannot be thought at all". Second, Hall asks "where, in relation to what set of problems, does the *irreducibility* of the concept, identity, emerge?" (Hall, 1996a: 2). Hall sees the answer to this question "in its centrality to the question of

agency and politics". He emphasises that the concept of identity is not "an essentialist but a strategic and positional one" (Hall, 1996a: 3).

In his discussion on cultural identity, Hall (1996b: 110-120) offers two different ways of thinking about it; the first in terms of one shared culture which "already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture" and the second in terms of undergoing constant transformation "subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture and power". In the first category, Hall (1996b: 110-111) defines cultural identity as:

> a sort of collective 'one true self', hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed 'selves', which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common. Within the terms of this definition, our cultural identities provide us, as 'one people', with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning, beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our one actual history.

Hall points out that his second conception of cultural identity refers to the intervention of history which constitutes "what we have become". In this sense, cultural identity "is a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being'. Cultural identities belong to both the future as well as the past". And "Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialist past, they are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture and power". For Hall, then, cultural identities "are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past" (Hall, 1996b: 112). In an interview with Kuan-Hsing Chen (Morley and Chen, 1996), Hall makes the point that cultural identity is not fixed, that it is always hybrid. He puts it this way:

> I think cultural identity is not fixed, it's always hybrid. But this is precisely because it comes out of very specific historical formations, out of very specific histories and cultural repertoires of enunciation, that it can constitute a 'positionality', which we call, provisionally, identity. It's not just anything. So each of those identity-stories is inscribed in the positions we take up and identify with, and we have to live this ensemble of identity-positions in all its specificities". (In Morley and Chen, 1996: 502)

According to Padmini Mongia (1996: 11), Hall "emphasises the necessity of understanding different notions of identity that remain sensitive to specific locations and moments; he is thus able to argue for a strategic essentialism that has served a crucial role in anti-colonial struggles of the past and continues to do so today". The notion, then, of cultural identity and its relationship to a strategic essentialism is an important one.

What is obvious from the above discussion is that notions of identity need not be essentialist as Hall (1996b) has put it. Rather, identity can be invoked in "a strategic and

51

positional" way. The important point that I feel Hall is making is that identities are always hybrid because they are continuously subjected to the interplay of history, culture and power. As he said, identity is "becoming" as well as "being". If one is, and is still, in the process of becoming, the resultant effect would have to be a hybrid identity. If we accept the above, then it is increasingly clear that there is no such thing as a 'pure' or fixed identity, that in fact, each person lives an "ensemble of identity positions in all its specificities" as Hall has described it. Cultural identities are therefore "always hybrid".

Hybridity/Third Space

Homi Bhabha's theorisation of the concepts of hybridity, ambivalence and mimicry "have become touchstones for debates over colonial discourse, anti-colonial resistance, and post-colonial identity" (Childs and Williams, 1997: 123-124). Bhabha (1994: 112) defines hybridity in the colonial moment in this way:

> Hybridity is the sign of the productivity of colonial power, its shifting forces and fixities; it is the name for the strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal (that is, the production of discriminatory identities that secure the 'pure' and original identity of authority)....For the colonial hybrid is the articulation of the ambivalent space where the rite of power is enacted on the site of desire, making its objects at once disciplinary and disseminatory - or, in my mixed metaphor, a negative transparency.

Bhabha (1994: 114) further notes:

> Hybridity is a problematic of colonial representation and individuation that reverses the effects of the colonialist disavowal, so that other 'denied' knowledges enter upon the dominant discourse and estrange the basis of its authority - its rule of recognition.

For Bhabha, hybridity does not indicate corruption or decline but rather, it is "the most common and effective form of subversive oppositions since it displays the 'necessary deformation and displacement of all sites of discrimination and domination'" (Ashcroft et al., 1995: 9). Ashcroft et al. note that Bhabha's argument is that the colonial space is an agnostic one because the relationship between the coloniser and the colonised "becomes one of constant, if implicit, contestation and opposition" (p. 9). In a paper titled 'Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences', Bhabha (1995) introduces the notion of the Third Space of enunciation in this manner:

> The pact of interpretation is never simply an act of communication between the I and the You designated in the statement. The production of meaning requires that these two places be mobilized in the passage through a Third Space, which

52

represents both the general conditions of language and the specific implication on the utterance in a performative and institutional strategy of which I cannot 'in itself' be conscious. What this unconscious relation introduces is an ambivalence in the act of interpretation....(p. 208)

According to Bhabha, it is this Third Space, this "in-between space" which "makes it possible to begin envisaging national, anti-nationalist, histories of the 'people'. It is in this space that we will find those words with which we can speak of Ourselves and Others. And by exploring this hybridity, this 'Third Space', we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of our selves" (Bhabha, 1995: 209). Robert Young (1995: 22) says this about Bhabha: "For Bhabha, hybridity becomes the moment in which the discourse of colonial authority loses its univocal grip on meaning and finds itself open to the trace of the language of the other, enabling the critic to trace complex movements of disarming alterity in the colonial text". Young (1995: 26-27) elaborates on Bhabha's concept of hybridity by arguing that hybridity "makes difference into sameness and sameness into difference, but in a way that makes the same no longer the same, the difference no longer simply different". He further notes that hybridity "consists of a bizarre binate operation, in which each impulse is qualified against the other, forcing momentary forms of dislocation and displacement into complex economies of agonistic reticulation" (Young, 1995: 26-27).

How does the theorising on hybridity or third space relate to cultural identity for decolonised peoples in postcolonial sites? As Hall (1996b) has argued, cultural identities are continuously transformed by the interaction of history, culture and power. One's identity is, therefore, never static or fixed as such but is being continually transformed. So while one can have a shared culture with a "shared history and ancestry" which provide "stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning" (Hall, 1996b: 111), at the same time, one's sense of identity is undergoing transformation. As Hall (1996b: 112) so aptly describes it, "Cultural identity...is a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being'". For me, Hall's conception of cultural identity fits in well with what Bhabha is saying. Although Bhabha is talking about the hybridity in identity and power relations when the colonised person subverts the authority of the colonial text and makes the relationship an ambivalent one, one can apply this to postcolonial contexts in the manner I have interpreted Hall. My interpretation of Bhabha is that the colonisers failed to completely inscribe subservient subject positions on the colonised because the

outcome of any colonial-colonised situation will be a hybridised one: neither identity staying quite the way the other perceived it to be.

The approach to third space or hybridity that is most appropriate for this research project is provided by bell hooks (1990), an Afro-American intellectual. In her discussion about issues of space and location she talks about "spaces of radical openness" where one chooses to resist against notions of domination and oppression. In this conception, "this space of radical openness is a margin - a profound edge" which is "also the site of radical possibility, a space of resistance". And it is this marginality which she names "as a central location for the production of a counter-hegemonic discourse" (hooks, 1990: 149). hooks emphasises that for oppressed, exploited, colonised people, it is critical to understand marginality as a position and place of resistance. She makes the distinction between the marginality that is imposed by oppressive structures and the choice of marginality as a site of resistance. She aptly describes it in this manner:

> I am located in the margin. I make a definite distinction between that marginality which is imposed by oppressive structures and that marginality one chooses as site of resistance - as location of radical openness and possibility. This site of resistance is continually formed in that segregated culture of opposition that is our critical response to domination. We come to this space through suffering and pain, through struggle....We are transformed, individually, collectively, as we make radical creative space which affirms and sustains our subjectivity, which gives us a new location from which to articulate our sense of the world. (hooks, 1990: 153)

Edward Soja (1996), a geographer, describes bell hooks' work on "Thirdspace" as "the new cultural politics of difference and identity that is re-awakening the contemporary world to the powerfully symbolic spaces of representation, to struggles over the right to be different, to a new politics of location and a radical spatial subjectivity and praxis that is postmodern from the start" (Soja, 1996: 84). It is works such as this that create a space of radical openness from which "to build communities of resistance and renewal that cross the boundaries and double-cross the binaries of race, gender, class, and all oppressively Othering categories" (Soja, 1996: 84).

Postcolonial Curriculum

There has been very little theory and practice on the concept of the postcolonial curriculum. For me, there are two critical issues that a postcolonial curriculum must address. First, it must take into account the need to value the cultural identity of every student in the class including particularly, Indigenous Fijian students (Hall's first

conception of cultural identity that is of "being"). As well, it should be concerned with addressing the question of how all students, Indigenous Fijians included, are going to reinvent themselves as hybrid, complex and dynamic human subjects in these new, changing times. This would take cognisance of Hall's second conception of cultural identity as a state of "becoming".

At this point, I refer the reader back to Thomas and Postlethwaite's questions on educational institutions at the point of decolonisation (See page 43). I had asked whether these questions were still applicable in the postcolonial moment or whether they should be reframed. My view is that they need to be transformed into the following set of questions:

- What constitutes a postcolonial curriculum?
- Why is there a necessity to reinvent such a curriculum?
- What values and ideals would it uphold? What would be the rationale of the postcolonial curriculum?
- What are its aims?
- What knowledge, attitudes and skills would this curriculum emphasise?
- What language would this curriculum be taught in?
- Who would decide what the content is?
- Whose interests would such a curriculum serve?
- Who benefits from such a curriculum?
- What are the social, educational, economic and political implications of developing and implementing such a curriculum?

The answers to all the questions I have raised here would form the framework for a model of the reinvented postcolonial curriculum which will be discussed in the final chapter.

After these questions are answered, another set of issues needs to be to addressed to ensure that the curriculum is a democratic one that does not marginalise the knowledge and cultural systems of any ethnic/cultural group living in Fiji. One such question has to do with whether the needs and aspirations of all the communities living in Fiji are met. Another critical issue concerns hegemony. How does a society ensure that the hegemonic practices of the colonial past are not perpetuated and maintained in this reinvented curriculum? As well, how does the society ensure that hegemony favouring one group over another does not replace the old hegemony?

The curriculum in Fiji has gone through two phases: colonial (1835-1970) and neocolonial (1970 to the present). My firm conviction is that the curriculum should undergo another phase. I will argue in Chapter Eight that Fiji's present curriculum does not meet the needs of all the communities and consequently needs to be overhauled and transformed. I will also argue that another justification for this transformation or reinvention is the need to meet the challenges of the 'New Times' that the global community is facing, particularly in view of the dynamic technological and communication 'revolution' sweeping the world. The Fiji school curriculum should reflect the inescapable 'truth' that the people are living in different times.

Theorising Social Justice and AA in Postcolonial Contexts: the Case Study Proposed

I have argued in the first section of this chapter that traditional notions of AA in the way they have been applied and theorised in Western educational contexts (and aped in postcolonial societies) are limited. I argued in the second part that recent postcolonial theory/discourse may provide conceptual and analytical resources and insights that provide a more comprehensive notion of AA that is more appropriate for the Fiji context. I now turn to a tentative exploration of how we might theorise AA and social justice in postcolonial contexts with specific reference to the Fiji context.

In Western liberal democratic nation states, the concepts of AA and social justice are intricately bound up with groups who comprise the minority population in terms of numbers and opportunities open to them (Edwards, 1995). Not only are ethnic migrant groups included in this minority category but indigenous groups also. The debate on AA and social justice, internationally, has centred on whether or not specific legal and institutional interventions aimed at increasing access for minority groups are desirable and indeed essential. The idea of social justice, of which AA is part, as applied in the West, is a contested and controversial concept (Rizvi and Lingard, 1996). Indeed, proponents of AA are now arguing for a politics of difference that acknowledges and affirms rather than marginalises difference, that promotes a heterogeneity of perspectives, that is liberating and enabling for affected groups (I.M. Young, 1990, Yeatman, 1994).

However, the concept of AA as understood in Western countries is somewhat different in the context of Fiji. It is true that AA was considered by two Postcolonial Governments as necessary to provide equality of opportunity and access for the indigenous population who were identified as disadvantaged in education and employment. However, target groups in Fiji differ in two respects from that of minority

populations in Western countries. First, Indigenous Fijians are not a subaltern minority like the Aboriginals in Australia, Maoris in New Zealand or American Indians in the United States of America. At the point of decolonisation, Indigenous Fijians, together with the Indo-Fijians, were the two dominant population groups in Fiji. Second, Indigenous Fijians have always held political power from the point of political decolonisation. In this regard, the question of AA in the Fiji context may or may not have parallels with its framing in those contexts where the group seen to be the beneficiary of AA is 'diasporic', or politically disenfranchised.

How then might we theorise AA and social justice in postcolonial contexts? What new insights can this research project provide? This thesis is not only a critique of AA but, just as importantly, it attempts to re-envision AA specifically in the Fiji context. Using a process of historical analysis and drawing on the conceptual resources provided by postcolonial theory, the thesis attempts to reconceptualise AA in new conditions in new times. Using the case study approach, I hope to provide a detailed and textured description and micro-analysis of AA in Fiji. The concept of situated knowledges is one that is critical in postcolonial theory, thus by using the case study approach, it is my intention to offer insights and new meanings that may be useful in the generation of hypotheses and theory building.

In the next chapter, I provide a detailed description and analysis of Fiji's colonial history in order to set the contextual background of the study. Since the issue of representation is critical in postcolonial theory, I explore the way Fiji's pre-colonial and colonial history have been textually represented. The issue of resistance is also important, thus, in the next chapter, questions of resistance and agency are also explored. Since the primary instruments of colonial power and control are history, language and education, I particularly emphasise these in the next chapter to show how they were manifested in the Fiji context. I also provide some background information on what I perceive to be important aspects of Fiji's contemporary conditions, arguing in particular that Fiji is a colonial construct and that the neocolonial configurations of what *is* has arisen out of what *was*, demonstrating that it is primarily Fiji's colonial history that has shaped its past and present and will no doubt impinge on its future. In the last section of the next chapter, I specifically discuss Fiji's educational system, focussing on racial inequalities in schooling and how AA was thought about, talked about, implemented and what some of its outcomes have been.

There are some important questions that this thesis attempts to answer. Was AA in Fiji an historically appropriate response to the social and educational inequalities created by its colonial past? Is it morally just for AA to be instituted for a majority group? What are the implications for social justice when AA is race-based, rather than based on gender and/or class? How was AA implemented and what have been its outcomes? How does one counter the hegemony that is sure to creep in when race-based policies are decided by the dominant beneficiary group? Are there other alternatives for AA in Fiji that may be more appropriate for Fiji in the 1990s? The answers to these questions will be addressed in Chapters Six and Eight.

Other questions also need addressing. For instance, what has been the basis for AA in Fiji? The category of race continues to hold dominance in the social and political fabric of national life. Since comparisons in the educational performance of Indigenous Fijians and 'Others' have underpinned AA practices, the important questions to ask are: How relevant or appropriate is the use of comparisons based on race in the 1990s compared to the 1970s and 1980s? What is the nature of the 'educational gap' and is this still an appropriate national strategy to use as an argument for the continuation of AA? What are the underlying causes of racial inequalities in schooling? How useful are explanations given for the underachievement of Indigenous Fijians and how do they hold theoretically? This set of questions will be answered in Chapter Five.

Indeed, what should be done to counter inequalities in schooling? What reforms to policy, people and school should be undertaken to improve on the lot of Indigenous Fijians? What can different agencies do to improve on the educational performance of Indigenous Fijians? Chapter Seven deals with reforms that informants have decided are necessary if AA is to work and if Indigenous Fijians are to do better in schooling.

For a postcolonial thesis, issues of voice and agency are of critical importance. As stated in Chapter One, one of the aims of the study is to enable informants to speak and be heard. Just as importantly the questions of whether this is a subaltern thesis and where it is heard and not heard are addressed in Chapter Eight. Other critical questions asked in the thesis are how salient is the use of neocolonial educational structures to explain underachievement, how colonially hegemonic is the current curriculum and can there be another more appropriate and culturally democratic curriculum that is not symbolically violent? These questions are addressed particularly in Chapter Eight.

In this chapter, I have explicated the theoretical frameworks that underpin the thesis. I highlighted the limitations of traditional ways of thinking of AA in Western

capitalist nations and argued that postcolonial theoretical resources may be more useful and appropriate in providing a broader and more comprehensive conception of AA in postcolonial societies like Fiji. In the next chapter, I undertake a postcolonial interrogation of Fiji's pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial contexts to lay the groundwork for a better understanding of the way AA in Fiji was conceptualised, implemented and talked about.

CHAPTER THREE

CONTEXTUALISING THE STUDY: PRECOLONIAL, COLONIAL, POSTCOLONIAL FIJI

In the previous chapter, I laid out the theoretical frameworks that underpinned the thesis. I first outlined the discourse on AA and demonstrated its limitations in understanding AA in Fiji. I then explicated the postcolonial theoretical framework as it is postcolonial conceptual resources that provide a broader and comprehensive understanding of AA in decolonised or postcolonial sites. However, in order to understand the origin and background of AA in education in Fiji, one needs to understand Fiji's history because the need for AA arose in response to the educational and other social inequalities created by Fiji's colonial history. This chapter, then, will explicate the impact of Fiji's colonial history to lay this understanding. It has five foci.

First, I critically re-explore representations of Fiji's pre-colonial history, not only as a privileging act, but more importantly as an act of resistance against the primacy of colonial representations and discourses that constructed the category and entity called Fiji. Second, I provide a brief overview of contemporary social, political and economic conditions in Fiji. Third, I provide an analysis of Fiji's colonial history, including resistance to colonial rule. Fourth, I argue that despite political independence, Fiji's educational system is an instrument of colonialism and the practices of colonial reproduction are still in play at this historical juncture. In particular, I analyse colonial and postcolonial representations of Indigenous Fijian underachievement. Finally, I will show that AA in education was a deliberate intervention on the part of a newly independent government to assert Fiji's postcoloniality.

This chapter, therefore, will be a review of economic, political and social conditions in precolonial, colonial and postcolonial Fiji. My principal intention is to critically discuss Fiji's history using conceptual resources provided by postcolonial theory. I will make the case that colonialism did not end at independence but that neocolonialism continues to pervade all structures—economic, political, social, and cultural. I will argue particularly that colonial reproduction is still part of Fiji's education system which has maintained colonial structures of curriculum, pedagogy, organisation, administration and assessment. AA policy, therefore, in education was Fiji's way of countering the effects of its colonial history and asserting its postcoloniality.

Precolonial Fiji

Since there is no written historical record by Indigenous Fijians, information on pre-contact conditions can be gleaned from the writings of Western historians, anthropologists, archaeologists as well as the earlier writings of the colonialists in Fiji, mainly in the form of missionaries and those working in the colonial services such as governors and bureaucrats. Whether these writings are an 'authentic' reflection of what existed before contact with the white man is contested. There are no written records in the language of the Indigenous Fijians by the Indigenous Fijians themselves to verify this because they did not have a form of writing prior to Western contact. These writings by non-Indigenous Fijians would also be problematic because their interpretations are drawn from a perspective informed and influenced by Western cultural values, norms and attitudes. They would also be problematic in the sense that what they write would be accepted by the Indigenous Fijians themselves as an authentic and authoritative view of themselves. In other words, what is represented by the English written word becomes internalised as the 'real' and 'true' representation of the history of the indigenous people. While Western representations of Indigenous Fijian culture and world view are problematic, the irony is that they nevertheless will be used, albeit critically, in this attempt to try and describe what it must have been like during pre-white-man-contact times.

It is erroneous to believe that Fiji had no history prior to contact with the white 'man'. The history books written from the perspective of the 'West' refer to the pre-colonial period as 'pre-history'. This is problematic because it assumes a history relative to contact with Western man. The pre-colonial history of Fiji is still being reconstructed. However, archaeological and other evidence show that Fiji could have been settled as early as 1290 BC (Frost, 1979: 65).

Where did the ancestors of the first Indigenous Fijians come from? This is still an area of educated speculation, but archaeological and linguistic evidence seem to indicate that they migrated from the direction of South East Asia, with Indonesia being the hiving off point of the people in Oceania (Tudor, 1962; Derrick, 1946). One source postulates that the ancestors of the present Fijians were first Papuan, then Melanesian and finally, Polynesian, in that order (Tudor, 1962: 47). According to Tudor (1962), the Papuans were the first to populate the Melanesian chain of islands, beginning with New Guinea and continuing eastward. It is not certain whether they reached Fiji. Tudor (1962) postulates that maybe seven thousand years ago, the Melanesians migrated further east,

reached Fiji and became the forefathers of the current Indigenous Fijians. Still according to Tudor (1962), the Polynesians, sailing along on a different route, arrived in Fiji some thousands of years later and settled mainly in the coastal areas of Fiji as well as in the eastern islands of the island group. The first Indigenous Fijians sighted by the first Westerners seem to be the products of the mingling of Melanesian-Polynesian 'stock'. Other sources (e.g., Howard and Durutalo, 1987), drawing their conclusions from archaeological and linguistic evidence, are in agreement that the ancestors of today's Indigenous Fijians were 'Melanesian' and 'Polynesian' in origin.

Many Indigenous Fijians generally believe that they are directly descended from a migration that brought the God chiefs Lutunasobasoba and Degei from the ancient homeland and landed on the north-west coast of Viti Levu (Gravelle, 1980, Bk One; Derrick, 1946). Indigenous legends report that Lutunasobasoba died and that Degei's many sons founded families with the original Melanesian women and migrated to other parts of Fiji. According to Peter France (1969), this widely known legend only made its appearance in 1892 when a Fijian paper, *Na Mata*, organised a competition to trace the origins of the Indigenous Fijians and so out of the winning entry, the legend of Degei was born. France (1969: 4) argues that this "myth" of Indigenous Fijian origins "seems to be a product of acculturation and the growing Fijian national consciousness rather than an indigenous tradition, and is significant of the needs, rather than the history, of the society which produced and accepted it". But according to Tudor (1962), many Indigenous Fijians are able to trace their descent back eleven generations to this migration. However, this indigenous belief is in dispute because the so called 'experts' believe that this is too short a period of time for the Indigenous Fijians to have reached the homogeneous state that they were found in by the first Europeans (Tudor, 1962). Whatever the case may be, it seems correct to conclude that the Indigenous Fijians had their origins in the many migrations from Melanesia and Polynesia. In areas of Fiji where the Polynesian influence was minimal, for example in the interior of Viti Levu, the 'Melanesian' physical traits as well as social organisation are significantly evident. In other areas, such as some of the eastern islands, the Tongan influence is physically, socially and linguistically evident. What is also evident is that given the lack of 'evidence', it is difficult to be certain about the origins of the Indigenous Fijian people. For as France (1969: 8) describes it, "The thin mist persists in Fiji, and prehistorians are making renewed attempts to penetrate it".

What of the social, economic, and political conditions of pre-contact Fiji? One Westerner, discussing the plight of Indigenous Fijians soon after contact with the West, has this to say about the effect of this contact on the old social structure (Coulter, 1942: 20):

> The Fijians at this time had a stable social, political, and economic organization of their own - one little understood by missionaries and other Europeans who visited their shores or came to reside in their islands. So much of their old ways of living has been misunderstood by Europeans, abandoned by them, modified, and spoiled by Western contacts that we shall never know or appreciate the finer points in their old social structure.

It is widely accepted that the education of the Indigenous Fijians was carried out informally as part of day to day living. Learning was contextually derived and was therefore relevant and meaningful. Indigenous Fijian children learned through listening, observing, imitating and practising what their elders did. Cultural knowledge, values and norms were transmitted from one generation to the next by the elders, be they grandparents, parents, older siblings or other members of the extended family. The elders would relate stories and legends to the young which would explain their history, their origins, their value systems and their view of the universe (Baba, 1991). Cultural knowledge was therefore passed on through these means with a lot of emphasis placed on listening and memory, especially for knowledge of the past, lineage history and so forth.

My paternal grandmother (to whom this thesis is partially dedicated) - recently deceased, the result of a union between an American beachcomber and an Indigenous Fijian lady from one of the eastern islands - could trace my father's family tree back six generations. She was almost ninety before she passed on but she still had a phenomenal memory which had been trained acutely in the oral traditions. In contrast, the written tradition is what indigenous people of my generation are trained in through the formal schooling system and we lack the minute attention to oral detail that our forefathers and foremothers were trained in. Knowledge and cultural values were therefore transmitted in pre-contact times via the family and members belonging to the same community in a rich oral tradition. This process, however, is now so mediated by the process of formal schooling that many Indigenous Fijians, for example, are losing out on their cultural knowledges and wisdoms. This is a consequence of the undermining and undervaluing of indigenous cultural knowledges that began during colonial rule and continues in this postcolonial moment. School learning is foreign, abstract and in many cases, irrelevant for daily living and there is far too much emphasis placed on 'book learning'.

Brij Lal (1992), an Indo-Fijian historian, points out that limited evidence disables us from describing the diverse social and political organisation of the early Indigenous Fijians. However, he notes that albeit risking some distortion and oversimplification, early Fijian society can be said to be "hierarchical and based on the principle of patrilineal agnatic descent" (Lal, 1992: 4). Deryck Scarr, a Western historian (1984: 3), likewise notes that Indigenous Fijians "favoured definition of status and authority by descent" with society ascribing functions whether it be chief, craftsman, fisherman, warrior or priest. According to the Bauan dialect, which was the indigenous dialect standardised during colonial rule, every Indigenous Fijian belonged to a *yavusa* 'clan' defined by as an "extended patrilineal kin-group claiming descent from a *vu*, or founding father" (Scarr, 1984: 5). This was regarded as the major building block of society. The other units of Indigenous Fijian society have been identified in descending order as *mataqali* or "family groups" where rank and power were determined by linear proximity to the founding father (Lal, 1992: 4), and the *i tokatoka*, the smallest unit, comprised of "the closely related households living in a defined area of village and cooperating to perform such communal undertakings as the building and maintenance of houses and the preparation of feasts" (Lal, 1992: 5). Several *yavusa* might join forces to form a confederation defined as the *vanua* or state. By the end of the eighteenth century, according to Lal, many *vanua* had united into a larger state called the *matanitu*.

Lal points out that the leading *matanitu* were involved in a great struggle for political supremacy complicated by external forces encroaching on Fiji at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The point I would like to emphasise here is that the social and political organisation of pre-contact Fiji varied substantially across the Fiji group. This variation is not accounted for in many accounts of social and political organisation of the Indigenous Fijian which assumes cultural homogeneity for all indigenous groups. Another point also worth making is that the social and political organisation of pre-contact (as well as post-contact) Fijian society is complex and well-developed and that this brief definition does not do justice to the elaborate patterns of familial and political relationships and allegiance that were well in place before the arrival of the first 'white man'. These complex relationships continue to play a significant role, not only in the organisation of Indigenous Fijian social life, but also in the political structures of postcolonial Fiji.

The early writings of the Christian missionaries describe Indigenous Fijians as living in a state of spiritual darkness (France, 1969), as backward, uneducated,

uncivilised and ignorant. They were represented as evil heathens and savages: "the very dregs of Mankind...quite unfit to live, but more unfit to die" (quoted in France, 1969: 29). Writing in 1858, James Calvert (1858: 1) described Indigenous Fijian nature as "the worst deformities, the foulest stains, disfiguring and blackening all the rest". It is interesting that very little is known of what the Indigenous Fijians thought of these 'white intruders'. France (1969) makes the point that the journals of traders, missionaries and planters are filled with complaints that the natives did not appreciate the advantages of adopting European ways. France records that some beachcombers were described as "blind", "as resembling a pig with all the hair scorched off" and the like. This observation negates the ethnocentric and Eurocentric view that Indigenous Fijians, on first contact, greeted the Europeans like "jubilant, awe-struck savages". As France (1969: 20) explains, the error of this view "lies in assuming that the natives of the Pacific judged Western civilization, on its first appearance, by its own values". And as Coulter (1942: 20) observes, the social and religious practices of the 'natives' "can be understood only within the framework of their own social order" with European society on the continent of Europe "no less obviously cruel" .

Coulter describes pre-contact Fijians as a religious people with their own gods, priests, witch doctors and temples. While what took place in the temples would be termed barbaric, heathenistic and utterly cruel from the Western perspective, Coulter explains that the "sacred beliefs and practices of the people were a function of their whole economic and social organization" (Coulter, 1942: 20-21). In terms, therefore, of Western civilisation these practices were absolutely evil. However, from the perspective of the indigenous people, their practices were socially derived, accepted and practised.

The question arises, then, of which perspective can be deemed the 'right' one if there can be such a thing. In the case of Fiji, Westerners came in with preconceived ideas of the indigenous people viewed against their own cultural values. The missionaries, for instance, were determined to change the existing practices so that they were closer to Western ideals/ideas. They imposed their own moral/religious framework on the people with scant regard for the repercussions on the old way of life that had been developed over a period of time. I argue that the dramatic changes imposed on the Indigenous Fijians beginning with Western contact is just as violent, cruel and barbaric as the cultural practices that Westerners found so abhorrent.

What I have done is to describe some representations of the features of pre-contact Fiji, with two principle motivations. First, it is a deliberate attempt to privilege this

neglected aspect of Fiji's history. As well, I have done this as an act of resistance against the portrayal in Western history books of a 'pre-history', against the notion that Fiji's history began at the point of contact with the coloniser, against the inherent assumption by the colonisers (colonial bureaucrats, missionaries, etc.) that Indigenous Fijian history prior to colonial contact was insignificant.

In so doing I am creating here a hybrid space, a 'Third Space' (Bhabha, 1995) where "the discourse of colonial authority loses its univocal meaning" enabling me, the postcolonial critic, "to trace complex movements of disarming alterity in the colonial text" (R. Young, 1995: 22). Or better still, what I am creating is a Thirdspace (Soja, 1996) where I have chosen a space "of radical openness" to resist against notions of colonial domination and oppression, as bell hooks (1990) so succinctly put it, that is inherently reflected in the silence prevalent in colonial (non-)treatment of Fiji's 'pre-history'. This "margin" which I have chosen to write from is one which is also "the site of radical possibility, a space of resistance" against hegemonic colonial (and postmodern academic) discourses. It is one that deliberately takes on a positionality that is strategically essentialist, using Spivak (1995), and one where I hope to produce "a counter-hegemonic discourse", in bell hook's words.

Having explicated what little is known of Fiji's history prior to the arrival of the "white man" as a point of resistance to colonial hegemonic discourses, I now turn to a brief description of 'contemporary Fiji' in order to set the 'present' scene before I carry out an analysis of 'colonial Fiji'. In this section, I make the important point that Fiji is a colonial construct. I then situate and locate Fiji on the 'global map' for those who have very little idea of where Fiji is. I also describe the current economic, political and social conditions that I feel are pertinent to mention in order to set the context for the substantive discussion that will follow on colonial and postcolonial conditions in Fiji.

Contemporary Fiji

I have not included this section in the last section of this chapter on Postcolonial Fiji for several reasons. The most important one is that at the outset, I wish to emphasise that many current institutional, ideological, social, economic, political and cultural practices are hybrid amalgamations resulting from the colonial encounter between coloniser and colonised. Second, it is important to provide a brief general introduction to Fiji's place in Western conceived notions of place and space, its population composition and other information that does not quite fit into the specificities of Fiji's educational

system that I describe in great detail later. Third, a contextual description of contemporary Fiji in terms of the bigger picture of economic, social and political life is important to frame up later discussions on 'Colonial' and 'Postcolonial Fiji'. I must admit that my primary intention to provide the information I have selected for this section of the chapter is as much for convenience as for any analytic purpose. The principal reason why the section on Fiji's colonial history sits in the nexus between the present (Contemporary Fiji) and the recent past and continuing present (Postcolonial Fiji) is to demonstrate that it is Fiji's colonial history that has shaped its past, present (and future). This is my analytic starting point.

Fiji: A Colonial Construction

What constitutes the category commonly known today as 'Fiji? It is my view that colonial practices—including the historical, imaginative, material, institutional and discursive practices—constructed the phenomenon called Fiji. The impact of almost one century of British colonialism on Fiji's physical, social, cultural, political and psychological landscape has been enormous and far reaching. The process of colonisation transformed many facets of life for Indigenous Fijians who, together with peoples of Asia and the Pacific, were treated as the 'Others' of Europe. This othering process manifested itself in many ways. For instance, the Indigenous Fijian traditional learning systems changed from relevant, contextualised ones to foreign, abstract forms that emphasised academic book learning. Their religious institution was transformed with many Indigenous Fijians converting to Christianity so that in this postcolonial moment, the majority are Christians. The political system follows the democratic ideals of the British-based Westminster system of governance. The economic structure is modelled on the capitalist market system. As a consequence of colonisation, many people have internalised the 'Western' ways of doing things. The fact that English is the language of schooling, official communication, administration, commerce, law and politics speaks of the extent to which colonial structures still permeate the local in this postcolonial moment, confirming the observation that one of the main features of colonial oppression is control over language (Ashcroft et al., 1989). It is possible to argue, therefore, that Fiji itself as we know it, perceive it, and indeed, name it, is a colonial construct.

The process of naming and categorising the place and the people is one which makes the unknown 'knowable' to the colonisers. This process constructs certain images.

The image of an 'underachiever' or 'failure' in the school system is a constructed one for Indigenous Fijians (see, for example, Education Reports during the colonial period) which has continued in this postcolonial moment. The Christian missionaries and the white community in general 'imaged' them as "savages" (Tudor, 1962) who had "the worst deformities, the foulest stains" in character and they "stood unrivalled as a disgrace to mankind" (Calvert, 1858: 1-2). At other times, Indigenous Fijians have been constructed as "lazy" (Coulter, 1942), "happy-go-lucky" and "irresponsible" (Belshaw, 1964: 269) with "a lack of drive", "a lack of competitive spirit" which, according to Belshaw (1964: 3-4), "constitutes a dangerous and destructive myth". In other words, Indigenous Fijians are imaged as very much like irresponsible and playful children by a colonising people whose assumptions of moral superiority evoke what JanMohamed (1995) calls the "economy of the Manichean allegory". Through the written text, the moral authority of the coloniser is articulated and justified by seeing the 'native' and representing him/her as inferior in every regard. It is when images of 'evil' are associated with 'natives' that "fetishize a nondialectical, fixed opposition between the self and the native" that evokes the economy of the manichean allegory (JanMohamed, 1995: 19). So through the processes of categorisation, 'imaging' and 'naming', Indigenous Fijians are effectively othered and constructed in discursive, institutional and material practices of Fijian colonial formations.

Another manifestation of Fiji's colonial construction is what I want to term the 'homogenisation of heterogeneity'. Before the colonial encounter, Fiji consisted of a diverse group of Indigenous Fijians and yet, for the purposes of control and ease of administration when this encounter did take place, Indigenous Fijians were homogenised through colonial methods of surveillance and categorisation: exploitation of an elite group and the establishment of an Indigenous Fijian police constabulary to maintain control over the local people, standardisation of the Fijian language so that one particular dialect became the hegemonic language, and the creation of institutional structures such as the Fijian Administration System and the *Vola ni Kawa Bula* (literally the Book of the Living). The latter is a colonial structure that determines the identity of an indigenous person. By implication, those not entered in this book cannot claim to identify as Indigenous Fijians. We can see, then, that the colonial encounter attempts to make the colonised visible, knowable and controllable: colonial administrative and institutional practices are created and maintained to see that this occurs. Principal among these practices is the construction of Indigenous Fijian identity.

And yet, while the colonisers were homogenising the great variety that existed in the indigenous human landscape, they were also emphasising the notion of difference as a form of power play during the period of colonial rule. Those that were not European were 'othered'. Colonial racialising practices ensured that there was a clear social hierarchy with the white community at the top with all their power and authority, followed by the local hand-picked indigenous 'elite'. The rest of the indigenous people, the Indo-Fijians and other ethnic groups were at the bottom of the social pecking order such that there were various layers of 'othering'. From the preceding discussion we can see that domination and oppression, the twin colonial controlling strategies, played a dominant role in the creation and maintenance of colonial power, authority and control. We can also see that racialising processes ensured the maintenance of colonial power and authority. It is my contention, then, that the Fiji of today is a colonial construct because what it is at this historical juncture is a direct result of the colonial encounter. Many institutional, ideological and epistemological structures instituted during colonial times have continued in neocolonial, hegemonic forms. Brij Lal (1992: 3), succinctly sums it up in this manner:

> Fiji entered the twentieth century firmly tethered to colonial policies put in place in the late nineteenth century. The structures of Fiji's economy, polity, and society were fixed by decisions made soon after the reluctant but unconditional cession of the islands to Great Britain on 10 October 1874. The task, and the tragedy, of modern Fiji has been to confront the twentieth century and the forces of change it has brought while hobbled by political and social structures and habits of thought that outlived their usefulness long ago.

Fiji's Place in Space

Having ascertained that colonial discursive and material practices constructed the category 'Fiji', I move on now to a brief description of Fiji's place in space and of the people that populate this space. According to the Western atlas (See Figure B), determined by Western conceptions of measurement, place and distance, Fiji is located in the south-west Pacific Ocean between longitudes 178 degrees 12' west and 176 degrees 53' east and latitudes 15 degrees 42' and 22 degrees south. The written records show that Fiji is made up of 332 islands, approximately one third of which are inhabited, which vary in size from 10,000 square kilometres to tiny islets a few metres in circumference. Fiji's total land area is estimated to be 18,272 square kilometres with 87 per cent of this total land mass made up of the two principal islands of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu.

Figure B: Map of Fiji
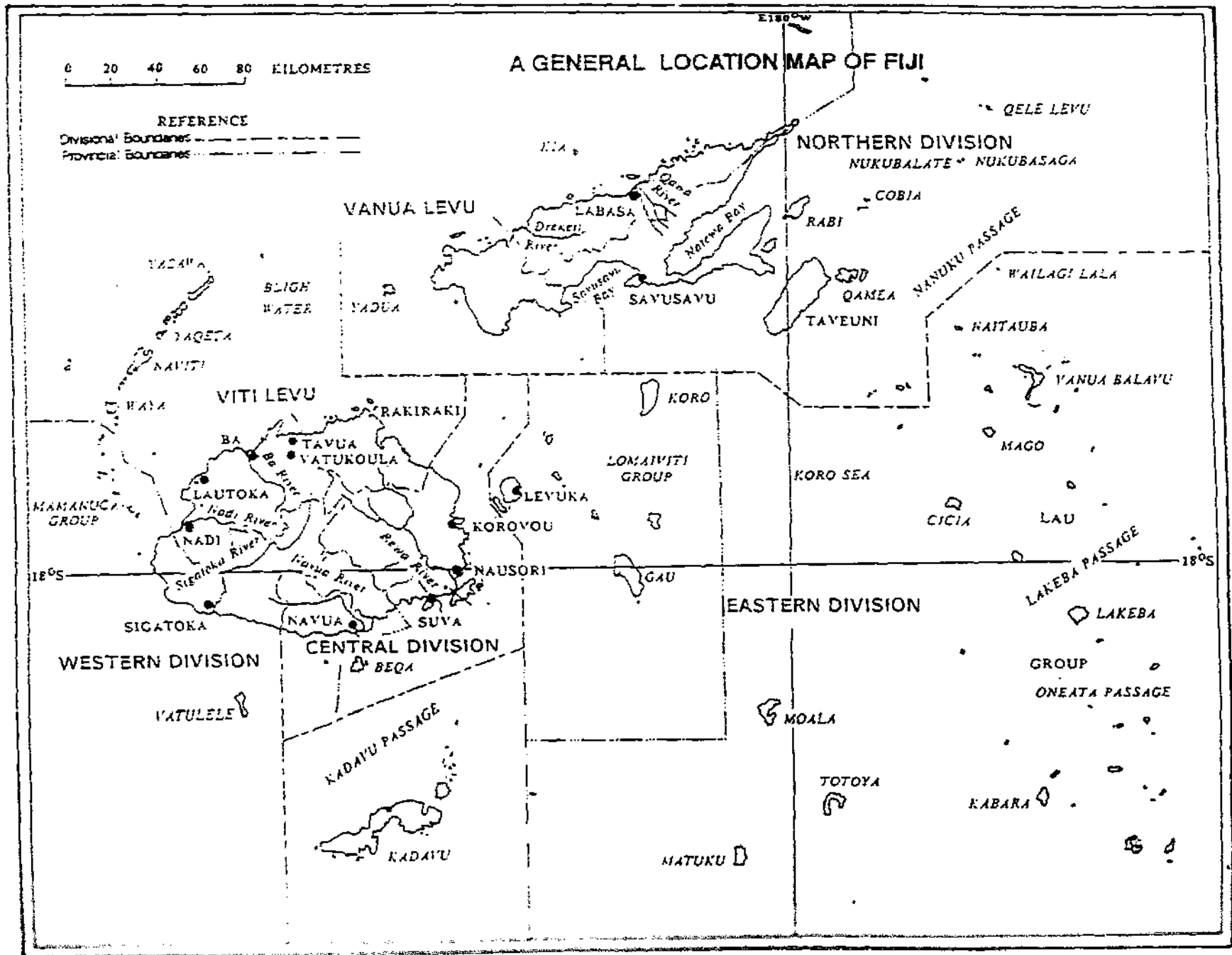
Fiji has been described as a small island state (Bacchus and Brock, 1987) with all the problems associated with this status. Principal among these problems is its physical, political and economic vulnerability which places it at great risk in the face of global capitalism.

Who populates Fiji? On the basis of a census taken in 1986 (Bureau of Statistics, 1987), Fiji's total population in that year was recorded as 715,375. It is not possible to be precise about these matters, but according to this census, the two major ethnic groups were identified as the Indo-Fijians who comprised 48.7% of the total population and Indigenous Fijians who constituted 46%. The 1986 census records the remaining 4.7 percent of the population as made up of Europeans, Part-Europeans, Chinese, Rotumans and other Pacific Islanders. In fact, Indo-Fijians have predominated in numerical terms since the 1946 census which has been a matter of concern for Indigenous Fijians. However, the 1996 census has seen a shift in population. Indigenous Fijians have outnumbered Indo-Fijians and this is a result of the continuing exodus of mainly Indo-Fijians to metropolitan centres overseas. The coups of 1987 have probably been the principal cause of these migrations. I will discuss the effects of these coups as well as other social and political issues that have occupied bodies and minds in Fiji society in the following section.

The Contemporary Social and Political Context

There is a huge body of literature on social, economic and political conditions in Fiji, particularly for the post-coup period from late 1987 onwards. My intention in this section is to develop an interpretation of post-coup social and political developments based on my own experiences and my reading of some of the literature. As I will argue, an understanding of these developments will be crucial to prognosticating the future of AA in Fiji.

Fiji continues to be a racially divided society. From the racialising discriminatory practices of British colonialism to the creation of state institutions, including educational and political practices, the all pervasive thread running through these is the notion of 'race'. As Michael Ward (1971: 29) has observed,

> Although the Fijians and Indians have lived together (but not, in most cases literally side by side) in the same country for almost a century, a wide cultural and attitudinal gulf still exists between them. Both groups have retained their separate languages and dialects as well as religions.

Social, cultural and political decisions are, as a matter of course, based on race (AA policies in education and raced-based schooling are two such social examples; in the area of politics, political parties are still formed on racial lines). The binary opposition of European/non-European, coloniser/colonised, has been replaced by that of Indigenous Fijian/Indo-Fijian, Indigenous Fijian/Other. This binary opposition has never been manifested as clearly as it was immediately after the 1987 coups.

Despite the pluralism that is evident in Fiji, racialising practices continue to be reflected in the hegemony that is inherent in the Indigenous Fijian political leadership that has been maintained since decolonisation in 1970. Since this time, two predominantly indigenous political parties have handled the reins of government which operate along the principles and structures of the British Westminster political system. The two coups carried out in 1987 by indigenous army personnel seemed to represent the fear of the Indigenous Fijian community that they would lose control over their land and destiny when the predominantly Indigenous Fijian party in power at the time was defeated by a predominantly Indo-Fijian party in the 1987 General Elections.

Indigenous Fijians own the bulk of the land and it is generally believed that Indo-Fijians are more involved in capitalism in terms of their more involved participation in the market economy. According to government statistics, Indigenous Fijians own close to 84% of all land with 10% being privately-owned freehold and the remaining 6% held as Crown Land by the Government. It has been recorded that the best arable land was owned by Westerners after contact with the indigenous people. Today, as in the past, the Indo-Fijians own very little land but are categorised as independent, successful farmers and businessmen, so much so that they are known to "dominate the economic activity of the country" (Bureau of Statistics, 1989: 2).

Political (and academic) discourse in Fiji have highlighted the perceived success of Indo-Fijians in education, the professions and business. The perception that Indo-Fijians are successful business people and have a relatively better standard of life has created a lot of resentment on the part of Indigenous Fijians. Indigenous Fijians have been represented as the underdogs, as the victims in their own land. And as Fijian nationalists like politician Sakeasa Butadroka (Leader of the Nationalist Party) and academic Professor Asesela Ravuvu have consistently pointed out, Indigenous Fijian interests needed to be protected. At least, that is one of the rationales put forward for the coups of 1987. With a predominantly Indo-Fijian party winning the 1987 General

Elections, the thinking that led to the coups was that Indigenous Fijian rights had to be protected whatever the cost.

However, it has been argued that this view may be too simplistic and that the coups were really "a strike against democratic government by elements associated with Fiji's traditional oligarchy seeking to hide behind a mask of populist communalism" (Howard, 1991: i). According to this viewpoint, the composition of this oligarchy under British colonial rule was the colonial administration, a large expatriate business elite and the eastern Indigenous Fijian chiefly elite (Howard, 1991: 6). The contention here is that after independence, the oligarchy necessarily changed hands to comprise of eastern elite chiefs and wealthy Indian businessmen. Whatever the 'truth' of the matter is, the material reality is the coups occurred, and they have had negative effects on all Fiji's peoples, some of which continue to reverberate even as I write.

There is no doubt that the 1987 coups have had profound and long lasting effects in all spheres of life - personally, nationally and internationally. First, the racial tensions and political instability in the period following the coups led to Fiji's expulsion from the Commonwealth (Fiji was readmitted in 1998) and a downturn in the national economy due to a lack of or withdrawal of investor confidence. In fact, unemployment and the concomitant social problems have accompanied Fiji's poor economic performance and have intensified in the late 1990s. Second, the coups have led to a massive migration pattern that has left huge gaps in the quality and quantity of available professionals, technocrats and other skilled workers. As an example of this, there was an estimated 50% of unqualified and untrained teachers in the educational system in the mid 1990s (from transcripts of interviews with officials of the two teachers' unions). Third, the so-called peaceful co-existence of the different ethnic groups resulted in intense racial resentment and recriminations. The Indo-Fijian community was vilified, threatened and made to feel unwelcome in a land which they had called home. Inter-racial relationships that had been shaky since colonial days were under strong attack in the name of Indigenous Fijian nationalism. Fourth, AA for Indigenous Fijians was intensified in education, employment and business. Many Indigenous Fijians took up positions of authority and power and state funding was expended to assist Indigenous Fijian participation in education and business.

Perhaps, an indication of the extent to which Indigenous Fijian power had materialised in powerful (and dangerous) ways is evident in cases of corruption and abuse of power that have been brought to light in the last two years. The National Bank, the

73

Ports Authority, the Housing Authority and other state-owned institutions faced financial difficulties when it was revealed that through nepotism, bribery and corruption, Indigenous Fijians in positions of power were able to exploit their positions to borrow large amounts of money without following procedures that ensured accountability and good economic sense. The National Bank of Fiji, for instance, ran up a debt of over Fijian $220 million and there are still cases of corruption before the courts.

The new constitution drawn up after 1987 was a deliberate political intervention that was not only AA at its extreme but also strong affirmation of postcolonial nationalism and identity by the indigenous people. The post-coup constitution guaranteed Indigenous Fijian paramountcy in government with the stipulation that the majority of seats were to be held by Indigenous Fijians and the positions of Prime Minister and President to remain in Indigenous Fijian hands in perpetuity. The logic seems to be that if Indigenous Fijians held the mantle of government, then Indigenous Fijian interests would always be protected. This view is problematic. The assumption that Indigenous Fijians are a hegemonic, stable group with shared beliefs and values is contested. What was overlooked in the post-coup constitution is the heterogeneity inherent in Indigenous Fijian society. One such manifestation is the political affiliations the people have outside of the Western mode of government. The allegiance people have to their chiefs will determine who they vote for.

An Indigenous Fijian belongs to one of three *matanitu* or confederacies, already predetermined by colonial and indigenous history, which is headed by a paramount chief. What island or part of Fiji s/he originates from will determine which of these confederacies and paramount chief s/he owes allegiance to. A postcolonial reading of historical records implies that Indigenous Fijian chiefs were deliberately given government positions that brought them in contact with their people by the colonial government. It is generally accepted that these chiefs were deliberately cultivated by the Colonial Government because of the control they exerted on their people. The allegiance to chiefs by the indigenous people continues at this historical juncture and forms undercurrents in the affairs of a country that is governed according to the political system of the West and one where issues of race are pervasive. Another factor also overlooked in the drawing up of the new constitution after the coups is that educational exposure, particularly in overseas countries, would produce more and more citizens with a more critical, analytical viewpoint that is Western in nature and would inevitably contradict

traditional frameworks. The perception of a unified, stable Indigenous Fijian group is therefore a myth.

A safeguard inserted in the post-coup constitution, as a compromise to the non-indigenous population, was a review of the constitution after a period of seven years. A committee to review this constitution (with a New Zealander as Chair, an Indigenous Fijian and Indo-Fijian making up the membership of this Committee) was formed in 1995. Its terms of reference called for recommendations on constitutional arrangements which would meet the present and future needs of the people of Fiji, promote racial harmony, national unity and the economic and social advancement of all communities (Reeves, Vakatora & Lal, 1996). It is my view that seven years of national life after the coups of 1987 saw a mellowing in nationalistic fervour and that many Indigenous Fijians were ready to dialogue and communicate with other ethnic groups in Fiji, notably Indo-Fijians.

Since 1996, a few issues dominated the political agenda: the expiry of Agricultural Land Tenant Agreement leases (ALTA), finalising the reviewed constitution, reviving a flagging economy and high unemployment. Arguably, it was debate on the Constitution Report which formed the principal focus of national social and political concern. In mid 1998, the constitution that had been reformulated after a two year review was promulgated as the revised constitution that Fiji would follow. The Report of the Fiji Constitution Review Commission, entitled *The Fiji Islands: Towards a United Future*, specifically stressed that national unity was something to be commended. In the words of the writers:

> Progress in a multi-ethnic society is achieved when its citizens realise that what is good for their neighbour must ultimately be good for them as well, when difference and diversity are seen not as sources of division and distrust but of strength and inspiration....National unity is a goal whose fulfilment will require an abundance of patience, good will and understanding among all the citizens of the Fiji Islands. It will require the nurturing of spiritual and human values which sustain people in times of need and help them to adapt to situations of rapid change. It will require building on the already considerable human and material resources of these islands. And it will be the touchstone against which the people will measure progress towards a strong and unified future for themselves and for generations to come. (Reeves et al., 1996: xix)

In 1998, the emphasis seems to be on preparation for the 1999 General Elections with the idea of radical coalitions becoming a reality. In an unprecedented development, Indigenous Fijian parties are negotiating with the two Indo-Fijian parties to fight the

elections. Developments on the union front have witnessed mass demonstrations by the workers against Government imposed wage limits. In mid-1998, Indigenous Fijian landowners of the space on which the largest hydro-electric plant is built in Monasavu staged roadblocks. These resulted in confrontations between the landowners and police. One possible explanation for this development is that this is a reaction against the revised constitution by nationalist Indigenous Fijians who resent what they perceive as the disempowerment of Indigenous Fijians.

At this historical juncture, Fiji is a site of unfinished business. However, one significant closure that has been achieved is the spirit of reconciliation, dialogue, negotiation and compromise that has been forged between the two dominant ethnic groups—Indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijian politicians have crossed the racial divide and are in the process of further dismantling it. In working toward finalising a constitution that would be acceptable to all citizens, politicians found that they could work together without invoking the category of 'race'. Nevertheless, there are many unresolved issues at hand. Next to the constitution, the next national undertaking is working through the ALTA dilemma in such a way as to meet Indigenous Fijian, Indo-Fijian and national interests. The social problems to do with unemployment, poverty, an increasing crime rate and the like also need working on. Over and above all these, Fiji's flagging economy needs revitalising in the face of such global matters as the Asian economic crisis.

I have here provided my interpretation of post-coup social, economic and political development. While Fiji's constitutional crisis has been amicably resolved, there are as yet many other social and economic crises to overcome. The uncertainty associated with expiring land leases for Indo-Fijian tenant farmers will need to be settled. As well, the problems that pertain to high unemployment (and unsettling social problems such as increasing crime and poverty) demonstrate the trouble in Fiji's economy. In this context of unfinished business, a major hurdle has been overcome - the finalisation of the constitution. Events in Fiji have shown that racial barriers are in the process of being dismantled. The important lesson perhaps to be learned from the aftermath of the coups is the recognition that all the peoples of Fiji have to work together in a spirit of cooperation, negotiation, tolerance and goodwill. This is necessary to forge the way for a common future.

Colonial Fiji

Thus far, I have set the scene of this thesis, arguing that Fiji is a colonial construct and then describing current issues facing the nation. I now turn to an explication of Fiji's colonial history. First, I begin the analysis of Fiji's colonial history by a second act of resistance: I discuss acts of resistance against colonial rule before explicating in detail the effects of colonial authority, knowledge and power as manifested in historical representations, language and education. As well, I explicate its more tangible applications as manifested in the policy of divide and rule. I also describe the colonial curriculum to demonstrate that this has continued well into the postcolonial moment.

Colonial History: 1874-1970

World history has witnessed the quest of European nations to dominate and exploit other nations (Sardar et al., 1993). The superiority complex that White inhabitants have over people different from them by virtue of their skin colour, religion, language, and other cultural criteria have led them to believe that their cultural values are far superior to those of Others. With the help of guns, alcohol, and under the guise of Christianity, Europe carried out a violent conquering of 'uncivilised', 'savage' and 'ignorant' societies. The environment and the social, political, religious and economic structures of the colonised took a physical, material, ideological and psychological bashing under the onslaught of colonialism. Whatever was in existence in a country that was colonised, including natural and human resources, was believed to be provided by providence for exploitation and utilisation by the colonisers. Additionally, the cultural values of the colonisers were believed to be the only values worthy of keeping, so the colonised were forced to assimilate these values or else be considered even more different and alien, both to the coloniser as well as the colonised. All these apply to the colonial situation in Fiji.

The history text books produced by Western writers have regarded three dates as important in Fiji's historical development. The first date, 10th October 1874, marked Fiji's introduction to colonial rule when the country was voluntarily ceded to Great Britain. The second date, 14th May 1879, marked the arrival of indentured labourers from India who were specifically brought in to work the sugarcane plantations. The third date, recorded as 10th October 1970, marked the time that Fiji attained political independence. This Western method of periodization is debatable because it wrongly

assumes that the entity that was named 'Fiji' by the colonising agent (i.e., Britain) had no significant history before the advent of the white 'man' on its shores. It is problematic because the colonising agent "unleashed a myriad of cultural and psychological forces, many of them not yet fully manifest even after 500 years" (Sardar et al., 1993: 83). It is problematic, too, because in taking on the belief that Fiji's history began only with the arrival of the white man, the British colonisers were guilty, just like all colonisers, of social engineering "to produce institutions and personalities that would be familiar to Europe" in order "to render the colonized predictable and controllable" (Sardar et al., 1993: 83-84). Periods/eras in history, therefore, provide emphasis on those times and dates that are important from the perspective of the colonising agent, not from the perspective of the colonised subject. This kind of periodization thus ensures legitimation of historical domination by the West. The periodization and ordering of history is a kind of inscribing control of history, and, ultimately, self-knowledge of the colonised.

Resistance to Colonial Rule

Considering that colonial rule occurred for close to a century in Fiji, resistance was reported to be minimal, particularly from Indigenous Fijians. "Resistance to British colonial rule and to the hegemony of the chiefs...was to be found mainly in inland and Western Viti Levu" (Howard, 1991: 26). Colonial representations of resistance to colonial rule portray these forms: armed revolt or millenarianism with serious opposition occurring in the years immediately following cession. Colonial dealings with resistance included the suppression of the Ra movement in 1878 and the Tuka Movement in 1892 in the interior hills of Western Viti Levu. The Tuka Cult in Ra and Ba provinces were perceived as a threat to the colonial administration such that Governor Thurston himself, aided by an Indigenous Fijian chief, led the Armed Native Constabulary (the police force made up entirely of Indigenous Fijian men) and crushed what was considered civil rebellion. In 1894 the people of Seaqaqa in Vanua Levu physically resisted in protest against a service imposed on them by colonial authorities by building a fort around their village. Two constables were reportedly killed in the ensuing attempt to resolve the matter. This prompted an attack by the Armed Native Constabulary which succeeded in crushing the rebellion.

Howard (1991) reports that serious opposition to colonial rule had mainly come to an end by the 1880s but had not disappeared completely. Another such example was

exhibited by a commoner named Apolosi Nawai who was compared to a prominent chief at the time in this manner:

> If Ratu Sukuna was to become the statesman of Fiji, Apolosi R. Nawai was its underworld hero—the only man from the ranks of ordinary villagers who rivalled the statesman for eloquence, personal mana, and a compelling vision of the Fijians in their own country. (Macnaught, 1982: 75)

Nawai was portrayed as "a cultist and Degei worshipper; an anti-everybody-but-Fijian militant who promised an end to taxation and the return of all land to the Fijians" (Gravelle, 1980 Bk Three: 9). He founded the 'Viti Kabani', an indigenous co-operative, with the ultimate aim of monopolising all the commercial activity such that all stores would be completely owned by the indigenous people. 4000 people reportedly attended the company's first general meeting in Tailevu in January, 1915. Ten indigenous government-appointed officers were purported to have been sacked when they went against government orders and attended the meeting. Nawai's success in gaining widespread indigenous support angered not only the Colonial Government but also the white settlers, the churches as well as the high indigenous chiefs. The latter were reported to have been insulted by Nawai's usurpation of their power.

The Colonial Government arrested Nawai and 42 others. Nawai was gaoled for 18 months. However, his popularity and appeal were evident when 5000 people were purported to attend the first meeting he called soon after his release from gaol which saw his social standing elevated from chief to king (Gravelle, 1980 Bk Three: 12). Negative reports at the expense of the Colonial Government and chiefs that filtered back to the Government of what transpired at his meeting resulted in Nawai's arrest and exile to Rotuma for seven years. He was exiled for a further ten years when, after his release, he began preaching and making predictions that were viewed as harmful by the colonial Government. This was the last reported serious attempt by Indigenous Fijians to resist colonial rule and the power instilled in the chiefs by the Colonial Government.

In a book entitled *Neither Cargo nor Cult: Ritual Politics and the Colonial Imagination in Fiji*, anthropologist Martha Kaplan (1995: xii-xiii) notes that the concept of cult, "the unbounded unnatural phenomenon, had its roots in colonial perceptions of the unexpected or unwelcome response to a trajectory of Christianization, 'civilization', or 'westernization' that the colonizers conceived as natural and inevitable". She argues that cults exist as a category in Western culture and colonial practice. So what began as neither cargo nor cult was created in the colonial imagination and became tied "not only

to the articulations of scholars and other observers, but also to the routinizing effects of official powers making states" (Kaplan 1995: 18). Writing specifically about what the official colonial records called the Tuka cult, Kaplan unpicks four different narratives of Navosavakadua, the key person in the narrative, in an effort to write her own narrative of "plural articulations, some defunct, some flourishing, some nascent, in a turbulent history of power, ritual, and history-making" (Kaplan, 1995: 16). Kaplan makes the point that in Tuka, the British believed they were encountering "events of an unusual character" which "marred the natural and inevitable trajectory of their colonizing project, in which Fijians, already Christian, were to become fully 'civilized'" (Kaplan, 1995: 69). What the British perceived to be "unnatural" or "unusual" events were labelled "superstition", "movement", "rebellion" or "cult". This was something they "labeled and reified as a manifestation of Fijian disorder and irrationality" and they "tried to exorcise it from the body politic through deportation" (Kaplan, 1995: 69).

Thus, the colonial response to what they perceived to be "Fijian disorder and irrationality" was to control it. In the instances described above (i.e., the so called Tuka cult and the Apolosi Nawai phenomenon), Indigenous Fijian resistance to colonial rule was seen as rebellion and hence had to be crushed. Those seen to be leaders of these so called cult or milleniarianism movements were exiled to a distant part of Fiji.

Resistance to colonial rule is reported to have come from the Indo-Fijian community more so than from the indigenous populace. Brij Lal (1992: 106) points out that Indo-Fijians "had no choice but to resist the European-dominated colonial order" because of their resentment at being placed "at the bottom of the colonial hierarchy". The Indigenous Fijians, on the other hand, were said to enjoy a cordial relationship with a colonial government that was perceived to have their interests at heart. For example, the reason indentured labourers from India were brought in to work the sugar plantations in 1879, five years after cession, was primarily because the first Governor of Fiji, Sir Arthur Gordon, "refused to run the risk of a plantation system's effects on the Fijian way of life" (Mayer, 1973). Gordon also institutionalised the administrative practices set in place by his predecessor, the acting Governor Sir Hercules Robinson, by instituting a system of 'Indirect Rule' which saw the indigenous people with a separate system of administration set apart from that of the rest of the colony. The Colonial Government utilised the chiefly system already in place to administer the people and this effectively ensured compliance from the people. Chiefs were given government positions to run the affairs of the indigenous people. Perhaps this is one reason why resistance from the indigenous

population against colonial rule was minimal. Another reason perhaps can be attributed to the fact that by a government policy of 'divide and rule', Indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians were effectively kept from joining forces against the colonial 'masters'. In any case resistance against colonial rule was reported to come principally from Indo-Fijians.

Gillion (1977: 18) reports that the "strikes and riots of 1920 were of great importance in the history of Fiji: they had an important influence on later European, Fijian and Indian attitudes in Fiji, and on opinion in India". With the end of the indentured system in 1916, the Indo-Fijians who remained were free to either lease land for sugarcane production or to work in the private and public sectors of the colony. In 1920 a strike occurred in response to Indo-Fijian labourers working in the Public Works Department in Suva refusing to heed an order that they were to work 48 hours per week instead of the usual 45. The strikers were joined by Indo-Fijian labourers in Suva, Rewa and Navua. Those working for Europeans were called on to join the strike but not those working for Indo-Fijians. A New Zealand armed troop of sixty arrived and the Governor became confident of taking some action against the strikers. In Samabula, on 12 February 1920, the police and military reacted to the crowd and opened fire. One Indo-Fijian was reportedly killed in this incident. Armed retaliation by the colonial Government effectively brought to end this first show of resistance by the Indo-Fijian community. This resistance demonstrated to the Colonial Government that the Indo-Fijians were not going to be passive migrant workers and they began to be viewed as "the Indian Problem" (Tudor, 1962: 71) for the duration of colonial rule.

A lot of unrest arose out of disputes between Indo-Fijian canefarmers and the Colonial Sugar Refining Company (CSR) which not only had monopoly over the sugar industry since it began operations in Fiji, but the highest ranking CSR managers were included in the top of the colonial hierarchy. This had implications for the involvement of the Colonial Government in any disputes Indo-Fijians had with the CSR. After the 1920 strikes and riots, the Colonial Government kept a watchful eye on the Indo-Fijian community. So in the words of Brij Lal (1992), the Indo-Fijian community had no choice but to resist given their inferior place in the colonial social and political hierarchy.

Indigenous Fijians, on the other hand, had great admiration for Europeans and European civilisation. Ratu Sir Lala Sukuna demonstrated this admiration by stating in the Legislative Council in 1947 (quoted in Lal, 1992: 106-107):

> Indians, like ourselves, have much to gain from European teaching on the practical approach to life. This approach, based on the humanities, refined by

Christianity, steeled by economic and political encounters, tempered by defeats and victories, this approach, I say, has proved itself, especially in the case of the British pattern, as the only effective approach to life. The attitude of mind created by this experience, by meeting and overcoming of difficulties in the vicissitudes of life, has in the course of centuries produced the spirit of co-operation, of moderation and of tolerance.

If speculation on what could have been is useful, perhaps there would have been stronger resistance from Indigenous Fijians if the first Governor of the colony, Sir Arthur Gordon, had not developed a different system of administration for the Indigenous Fijians that officially institutionalised the authority and power of the chiefs over their people. Perhaps there would have been more armed revolts led by the chiefs themselves if the Colonial Government had not stamped down hard on the selling of indigenous land. Perhaps there would have been open rebellion if the Colonial Government had prioritised the needs of the European settlers from Britain, New Zealand and Australia at the expense of the indigenous way of life. Perhaps there would have been violence and killings if Fiji had been taken by armed force rather than the peaceful signing of the Deed of Cession in 1874. And there would certainly have been greater armed resistance from Indigenous Fijians themselves if the course of history had been different and Indo-Fijians not been brought in to work in the sugar plantations but rather, the Indigenous Fijians made to work in the appalling conditions that Indo-Fijians were forced to work under.

If Indigenous Fijians had been relegated to the bottom of the social and political colonial hierarchy, there would probably have been greater nationalistic zeal from the indigenous population. Self-determination might have been wrested from colonial hands (or not at all) in a violent revolution such as occurred throughout "Third World" ex-colonies like Cuba, Algeria and Indonesia. In any event, none of these occurred. The presence of an immigrant population and the utilisation of Indigenous chiefs in the Fijian Administration system specifically set up to administer and control the indigenous population (although chiefly authority was limited by colonial rule), meant that a complex, volatile situation existed in Fiji (Howard, 1991). Setting up specific institutions for Indigenous Fijians, including the establishment of an armed police force solely made up of indigenous men but under the authority of a white officer, effectively set the indigenous population apart from the Indo-Fijians (as well as Indigenous Fijians from the European population) in such a way that any combined efforts for rebellion against colonial rule (assuming that the inclination was present in the first place) was very difficult to arrange. Colonial policy in Fiji, therefore, not only exploited the indigenous

82

traditional political system that was already in place, but also was divisive and discriminatory in its treatment of the people of the land. This discriminatory treatment saw the white European population in the dominant position with the Indigenous Fijian chosen elite next. The Indigenous commoner Fijians and the Indo-Fijians and other minority groups were relegated to the bottom of the colonial social hierarchy.

Colonial Power and Control: Divide and Rule

The colonial policy of divide and rule was an effective mechanism to maintain power and control. Two viewpoints can be said to apply to the way indigenous chiefs were used by the Colonial Government immediately after cession. The traditional viewpoint is that colonial rule in Fiji was benevolent and non-exploitative. The Deed of Cession was viewed by the indigenous population "as a solemn charter for a British-Fijian partnership premised on verbal assurances (the cession itself was unconditional) that colonial rule would respect and maintain the interest of Fijian society as paramount" (Macnaught, 1982: 1). Traditionalists view the chiefly system as the indigenous people's main safeguard against the negative impact of the modern world. Colonial impact then, according to traditionalists, would be minimal with this safeguard in place. For example, Legge (1958: 202) argues that

> In its modern interpretation administration through native rulers is but one part of a system which is based upon growing knowledge of, and respect for, the closely integrated structure of primitive societies, and of the difficulties likely to accompany the changes which take place in these societies as they are brought into sharp collision with Western civilization.

Likewise, Macnaught (1982: 49) observes that "Ultimately colonial rule itself rested on the loyalty chosen chiefs could still command from their people, and day-to-day village governance, it has been seen, totally depended on them". In a similar manner, Roth (1973) and Scarr (1984) viewed the chiefs as central to the well-being of the indigenous people.

On the other hand, the opposing perspective would view the use of the chiefly system as an exploitative situation which maintained the supremacy and power of the colonial 'masters' over the masses. Howard (1991: 25), for example, argues the first Governor of the colony, Sir Arthur Gordon, "clearly saw that establishment of colonial rule initially entailed working through collaborator chiefs" and Gordon "sought to create

a facade of responsibility among these chiefs, with European officials providing supervision and ultimately being in control". Howard (1991) claims that:

> Following the initial guidelines established by Robinson and Gordon, during the remainder of the nineteenth century, the system of administering to native Fijians was developed to serve the needs of an evolving colonial political and economic order. At the upper level, hereditary chiefs slowly were turned into colonial bureaucrats. During the initial period of colonial rule, chiefly power had been consolidated and reformed and the rights of commoners diluted. (pp 31-32)

I am somewhat caught in a bind in this debate. Mine is an ambivalent self-positioning. On the one hand, I am an indigenous female Fijian 'commoner' with strong traditional allegiance to the chiefs of my village and island. On the other hand, I must also profess the perspective of the postcolonial critic who uses the Western form of academic theoretical analysis to lay open the oppressive effects of colonial rule. I view the distinctive Indigenous Fijian Administrative system that consolidated the power and authority of the chiefs as a clever attempt by the Colonial Government to maintain control over the indigenous population. The formation of an armed police force specifically made up of Indigenous Fijians was a masterpiece in tactical strategy because, not only were indigenous people used to control the vagrancies of the indigenous people themselves, but this method of control kept the white settlers out of the picture for there would have been severe backlash against white settlers and Government officials if white people had made up the police force. This was also a form of control over the Indo-Fijian populace and was an effective way of keeping the two major ethnic groups apart with very little opportunity for combined resistance.

So while I think that the Colonial Government was oppressive and had the self-interests of the white settlers always at the forefront, yet on the other hand, I cannot help but think that the indigenous people in Fiji would have gone the sad path that other indigenous people have followed such as the Maoris in New Zealand, the indigenous people in America as well as the aboriginal population in Australia if the Colonial Government in Fiji had totally dominated indigenous society, allowed the settlers to buy out indigenous land and caused the rapid disintegration of indigenous culture by insisting on the assimilation policies it did in its other colonies which asserted white supremacy.

While I recognise that colonial rule is exploitative, oppressive and in many cases inhuman because of the inherent assumption that what is Western is good and what existed prior to contact with the white man is unimportant and therefore insignificant, I

am also grateful to the first Governors of Fiji in recognising the impact Western contact may have on indigenous culture. On the other hand, I resent the very process of colonisation which assumes domination, superior values and power display. I particularly resent the self identity that I have been inflicted with which is by association with colonialism, created and constructed by that very process. The identity crisis therefore that I am undergoing (which will be evident in parts of my writing) is one that is dislocated. It is a manifestation of a dual incomprehensibility: on the one hand, dealing with the difference between the West and my actual self; and on the other, coming to grips with the difference between my actual self and the invented self given 'Others' like me by Europe (Sardar et al., 1993), particularly Britain and its other white-settler colonies such as New Zealand and Australia.

Colonial Power and Control: Knowledge, History, Language and Education

I have described the domination and oppression of the colonial process that tried to suppress any signs of resistance from the colonised. As well, I have outlined the colonial policy of divide and rule that effectively set in place racialised practices that continue at this historical juncture. I now turn to an explication of colonial control, authority and power as manifested in historical knowledge and its representation, language and education.

Historical knowledge is problematic in Fiji. This is not surprising given that the only history Fiji knows is the one drawn up for them by the British colonial system. The knowledge that is endemic to the people of Fiji is layered under Western interpretation and represented that way in the guise of history. The history one gets, therefore, is not the history of a particular people but how one or another 'orientalist' perceived it. Western assumptions, knowledge and outlook formed the basis for the interpretation and representation of the history of 'Others'.

The issue of representation is crucial in any discussion of the colonial condition. European texts (anthropologies, histories and fiction) have "captured the non-European subject within European frameworks which read his or her alterity as *terror* or *lack*" (Ashcroft et al., 1995: 85). Through schooling and general colonialist cultural relations, these representations were then projected back to the colonised as authoritative pictures of themselves. The history of Fiji, as we know it, has been represented and written by colonialists and after political independence, by Western expatriates. Our first glimpses of what life in Fiji might have been like come from the logs of sea captains (e.g., William

Bligh) and memoirs, diaries and correspondence of British subjects such as those serving in the colonial office (e.g., governors) as well as Christian missionaries. For example, descriptions of Indigenous Fijian society have been provided by such titles as *Fiji and the Fijians* (Williams and Calvert, 1858), *Fijian Society* (Deane, 1921), *The Hill Tribes of Fiji* (Brewster, 1922), *Fijian Frontier* (Thompson, 1940), *Deuba. A Study of a Fijian Village* (Geddes, 1945) and *Fijian Way of Life* (Roth, 1973). Works on the Indo-Fijian society by Westerners include Mayer's *Peasants in the Pacific. A Study of Fiji Indian Rural Society* (1973), Gillion's *The Fiji Indians: Challenges to European Domination 1920-1946* (1977) and Coulter's *Fiji: Little India of the Pacific* (1942) and *The Drama of Fiji: A Contemporary History* (1967).

Only since the early 1980s have Indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians begun seriously writing about the situation in Fiji in order to negate the Eurocentrism of colonial writings, as a means of protest or resistance or even to confirm Western interpretations or representations (e.g., Ravuvu, 1974, 1983, 1987, 1991; Ali, 1980, 1986; Lasaqa, 1984; Narayan, 1984; Durutalo, 1985a, 1985b; Lal, 1986, 1988, 1992). Even today, there is still a proliferation of writings on conditions in Fiji by people who are not indigenous or non Indo-Fijian (e.g., Howard, 1991; Lawson, 1991). I am not arguing that this is bad. However, the point needs to be made that more ethnic people residing in Fiji need to research and write about the prevailing and past conditions in this country in order to write themselves into the history books, provide their own voice(s) about themselves, and make prominent their place in the history books. This thesis, *inter alia*, is an attempt to provide Indigenous Fijians with a voice that negates representations of Indigenous Fijians as school failures. It is a tool that writes back/talks back to colonial representations.

Robert Young (1990) points out that myths about the Western world abound in the colonies regarding power, knowledge and therefore history. He questions the myth that white history is the History of the world and he articulates the need to deconstruct "the concept, the authority, and assumed primacy of the category of 'the west'" (R. Young, 1990: 19). He maintains that the long-term strategy of critiqueing the structures of colonialism is "to effect a radical restructuring of European thought and, particularly, historiography" (p. 119). This involves "repositioning European systems of knowledge to demonstrate the long history of their operation as the effect of their colonial other".

This viewpoint is highly pertinent to Fiji. It is important that the history of the country as written by Westerners, is deconstructed so as to place more emphasis on the history of the country before and after contact with the West from the perspective of the

people in that country, not from an outsider's perspective. Indigenous Fijians, Indo-Fijians and other ethnic groups living in Fiji need to be made aware of the long-term effects of colonialism and attempt to find a constructive and practical way to "deconstruct the concept, the authority, and assumed primacy of the West" as Robert Young (1990) has put it.

The primary instruments of control of colonised subjects were (and still are) written history (texts), education and language. All these are evident in Fiji. The history of the country has been written by British colonialists, often governors or people in authority at the time, as well as missionaries. Even at this historical juncture, there is still much hesitation by Indigenous Fijians to write their own history. Perhaps this is because Fijian history has an oral rather than written tradition. Or perhaps it is because they have not been made to feel empowered or confident about writing about themselves. Their psyche has been so affected by the experience of colonialism that they would subconsciously feel that they are 'inferior'. After all Fijian history was written by the British.

How then can Fijians better that history? Frantz Fanon so aptly described this mentality in his book *Black Skins, White Masks* (1967a). Indigenous Fijians, after been made to feel inferior (through the ideological, political, economic and social structures put in place by the British—96 years of this), may have internalised this attitude. Consequently they may believe that anything Western is good for them and would strive as much as possible to emulate Western behaviour and internalise Western values and attitudes.

Language is a powerful control mechanism in a colonial situation. The English language became the legitimate official language during colonial times in Fiji. The Indigenous Fijian alphabet was constructed by Western Christian missionaries as a first step in making the 'natives' more understandable to Western society. Next, the English language became the language of the school with instruction carried out in this medium. English texts were the source of knowledge about the world presented to the indigenous people and other ethnic groups in Fiji. Fanon (1967a) argues that the best way of controlling a people is through the institutionalisation of the colonial language. This is certainly true for Fiji. Today, after almost three decades of independence, the colonial situation is still evident in the official use of the English language in schooling, communication, law, commerce and administration. This dependence on the colonial

language is an insidious legacy for a nation that has purportedly attained political self-determination.

As explained earlier, Western history books represented Indigenous Fijians as primitive and ignorant. Missionaries were intent on transforming the 'natives' and 'heathens' who were regarded as the "very dregs of Mankind, or Human Nature (sic), dead and buried under the primeval curse, and nothing of them alive but the Brutal part...." (cited in France, 1969: 29). It was envisaged that a Western-type education would make the Fijian less primitive. The British curriculum was institutionalised during colonial times. Missionaries, who were the initial teachers, did their best to inculcate Western values and attitudes in their students. This was continued after political independence by expatriate teachers from New Zealand and Australia (also British colonies) who were recruited to teach in Fiji before local teachers were trained. At this historical juncture, despite the fact that local teachers provide instruction, the curriculum is still pro-Western in its orientation, pedagogies and content.

Colonial Curriculum

The education of Indigenous Fijians owes its beginnings to the Christian missions. The main purpose of Methodist mission schools was to evangelise the 'natives' and for this purpose, the missionaries evolved an orthography for the Fijian language and translated parts of the Bible into this newly written language. The early curriculum for Fijians in the nineteenth century was therefore one which saw an emphasis on Christian doctrine and learning to read and write in the vernacular but arithmetic and some vocational education was also provided (Mangubhai, 1984).

The missions thus solely controlled educational activity in Fiji for eight decades. This changed, however, when the Education Ordinances of 1916 and 1918 enabled the Colonial Government to take direct control by providing grants-in-aid in exchange for control over the curriculum, the language of instruction (it was stipulated that instruction had to be in English after Class 4) and school registration. Thus began the process of control that would ensure that the curriculum, school pedagogies and the way that learning was evaluated would become hegemonic and normative. In this postcolonial moment, the purposes of education, the curriculum, the educational administrative system and pedagogies remain of Western origin (Mangubhai, 1984; Thomas and Postlethwaite, 1984). In the course of this thesis, I will return repeatedly to this historical legacy.

The fact that English became the language of instruction is significant since one of the main features of colonial oppression is control over language (Ashcroft et al., 1989). The transmission of knowledge and culture is carried out through language. Language, then, becomes the medium through which a hierarchical structure of power is perpetuated, and the medium through which conceptions of 'truth', 'order', and 'reality' become established (Ashcroft et al., 1989: 7).

Through the English language, English culture formed the heart of the curriculum in colonial Fiji. For instance, a whole generation of primary school students in the 1940s and 1950s grew up on the *New Method Readers*, a series used in most tropical British colonies where they learned about such things as England's four seasons, King Arthur, Rip Van Winkle and the desert crossing in Egypt (Lal, 1992). The secondary school curriculum, set by Cambridge University, was heavily academic and exam-oriented. The literature component consisted of Shakespeare's plays and the works of Charles Dickens, Thomas Hardy, Jane Austen and Robert Louis Stevenson (Lal, 1992). History students in 1951 were required to be familiar with topics ranging from the history of Fiji and the organisation of the colonial government to British imperial history and the history of the Renaissance and the Reformation (Lal, 1992). Local language, history and culture were totally ignored in the curriculum.

Using the leverage of grants-in-aid, then, the Colonial Government was able to impose the curriculum and the language in which it should be taught. Note here the undermining of Indigenous Fijian cultural knowledge and wisdom in the school curriculum. Note also the emphasis on English as the medium of instruction after class 4. The secondary school curriculum was dictated by external examinations set in foreign lands. New Zealand continued to set the exams and, consequently, the curriculum until 1988, eighteen years after decolonisation occurred. So it was during colonial rule that the curriculum for primary and secondary schools was decided and this has continued in neocolonial hegemonic forms after the point of decolonisation.

Postcolonial Fiji

So far in this chapter I have explicated the impact of British colonisation on Fiji's physical, social, cultural, economic and political landscape. I have tried to show that no matter how benign British colonialism may have seemed, the colonisation process was oppressive, dominating and exploitative. Colonial assertions of control, authority and power form the central pivot of colonialism. The process and practice of colonialism is,

therefore, one of epistemic violence (Spivak, 1995). In this section I reiterate the point that what *is* at this historical juncture are neocolonial configurations of what *was*. Hence, Fiji's colonial history has shaped in significant ways the ideological, epistemological and material basis of Fiji society. In particular, I describe the neocolonial shaping of the educational system after political self-rule became a reality and then focus on a discussion of educational inequalities. This manifests itself in a fuller description of "the educational gap" or underachievement of Indigenous Fijians. I then provide an analysis of the development and implementation of AA policies which forms the last section of the chapter.

After Fiji became a British colony in 1874 the people endured 96 years of British values, attitudes and institutional structures. A century is long enough for the inculcation of Western values into the fabric of every facet of life in the colony. The ideology of the colony was British in flavour. Fiji's political, economic and educational structures were (and still are) almost twin copies of Britain's, in essence if not in quality. Schools, for example, were established along similar lines to those in the home country. Uniforms, a formal curriculum based on Western knowledge and values, timetables, teachers, buildings and other physical infrastructures, school fees, text books, a central administrative system, school grants and the like became inherent features of Fiji's educational system. The democratic form of political governance was set in place during colonial times and continues today. The legal and judicial system was adopted from the home country as well. Economic structures with an emphasis on capitalism set in place prior to independence are firmly entrenched today. The assumption that seemed to be held by the British colonialists was that their way of life was superior to that of the 'natives' therefore, if structures from the home country were set in place, life would be much easier for them because of this familiarity. There was little consideration of how these structures would affect the indigenous way of life. It was assumed that what was good for the home country would definitely be good in the colony.

Colonial institutional and discursive structures, whatever form they may take, do not necessarily end when a nation attains political independence. In a colony where the coloniser was more than willing to hand over total responsibility to the people of the colony, it would be extremely difficult for a new nation to dream up new ways of doing things. In any case, 96 years of colonisation had firmly entrenched in the psyche of the colonised the notion that what was British was good for them. The smooth transition from one phase to another was facilitated by the existence of a local elite who had been

trained by the colonisers in the ins and outs of that value system. These were represented by those in government positions, including persons of chiefly rank, who had been cultivated by the colonisers. It is not altogether surprising that the old colonial structures continued to play a prominent part in the workings of a newly independent nation. Today, a quarter of a decade down the path of Fiji's postcolonial history, this still applies, albeit in different forms.

Neocolonial Curriculum

Neocolonialism is the highest stage of colonialism where a politically independent nation that was once under colonial rule, continues to be bound, whether voluntarily or through necessity, to a European or American society, or to a Western derivative society such as New Zealand or Australia (Altbach and Kelly, 1978). Neocolonial educational practices continued in Fiji as manifested in the distribution of foreign textbooks, the subtle use of foreign technical advisers on matters of policy, as well as the continuation of foreign administrative models and curricular patterns for schools, with very little alterations to the curriculum that was in place before independence (Altbach, 1971).

The most insidious element of neocolonialism is that relatively little change to the education system occurs after ex-colonised nations attain political independence. As Ashcroft et al., (1995: 424) have put it, "Education is perhaps the most insidious and in some ways the most cryptic of colonialist survivals, older systems now passing, sometimes imperceptibly, into neo-colonial configurations". In this sense, educational apparatuses can be described as hegemonic because once structures such as the curriculum, assessment and school organisation become entrenched and institutionalised, they have a totalising effect on the society. Education deeply saturates "the consciousness of a society", as Raymond Williams (1976: 204) emphasises, and becomes unquestionably what parents want for their children.

New Zealand, another British colony, has played an influential role in the development of education in Fiji (Whitehead, 1981). This is evident particularly in the nature of the curriculum and the presence of teachers, educational administrators and head teachers from New Zealand prior to, and in the decade after, political independence. The curricula offered in schools after independence were a continuation of those firmly entrenched in colonial times. Up to almost two decades after independence, Fiji still depended on New Zealand to prescribe the content of, and set the higher exams for,

Forms 5 and 6. The New Zealand University Exam, taken at Form 6, was phased out in 1988 with the New Zealand School Certificate following the year after.

The length of time taken for Fiji to move from an 'imported' curricula and examinations to a more local one demonstrates the institutionalisation of colonial structures. Fiji may have become independent politically but, in terms of education, it has been very heavily dependent on content, pedagogies, school organisation and assessment derived from European culture, notably of Britain and New Zealand. For instance, the study of English literature at the senior level continues to emphasise Western works such as Shakespeare (*Julius Caesar, Hamlet, Twelfth Night, The Tempest*), Somerset Maughan's *The Razor's Edge*, Graham Greene's *The Heart of the Matter*, Katherine Mansfield's *Selected Stories*, Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*, G.B. Shaw's *Androcles and the Lion* and Tom Stoppard's *Night and Day*.

The themes for senior History include economic development (Fiji, 1930-present; Japan, 1918-1970), social welfare (Fiji since 1945; New Zealand, 1891-1970), conflict (Palestine/Israel, 1945-1967; China, 1921-1949), nationalism (Italy, 1848-1871; Germany, 1848-1879), imperialism (India, 1875-1947; Europe and Southern Africa, 1870-1919), international relations (World War I; World War II) and government (United Kingdom, 1832-1868; Russia, 1927-1957). The theme of cultural interaction includes a study of Fiji and South Africa. Specifically, the topic Fiji Since 1874 has four foci: Fiji after cession, 1874-1920, Adjustments, 1920-1970, The Integration Process and Post-Colonial Period, 1970+. Two of the three recommended books for this topic are written by Westerners - *Fiji in the Pacific* by Donnelly and Kerr, revised in 1994, and J.D. Legge's *Britain in Fiji, 1855-1880*, published in 1958. The point I would like to make here is that if the teacher does not adopt a critical pedagogical approach, s/he will present to the students colonial representations of Fiji and students would internalise these representations as an authentic interpretation of Fiji's history.

The other valid point to make is that the Form Six History curriculum that was developed in 1987 was still in use in 1996 and may still be in use today. The same can be said for the Form Seven History curriculum. This was a reprint of a version that was developed in 1979 and was subsequently reprinted in 1982 and again in 1991. The implication of this is that no changes have been made to the Forms Six History curriculum for over 10 years and close to 20 years for the Form Seven History curriculum.

I recall from my own experiences at a multiracial school, Suva Grammar, in the late 1970s being taught by expatriate teachers from New Zealand and Australia. The principal of the school was also 'European'. I studied for and passed the New Zealand School Certificate (Form 5) and University Entrance (Form 6) Examinations. Sereana Tagivakatini, Fellow in Science Education at the Institute of Education, USP, recalls when she did her senior years in the mid 1970s at Lelean Memorial School, a predominantly Indigenous Fijian school, that the principal was European and her teachers were mainly New Zealanders, Australians and some Peace Corps from the United States of America. Tagivakitini notes:

> The language in and of schools was English. Students were actively discouraged from talking in the vernacular. Culture was given a one-two period session once a week and were largely used for meke practices. Never was culture integrated into mainstream studies. Other coverage of history and culture was academic as and when they cropped up in History or Geography lessons. (Tagivakatini, personal email correspondence, 20/11/98)

It is interesting that the only other places where British-based educational practices were adopted are Hong Kong, Singapore and even after decolonisation, Malaysia. Only in recent times has Fiji become confident enough to specify its own curricula and national examinations at the upper secondary level. Even so, Western knowledge and values still play a dominant influence in these changes as the above examples show. Many informants argue that the curriculum, pedagogical and assessment systems are still Western-oriented (See Chapter Five). And this state of play is maintained by the continued dependence on foreign educational aid and the utilisation of so called foreign 'experts' or 'consultants' that such aid produces. This is one reason why a neocolonial curriculum has continued after independence from imperial colonialism. Other explanations for the continuation of hegemonic, neocolonial educational structures will be explored a little later in this section.

The formal education structures that were put in place during colonial rule in Fiji became the norm, with the society not really critically questioning whose knowledge it is and whether it is relevant and appropriate. In any case, it was more a case of the local people aspiring for the kind of education that the 'white masters had' and the mentality seems to have been 'what was good for them must be good for us'. The aspirations of the people in Fiji for a Western type education is put in this manner by Thomas and Postlethwaite (1984: 299):

If *advertising* can be defined as 'making people dissatisfied with their present condition, and proposing ways to surmount this dissatisfaction,' then the Westerners' arrival can be viewed as a kind of advertising. The material culture and learning they introduced served in many cases to cause islanders' dissatisfaction with aspects of their own traditional modes of living, thereby creating in them new appetites and goals to be fulfilled by embracing elements of the colonisers' culture.

Despite attaining political independence in 1970, Fiji is in a neocolonial condition because of its continued dependence on the hegemonic social, political, economic and educational structures that had been instituted during the period of colonial rule. These structures were maintained and perpetuated by the local elites who had power after political independence was attained. In any case, what other alternative education systems had Fiji known? Fiji was colonised for almost a century. That is long enough for the people to internalise the British way of doing things. After all, Britain had not done anything overtly destructive in Fiji to cause the people to rise up in nationalistic resistance as had occurred in India. There is also the interrelated explanation where the local elites were trained as clerks and public servants before independence to maintain the colonial administration (Baba, 1991). Not only were these elites trained under colonial bureaucrats, but those who received an overseas education did so in British-based universities. These processes ensured the maintenance and perpetuation of Western cultural values, knowledge and attitudes.

As discussed earlier, an added explanation for the continuation of neocolonial hegemonic structures was the continued dependence Fiji had on Britain and New Zealand. Fiji has a limited physical resource base and therefore a small industrial base, hardly enough for economic sustenance. Fiji depends heavily on Western countries for foreign economic and educational aid. Hegemonic neocolonial educational structures, therefore, continue to be perpetuated by this economic dependence.

Fiji has maintained a neocolonial curriculum despite decolonisation. There has been more focus on local content, including the inclusion of Fijian as a language of study, but it is my view that this change is superficial and does not fundamentally change the Western focus and orientation of the curriculum. In his comparison of education in Fiji in 1925 and 1983, Mangubhai (1984), notes that in 1983, more than a decade after decolonisation, the content, language and structure of education were still predominantly derived from European culture. Just like the colonial curriculum, the neocolonial curriculum devalued (and continues to devalue) Fijian knowledge and cultural values.

In sum, the educational system in place in this postcolonial moment is a continuation of that set in place during the period of colonial rule. Not only is the curriculum and examination system Western-based, but the pedagogies of schooling, school organisation, administration and organisation are still foreign. As well, English is used as the medium of instruction and this is a tangible manifestation of the continued effect of colonialism.

Racial Inequalities in Schooling

Thus far, I have set the context by analysing Fiji's pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial conditions. I particularly make the point that the educational system has continued in neocolonial hegemonic configurations in the postcolonial moment and continues to do so at this historical juncture. At this stage, I would like to describe the framework that led to the development of AA as a strategic intervention and a counter response to the effects of educational and social inequalities created by a colonial past. This framework is underpinned by the notion of an educational gap between Indigenous Fijians and children of 'other' ethnic groups in Fiji, notably Indo-Fijians.

This educational gap has been specifically defined as "any kind of disparity that currently exists between Indigenous Fijians and Others in relation to access to education, the nature of teaching and learning resources available in schools and the performance of students in external examinations" (Cabinet Memorandum prepared by the Minister for Education, August 1988). At the point of decolonisation, Indigenous Fijian underachievement in schooling (Fiji Government, 1970) and their consequent under-representation in "top and middle level positions in the public and private sectors of the economy" (Fiji Government, 1975: 184) were problematised as national issues.

What were the reasons for, and the nature of, the educational gap that formed the basis for the development of AA in Fiji? One of the main aims of this thesis is to answer this question (See Chapter Five). Nevertheless, I would like to discuss the findings of the 1969 Fiji Education Commission Report. In this report, the views portrayed are basically colonial representations of Indigenous Fijian underachievement which have been perpetuated and reproduced in postcolonial official and academic discourses. This report is also interesting because Fiji's educational development in the decades after decolonisation has been shaped by the implementation of some of its recommendations. It is pertinent to say that the blueprint of educational development in the postcolonial period, including the development of AA policies, has found its basis in this report. As

well, official postcolonial government (Ministry of Education Annual Reports, Parliamentary Debates, National Development Plans) and academic discourses have reproduced these colonial representations of Indigenous Fijian underachievement.

In the years preceding decolonisation, the Colonial Government prepared local leaders for political self-rule. An informal local Indigenous Fijian government structure was in place that recognised the sovereignty of Indigenous Fijians while processes were being finalised to see to official decolonisation (occurred in 1970) and the first general elections (held in 1972).

In 1968, a Commission was formed to examine the state of Fiji's educational system. One of the Commission's seven terms of reference dealt specifically with the problems of Indigenous Fijian education. This term of reference specifically called for recommendations to be made on

> the special problems of the education of Fijians and the extent to which special measures, including scholarship provision and the improved preparation for higher education, may be necessary to solve them. (Fiji Education Commission, 1969: 67)

The composition of this Commission is interesting in that none of the six members[4] were local. The Commission noted that one problem which had concerned the Colonial Government, the Education Department and Indigenous Fijian leaders was the "disparity in educational performance between children of the two major racial groups - the Indigenous Fijians on the one hand and those of Indian extraction on the other" (Fiji Education Commission, 1969: vi). The Commission, therefore, defined the Indigenous Fijian educational problem as the wide disparity in educational opportunity and achievement between the two major racial groups. The Commission noted that the low quality of Indigenous Fijian primary education was reflected in poor Indigenous Fijian school performance at the secondary, and consequently, tertiary levels. The Commission also noted the poor performance of Indigenous Fijians at overseas universities.

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[4] The chair of the Fiji Education Commission was Sir Philip Sherlock, Secretary General of the Association of Carribean Universities and Research Institutes. The other five members were Mr G. Bessey, Director of Education, Cumberland; Mr P. Chang Min Phang, Chief Inspector of Schools, West Malaysia; Miss Margaret Miles, Headmistress of Mayfied School, Putney, London; Professor A.J. Lewis, Chairman of the Department of Educational Administration, Teachers' College, Columbia University, New York; and Professor O.H.K. Spate, Director of the Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University.

The following factors were identified by the 1969 Education Commission as impediments to the education of Indigenous Fijians:

1. The scatter of Indigenous Fijian schools; consequently, these schools were identified as too small for effective staffing and teaching;

2. Difficulty of supervision by Education Department officials because of (1) above;

3. Isolation of Indigenous Fijian rural teachers contributing to lack of intellectual stimulus to help their own professional development;

4. Many Indigenous Fijian students were forced to be boarders because of the distance of schools from their homes, usually in the rural areas which added to the burden of costs;

5. Severe shortage of appropriately qualified Indigenous Fijian primary teachers;

6. Rural poverty made it very difficult for school committees to maintain adequate standards and for parents to pay school fees;

7. Physical conditions in the village were not conducive to study: inadequate lighting, little privacy, children often walked long distances to and from school, and many social distractions.

Further, the Commission identified various intangible contributing factors to the problem of Indigenous Fijian education. Once such cause was the social background of Indigenous Fijians which manifested itself in their lack of perseverance and patience. These attitudinal weaknesses coupled with difficulties in money management were viewed as problematic. The Commission also viewed boarding schools as a hindrance to performance at tertiary institutions because of their contribution to the slow maturation of Indigenous Fijian students which could result in the students having difficulty in adapting to the permissive atmosphere of the university. In addition, the lack of competition in totally Indigenous Fijian schools was seen as a handicap to Indigenous Fijian educational advancement. Moreover, the Commission identified the structural difference from the English language to the Fijian language as a further handicap.

Having determined Indigenous Fijians educational problems, the Fiji Education Commission made a number of general and specific recommendations to particularly assist Indigenous Fijian students. Many of the general recommendations concerned rural needs. The Commission, for instance, recommended that the Postcolonial Government build six junior secondary schools of high standard in carefully selected areas. It also recommended the improvement of teacher training and conditions of service, and the localisation of the curriculum. Further, it recommended that pre-school and adult

education campaigns be conducted in rural areas to improve the attitude to, and conditions of, children's study in the village.

The specific measures recommended by the Commission to help Indigenous Fijians bridge the educational gap included scholarship awards. More specifically, the Commission recommended that 50% of government tertiary scholarships be reserved on a "parallel block basis" for Indigenous Fijians. What this meant was that Indigenous Fijians were to compete for 50% of the scholarships while the non-Indigenous Fijian component would compete for the other half. The Commission also recommended that in the event of Indigenous Fijians not filling their quota, the un-allocated balance of funds should be devoted to other specifically Indigenous Fijian educational needs such as university students repeating courses. I will discuss AA policies in more detail in the next section. What I would like to do now is to examine the statistical and other data on Indigenous Fijian underachievement to see what the state and nature of the educational gap is that has been the basis for AA.

Table 1: A Comparison of Indigenous Fijian and Indo-Fijian Performance in the NZSC Examination: 1966-69

Number of Candidates and Passes							
Indigenous Fijians				Indo-Fijians			
Year	Sat	Passed	%	Sat	Passed	%
1966	110	64	58.2	157	196	61.1
1967	158	77	48.7	504	186	36.9
1968	272	133	48.9	757	378	49.9
1969	487	223	45.8	1414	545	38.5

(Source: Education Department, Report for the Year 1969: 17)

The two national examinations prior to decolonisation were the Cambridge School Certificate and the more popular New Zealand School Certificate (NZSC) Examinations taken at the end of Form Five (Year 11) and New Zealand University Entrance (NZUE) Examination taken at the end of Form Six (Year 12). Table 1 above provides a comparison of Indigenous Fijian and Indo-Fijian performance in the NZSC Examination for the four-year period just prior to decolonisation in 1970. From Table I, we can see that the concerns of the Colonial Government and Indigenous Fijian leaders may have been correct. The concerns were mainly with regard to the actual number of Indigenous Fijians accessing the final year of schooling. In 1969, the actual numbers of Indigenous

Fijians sitting the NZSC examination was almost a third of Indo-Fijians. In terms of the numbers qualifying to enter Form Six in 1969, again, there were three times more Indo-Fijians qualifying than Indigenous Fijians. For the four year period 1966-1969, only 497 Indigenous Fijians passed as against 1205 Indo-Fijians, a clear difference of almost two and a half times more Indo-Fijians qualifying for Form 6.

Table 2 below illustrates that the problem of Indigenous Fijian attainment was more serious at the University Entrance level. Not only was the number sitting this examination disproportionably smaller but the number of Indigenous Fijians passing was abysmally low. For instance, in 1969 only 44 Indigenous Fijians qualified for university against 132 Indo-Fijians, giving it a ratio of 1 Indigenous Fijian pass for every 3 Indo-Fijians. The small number of Indigenous Fijians qualifying for entrance to tertiary institutions was a matter of great concern to the incumbent Postcolonial Government on the eve of political self-determination. The number passing or graduating at university level would be even smaller given the poor performance of Indigenous Fijians in overseas universities. Hence, the concern of both the Colonial and Postcolonial Governments for the education of Indigenous Fijians was justified since this meant that only a small number of Indigenous Fijians were qualifying for decision-making positions in national life. This was indeed a national problem confronting the newly independent Fiji Government at the point of decolonisation.

Table 2: A Comparison of Indigenous Fijian and Indo-Fijian Performance in the NZUE Examination, 1966-69

Number of Candidates and Passes						
Indigenous Fijians				Indo-Fijians		
Year	Sat	Passed	%	Sat	Passed	%
1966	45	16	35.5	106	64	60.4
1967	88	22	25.0	200	78	39.0
1968	80	23	28.7	281	87	30.9
1969	131	44	33.6	404	132	32.7

(Source: Education Department, Report for the Year 1969: 17)

What is the nature of this educational gap, say 10, 20 and 30 years after Fiji became independent? Has it remained the same or has it narrowed in the way that the Postcolonial Governments have intended? Table 3 below provides comparative data of Indigenous Fijian and Indo-Fijian pass rates in the NZUE examination over a nineteen-

year period from 1970-1988. The pass ratio for this period shows that the difference between Indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians has remained the same as in colonial times, that is 1 Indigenous Fijian pass to every 3 Indo-Fijians. Between the period 1980-1988, a yearly average of 598 more Indo-Fijians qualified for entrance to university compared to

Table 3: A Comparison of Indigenous Fijian and Indo-Fijian Pass Rates in the NZUE Examination, 1970-88

Indigenous Fijians				Indo-Fijians			
Year	Sat	Passed	%	Sat	Passed	%	Difference in Number of Passes
1970	202	45	22	501	167	33	122
1971	224	55	24	585	146	25	91
1972	252	63	25	684	225	33	162
1973	202	58	29	709	232	33	174
1974	240	67	28	807	246	30	179
1975	293	76	26	912	299	33	223
1976	318	96	30	1107	322	29	226
1977	478	107	22	1405	411	29	304
1978	576	170	29	1710	647	38	477
1979	804	183	23	2037	681	33	498
1980	922	184	20	2305	771	33	587
1981	1000	219	22	2278	825	36	606
1982	1117	258	23	2512	837	33	579
1983	1300	334	26	2581	950	37	616
1984	1259	333	26	2597	947	36	614
1985	1433	391	27	2478	874	35	483
1986	1483	345	23	2447	933	38	588
1987	1622	368	23	2493	1077	43	709
1988	1951	441	23	2651	1047	39	606

NB. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.
(Source: Ministry of Education Annual Reports)

Indigenous Fijians. This had implications for differential entry points to USP, for instance, where Indigenous Fijians entered USP with lower marks as a result of the quota placed on government scholarships. This will be discussed further in the next section on AA.

Has there been a significant improvement in the educational gap in the period 1987-1996? We have seen that since decolonisation, the ratio of passes at the NZUE examination has been 1 Indigenous Fijian to 3 Indo-Fijians. This has not changed from the four-year period prior to political self-rule where the ratio was also 1:3. Tables 4 and 5 provide statistical data on pass rates for the Fiji School Leaving Certificate (FSLC) and the Fiji Form Seven examinations. The FSLC programme, a two year programme, replaced the NZSC and NZUE in 1988 with the first examination taken in 1989. It was only in 1992, when the Government decided to stop sponsoring students into the Foundation course at USP, that predominantly Indigenous Fijians schools expanded up to Form Seven (Jitoko, 1995). Many Indo-Fijian schools had been offering Form Seven courses for many years prior to that. The introduction of the Fiji Form Seven national examination has increased schooling to 13 years for those who make it through the system.

Table 4: A Comparison of Indigenous Fijian and Non-Indigenous Pass Rates in the FSLC Examination, 1989-95

| | Number of Candidates and Passes | | | | | |
| | Indigenous Fijians | | | Non-Indigenous | | |
Year	Sat	Passed	%	Sat	Passed	%
1989	2987	1247	41.7	4010	2179	54.3
1990	3366	1420	42.2	4006	2263	56.5
1991	3844	1595	41.5	4603	2618	56.9
1992	4317	1516	35.1	4894	3006	61.4
1993	4750	1806	38.0	5280	3217	60.9
1994	5012	1899	37.9	5340	3287	61.5
1995	5274	2062	39.1	5720	3458	60.4

(Source: Ministry of Education Annual Reports)

Table 4 shows a comparison in the pass rates of Indigenous Fijians compared to all the other ethnic groups combined in the FSLC examination from 1989-1995. In terms of the numbers accessing Form 6, Indigenous Fijian figures are becoming increasingly comparable. In 1995, for instance, the ratio was 1:1.3 in favour of the non-indigenous category. However, in terms of numbers passing and qualifying for Form Seven, a bigger proportion of Indigenous Fijians are failing. The highest percentage of passes for Indigenous Fijians has been 42% compared to 60.4% for the non-indigenous category. In

1995, only 39% of Indigenous Fijians passed compared to 60.4% of the non-indigenous category. What conclusions can we glean from these figures? An interesting trend that has occurred in the detailing of the results is the inclusiveness of the Indo-Fijian category in the 'Other' category compared to the clear distinction made prior to the coups of 1987 between Indigenous Fijian and Indo-Fijians. The gap between students studying at the Form Six level seems to be narrowing if ratios are anything to go by. The ratio between Indigenous Fijians and the non-indigenous category has reduced from 1:3 in the decade of the 1970s and 1980s to approximately 1:1.7 in the first half of the 1990s.

While the results at the end of Form Six may look encouraging, Form Seven results illustrate a disproportionately large educational gap between Indigenous Fijians and other ethnic groups. Table 5, which shows a comparison in the Fiji Seventh Form national examination in 1995, emphasises the point that the educational gap between Indigenous Fijians and other ethnic groups is still large, particularly where it counts most—at university entrance level. The Ministry of Education (MOE) in a non-dated paper entitled "Factors Affecting the Performance of Fijian Schools" highlights two points: first, that a comparatively small number of Indigenous Fijians are accessing Form Seven; and second, that the pass rate for Indigenous Fijian students is low compared to other ethnic groups. Table 5 reveals that in 1995, for every Indigenous Fijian accessing Form Seven, there were two Indo-Fijians. In terms of passes, the ratio was 1:3.5, that is, 1 Indigenous Fijian passing for every 3.5 Indo-Fijians. When one adds the 'Other' category to the non-Indian category, the ratio is 1:3.8.

Table 5: A Comparison of Pass Rates in the Fiji Seventh Form Examination, 1995

	Indigenous Fijians	Indo-Fijians	Others	Total
Total Sat	871	1822	209	2903
Total Passed	387	1358	131	1876
% Pass	44.4	74.5	62.7	64.6

(Source: Ministry of Education paper titled "Factors Affecting the Performance of Fijian Schools", n.d.)

These statistics indicate that the educational gap identified as a serious national problem at the point of decolonisation is still serious almost four decades later.

The MOE, in a non-dated paper that is post-1995, identifies the following as factors affecting achievement in Indigenous Fijian schools:

(a) Teacher Shortage

(b) Isolation

(c) Management problems

(d) Leadership problems

(e) Teacher attitudes

(f) Lack of parental and community involvement

(g) Lack of prudent time management

In 1995, the MOE strengthened its Fijian Education Unit to specifically look at the education of Indigenous Fijians. This unit, consisting of a Principal Education Officer and a Senior Education Officer, began close liaison with Indigenous Fijian schools and began a multi-pronged approach to tackle the shortcomings identified above.[5] Since it was formed in 1995, this Fijian Education Unit has been proactive in conducting workshops for Indigenous Fijian primary school headteachers and secondary school principals as well as Indigenous Fijian school managers and education officers (Ministry of Education, 1995). It has also been involved in school visits to advise teachers and parents on their role in the education of Indigenous Fijian students.[6]

I have examined the Ministry of Education reports and statistical data to ascertain the nature of the educational gap that the first Postcolonial Government had identified as a national problem at the point of decolonisation. From the evidence of the data, the educational gap that existed in 1970 is still evident in the mid-1990s. If its main purpose was to narrow the educational gap so that Indigenous Fijians could be better represented in "senior positions in the public and private sectors" (Fiji Government, 1966: 96) of the economy, why has AA not made an impact on the underachievement of Indigenous Fijians?

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[5] This information was provided by the two officers at the Fijian Education Unit of the Ministry of Education during interviews I conduced in late 1996.

[6] See Appendix A for a mission statement developed by the MOE detailing what it hopes to achieve in terms of the education of Indigenous Fijians by the Year 2001.

AA Policies in Fiji

The impact of recommendations made by the 1969 Fiji Education Commission on the education of Indigenous Fijians was far reaching. The first Postcolonial Government advocated twelve special measures to reduce the educational gap between the two major racial groups. These measures were aimed at improving facilities (i.e., boarding, books, equipment), encouraging more Indigenous Fijians through scholarship provision, providing incentives for teachers to teach in rural areas (i.e., better quarters), improving teacher education (i.e., better qualified teachers), establishing more junior secondary schools, launching a 'public relations' campaign, easing the problem of travel, and the acquisition of more vessels for field staff (Fiji Government, 1970). One of the long-term aims of the Postcolonial Government, which it hoped to achieve by the mid-1980s, was defined as "a marked improvement in the education of Fijians" in order to redress the educational imbalance between the Indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians (Fiji Government, 1970: 67). Five years later in 1975, the Government emphasised the need for special measures if the nation was to "produce enough qualified Fijians to occupy a due share of top and middle level positions in the public and private sectors of the economy" (Fiji Government, 1975: 184).

AA policies, then, have been in place since the early 1970s to counter this government defined problem of Fijian underachievement. At least six AA policies were implemented by the first Postcolonial Government, especially at the tertiary level, in the hope that the imbalance in educational attainment of the Indigenous Fijians and non-indigenous students would be reduced. This, it was envisaged by the Government, would somehow reduce, if not close, the occupational gap between the ethnic groups. Specifically, these AA policies were:

(i)   The establishment of junior secondary schools since the early 1970s to specifically increase the number of Fijians at the secondary level and to improve the education of Indigenous Fijians in general;

(ii)   The reservation of 50% of Fiji Government university scholarships for Indigenous Fijians since the mid 1970s;

(iii)   The inauguration in 1971 of a 'public relations' campaign designed to encourage in Indigenous Fijian parents, especially in rural areas, a greater appreciation of the educational needs of their children.

(iv)   The award of scholarships to all deserving Indigenous Fijian applicants since 1975;

(v)   The establishment in 1984 of special funds for more scholarship awards and institutional improvements of Indigenous Fijian schools. This was an annual fund of $3.5 million; and

(vi)   The conversion of a teachers' college into a residential college for foundation students at the University of the South Pacific (USP) in 1984. (Puamau, 1991: 115-116)

From the above list, one can see that three AA strategies (ii, iv and v) were devoted to providing Indigenous Fijians with scholarship awards to enable them to access a university education. It is important to note at this juncture that AA strategies in Fiji were not specifically aimed at addressing educational inequalities at the lower levels of the educational system. Instead, the emphasis was on providing Indigenous Fijians with the opportunity to access a tertiary education to enable them to be better represented in middle and top level jobs in the private and public sectors of the economy. That is where the perceived priority lay soon after decolonisation occurred in 1970. This point is further discussed in the Interpretation section of Chapter Six.

I now turn to an examination of AA policies in education. What have been their assumptions and rationale? How have they been implemented? What have been some of the outcomes of these policies? I specifically focus on a statistical analysis of two AA policies in play at this historical juncture: the allocation of half of all government tertiary scholarships for Indigenous Fijians and the annual $3.5 million (increased to $4.7 since 1994) Indigenous Fijian Education Fund.

AA Policy: Government Scholarships for Indigenous Fijians

The AA policy of reserving 50% of government scholarships for Indigenous Fijians was first proposed by the 1969 Fiji Education Commission. It was incorporated into Fiji's Sixth and Seventh Development Plans for the period 1971-1980. In theory, this policy was supposed to ensure that more Indigenous Fijian graduates would be in a position to hold the middle and top level positions envisaged for them by the first Postcolonial Government in the public and private sectors of the economy. A tertiary education, particularly university training, was viewed as the means by which a proportional number of Indigenous Fijians would participate actively in the economic and social well-being of the nation. But more importantly, as Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, the Prime Minister from 1970-1987, argues AA was perceived as necessary to ensure that

future racial harmony in the country was achieved (The Fiji Times, 17/10/81). Or as Dr Ahmed Ali, the Minister for Education, put it in the Parliamentary Debate Session of August 1982, AA for Indigenous Fijians was needed for the sake of political stability.

A problem consistently found in the implementation of the 50:50 policy has been defined as a lack of suitably qualified Indigenous Fijians available for the number of scholarships awarded, particularly for school leavers entering Diploma, Social Science, Science and Medical Foundation programmes at USP. This was a direct result of the very small number of Indigenous Fijians passing the NZUE examination (See again Tables 2 and 3). As a consequence of the ineligibility of many Indigenous Fijians to enter university, the 50:50 scholarship quota in favour of Indigenous Fijians could not be implemented in its entirety as Table 6 shows.

Table 6: Racial Distribution of Government University Scholarships, 1970-82

Year	Total Number	Indigenous Fijian %	Indo-Fijian %	Others %
1970	182	32.96	53.29	13.75
1971	263	34.22	54.75	11.03
1972	338	31.06	56.80	12.14
1973	407	34.40	58.23	7.37
1974	460	34.35	57.39	8.26
1975	557	37.70	54.58	7.72
1976	633	42.65	49.92	7.43
1977	644	38.02	56.99	6.99
1978	676	25.21	58.28	6.31
1979	450	39.93	55.17	4.90
1980	1344	41.82	53.13	5.05
1981	1347	41.42	54.50	4.08
1982	1194	44.47	52.01	3.52

(Source: Parliamentary Debates, 23rd August, 1982: 655. This table was quoted by Mr J.M. Ah Koy, the General Member for Suva, who claimed it was supplied to him by the Public Service Commission)

Table 6 illustrates that not once in the years between 1970-1982 have Indigenous Fijians claimed their 50% of the scholarship quota. On the other hand, Indo-Fijians have consistently been able to meet over 50% of scholarship awards. The Report of the Public

Service Commission (PSC) for 1988/1989 emphasises the point that in the period 1970-88, Indigenous Fijians have only utilised 42.16% of Fiji Government and aid supported degree scholarships while non-ethnic Fijians have utilised 57.84%. To counter this, Cabinet decided in March 1989 that:

> (a) the 50-50 scholarship policy be abolished and a new policy enforced to ensure that the gap between Indigenous Fijians and Others in various areas of study are met;

> (b) in order to bring about parity, especially in the professional/technical areas, awards should be biased in favour of Indigenous Fijians; and

> (c) to make up the disparity which has occurred over the last 18 years, and to cater for present manpower demands, allocation for Indigenous Fijians each year be not less than 50% of the awards given. (Public Service Commission, Report for 1988-1989: 22)

This decision by Fiji's Cabinet in early 1989 to abolish the 50:50 allocation of government scholarships and replace that policy with a 50+ allocation "biased in favour of Indigenous Fijians" has resulted in Indigenous Fijians utilising over 50% of scholarships for the first time in 1989. This trend has continued into the 1990s except in 1994 when the allocation for Indigenous Fijians was slightly less than 50% as Table 7 shows.

Table 7: Racial Distribution of Government University Scholarships, 1989-94

Year	Total Number of Awards	Indigenous Fijian %	Others %
1989	1133	54.0	46.0
1991	1135	52.7	47.3
1992	1232	54.0	46.0
1993	1237	52.8	47.2
1994	1514	49.9	50.1

(Source: Public Service Commission Annual Reports)

So, the AA policy of allocating half of all government scholarships to Indigenous Fijians was met for the first time in 1989. This was in response to a Cabinet decision to abolish the 50:50 allocation and increase the quota in favour of Indigenous Fijians. One

can only speculate on the reasons why Indigenous Fijians have not been able to meet their 50% allocation of government scholarships. One reason could very well be the lack of applicants with the appropriate entry marks. Another reason could be attributed to the "bloody-mindedness" of bureaucrats determined to subvert the full implementation of this policy as Dr Ahmed Ali[7] puts it.

I have just discussed problems associated with the implementation of the 50:50 scholarship quota policy that was supposed to provide access to more Indigenous Fijians at the tertiary level. I now turn to an examination of the second AA policy, the Special Indigenous Fijian Education Fund, instituted by Fiji's first Postcolonial Government to counter their lack of access to and representation in those processes that assure a more representational participation in social and economic life. First I provide a brief background to the conceptualisation behind the policy before detailing the two specific foci of the fund which are the capital development of Indigenous Fijian schools and scholarship awards for Indigenous Fijian students to access tertiary education.

AA Policy: The Special Indigenous Fijian Education Fund

The special annual fund of $3.5 million was established by Cabinet in late 1983 to assist the education of Indigenous Fijians (Ministry of Fijian Affairs, Annual Report for the Year 1988). It was first implemented for five years from 1984-88. Cabinet approved the second phase from 1989-93. Since 1994, this fund has increased to $4.77 million. At this historical juncture, AA for Indigenous Fijians in the form of this special annual fund is a hegemonic feature of Fiji's social and political landscape.

The then Prime Minister, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara summed up the need for the Special AA Fund in this manner:

> I think the basic criterion that decided Government to allocate this fund and to put it under the Ministry of Fijian Affairs is the fact that it is the Fijian people, as a whole, who have been lagging behind in education. Many endeavours have been made and the problem seems to have not been reduced. We hope that with this injection of funds and activity that will arise from it, we will be able to hope to alleviate the problem that is building up - the resentment of one section of the community about their lagging behind in achievements in the professions and educational attainments. (Parliamentary Debates, Oct/Nov/Dec. 1983: 1756)

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[7] Dr Ahmed Ali is a former Minister for Education (1982-1986) and is currently Director of the Policy Analysis Unit in the Prime Minister's Office at the time of the interview, dated 4/10/96.

Similarly, it was noted by a member of Parliament, Ratu Timoci Vesikula, in the Parliamentary Debates of Nov/Dec. 1984 that the Special Education Fund was essential

> ...not merely for the benefit the Fijian people will receive, but also for the well-being of this country and in this sense, for the welfare of all the people domiciled in Fiji. By ensuring the Fijian people a fair share of the fruits produced in their land, this country will continue to have the stability for which it has been noted for everywhere. (Ratu Timoci Vesikula, Parliamentary Debates Nov/Dec 1984: 74)

The assumption of Cabinet, when setting aside this sum, was that special financial resources were a prerequisite for any intended improvement in the education of Indigenous Fijians (Fijian Education Committee, 1988). Better provision of adequate school facilities, good teaching and suitable advisory services was considered to be the means of improving Indigenous Fijian performance. Thus, one of the targets of the fund was school development (e.g., upgrading buildings and facilities - classrooms, libraries and science laboratories), resources (e.g., library books), and materials (e.g., science laboratory chemicals and equipment) - particularly in rural Indigenous Fijian schools. The second focus of the fund was provision of scholarships for tertiary studies in areas such as Commercial, Scientific and Technological fields where Indigenous Fijians were lagging behind.

The creation of this special fund as an AA policy to improve the education of Indigenous Fijians arose as a consequence of the relative failure of special measures spelt out in the first two postcolonial Development Plans (Fiji Government, 1970, 1975) to significantly improve the educational performance of Indigenous Fijians. This fund is administered by the Ministry of Fijian Affairs (MFA) which is synonymously referred to as the Fijian Affairs Board (FAB). The implementing arm of this special fund is the Fijian Education Unit at the MFA which is responsible for compiling information on Indigenous Fijian education, making proposals for the use of the fund and monitoring its usage (Ministry of Fijian Affairs, Annual Report for the Year 1987). It is the Fijian Education Committee (FEC) that makes decisions on the disbursement of the fund. This Committee, chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the MFA, comprises Indigenous Fijians in key positions in the public and private sectors with relevant experience in education.

Capital Development of Schools

The first phase of the Special Education Fund was administered by the Ministry of Education (MOE) before it was transferred to the MFA. The then Minister for Education, Filipe Bole, in a memo to his Permanent Secretary, outlined the ground rules to be observed in the administration of the capital fund which have since formed the basis for the disbursement of this particular fund. The capital fund was to be used for the following purposes: classrooms, staff quarters, laboratories, Woodworkshops, Home Economics rooms, secondary school libraries, classroom furniture, production equipment (duplicators, typewriters, audio-visual etc.), textbooks, library books, science equipment for elementary, basic and higher secondary school, electrification, building plans, surveys and research (Ministry of Education internal memorandum, 18/1/89). The fund was specifically not to be used for school grounds or gymnasiums, fencing of school compounds or construction of playgrounds.

Table 8: Proportion of Fijian Education Fund Utilised on Capital Development of Schools, 1984-93

Year	Amount of Money Used ($)	Percentage of Total (%)
1984	2,775,845.00	79.31
1985	1,713,188.00	48.95
1986	2,111,597.00	60.33
1987	305,477.00	8.73
1988	849,825.00	24.28
1989	1,950,671.00	55.73
1990	1,728,905.00	49.4
1991	931,527.00	26.62
1992	928,856.00	26.54
1993	15,570.00	4.45
TOTAL AMOUNT DISTRIBUTED IN A YEAR: $3.5 MILLION		

(Source: Information provided by the Ministry of Fijian Affairs, Personal Correspondence dated 16 October, 1996, reference no. 18/3/1)

Table 8 gives an indication of how the capital development fund was utilised over the period 1984-1993. It is clear from this table that school development was a major preoccupation in the disbursement of the Fijian Education Fund, particularly in the first three years of implementation. Spending on schools in 1987 was 8.7% of the total

because the coups had a large impact. "Due to the state of affairs of the nation, $700,000 was returned to government and $786,575 vired to the Ministry of Fijian Affairs' administration" (Ministry of Fijian Affairs, 1987: 32). In 1993 there was a significant decrease in spending on school development. Only 4.45% of the total Fijian Education Fund was utilised and I have been informed by senior officers at the MFA that the capital development component of the Special Education Fund ceased in 1993. The emphasis in the years since has been on manpower development. The emphasis, then, has shifted from assisting Indigenous Fijian schools to an almost total focus on scholarship provision. According to information provided by the Ministry of Fijian Affairs, $4.7 million is used for the further education of Indigenous Fijians and only $100,000 for school text and library books.

Many of the Indigenous Fijian principals, as well as other educationists that I interviewed, expressed concern at the abolition of this AA programme (See Chapter Six). They thought this may be a premature move given that many Indigenous Fijian schools still need a lot of capital work in addition to maintaining what the fund had contributed to building in its first ten years of operation. However, a senior MOE bureaucrat pointed out that the two main reasons for the shift in emphasis of the MFA administered Fijian Education Fund has been the increase in university fees and the increased allocation in the MOE budget for capital development of schools.

Scholarship Provision

As pointed out above, one of the programmes of the $3.5 million Special Education Fund, which increased to $4.77 million from 1994, has focussed on the physical development of Indigenous Fijian schools and the provision of resources and equipment. I now shift to an examination of the second focus of the programme which is to do with scholarship awards. An interesting feature of the awards of scholarships is the inclusion of Rotumans in the category of potential beneficiaries.

Table 9 provides data on the number of Indigenous Fijians and Rotumans who have won scholarship awards, both locally and overseas. Since the inception of the Fijian Education Fund AA policy, a total of 4830 Indigenous Fijians and Rotumans have been awarded scholarships to study both locally and overseas to get Certificate, Diploma, undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications (See Appendix B for a listing of programmes and awards that students on FAB scholarships have pursued). Table 9

shows that a total of 4,391 local and 439 overseas awards have enabled all these Indigenous Fijians to access a tertiary education.

Table 9: Numbers of Indigenous Fijian and Rotuman FAB Scholarship Awardees, 1984-96

Year	Local Awards	Overseas Awards	Total
1984	90	24	114
1985-1987	668	109	777
1988-1990	811	79	890
1991-1993	1,022	113	1,135
1994-1996	1,800	114	1,914
Total	4,391	439	4,830

(Source: Information provided by the Ministry of Fijian Affairs, Personal Correspondence dated December 1996)

In contrast to the Fiji Government scholarship awards which discourage postgraduate applicants, the FAB awarded scholarships have resulted in Indigenous Fijians attaining postgraduate qualifications. Tables 10 and 11 provide data on the number of Indigenous Fijians and Rotumans who have graduated on FAB scholarships, both locally and overseas. Table 10 shows that a total of 1,213 Indigenous Fijians and Rotumans have graduated locally.

Table 10: Local Graduates on FAB Scholarships, 1984-95

Year	Number of Graduates
1984-1986	18
1987-1989	206
1990-1992	520
1993-1995	469
Total	1,213

(Source: Information provided by the Ministry of Fijian Affairs, Personal Correspondence dated December 1996)

Table 11: Overseas Graduates on FAB Scholarships, 1988-95

Postgraduate	Undergraduate	HND/Diploma	Pilot training	Total
57	114	28	9	208

(Source: Information provided by the Ministry of Fijian Affairs, Personal Correspondence dated December 1996)
Key: HND - Higher National Diploma

Table 11 shows the number of Indigenous Fijians who have graduated overseas with postgraduate, undergraduate, diplomas and as pilots (See Appendix C for a listing of postgraduate awards by discipline). Postgraduate awards have been at Postgraduate Diploma, Masters and PhD levels in a wide range of disciplines including law, sociology, public administration, agriculture, linguistics, education, economics, defence and security analysis, business administration, marine biology, aquaculture and geoscience computing. Table 11 shows that a total of 57 Indigenous Fijians have graduated with postgraduate qualifications on FAB scholarships in the 8 year period from 1988-1995.

What of overseas graduates prior to this period and what qualifications did Indigenous Fijians acquire? The Fijian Education Committee of the MFA (1990) recorded that 216 Indigenous Fijians awarded overseas scholarships graduated in the first five years of the Special Education Fund AA policy (i.e., 1984-1988). Of these 216 graduates, 29 gained postgraduate awards (PhD=1; Masters=20; PGDip=8). The bulk of the graduates attained first degrees (173) and 14 Indigenous Fijians returned with Diploma and Certificate level qualifications. These figures show that a good proportion of Indigenous Fijians with PhD and Masters qualifications have been able to attain these qualifications through FAB scholarship awards.

There has been much controversy over awards for those provinces that are disadvantaged in terms of access to the upper secondary school level and passes in national examinations. See Appendices D and E for details on provincial allocation for local and overseas awards. See also Appendices F and G for details on the provincial distribution of FAB graduates, both locally and overseas. What is obvious from these statistics is that the educational discrepancies in access and performance amongst the Indigenous Fijians is as marked as the educational gap between Indigenous Fijians and other ethnic groups. Issues of provincial inequity in scholarship awards and graduates

have caused much concern, particularly for the provinces that are underrepresented. This will be discussed in Chapter Six.

The criteria used for the selection of awardees of FAB scholarships has been another area that has caused much concern because they have not been made transparent to the public. The only information received is in the form of (a) an advertisement calling for applications from Indigenous Fijians and Rotumans in particular fields of study and (b) a list of applicants called to attend interviews at the MFA. Appendix H provides information on the criteria used for the selection of awardees of FAB scholarships. The four most important criteria rests on academic performance, choice of programme of study, recommendation from Employers for working applicants and special consideration of those from disadvantaged provinces.

An area that has been neglected in discussions on AA in Fiji is that of gender equity in access to scholarships. This is primarily because of the following reasons: (i) the secrecy surrounding policies which are race-based; (ii) the consequent lack of public information; (iii) the emphasis on giving awards to Indigenous Fijians, irrespective of gender and (iv) the male biased nature of courses for which applicants can apply. Tables 12 and 13 provide data on the allocation of FAB scholarships over a 13 year period from 1984-1996 for local and overseas institutions based on gender. We can see from these tables that, with the exception of several years, a significant number of both local and overseas FAB scholarships have been awarded to males. In terms of local scholarships, the highest percentage awarded to female Indigenous Fijians was 74.7% in 1990 and the next highest in 1989 with females winning 52.4% of local scholarships. The average percentage of local scholarships awarded to female students, however, has been 40.9%.

As Table 13 shows, the same holds true for the award of overseas FAB tertiary scholarships. Females are significantly underrepresented in overseas training on FAB scholarships. The highest percentage of overseas scholarships awarded to female Indigenous Fijian students was 53.3% in 1992. However, the next highest was in 1985 when females scored only 25% of all overseas scholarships. The average percentage of overseas scholarships awarded to females has been less than this at 23.9%, which is less than a quarter of all overseas FAB scholarships.

Table 12: Local FAB Tertiary Scholarships Based on Gender, 1984-96

Year	Male	%	Female	%	Total
1984	62	68.9	28	31.1	90
1985	84	54.9	69	45.1	153
1986	151	55.5	121	44.5	272
1987	152	62.6	91	37.4	243
1988	186	61.4	117	38.6	303
1989	99	47.6	109	52.4	208
1990	76	25.3	224	74.7	300
1991	224	56.4	180	43.6	404
1992	116	54.2	98	45.8	214
1993	204	50.5	200	49.5	404
1994	439	81.3	101	18.7	540
1995	393	77.4	115	22.6	508
1996	543	72.2	209	27.8	752

(Source: Information provided by the Ministry of Fijian A.fairs, Personal
Correspondence dated December 1996)

The interview data (described, analysed and interpreted in Chapters Five, Six and Seven) have identified financial wastage caused by Indigenous Fijian underachievement at the tertiary level as a serious criticism of the AA policy of scholarship provision. In comparison to the Government (PSC) managed scholarship awards, the FAB controlled Special Education Fund is perceived to be the lesser of the two in terms of examination entry marks and prestige. The PSC awards are given to those who score the highest examination marks and it is generally understood that if a person does not meet the requirements of PSC, then that person might stand a good chance with FAB. The implication of this is that Indigenous Fijians on FAB scholarships may actually enter university with lesser entry marks than those on PSC awards. This is a criticism by those who argue that scholarships should be awarded to the most meritorious, irrespective of ethnicity. Critics of the Special Fund therefore have pointed to financial wastage as a major limitation of the implementation of this Fund. I now turn to an analysis of statistics on those awards that have been terminated, both at local and overseas tertiary institutions, with the purpose of quantifying this supposed wastage.

Table 13: Overseas FAB Tertiary Scholarships Based on Gender, 1984-96

Year	Male	%	Female	%	Total
1984	20	83.3	4	16.7	24
1985	27	75.0	9	25.0	36
1986	25	80.6	6	19.4	31
1987	33	78.6	9	21.4	42
1988	16	80.0	4	20.0	20
1989	21	87.5	3	12.5	24
1990	26	74.3	9	25.7	35
1991	28	82.4	6	17.6	34
1992	7	46.7	8	53.3	15
1993	44	68.8	20	31.2	64
1994	37	69.8	16	30.2	53
1995	23	85.2	4	14.8	27
1996	26	76.5	8	23.5	34

(Source: Information provided by the Ministry of Fijian Affairs, Personal Correspondence dated December 1996)

Appendices I and J provide details of the number of students who have had their studies terminated due to poor performance and the approximate costing in local and overseas tertiary institutions consecutively. In terms of local awards, over $1.77 million has been the approximate wastage due to a total of 412 terminated awards at the University of the South Pacific (USP) alone for the eight year period from 1988-1995. With regard to overseas tertiary scholarships awards, approximately 37 awards were terminated at an approximate cost of $1.1 million in the five year period from 1990-1994.

In terms of outcomes, then, quite a number of Indigenous Fijians have been able to attain graduate and postgraduate qualifications under FAB sponsored scholarships. As Table 10 indicates, 1,213 Indigenous Fijians have graduated locally. Table 11 and figures provided by the Fijian Education Committee of the MFA indicate that approximately 424 Indigenous Fijians have graduated from overseas universities over the 13 year period from 1984-1995 bringing the total number of graduates to 1,637. At the same time, there have been losses with an estimated minimum amount of $2.87 million in eight years for the termination of a total of 451 local and overseas scholarships (See Appendices I and J). Despite the financial loss, it would seem that a substantial number of Indigenous Fijians have graduated under FAB sponsored scholarships. It is indeed

doubtful whether these many Indigenous Fijian students would have accessed a tertiary education in the absence of such a scholarship fund.

The quantitative data provided in the preceding sections indicate that the educational gap that existed between Indigenous Fijians and other ethnic groups prior to decolonisation is still present at this historical juncture, especially in terms of access to and performance at national examinations at the Form Seven level. We have seen from the analysis above that AA policies have taken shape in the form of scholarship provision and school capital development. The important question to ask is: What impact have these policies had on racial inequalities in schooling? Considering that very little AA was provided to assist Indigenous Fijians directly in schooling, was it a misconception on the part of the first Postcolonial Government to assume that there was a direct relationship between the educational gap and the availability of state funds? The Government's concern has been with regard to enabling Indigenous Fijians to attain positions of authority and power in the public and private sectors of the economy. There is no doubt that the scholarship provisions by PSC and FAB have made a significant difference as the data on scholarship awards and graduates demonstrate. Precisely how this has translated into employment prospects for Indigenous Fijians is yet to be ascertained by further research. Precisely how to translate spending on school facilities, resources and equipment into examination performance of Indigenous Fijians is again difficult to ascertain.

My main concerns here are to find out why Indigenous Fijians are underachieving in schooling, why AA policies have been ineffective in reducing or closing the educational gap, what the nature is of the relationship between underachievement and AA, and what impact neocolonial educational structures have on Indigenous Fijian underachievement.

Summary

In order to understand AA, we need to see how these policies interact in specific historical contexts. I have attempted to provide the shifting economic, political and cultural context under which AA operates in Fiji. It is through this context that we should view AA in Fiji.

I have examined Fiji's history in order to place in context the conceptualisation and implementation of AA policies in education that followed immediately after the first Postcolonial Government took up the reins of government from the colonial 'masters' in

117

one of its first bids at self-determination. It is pertinent to point out that although this government was a multiracial one, the perception by the people was that it was a predominantly indigenous party because the majority of the ministers were Indigenous Fijians. I view AA, therefore, as a deliberate move by the government to assert Fiji's postcoloniality and, in so doing, to counter the effects of a Western education that had disadvantaged indigenous students in schooling.

Some important issues raised in this chapter pertain to Fiji's colonial history. These issues include the problematics associated with the following: the use of categories and Western periodization; historic forms of knowledge particularly in view of the following: (a) the absence of a written tradition before pre-contact times; (b) dependence on the historical representation by the colonialists/colonisers/western writers; (c) the insidious effect of Western representation of Fiji's history on the people themselves; and (d) the continuation of colonial educational structures and reproduction after the nation had attained political self-determination.

I also provided a detailed account of the thinking that led to the development of AA in postcolonial Fiji in the form of racial inequalities in schooling followed by an examination of two specific AA polices: the 50% quota of scholarships for Indigenous Fijians and the Special Annual Education Fund for the education of Indigenous Fijians and Rotumans. I have provided quantitative data to show the nature of the educational gap that the Postcolonial Governments said existed, as well as a statistical analysis of the outcomes of the two aforementioned AA policies.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This research project is a qualitative case study of policy in the Fiji context and draws on interviews as its main source of data. In this chapter, I explicate the methodological considerations I had in mind prior to, during and after data collection. First, I review the literature on previous studies and procedures on research methodology pertinent to this study. Specifically, I review the literature on qualitative research, the case study approach, the interview and policy analysis. The second and third sections of the chapter offer a description of the fieldwork. The final part of this chapter is a description of the processes of analysing and interpreting the interview data.

Literature Review on Methodology

Qualitative Research Methodology

Qualitative research (henceforth referred to as QR) has been described as research that studies talk, texts and interaction with the four major methods of QR identified as observation, analysing texts and documents, interviews and recording and transcription (Silverman, 1993). Put another way, qualitative methods are of three kinds: direct observation, in-depth, open-ended interviews and written documents (Krathwohl 1993; Patton, 1990). While there is "no standard approach among qualitative researchers", what is common is that they "all share a commitment to naturally-occurring data" (Silverman, 1993: 23).

Drawing on the work of sociologist John Lofland (1971), Patton (1990: 32) interprets what Lofland suggests as four people-oriented mandates in the collection of qualitative data as: (1) the researcher "must get close enough to the people and situation being studied to personally understand in depth the details of what goes on"; (2) the researcher "must aim at capturing what actually takes place and what people actually say: the perceived facts"; (3) "qualitative data must include a great deal of pure description of people, activities, interactions, and settings"; and finally, (4) "qualitative data must include direct quotations from people, both what they speak and what they write down". The qualitative researcher must be directly involved in the natural setting and must be actually present to faithfully and accurately record what people say and do (this would exclude data collection using written documents). This inherently means that the views and perceptions of the participants are valued highly. Broadly speaking then, QR is that which "produces descriptive data: people's own written or spoken words and observable behaviour" (Taylor

and Bogdan, 1984: 5). Or as Krathwohl (1993: 311) points out "Qualitative research methods permit the description of phenomena and events in an attempt to understand and explain them". He (Krathwohl, 1993: 311) adds:

> Such descriptions may be used to seek principles and explanations that generalize. Qualitative methods are inductive: they let the problem emerge from the data or remain open to interpretations of the problem different from those held initially. The data are accounts of careful observations, including detailed descriptions of context and nearly verbatim records of conversation.

Another characteristic of qualitative data is that it contributes to hypotheses generation and theory building. In QR, unlike the quantitative approach where data is collected to test preconceived hypotheses, models or theories, there are no specific hypotheses at the outset but the hypotheses are produced by the field research itself. The strength of QR therefore lies in the flexibility this gives to design which is partially emergent as the study occurs (Krathwohl 1993; Patton, 1990) and alternative analyses after the data collection phase (Silverman, 1993; Krathwohl 1993).

While qualitative data contributes to the generation of hypotheses and theory building, not theory testing, it is important to note that the selection of a methodology depends upon the researcher's theoretical perspective. This does not mean that the research study undertaken has initial theories that need to be tested in the field. Far from it. Rather, what is referred to here is that the research method or tool that is selected for use will be determined by the researcher's theoretical standpoint about the place of knowledge and how this is translated from theory into practice. Thus, what research questions one is asking, how one answers these and how they are interpreted depend on one's theoretical perspective.

Quantitative research places an emphasis on numbers. On the other hand, QR focuses on words, actions and records (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994). But this does not mean that one method has to be used exclusively. In fact, one might want to combine both approaches. As Silverman (1993: 22) points out: "[T]here are no principled grounds to be either qualitative or quantitative in approach. It all depends upon what you are trying to do". Similarly, C.W. Mills (1959: 245-246) urged researchers:

> Be a good craftsman: avoid any rigid set of procedures. Above all, seek to develop and to use the sociological imagination. Avoid the fetishism of method and technique. Urge the rehabilitation of the unpretentious intellectual craftsman, and try to become such a craftsman yourself. Let every man be his own methodologist; let every man be his own theorist; let theory and method again become part of the practice of a craft.

According to Silverman (1993: 21), most QR is concerned with describing and illuminating "the meaningful social world as prescribed by the interpretivist paradigm". "Achieving understanding" is how Maykut and Morehouse (1994: 34) define the goal of qualitative inquiry. Or as Taylor and Bogdan (1984: 8) put it: "The phenomenologist views human behavior, what people say and do, as a product of how people define their world". They add that the task for the qualitative researcher "is to capture this process of interpretation" because the "phenomenologist attempts to see things from other people's point of view" (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984: 9). What these writers all have in common is that they view qualitative methodology as a way of approaching and interpreting the empirical world from the perspective of the participants in the study.

This far I have discussed the general characteristics of qualitative research. Four points have been made: First, qualitative research is concerned with naturally occurring data; second, these data contribute to the generation of hypotheses and theory building which facilitate alternative analyses after data collection; third, one's choice of methodology is influenced by one's theoretical perspective which can either fit into the quantitative or qualitative theoretical framework or can be a combination of both; finally, the ultimate aim of qualitative research is to gain an understanding of how people view their world: the main role of the researcher is to interpret how people define their world.

QR draws on participant perspectives in order to gain a deeper insight and understanding of social phenomenon unlike the positivist research tradition of generalising results. Another specific feature of QR is that the research design evolves over time and the emphasis is placed on the researcher as the main research instrument. Additionally, the research sample is selected purposively and the researcher goes out into the natural setting to collect the data. Moreover, data collection involves capturing people's words and actions. As well, data analysis is ongoing and primarily inductive. Finally, research outcomes are reported using a case study approach (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994).

The Case Study Approach

The qualitative case study is "an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a bounded phenomenon such as a program, an institution, a person, a process, or a social unit" (Merriam, 1988: xiv). According to Stake (1994), a case study is not a methodological choice but is instead a choice of object to be studied because the researcher chooses to study the case. A case study has also been technically defined as an empirical inquiry that "investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the

boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used" (Yin, 1989: 23). The latter definition has been used to differentiate the case study strategy from an experiment, a history and survey methods.

Stake (1994) emphasises that the case study is a specific, unique, bounded system. He suggests that many researchers will gather data on all of these: the nature of the case, its historical background, the physical setting, other contexts (including economic, political, legal and aesthetic), other cases through which this case is recognised and those informants through whom the case can be known (Stake, 1994: 238). Stake (1994) goes on to identify three kinds of case studies: the intrinsic case study where the aim is better understanding of a particular case; the instrumental case study where a particular case is examined to provide insight into an issue or refinement of theory; and the collective case study where a number of cases are jointly studied in order to inquire into the phenomenon, population or general condition. For Stake, the purpose of case study is to represent the case, not the world.

Providing us with more information on the case study, Yin (1989: 13) makes the point that the case study strategy is generally appropriate "when 'how' or 'why' questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context". He categorises case studies into three types: explanatory, exploratory and descriptive, although he cautions that there are large areas of overlap among them. It is pertinent to point out at this point that my own research case study is a combination of all of these three categories. This study is principally explanatory, attempting to explain the causes of Indigenous Fijian underachievement and the reasons why AA policies have not had a significant impact on reducing educational inequalities. But it is also descriptive since I have made the methodological decision that informant perspectives are valuable and incipiently meaningful. This is borne out by the heavy emphasis I have placed in Chapters Five through to Seven on what informants say. It is the tentative nature of QR that also makes this thesis an exploratory one as well. So as Yin has described it, there are large overlaps in case study types.

Merriam (1988: 17-20) stresses several characteristics of QR which feature prominently in case study research. First, she makes the point that the primary focus of qualitative researchers is process rather than outcomes or products. The second point she emphasises is that meaning is what qualitative researchers are interested in - "How people make sense of their lives, what they experience, how they interpret these experiences, how they structure their social lives". The third point Merriam makes is that the researcher "is

the *primary instrument* for data collection and analysis" and that the data are "mediated through this human instrument" in the form of the researcher. The fourth obvious characteristic of QR that Merriam discusses is that QR usually involves fieldwork, where one physically goes "to the people, setting, site institution ("the field"), in order to observe behavior in its natural setting". Two additional features that Merriam attributes to QR are qualitative description and induction. In the former, because QR is concerned with process, meaning and understanding, words or pictures are used to describe the phenomenon under study. In the latter, QR is inductive because it "builds abstractions, concepts, hypotheses, or theories, rather than testing existing theory" as is the norm with quantitative research. Another feature of QR is that qualitative work is generally written up as a case study (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994; Krathwohl, 1993; Yin 1989).

Yin (1989: 146-151) outlines five general characteristics of what he calls "an exemplary case study". The first point he makes is that the case study must be significant. For example, the case study is significant in terms of the individual case or cases being unusual and of public interest. Another example he gives is that the underlying issues are nationally important either in theoretical, policy or practical terms or as he puts it "both of the preceding". A second characteristic of an exemplary case study, Yin claims, is that it must be "complete" and this can be carried out in three ways: (a) the boundaries of the case, defined as "the distinction between the phenomenon being studied and its context", are given "explicit attention". This can occur throughout the analytic and reporting phases of doing case studies and can be achieved by showing "through either logical argument or the presentation of evidence, that as the analytic periphery is reached, the information is of decreasing relevance to the case study"; (b) in the collection of evidence, the researcher should demonstrate convincingly that (s)he was exhaustive in collecting the relevant evidence; and (c) the absence of a severe time or resource constraint because this a reflection that the research design was planned around such constraints and should not then arise in the middle of the case study. A third characteristic of an exemplary case study identified by Yin (1989) is that the case study must consider alternative perspectives that most seriously challenge the design of the case study. This can occur for instance in alternative cultural views, different theories or variations among the people who are part of the case study. As Yin (1989: 149) puts it: "In fact, the exemplary case study anticipates these 'obvious' alternatives, even advocates their positions as forcefully as possible, and shows - empirically - the basis upon which such alternatives can be rejected".

The last two characteristics of an exemplary case study, according to Yin (1989), are that the case study must display sufficient evidence and that it must be composed in an engaging manner. For the former, the "exemplary case study is one that judiciously and effectively presents the most compelling evidence, so that a reader can reach an independent judgment regarding the merits of the analysis" (Yin, 1989: 149). The latter, that is writing of the final case study report in an engaging manner, should engage, entice and seduce "the eye" of the reader. This would necessitate enthusiasm on the part of the researcher who would impart the impression that the case study "contains earth-shattering conclusions" (Yin, 1989: 151).

For Patton (1990: 461), credibility issues for qualitative inquiry, which are equally applicable to case study research, are as follows. First, rigorous techniques and methods for gathering high-quality data need to be made and the data carefully analysed with particular attention placed on issues of validity, reliability and triangulation. Secondly, there is the issue of the credibility of the researcher, which is dependent on training, experience, track record, status, and presentation of self. Third, the researcher needs to have a philosophical belief in the phenomenological paradigm in the sense that s(he) has a fundamental appreciation of naturalistic inquiry qualitative methods, inductive analysis, and holistic thinking. Patton (1990: 461) sums this up by maintaining that credible qualitative study will thus need to address the following issues: (1) What techniques and methods were used to ensure the integrity, validity, and accuracy of the findings? (2) What does the research bring to the study in terms of qualifications, experience and perspective? and (3) What paradigm orientation and assumptions undergird the study?

What criticisms have been made about case study research? Yin (1989: 21-23) identifies three problems: lack of rigour, very little basis for generalisation and the tendency towards massive, unreadable documents. In answer to the first criticism, Yin points out that bias can enter into conduct of experiments or in the design of questionnaires for surveys and that it is possible to minimise bias. Yin's response to the second criticism is that "case studies, like experiments, are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes" (Yin, 1989: 21). In answer to the third criticism, Yin points out that case studies need not necessarily be massive, unreadable documents and spends a whole chapter outlining how this can be done. He also notes that case studies need not take a long time and says that confusion may have arisen between the case study strategy with ethnography or participant-observation, which is a specific method of data collection that does take a long time to carry out.

It is clear, therefore, from the preceding discussion that the case study approach is appropriate to use when one wants to study bounded phenomenon occurring in its naturalistic setting, in the field. *The boundary of the case being studied is local and therefore non-generalisable because case studies deal with situated knowledges.* This concept of situated knowledges is critical in postcolonial contexts, as I have explained in Chapter One, in this chapter and in Chapter Eight. The final outcome, that is the case study report (like this thesis), would yield a textured and detailed description of local phenomenon that is specific to that situation under study. The case study approach is also useful to use when one wants to generate hypothesis and for theory building.

This particular research study is a qualitative case study of policy in Fiji using the interview as the main source of data. The phenomenon under study, that is, AA policies, is a bounded phenomenon because it is specifically in the context of Fiji that it is examined. Not only is this study bounded in terms of place, it is also bounded in that the 74 interviews conducted provide 74 different 'cases' to the overall case study and offer a rich and complex description of phenomenon that is specific and local to Fiji. What is critical here is the potential each viewpoint has for developing critical theoretical insights into the case under study.

In this section, I reviewed the literature on qualitative case study. The next section examines the interview as a qualitative research method because, as mentioned earlier, this study is a case study of public policy in the Fiji context and specifically uses interviews as its main source of data.

The Qualitative Interview

This particular section reviews the literature on the interview with special emphasis on what it says about the qualities or characteristics of the qualitative interview, what its strengths and limitations are, and the issues pertaining to data analysis and interpretation.

An interview is not only a conversation but a conversation with a purpose (Maykut and Morehouse 1994; Lincoln and Guba 1985) or as Holstein and Gubrium (1997: 113) describe it "interviews are special forms of conversation". The qualitative interview has also been defined as "interaction" (Fontana and Frey, 1994: 361), and "talk" (Silverman, 1993). Alternatively, qualitative interviewing has been defined by Mishler (1986: vii), who proposes a reformulation of the process after finding standard views and practices of interviewing limited, as a "discourse shaped and organized by asking and answering questions". As he has described it, "An interview is a joint product of what interviewees

and interviewers talk about together and how they talk with each other. The record of an interview that we researchers make and then use in our work of analysis and interpretation is a representation of that talk" (Mishler, 1986: vii).

The main purpose of an interview "is to obtain a special kind of information" (Merriam, 1988: 72); it is a method of trying to understand our fellow human beings (Fontana and Frey, 1994; "it provides us with a means for exploring the points of view of our research subjects, while granting these points of view the culturally honoured status of reality" (Miller and Glassner, 1997: 100). McCracken (1988:9) puts it this way: "The long interview gives us the opportunity to step into the mind of another person, to see and experience the world as they do it themselves". Perhaps the best description of the purpose of an interview is given by Patton (1990: 278), who makes the assumption that "the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit".

In terms of types of interviews, Patton (1990) distinguishes between the informal, conversational interview, the general interview guide approach - what Lofland (1971: 76) has called "intensive interviewing with an interview guide" - and the standardised open-ended interview. This corresponds with Merriam's (1988) classification of unstructured, semi-structured and highly structured interviews. Similarly, Maykut and Morehouse (1994) refer to interview types as the unstructured, the interview guide (semi-structured) and the interview schedule (structured). What is common in all these types of interviews is that one, the questions are open-ended, and two, they are conducted in some depth, hence the phrase "depth interview" or "in-depth interviewing" (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994; Jones, 1985; Taylor and Bogdan, 1984) or the "long interview" (McCracken, 1988). The third commonality in these types of interviews is "that the persons being interviewed respond in their own words to express their own personal perspectives" (Patton, 1990: 287).

In terms of interview content, Patton (1990: 290) points out that many decisions will have to be made such as what type of interview to carry out, what questions to ask, how to sequence questions, how much detail to ask for, the length of the interview and how to word the questions. As well, Patton addresses the issues of asking clear questions, being careful about asking 'why' questions as well as the issues of rapport and neutrality. Merriam (1988) emphasises that to ask good questions is essential to getting good data. Issues surrounding asking the interview questions, before and during the actual interview, are therefore critical to getting the data sought in the quality that is required. As well, it is recommended that interviewers record the interview on a good quality tape recorder and

that transcriptions are made of the interview because that is the data that will be utilised in the analysis and the interpretation (Merriam, 1988; Patton, 1990; Silverman, 1993).

Many social scientists regard the interviewer as the research tool or instrument in the collection and analysis of data (McCracken, 1988; Taylor and Bogdan, 1984; Patton, 1990). As such, the interviewer plays a critical role in the interviewing process. After all, the interviewer determines what questions to ask, when to ask them, and is in control of the structure of the interview and the way the data are analysed and interpreted. In addition, Miller and Glassner (1997: 101) point out: "The issue of how interviewees respond to us based on who we are - in their lives, as well as the social categories to which we belong, such as age, gender, class and race - is a practical concern as well as an epistemological or theoretical one".

Power relations are supposed to be equal in the interview situation, that is, where no one is dominant and in a context where both are participating in what is supposed to be a social interaction. However, dynamic power relations are at work in this relationship. What is important is to ask who has power at which point and what does that power consist of. For me, the interviewer, in using himself or herself as the tool or instrument for data collection, has control over the questions that are asked in the interview, directs the interview in the direction s(he) considers appropriate to the kinds of data sought, and has the final say on what to do with the data in terms of their analysis and interpretation. On the other hand, the interviewee (I use the term informant in subsequent chapters) also has power because s(he) determines what s(he) says to the extent that what s(he) says will influence the quality of the data. If one takes this a step further, the interviewee has a great deal of control in the sense that s(he) determines how much to reveal and what to hide from the interviewer. The interviewer, therefore, has to ensure that nothing in manner or dress or demeanour or overall presentation, including the kinds of questions asked, will offend or hurt the interviewee. This has implications for the preparation that the interviewer makes prior to and during the data collection. Furthermore, issues of power in the interview situation can be taken further to ask questions about what position does the interviewee hold in relation to the interviewer (e.g., is s(he) superior or a subordinate) and how does the ethnicity, class, age and gender of the interviewee impact on the data collection. I will take this up in relation to my interviews.

Interview data analysis has been described as "hard, sometimes, tedious, slog" (sic) (Jones, 1985: 56) or as Merriam (1988) put it "tedious and time-consuming work". On the other hand, it has been described as "a dynamic and creative process" (Taylor and Bogdan,

1984: 130). Data analysis "is the process of making sense out of one's data" (Merriam, 1988: 127). One point that is made about data analysis is that data collection and data analysis should occur simultaneously (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Merriam, 1988; Maykut and Morehouse, 1994; Taylor and Bogdan, 1984) although it is usual for the researcher to concentrate most on analysis and interpretation after all the data is collected. Taylor and Bogdan (1984: 129) recommend that intensive analysis begins soon after the data has been collected. However, they make the point that the researcher may be forced to postpone analysis for the simple reason, for example, that the transcription of interviews took much more time than initially anticipated.

Much has been said about how to go about analysing the data. For example, Taylor and Bogdan (1984: 130) point out that combining insight and intuition with an intimate familiarity with the data is how researchers gradually make sense out of what they are studying. They argue that the researcher must learn to look for themes by examining the data in as many ways as possible. In a similar vein, Maykut and Morehouse (1994) outline some of the processes involved in preparing the data for analysis in terms of coding data pages to their sources and unitizing the data. They then discuss the "constant comparative method" of analysing qualitative data which draws heavily on the work of Lincoln and Guba (1985), utilising such sequential strategies as inductive category coding, refinement of categories, exploration of relationships and patterns across categories and the integration of data and writing up the research. With regard to the latter strategy, they point out that "writing up one's research is part of the analytic process" and that "[p]ondering the substance and sequence of the report requires a rethinking of the data, often yielding new insights and understanding" (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994: 145).

Taylor and Bogdan (1984: 81-82) point out three drawbacks of interviewing that they note arise from the verbal statements or talk that interview data consists of. The first drawback they highlight is that "as a form of conversation, interviews are subject to the same fabrications, deceptions, exaggerations, and distortions that characterize talk between any persons". What this means is that the interview may provide insights into how people perceive their world and how they behave, but one thing that needs to be remembered is that what people say and what they actually do may be different. That is, the interviewer must not accept the interviewee's description of events as if they were facts. The second limitation that Taylor and Bogdan point out is that "people say and do different things in different situations". Thirdly, they (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984: 82) say that interviewers make assumptions about things that could have been observed because they "do not directly

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observe people in their everyday lives" therefore they are "deprived of the context necessary to understand many of the perspectives in which they are interested".

But in order to examine the interview data on AA in Fiji, it is important to have a good idea about what we mean when we talk of policy and policy analysis. In what follows I review the literature on policy and policy analysis.

Policy Analysis

What is policy? Many writers agree that defining policy is not an easy task (Ham and Hill, 1984; Cunningham, 1963). Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard and Henry (1997: 24) make the point that policy is very difficult to define because of its ongoing and dynamic nature, because we are trying "to capture and pin down something which is continually in process". By contrast, according to Considine (1994: 3), the standard view of public policy is "an action which employs governmental authority to commit resources in support of a preferred value". Alternatively, he suggests another definition of policy as "the continuing work done by groups of policy actors who use available public institutions to articulate and express the things they value" (Considine, 1994: 4). Hogwood and Gunn (1984: 13-19), operating within a traditional framework, categorise ten different uses of the word policy as "policy as a label for a field of activity", "policy as an expression of general purpose or desired state of affairs", "policy as specific proposals", "policy as decisions of government", "policy as formal authorization", "policy as a programme", "policy as output", "policy as outcome", "policy as a theory or model" and "policy as process". Policy has also been defined as "what governments choose to do, or not to do" (Dye, 1987: 2). Thus, public policy, as distinct from the activities of private enterprise which has self-interest as the main motivation, forms the focus of this thesis.

Policy is both process and product; it is certainly much more than just a specific policy document or text (Taylor et al., 1997). In this conceptualisation of policy, policy involves not only the production of the text and the text itself, but also ongoing modifications to the text as well as processes of implementation into practice. Policy processes are, hence, viewed as complex, interactive and multi-layered. Bowe, Ball and Gold (1992: 19-20), in their discussion of the policy cycle, envisage three primary policy contexts of policy making: the context of influence, the context of policy text production and the context of practice. Ball (1994: 26) adds two more contexts to the policy cycle formulation: the context of outcomes and the context of political strategy.

What is policy analysis? What are the purposes of policy analysis? And how does one go about analysing policy? These are three key questions that writers about policy analysis attempt to answer (for example, see Dunn, 1994; Ham and Hill, 1984; Hogwood and Gunn, 1984; Wildavsky, 1987). The study of policy is a highly contested field because the ideological or philosophical positions that one holds are reflected in the way one thinks not only about policy but also the nature of civil society (Taylor et al., 1997).

Taylor et al. (1997: 35) define policy analysis very simply as "the study of what governments do, why and with what effects". By contrast, Wildavsky (1987: 15-19, 385-406) uses the metaphor of policy analysis as both art and craft rather than providing a definitive definition. He argues that policy analysis is an art whose "subjects are public problems that must be solved at least tentatively to be understood" (Wildavsky, 1987: 15) and that analysis is imagination. He (1987: 389) reiterates the point that "Without art, analysis is doomed to repetition; without craft, analysis is unpersuasive". He notes:

> Policy analysis is creating and crafting problems worth solving. What is the clay of which recalcitrant experience is shaped into problems and how is the form of the problem determined? By understanding the material with which analysts work, we can better understand the limits and potentials of the craft. (Wildavsky, 1987: 389)

Taylor et al. (1997) have identified two models of policy development and analysis: the traditional or rational model and the more recent model of critical policy analysis. In the traditional or rational model, the main focus was on determining the technically best course of action to adopt in order to implement a decision or achieve a goal. The policy scientist, therefore, was supposed to clarify the possible outcomes of certain courses of action as well as choose the most efficient course of action in terms of available factual data for the government of the day. A criticism of this model, Taylor et al. point out, is that issues of power and the ways in which the state might exercise this power were mostly ignored. As well, these researchers point out that the traditional view of policy analysis was based on a particular view of knowledge which assumed that any knowledge, to be of any use, "must be scrupulously value-neutral, grounded in the essential facts provided by the most systematic observation possible" (p 18). This process of policy making, therefore, adopts a measure of rationality, this view claims, which would "counteract the special pleading and special sectional interests which might otherwise dominate the political processes" (p 18). Policy analysts, according to this view, advise policy makers on the most efficient course of action to take to achieve a particular goal, but are not deemed to be qualified to assess the morality or the legitimacy of the goal itself.

On the other hand, the critical policy analysis model contradicts this traditional view of policy analysis. First it contends that social scientific knowledge cannot be value-neutral. Taylor et al. (1997: 18) put it this way:

> In our view, observations are inevitably informed by our theories and values in ways which make any absolute distinction between policy analysis and policy advocacy hard to sustain. What we 'see' when we examine the processes involved in the development and implementation of any particular policy is framed by larger questions, which are themselves linked to the normative positions we might adopt about education and its role in creating conditions for social reproduction or transformation.

Second, it views critical analysis as overtly political and sees "a major task of critical policy analysis as investigating the ways in which key terms are used, and the extent to which particular policies are consistent with our moral vision for education" (Taylor et al., 1997: 19). Third, critical policy analysis should pay attention to both the content of the policy as well as to the processes of policy development and implementation. The fourth claim made by the critical analysis model is that an examination of the manner in which power is exercised in the making of political choices is central to critical policy analysis. Fifth, an understanding of the context in which a policy emerges is important in this model of policy analysis.

It should be noted that this study aims to utilise the critical policy analysis approach rather than the traditional approach to policy analysis. Following Taylor et al. (1997), it recognises that policy is complex in the following ways: it is more than the text, it is multi-dimensional, it is value-laden, it exists in a particular context, it is a state activity, it interacts with policies in other fields, policy implementation is never straightforward and that policies result in unintended as well as intended consequences. Policy processes therefore are complex, interactive and multi-layered. Some of the salient points of the critical policy analysis approach worth reiterating are that social scientific knowledge is value-laden, and that in examining the processes involved in the development and implementation of any educational policy for instance, one's thinking about the role of education in perpetuating social reproduction or transformation will influence the analysis. Additionally, critical analysis is overtly political. As well, the content and the processes of policy development and implementation should be given attention. Furthermore, the exercise of power in the making of political choices is a central focus of critical policy analysis. As well, an understanding of the context in which a policy arises is also important.

131

I have just provided an explanation of what policy is and how policies are analysed. As mentioned earlier, this study is a qualitative case study of policy using interviews as the principal source of data. The context surrounding AA policies in their local, bounded context will be discussed in detail in Chapter Six. The questions which guided the policy analysis are discussed in the summary section of Chapter Six.

Preparing for the Fieldwork/Data Collection

Thus far, I have examined the literature on the interview as a qualitative research method of data collection. I discussed what the literature says about what a qualitative interview is, the purpose of the interview, the features of the interview, what is involved in analysing and interpreting the interview data, some of the limitations of the interview method as well as what policy analysis entails. The next section is concerned with a self-reflexive description of the decisions I made regarding the method of data collection and the reasons I made certain decisions prior to the data collection phase of the study.

Reflexivity: Assumptions of the Current Research Design

Three ways have been identified where researchers display self-reflexivity: (a) describing decisions that went into selecting methods, (b) laying out limits of knowledge (or threats to validity) in a particular study and (c) laying out the researcher's personal biases that might influence the conclusions (Potter, 1996: 294). The first definition of self-reflexivity will be described in the following sections. The second approach to self-reflexivity will become apparent in the course of the whole thesis where I will lay out the limitations of the study at appropriate junctures. The final approach to self-reflexivity was discussed in some detail in Chapter One where I laid out my personal biases in terms of the assumptions I made before, during and after data collection that are intricately woven into the research design. My personal biases and perspectives will also be explicated in the next sections in decisions I made regarding the interview categories and sample, in the kinds of interview questions I decided on, the actual processes of the fieldwork and the analysis and interpretation of the data.

My theoretical perspective of research design hinges around the qualitative research method that assumes that data collected in its natural state, in the field with real people whose experiences, values and knowledge of the world is valuable, will provide worthwhile data that play a pivotal role in the outcome(s) of the study. My decision to use case studies of interviews with 74 participants to provide illumination on the research aims and

questions arose out of the critical role I felt that the case study approach and the interview method had in providing the understanding that I sought.

The next three sections will be a self-reflexive examination of the decisions I made and why I made these decisions in relation to the research design before, during and after the data collection phase, culminating in a discussion of how I went about analysing and interpreting the research data.

The Preliminary Stage

I began preparing for the fieldwork in January of 1996. During my first year of studies the previous year, I had decided that this project would be qualitative and that the specific tool I would use would be interviews with people whose experience and knowledge about AA policies and education in Fiji would form the main part of my research data. I had decided that I would use this "flexible strategy of discovery", what Lofland (1971: 76) calls "intensive interviewing with an interview guide". According to Lofland, the purpose of this method of inquiry is "to carry on a guided conversation and to elicit rich, detailed materials that can be used in qualitative analysis" (p. 76). It is the search for these "rich, detailed materials" that I sought through the interview method of data collection.

In summary, prior to the data collection phase, I made decisions regarding the interview categories, the ethnic and gender composition of my interview sample, obtained ethical clearance to proceed with the fieldwork, corresponded with potential informants (See Appendix K for a sample of the initial letter of contact), finalised interview questions and conducted several trial interviews (See Appendix L for a fuller account of the administrative activities I conducted prior to the fieldwork). I also made the decision that the language of the interview would be English since the discourse of communication is English in both official and every-day circles. An important reason for this decision to conduct all interviews in English was that strategically, it would enable less work after data collection, that is, I would not have to spend hours transcribing the interviews verbatim and then translating them into English. I thought it was better, under the circumstances, to get the informants' exact words, rather than my interpretive translation. In other words, it was a strategic decision to conduct the interviews in English - since the thesis is written in English, it would be easier all around if the interviews were conducted in English.

Ethical considerations were also important aspects of the research. Participation was voluntary and informants were assured that they could withdraw from the study at any time. As well, their anonymity was protected unless they wished specifically to be named in the

thesis. They also had a choice about having their interviews audio-recorded. Furthermore, each informant was given the opportunity to make amendments to the interview transcripts prior to my utilising them. Finally informants were informed of where they could access the thesis in its final form.

Selection of Questions for the Interview

As a guide to the interview I selected six general questions (See Appendix M). I sent these questions with my first letter to potential participants to make them aware of the kinds of questions I would be asking them. Questions 1 and 2 were intended to put the participants at ease and let them talk about their understanding of what in their view AA meant, as well as their knowledge of AA policies in Fiji's educational system. Questions 3-5 were concerned with participants' views on AA policies and the final question on the general guide was concerned with the reasons for continuing Indigenous Fijian underachievement. However, after three trial interviews conducted before the fieldwork, this list was translated into 17 points in the actual interview (See Appendix N for the detailed interview guide).

It was important that I thank each participant for agreeing to be interviewed and emphasise how important their contribution was to my research project. This became the first point in the Detailed Interview Guide. I followed this with a brief introduction of what I was doing and the purpose of the interview. The principal reason for questions 2-3 was to get the participants to feel at ease by talking about themselves and their contribution to education in Fiji.

The reason for questions 4-8 on the Detailed Interview Guide, which corresponded with questions 1-5 on the General Interview Guide which was sent with my first correspondence to potential participants, was to get the interviewees' views and perceptions on what their understandings were on the concept of AA, what they knew about AA policies in education to specifically assist Indigenous Fijians, how these policies were implemented, what the outcomes of these policies were and what importance they placed on AA. These questions were critical as they are central to the research topic and the main research question which I reiterate here: After over two decades of AA to assist Indigenous Fijians in education, why are these students still underachieving compared to the non-indigenous population? Questions 9-11 were specifically on participants' views on why they thought Indigenous Fijian students were generally not doing as well as other ethnic

groups in Fiji. The bullet point items in questions 9 and 11 are reminders to me to ask their views on these aspects if they do not mention them in their answer.

It is pertinent to note here that I stopped asking questions 4 and 12 altogether when I realised that this posed problems for some participants. Question 4 called for the participant's definition of AA and question 13 was too difficult a question for many of the participants to answer as reflected in some of the answers that I received. At some point in the interviews, I realised that it might be important to ask Indigenous Fijians why they succeeded in school. This question replaced question 12 but was only asked of Indigenous Fijians.

The two elements in Question 14 were important to gauge the participants' views on other agencies that can be involved in Fijian education. The main purpose of questions 15 and 16 was to determine how, in the participants' views, AA policies can be made to work. The final question was a hypothetical one, and the most difficult. Its purposes were not only to seek participants' views about how the whole issue of Fijian education could be improved, but it also acted as a summing up to the whole interview.

Selection of Interview Sample: Interview Categories

After initial discussions with supervisor Professor Rizvi, I decided on six categories of people to interview: Politician, Bureaucrat, Community Representative, Academic, Secondary School Principal and Teacher. The sample was also to include expatriates who have worked in education in Fiji under any of the categories. The main reason I selected these six categories was that I wanted to get as wide and comprehensive data as I could in order to take account of the different perspectives that people might have. I thought that these categories would add complexity to the data that might not be evident if, say, only two categories were selected. I had decided that I would interview five in each category and the total number of participants would be 30. However the reality was that I ended up interviewing more than double this number of people for the following reasons: more names were suggested to me by participants and other professionals and I felt I had to interview all the key people at the Ministry of Education (a total of 11 comprising almost 16% of the sample).[8] (See the beginning of the thesis for a complete list of Informants)

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[8] I did this because not only did I consider their viewpoints important, but I did not want to risk offending anybody in the ministry by excluding them from the interviews.

Initially, I had wanted to interview people out in the rural areas who might fit under the categories of principal, teacher or community representative but because of time, logistical and financial constraints, I had to drop this idea altogether. However, in determining the people to be interviewed, I built in a tacit requirement to interview people who had had experience teaching in the rural areas. Why the rural area? When one speaks of Indigenous Fijian education in Fiji, one is basically referring to the rural area because the bulk of the Indigenous Fijian population is rural by nature. I had also wanted to interview students themselves for their perceptions about why students fail in school but, again unfortunately, the problematics associated with this made it an inappropriate category.

In terms of ethnic and gender composition, I decided that the range for the former would be 60% Indigenous Fijian and 40% non-indigenous and that the gender make-up of my sample could range from 70% males to 30% females. I needed to consider the inclusion of expatriates in the non-Indigenous Fijian category as well. Why did I decide on these details? Since the study mainly was concerned with the educational achievement of Indigenous Fijians, I thought it was appropriate to interview more Indigenous Fijians hence the decision to have a ratio of 60-40.

As it developed, I interviewed Indigenous Fijians and Rotumans who comprised 69% of the sample, while non-Indigenous Fijians made up 31% (see Table 14). From Table 14, one can see that 64% of the sample was male and 36% was female. I interviewed close to 7% in the expatriate sub-category of the non-indigenous category. Table 15 gives a summary of the number of participants in each category.

I would have preferred to have interviewed some more politicians and fewer bureaucrats but this proved difficult. In the first instance, it was difficult accessing politicians since the Parliament was in session for most of the time I was in Fiji for the field

Table 14 Participants in the Interview by Ethnicity and Gender

Ethnic Category	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Indigenous Fijians and Rotumans	27	24	51 (69%)
Non-Indigenous Fijians	20	3	23 (31%)
Total	47 (64%)	27 (36%)	74 (100%)

study. In the second instance, the bureaucrat category was inflated due to the fact that additional key people working in the Ministry of Education were interviewed.

Table 15 Participants in the Interview by Category

Category	Number	Percentage
Politician	10	13.51
Bureaucrat	17	22.97
Academic	11	14.86
Principal	12	16.22
Teacher	12	16.22
Community Representative	12	16.22
Total	74	100.00

As evidenced from the totals in Tables 14 and 15, I conducted a total of 74 interviews. This total includes two that I conducted as trial interviews prior to the actual fieldwork and three group interviews. In general, the actual number of interviews conducted seems representative enough of the various categories.

Selection of Interview Sample: Deciding on the Participants

As mentioned earlier, after deciding on the six different categories, I then decided on the actual people who would fit under each of the categories. To assist with this, I corresponded with several people in Fiji asking them to recommend names to me. I also made up a list of potential participants under each category based on my knowledge of the people I thought would contribute in terms of the 'conventional' data. As importantly, I considered people who may have 'different' or unconventional views and/or experiences. Because the Ministry of Education is centrally located and I know many people on a professional basis from my dealings in education, I could form an opinion about the value of a good number of the potential interviewees before the interviews. As well, I took on board suggestions of names from people I had initially written to for this purpose.

In terms of politicians and bureaucrats, I felt that it was important to include past and current Ministers and Permanent Secretaries of the Ministries of Education and Fijian Affairs, since both ministries were instrumental in some way or other in formulating and implementing AA policies in education. I thought it was also important to obtain the

perspectives of the two Prime Ministers since independence. Unfortunately I was not able to interview either of them due to difficulty of access. I also thought that it would be important to obtain the viewpoints of the politicians who were part of the Opposition Political Party. Again it was unfortunate that I could not interview certain key politicians because of difficulty of access since the Parliament of Fiji was in session for most of the time that I was in Fiji for the fieldwork. Additionally, Fiji was in the process of deciding prominent political and social issues such as the Review of the Constitution (a special parliamentary sub-committee was formed to examine the Report of Fiji Constitutional Review Commission) and the expiry of land leases (ALTA)[9], two issues which preoccupied the whole country as I have described in Chapter Three.

In terms of deciding on people in the bureaucrat category, I felt I had to interview people in the Ministry of Education (MOE), the Ministry of Fijian Affairs (MFA) and the Public Service Commission (PSC) as these were the three agencies involved in developing and implementing AA in education. It was not possible to interview a few key people at the MFA due to access problems (interviewing of students for overseas scholarships was taking place). However, a few key people were facilitative in answering a set of written questions regarding the implementation of the $3.5 million annual fund (see Appendix O for the questions). For this I thank the Permanent Secretary of Fijian Affairs, Ratu Jone Radrodro, the Acting Permanent Secretary for Fijian Affairs Mr Isoa Tikoca and the staff at the Fijian Education Unit (FEU) once again for providing invaluable data that are unavailable elsewhere.

Academics, all of whom were teaching at the University of the South Pacific (USP) based in Suva, Fiji, were selected in terms of who I thought might be able to contribute to the debate on AA. Most of the expatriate informants came from the academic category. Community representatives were those people who I thought were not only involved as parents and sat on some committees, but were also key people in the community in terms of the positions they held. For this, I included church leaders, leaders at the University Extension who worked in distance education, the University librarian, business leaders and key people in the two teachers' unions—the Fijian Teachers Association (FTA) which caters for Indigenous Fijians and Rotuman teachers and the Fiji Teachers Union (FTU) which is primarily for Indo-Fijian teachers.

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[9] ALTA stands for the Agricultural Land and Tenant Agreement. This agreement is managed by the Native Lands Trust Board (NLTB). Indigenous Fijians are landlords while the Indo-Fijians form the bulk of the tenants.

Those in the principal category were selected either as current or past principals and included are two principals at tertiary institutions, namely a teachers' college and the only medical school in Fiji. The participants in the teacher category were selected if they had held heads of department positions in a secondary school or had taught for a number of years in secondary schools. Eight participants who come under this category were interviewed in three group sessions because of time pressures on both their and my part. Some of those interviewed were either lecturers at a teachers' college or at a TAFE college or were professionals at the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU), but the reason they were selected under this category was because they had all taught at a secondary school before taking up these positions.

The Actual Fieldwork

The Processes Involved

Data collection was carried out in Fiji over a period of 15 weeks from 24 August to 6 December 1997. In total, I interviewed 74 people: 66 individually and the remaining 8 were interviewed in three separate group sessions. This included the two pilot and trial interviews carried out in Brisbane prior to the commencement of the field study. The group interviews were carried out because of time constraints both on the interviewees' and my part. The participants in the group interviews belonged to the same peer and friendship group and were comfortable about being interviewed together.

Each interview was an average of one to one and a half hours long. Four interviews with key female participants took up to three hours. There were only two interviews that lasted less than an hour. The majority of the interviews took place at the working place of the interviewees during the working week, some extending well into the evening. Seven interviews were carried out at the interviewees' home, two of which took place over the weekend. The bulk of the interviews were completed by the end of the eleventh week. The largest number of interviews occurred in week seven where 14 interviews were scheduled, of which 10 were completed and four postponed.

My first two weeks in Suva, where all the data was collected, were spent sorting out financial matters, making arrangements for the telephone to be installed at home and an office space to work from at my former workplace (the Fiji College of Advanced Education – FCAE - in Nasinu), making arrangements for phone messages, meeting relatives and friends and getting in contact with people who had already agreed to be interviewed prior to my arrival in Fiji. The latter was a critical component of my early weeks in Fiji because not

only did I need to confirm interviews and thereby get started with the interviews, the telephone calls were my way of re-establishing links that had begun with the initial letter that each one of them had received.

The number of interviews I carried out varied from week to week. I conducted my first interview on Thursday of the second week. I found that I was very uncomfortable and stilted; the data from this interview probably reflects this limitation. However, I found that by the fourth interview, I was not referring to my notes and could ask questions without much difficulty. I knew most of my interviewees and could go straight into the interview without having to build up a sense of trust and rapport that is a normal part of the preliminaries when interviewing relative strangers. I did not need to spend as much time at the beginning to persuade the participants that I was not a threat, and that whatever contributions they could make to the research project were valuable and, unless they otherwise stated, confidential. This is not to say that I did not have to build up rapport with some participants I knew but the point I hope to make here is that it seems relatively easier to talk with familiar rather than unfamiliar people and that one does not spend as much time getting introductions and explanations done before the interview proper.

Telephone calls were an integral part of the interview process. From the first week, right up to my last day in Fiji, I was liaising, arranging, organising, postponing and calling for information I was missing.

I used an excellent quality walkman Sony tape recorder which had an unobtrusive microphone. Tape recording was not a hindering factor in data collection. This was partially because I had specifically requested that the interview be tape-recorded when I first wrote to the participants so all the participants were aware, before the interview, that I needed to tape-record our sessions. This was also due to the fact that the quality of recording was so good that it was not distracting in any way. In all the cases, the participants did not seem intimidated by its presence. There was one case where a participant had written in his consent form prior to the fieldwork that he was cautious about being tape recorded because of the sensitivity associated with the research topic. I noted this but took along the tape recorder just in case. In the preliminaries before the actual interview, I mentioned that everything he said would be strictly confidential and that if I tape recorded the interview, I would send him a copy of the transcript before I utilised anything in the interview. I also mentioned that I would not mention him by name. I took notes for the first 10 minutes of the interview and was pleased when he suggested I tape record the interview given that it would be so difficult to record the interview with paper

and pen. I found that in all cases, the participants quickly forgot about the recorder once they became engrossed in what they were saying.

Language of the Interview

All the interviews were conducted in English. As mentioned earlier, I had decided to conduct the interviews in this medium because all the participants could speak English relatively fluently. English is the language of the discourses of schooling, public administration, formal communication, bureaucracy, politics, law and so forth. All the informants were sufficiently conversant with the English language to enable us to have meaningful conversations.

I also mentioned earlier that the use of English as the medium for interviewing was a strategic decision. It was strategic because the interview language would be compatible with the language of the thesis. I did not think it was a worthwhile exercise to conduct the interviews in Fijian only to spend double the transcribing time on translation work. I also did not want to colour the translation with my own interpretation of what the interviewees actually said and meant.

It was also for the sake of consistency that I conducted the interviews in English. Not all the informants were Indigenous Fijians. As 31% of informants were non-indigenous, it was strategically and practically convenient to conduct interviews in English. If I had interviewed Indigenous Fijian parents who had little knowledge of English, then I would have had to conduct the interviews with them in Fijian. As it was, I did not come across any informants who were not fluent in English.

Some informants, particularly Indigenous Fijians, switched codes from English to Fijian when they wanted to emphasise a point. This seemed to occur naturally in the course of the conversation. Other instances where code switching occurred were in cases where the discussion centred around the content of the Fijian curriculum and on the role of the church and parents in the education of Indigenous Fijians. It is interesting that those Indo-Fijians who could speak some Fijian also used Fijian words and phrases to make a point. I did not discourage the informants from code switching. Where Fijian was used, they were transcribed verbatim but were translated into English in the thesis so that non-Fijian speakers can understand what was said.

It should not come as a surprise that I opted for English as the language of the interview. This demonstrates the extent to which the process of colonialism has colonised my thinking space. Even if I had made the decision to conduct interviews with Indigenous

Fijian informants in Fijian, it is uncertain whether this would have increased the speaking voice that I claim to be giving them in this thesis. The reality is that this text has to be written in English. Hence, it was strategic to conduct the interviews in the language of the thesis.

Problems in the Field

Most of the interviews were carried out satisfactorily. There were three, however, where I felt that the participants had not given the questions adequate thought and were therefore not as prepared as I would have liked them to be. This was understandable, given the busy schedules that they had.

All researchers who conduct fieldwork must have their repertoire of blunders they committed. In my case, I fouled up on two occasions with the tape recording machine. They were not due to any lack of preparation on my part. In each instance, I had checked that the batteries were not flat, carried an extension cord and an adaptor just in case they were needed, had the appropriate blank tape in the machine and had switched on the machine at the right time.

My first blunder occurred with a very lengthy interview with the Minister for Education, Women and Culture, the Right Honourable Ms Taufa Vakatale. The Minister had postponed our interview several times until Thursday 3rd October so that she could give me two and a half hours of her time. On my arrival she put me at ease and we proceeded with the interview. I left her office at 12.50 p.m. and made a hasty dash in a taxi to the bus stand to catch the 1.00 p.m bus out to Sawani, a journey of some 45 minutes for another interview scheduled to begin at 2.00 p.m. As soon as I arrived I sat down outside the office to put the Minister's tapes away and prepare for the next interview. I had not completed this when my interviewee came out of her office and saw me. In the ensuing confusion, I inadvertently put the Minister's first tape back into the machine thinking that it was a blank tape as it was not yet labelled. You can guess the rest. I taped my next interview over the Minister's tape. On the third day after this interview, I managed to reconstruct part of the interview with the help of the notes that I had made during the interview. It took me a long while to gain enough courage to call the Minister's office to request another interview. Unfortunately, I left it rather too late because I was informed by her secretary that she was very busy with parliamentary sittings, attending prize, opening and closing ceremonies and the like. The Minister's secretary assured me that she would inform the minister about my request and would get in touch with me. I had actually

sought advice from an elder about how to make the approach. I had obtained a *tabua*[10] for the purpose of seeking her forgiveness and asking for a reinterview. It was not until three days before I was to return to Brisbane that I received a call from the Minister's office informing me that the Minister could squeeze me in for 45 minutes. At the second interview, I was very apologetic but Ms Vakatale laughed my mistake away and I asked those questions that I felt were the more important ones and had been absent in the reconstructed text.

The second blunder occurred when I was interviewing a school principal. It was not until close to the end of the interview that I realised that the machine was still in the pause mode and that I had not activated the machine at the beginning of the interview. Fortunately, the interviewee was very pleasant about it and agreed to be reinterviewed. I re-asked the questions and she gave a summary of her answers which I managed to record without any further mishaps. She also gave me the notes that she had prepared for the interview.

I also faced several other problems in the course of the fieldwork. For the first five weeks, making contact and confirming interviews were quite problematic. The telephone was not installed at home until the sixth week and I had to rely on the telephone at the FCAE for messages from the interviewees. On several occasions, I found that because I had missed messages left for me I arrived at the scheduled interview venue only to find out that the interview had been postponed. As far as possible I called ahead to reconfirm a day or two before the scheduled interview, but in some cases this was difficult, particularly when I had two or three interviews to attend each day over several days and the interviews were in different locations. Another problem was with postponements of interviews and then rescheduling times suitable for me and the participants. In my fifth week, for example, five out of eight interviews were postponed. In four cases, because of the nature of the participants' jobs, I had to reschedule other times to complete the interviews, two of which were eventually not completed. As well, five key people were not interviewed because of the constant rescheduling and the mismatch in their times and mine: two Indo-Fijian politicians from the Opposition political party, two senior bureaucrats and one Indigenous Fijian school principal. I was rather sad that I could not interview two opposition

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[10] A *tabua* is a whale's tooth, an article of special value amongst Indigenous Fijians. It is used as a presentation on all special occasions, such as the installation of a chief, a means of acquiring property, to assuage the temper of a person of rank, weddings, funerals, welcoming important dignitaries, etc. (Capell, 1941). I would have used the *tabua* to seek the Minister's forgiveness for messing up her interview. On the advice of the Minister's Personal Secretary, I did not present the *tabua*.

parliamentarians, Mr Mahendra Chaudry and Mr Shiu Charan, because of scheduling difficulties.

It was also unfortunate that I could not interview some other key players because of their very busy schedules: the President, His Excellency Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara who was the first Prime Minister of Fiji under whom the AA policies in education were established; the Prime Minister, The Right Honourable Brigadier General Sitiveni Rabuka, who is also known as the leader of the two coups instituted in 1987; the Minister for Foreign Affairs, The Right Honourable Mr Filipe Bole, who was also a previous Minister for Education, and Leader of the Opposition, The Right Honourable Mr Jai Ram Reddy. The timing of my data collection, perhaps, was not very good given that the Parliament was in session most of the time I was in Fiji.

The Personal and Socio-cultural Contexts

Discussion on the personal or social context under which the field study is carried out is generally absent from the literature on research methods. Some western researchers do indeed acknowledge the personal aspects of research but in the main, the general absence or neglect by writers of research method literature is a serious limitation because there should be recognition that the personal/social context can impinge on the data collection. In my case I took my youngest child, a boy of five called Manoa, with me while my husband and three older children remained behind in Australia with my mother. I feel that extra stress is placed on a researcher who goes overseas for data collection for an extended period of time, especially when the nuclear family is absent, and particularly when one has the extra care and responsibility of a child during the data collection exercise. Additionally, extra financial stress was placed on me because Manoa and I stayed with my sister (who a few weeks before our arrival had become unemployed), her two children, a sister-in-law and her son Daniel who is the same age as Manoa. Yet Manoa accompanied me to Fiji and I consider him a valuable and important part of the data collection stage.

What impact did my personal circumstance and the social and cultural contexts have on the data collection? Would this negatively reflect on the quality of the interviews and would the data then be contaminated in some way because of this? Would knowing the interviewees affect the quality of the data as compared to interviewing people I had not met

before? Would my missing out on interviewing some key people affect the richness and complexity of the overall data? These are some crucial questions that need addressing.

In terms of answering the first question regarding the personal and socio-cultural context under which the field study was carried out, more elaboration is needed in order to gain a better understanding of the answer I am going to give. I had been away from Fiji for two and a half years and it was a wonderful experience returning for three months and re-immersing myself in the culture and the language. Just as importantly, Manoa and I were re-acquainted with the extended family, friends, soil, land and sea. I cannot describe how I felt as we neared Nadi Airport and I got my first glimpse of the land. Actually walking on Fiji soil and knowing that I was home again was a wonderful feeling. For a student studying in a foreign land, the fieldwork gave me an opportunity for re-immersion, re-acquaintance and replenishment to prepare me for the last phase of the PhD. For me, the fieldwork phase was not simply for data collection purposes. Just as importantly, it rejuvenated me physically, culturally, and spiritually. And since Manoa was part of this journey back home, he is bound up intrinsically with the peace of mind I had whilst carrying out the fieldwork. In this way, Manoa facilitated rather than hindered the data collection.

The social context where I was carrying out my fieldwork, amidst the extended family and close friends, could have affected the productive time I might have been spending intensively listening to the day's interviews and preparing more thoroughly for the next day's interview(s). It is critical therefore, in my view, that consideration is given to the social and cultural context under which the field study took place as this may have implications on the analysis and interpretation of the data undertaken later.

Despite the shortcomings that might be associated with going into the field where one 'fits' comfortably but where the personal and social context might be inhibiting to the Western way of conducting research, I feel even richer for going home because of the contributions I made. I presented two papers at the University of the South Pacific, where I did both my first and second degrees: one was as guest speaker in a postgraduate course and the second was to staff and students at a lunch time seminar.

As well, I attended many functions including the graduation ceremony at the FCAE, the funeral gathering of an uncle, three birthday parties and many luncheon/dinner parties with friends and relatives. These all contributed to my well-being since I was considered an integral part of the community. Furthermore, the interactions with people enabled me to freely discuss what I was doing and I received constructive feedback and advice which

contributed, I feel, to the relative success of the interviews. Drawing on the strengths of the informal and formal networks that I had contributed greatly to the relative success of the fieldwork. In fact 40% (28) of interviewees were interviewed as a result of suggestions from people I knew. Forty-two out of 63 people who I had written to agreed to be interviewed and the remaining 28 interviewees were a result of the snowball effect created by those I knew and those I interviewed.

Does it affect the data when a researcher interviews many people she knows? On the contrary, I think interviewing people we know dispenses with that period of building up trust and is more enabling in situations where the interviewee has nothing to fear from the interviewer. In many of the interviews I carried out, the participants were senior in terms of position and age, and I would like to think that I had prepared them relatively well for the interview in the initial letter I had written to them and when I telephoned to first arrange and then confirm the interview. I hope that any ambiguity that may have arisen from lack of knowledge about my research study, the purpose of the study, what the general questions were and so forth would have been reduced before the interview even started. In fact, quite a few people thanked me for selecting them and seemed pleased to be providing me with valuable knowledge derived from their particular values and years of experience.

Thirty-four percent of the participants were unknown to me before the interview. I found that I had to work really hard at gaining their confidence and trust before they became more open in their answers. Despite this, I do not think that either knowing or not knowing participants before the interview has a powerful effect on the actual interview. What is more important is that the interviewer builds up a rapport and gains the trust and confidence of the participant. What is also important is that there is no ambiguity in the questions that may keep the participant guessing at the reason for a question. In the first instance, the researcher has to be up front about what the study is about, why the need for the study, why the need for the interview, what the questions are, and issues of confidentiality which need to be sorted out and so forth.

Despite the advantages that accrue from knowing informants, there were some instances where the informants seemed to exert their authority. For example, one participant who obviously had not thought about the questions before the interview gave me the equivalent of a 'telling off' when she was unprepared for one of the earlier questions. I found in general that those who had not given the general questions I had sent out with the first letter much thought were the ones who were annoyed at some of the questions. But these were isolated cases. In a few other cases, the participants had other prior

commitments immediately after the interview and I had to hurry through the final questions in order to bring the interview to a quick close.

What is the impact on the study when key players are excluded due to time constraints or for other reasons? I believe that while the study could have been richer by their inclusion, the amount of data that I have accrued from the 74 interviews is extremely rich and offer some very useful insights into the questions I was asking. The complexities that appear in the data come from the different perspectives participants take to the questions put to them. So I do have a significant proportion of data that demonstrate the complexities and tensions that exist in the different perspectives and positions that the participants have taken in the interviews.

After the Fieldwork

I found my experience in the few months after my return from data collection debilitating and unproductive. It was a time that I found myself in limbo and it was a slow process to adjust back into the culture of the reading and writing associated with academic work. In the 15 weeks away in the field, I had not done any serious reading despite one of my supervisor's advice of the need to flex the mental muscles - as explained in the previous section, this was difficult for me because of the socio-cultural context I was operating under. So adjusting back to academic life after the fieldwork was a slow and painful process, particularly when part-time tutoring work impinged on my thesis-working time.

In the following sections, I will discuss the process of transcribing the interviews and how I proceeded with the analysis and interpretation of the data.

Transcribing the Interviews

My immediate concern on returning from my fieldwork was to convert my interview data into a retrievable, written text for these were to be my main research data. I returned to Brisbane from Fiji in December 1996. I did not begin any transcription work until late February 1997. There were several reasons for this. The first was that there was no transcribing machine available for my use and the first one became available only in mid February of 1997. Secondly, I had five relatives staying with my family over the Christmas holidays and the last did not leave until the middle of February. Third, I had not realised that I would be so tired after the field study and I needed to recover from the intensive data collection that I had just come through. However, the most important reason for me was spending time getting reacquainted with my immediate family after the longest separation

period we have ever had. After all, three months away from husband and children is a considerable amount of time by any standards.

I found the transcription work an extremely painful affair, both in terms of my time and pocket. The tedious, painstaking and time-consuming transcription work took longer than the six months I had anticipated for this purpose. By the end of April I had personally transcribed 17 interviews. In total, I transcribed 43 interviews in their entirety. On average, one hour of interview took six hours to transcribe. As many of my interviews were about one and a half hours long, the hours that went into transcribing the 50 interviews totalled 450 intensive hours. Additionally, I had to spend more time listening to and correcting those transcripts that had been prepared by the three people who I had hired to carry out some of the transcription work for me. As two of the transcribers were not familiar with the Fiji context, I spent hours making the necessary corrections to these transcripts before sending the draft off to the interviewee to check.

Since I had run out of transcription funds, I made the decision that for the remaining 31 interviews, I would only transcribe those portions which had potential for usage. Because I had the moral conviction that I would let each informant 'speak' in some way in the thesis, I felt I could *not* leave out any of the interviews. After all, each informant had given me the privilege of hearing their 'speech'. Thus, I spent a considerable amount of time listening to the remaining 31 interviews, selecting the sections that resonated with what I thought was important, and transcribing them.

For all the transcripts, as soon as one was completed, I would make two copies, keep one and send the other off to the interviewee with a covering letter (See Appendix P) and a consent form. In the letter, I had asked the interviewee to send back the amended version of the interview, if they had made any amendments, as well as the consent form which was a statement of whether they agreed to be quoted by name or whether they wished to remain anonymous in the thesis. As soon as I received a reply, I would make the necessary amendments and print out three copies of the final interview transcript. I opened up three files—one file for permanent copies of the interviews, one file for analysis purposes (for writing on, highlighting, etc.,) and one for cutting up purposes.

Analysing and Interpreting the Data

In addition to one year of transcription work, many hours were spent in data analysis and interpretation. It is important to stress that the two processes are not separate but can occur simultaneously. In fact, the process of making sense of the data had begun

during the interview proper. I found that on reflecting on the interviews, I had a fair idea of the kinds of themes that were occurring. This process was continued during transcription work. I found that as I listened to the interview tapes, I began to get a clearer picture of the issues that were emerging.

I would take out each transcript from the analysis folder and pore over it, reread it, make notes in the margin down the left, and put a one word or several-phrase summary of what the theme was for different quotations down the right margin. Prior to this I had formulated on paper what I thought some of the themes would be. These were added to as I came across new themes that did not fit into the prior list. I opened up many files with its theme written on the front.

As soon as I had 'completed' analysing a transcript, I would take out a 'clean' version from the cut up file and transfer the theme to the appropriate place on the right margin. I would classify or code each quotation with the following information on the left hand margin: name, interview category, gender and race and the page number. When this was done, I then cut up the appropriate quotations and sections and placed them in the folder that contained all the quotations that had the same or similar themes. I opened up many new files as new or different themes emerged. What I did not think was relevant I placed in a trash file thinking that I might have some use for them later on.

I found that once I became familiar with my data, I could make connections between what interviewees said that was similar and that which differed, etc. I wrote down my observations in an analysis folder and continued with this running commentary for all the interviews. This folder was to play a most critical role when I had to put the data together and try to interpret what they meant to both the interviewees and to me. As I was building up my folders of data using a thematic approach, I would prioritise the quotations according to the value I placed on them with the most important at the top of the pile. In other words, I was categorising the data when I was analysing them.

Does it make a difference to the quality of analysis and interpretation if there is a big gap in terms of time of data collection and intensive analysis work? The literature suggest that it is best to simultaneously carry out analysis while collecting the data (e.g., Miles and Huberman, 1994). The quality of data analysis may also be affected by the gap between completion of data collection and intensive analysis. I did not really begin intensive analysis work until six months had elapsed after my return from data collection. As I explained earlier, this was due to the fact that transcription of interviews took far longer than I had anticipated and I also experienced personal problems during this time

coupled with my tutoring commitments in three different courses at the university. Despite these shortcomings, I do not think the analysis is affected too negatively because once I began poring over the transcripts and reacquainted myself with field notes I had made, this lack was accounted for.

In terms of interview data description and interpretation, it is pertinent to note that I have made a distinction in the way I have presented these in Chapters Five, Six and Seven. In other words, I let the informants speak and built up a narrative based on their 'speeches' without trying too much to analyse and interpret what they meant. It is in the latter part of each of the data chapters that I provide an in-depth analysis and interpretation of the data. While this distinction may be theoretically problematic, it is nonetheless analytically useful. In Chapter Eight, I explicate the reason why I have chosen this format. Basically, my purpose in separating the data description from its analysis and interpretation is due to the strategy of privileging Indigenous Fijian voice(s) that I consider methodologically important. This is in keeping with one of the aims of the thesis where I wish to provide the space for Indigenous Fijians to speak, to have a voice from which to articulate their place in the world. I, therefore, have privileged the narratives provided by the informants of the study by separating what they say from my interpretations of their narratives. However, I acknowledge that the 'freedom' of my informants to speak is mediated by my selection and ordering of interview data as well as the accompanying commentary.

Summary

This chapter has described and explicated the methodological framework and considerations that underpinned this research project. In particular, I discussed QR, narrowing down to the case study approach and then, focussed specifically on the interview.

The important point that I make in this chapter is that the case study approach that I have adopted in this thesis is non-generalisable because the case under study is local and case studies deal with situated knowledges. This is particularly critical in postcolonial contexts. The final outcome should yield a detailed and textured description and analysis of locally specific phenomenon (i.e., AA policy and racial inequalities in education in Fiji). Moreover, another important point that I make in this chapter is that by utilising the case study and interview methods, I have sought to "enter into the other person's perspective" with the assumption that "the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable and able to be made explicit" as Patton (1990: 278) has put it. This approach is in keeping with the

emphasis that I have placed on the perspectives of the informants, particularly with the view that providing a voice for 'locals' is important. However, I have made the important point that the informants' ability to speak 'freely' has been mediated by my choice of interview extracts.

In the following three chapters, I present, analyse and interpret the interview data. First I discuss explanations for racial inequalities in education (Chapter Five) followed by viewpoints on the conceptualisation, implementation and outcomes of AA (Chapter Six). I then discuss the portrayals of the informants regarding reform in terms of people, practice and policy (Chapter Seven).

CHAPTER FIVE
EXPLANATIONS FOR RACIAL INEQUALITIES IN SCHOOLING

The following three chapters provide a summation, analysis and interpretation of the interview data. In this chapter I examine what the interview data reveal about explanations for the underachievement of Indigenous Fijians under three broad themes: socio-cultural deficit, psychological and historical structural models. The first two categories give deterministic, essentialistic explanations for failure in school and basically hold the victim's physical, social and cultural environment responsible for his or her underachievement in schooling. The third category shifts from an emphasis on the underachiever's social and cultural environment to a focus on educational structures in place, such as the curriculum, assessment and pedagogical systems, as a possible explanation for underachievement.

Socio-Cultural Deficit Models

Many informants attribute the academic underachievement of Indigenous Fijians to deficit in, variously, their physical, social or cultural environment. Rurality, or the problems associated with distance from urban spaces, is identified as a serious impediment to the performance of Indigenous Fijians in schooling. The home background of these students, their socio-economic status, the cultural orientations of their parents and school variables, such as teacher quality and resource availability, have also been identified as important factors contributing to their performance in formal schooling.

Rurality: Spatial Disadvantage

The issue of the disadvantages associated with distance from urban spaces has been consistently raised by the informants. For instance, Sefanaia Koroi, Chief Education Officer in charge of Primary Education, draws our attention to spatial disadvantage in this manner:

> In Fiji, what has been...foremost in policy...is the rural concept because there is a tendency to look at the two sectors of the economy, rural and urban and look at the disadvantaged area - the rural. Most of the schools are in rural areas, most of the Fijians live in rural areas and the disparities in performance tend to point to the fact that rural education seems to be the starting take-off point of modern education for our Fijian children. (T9: 2)

Koroi makes several points here. First, the rural area is disadvantaged relative to urban centres. Second, a significant proportion of Indigenous Fijians live in rural areas and third, because of this, many Indigenous Fijian children begin their schooling in this economically and educationally disadvantaged environment.

Another informant who is concerned about the problems of spatial disadvantage is Sakeasi Butadroka, the Leader of the Fijian Nationalist Party. Butadroka highlights the problems associated with rurality by asking, "How can you expect high passes from Fijian youth when most of the Fijian parents are still in the rural area without any provision for electricity, for medical services, for roading and for good housing?" (T36: 5).

Focussing specifically on the rural Indigenous Fijian school, Veniana Lovodua, Principal of ACS who worked as a curriculum officer and has had vast experience visiting rural and urban schools, reiterates the point about the lack of adequate educational equipment, materials and resources. As she has put it, "There is a lot of struggle in the rural areas, struggle for the children because their facilities are non-existent". She notes that "There would be one book among six or seven if they're lucky". As well, according to Lovodua, "there is no electricity hence no duplicating machine or photocopier" (T44: 1).

Filimoni Jitoko, Principal Education Officer in charge of the Fijian Education Unit at the MOE, particularly highlights the issue of rural poverty and how that impacts on the school. He argues that "the lack of funds in the community" would be a "hidden factor" that would explain the "difference in the resources available for Fijian schools...when we compare this with the resources available in the Indian secondary schools". Emphasising the struggle that Indigenous Fijians face, he points out that "Parents face a lot of difficulties" so that "fees for students in Fijian schools are paid very late if they are paid at all". This creates problems for the school management who "can't do a lot in terms of school development because funds are not readily available". The "scarce cash available" then affects "resourcing the teachers in their teaching work" as well as general school development (T13: 2).

What is the underlying cause of the poverty of Indigenous Fijians in the rural areas? The subsistence economy of the rural areas is raised by Joeli Nabuka, currently Manager of Academic Services at the Fiji Institute of Technology. Nabuka was principal of several rural Indigenous Fijian schools for a period of twelve years and spent three years as Principal of the Lautoka Teachers College. Nabuka's emphasis is on the reasons for the poor economic base of the rural area which affects the quality of resources, teachers and so forth. As he explains it, "The only sources of employment...in the rural areas are actually for those who have come out from the urban areas, for example teachers. It is "economically inactive...in the sense that there is no source of basic employment there" (T10: 2).

A senior educator at USP also emphasises the issue of poverty and survival in the rural area, particularly as faced by women, which in turn impacts on the children's education. She notes:

> Another issue is hardship at home, affordability....For...women in rural areas, a lot of time is spent trying to survive. What is education when you're spending hours getting food...getting firewood...getting the daily sustenance which most urban people are spared from....I think in many Third World countries, most of us haven't sorted out our basic needs and this is a hindrance to schooling or to taking advantage of opportunities offered in the schools and the formal educational system. (T11: 7)

The key theme here is the portrayal of spatial disadvantage associated with distance from urban centres. Because the rural economy is mainly subsistence-oriented, there is not much scope for the kind of economic development that would bring a reasonable level of financial prosperity and security for the inhabitants. As the informants above have consistently pointed out, poverty and the struggle to survive are a way of life in the rural area. Consequently, teaching and learning resources are scarce. This, together with lack of formal education on the part of adults, perpetuates the cycle of ignorance and poverty which is not conducive to school success for Indigenous Fijians in rural areas. The issue of uneducated Indigenous Fijian parents will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven. For now, I would point out that educational deprivation in rural Indigenous Fijian schools is a key focus of my informants. Many Indigenous Fijians start their formal education in rural primary and junior secondary schools, and the poor economic and educational base that they encounter is purported to have serious implications for their education, particularly when they move to the urban centres for a high school education.

Many informants have pointed out that rural schools face another disadvantage: that of poorly trained, underqualified teachers. For example, Taufa Vakatale, the Minister for Education, argues that poor living conditions in the rural area are a deterrent to attracting qualified teachers. Because teachers are not considered a priority, their "houses, for example, are sub-standard compared to the housing that other government officers who go out to serve in the rural area". As the Minister for Education puts it, "Unfortunately, most of the rural schools are committee-run schools and the responsibility for providing houses for teachers would rest on the rural community". There is then "a serious problem with the kind of quarters that teachers are provided with" (T14: 2).

The point that is worth reiterating here is that almost all rural Indigenous Fijian schools are owned and managed by local communities. In fact, about 96% of all educational institutions are community or privately owned. By and large, community owned Indigenous

Fijian schools are economically poor. What this means is that many local Indigenous Fijian communities in the rural area are not in a financial position to build adequate houses for their teachers, let alone build schools that are equipped with adequate teaching and learning facilities and resources. This is further exacerbated by the problem of remoteness. The further the school is from the closest urban centre, the more problems there are with the transport of people and goods. The Minister for Education states:

> Another problem faced in rural education is that some schools are remote and very difficult to reach. It is very difficult to get materials, furniture, etc out to these schools and they, as well as other schools in the islands, have problems with equipment and transportation. How to transport materials out to these schools, given the transportation difficulty, is a serious problem, especially in interior areas which can only be accessed by horse transport. Teachers may want to improve their living standards out in the rural areas but may be constrained by remoteness and transportation problems. (T14: 2)

She also raises the problem of young, inexperienced teachers having to teach multiple classes. This problem is further exacerbated by the lack of professional networking between these teachers and their colleagues in the urban ce...res because of the problem of remoteness. As the Minister notes, "They...lack professional networking with their colleagues because of the problem of remoteness from the centres and many of them are forgotten once they go out the rural areas to teach" (T14: 2).

Vakatale's views about substandard facilities and lack of professional support are reiterated by Divendra Nath. Nath is currently Assistant Principal at Mahatma Gandhi Memorial School. An Indo-Fijian teacher, who in his first year out of training taught in a remote rural Indigenous Fijian school, Nath recollects:

> When I went out in my first year, I did not receive any professional support. The Ministry posted us and left us to sink or swim. The housing was substandard. I was told that there was electricity but this was provided by a generator. I was told there was water supply but this consisted of only one tap outside for washing and everything. (T52: 2)

What Vakatale and Nath have said about the problems faced by new, inexperienced teachers is supported by Veniana Lovodua, Principal of Adi Cakobau School. She goes a bit further to argue that many teachers in rural schools are "not graduates, not teacher-trained" and some are "fresh school leavers". The very young untrained and inexperienced teachers had the problem of "their students...treating them as colleagues...And they don't have control and they teach the way they were taught" (T44: 1).

The challenges associated with the disadvantage of location have been addressed in various ways by the Ministry of Education. Hari Ram, former Permanent Secretary for Education, served in the education sector for many decades as teacher, secondary school inspector, and a senior bureaucrat. Currently the Director of the Institute Social and Administrative Studies at USP, he points out that when he was Deputy Secretary for Education, "one of the major aims of the Ministry of Education was...to reduce the educational gap between Indigenous Fijians and others". This included improving "teaching facilities in rural areas - the buildings, the libraries and...to increase the supply of educational materials to rural schools" including "better laboratories...more equipment for practical work in science subjects" as well the improvement of the "staffing to those schools" (T5: 2).

The emphasis, since independence, on rural education policy seems to have been the improvement of schools facilities, the provision of adequately trained teachers and educational resources. Amraiya Naidu, the current Permanent Secretary for Education, points out that for the three years between 1996-8, a total of $3.45 million was earmarked for science education in the rural area. He notes that this fund will be used "in the teaching and learning of science in rural schools for rural children" and would include the building of new laboratories or the upgrading of old ones. As well, chemicals and science textbooks would be provided to rural schools. Refresher courses are also planned for science teachers and in areas where there is no electricity, generators would be provided, particularly for the teaching of Physics. Naidu also points out that the MOE has been concerned about teachers' conditions in the rural area and were assisting in building teachers' quarters. Moreover, the Ministry was providing a rural allowance to attract teachers and an incentive allowance to retain graduate teachers in the rural area.

The Minister for Education identifies inequities in the allocation of the per capita grant of $30 per primary child emphasising that remote and small schools in the rural areas were greatly disadvantaged because of their small enrolment numbers. She notes that the MOE is in the process of trying to bring about financial equity through a provision of an additional grant over and above the per capita grant. This, she maintains, will need to be worked out in such a way that the more remote schools with small enrolment numbers are not further disadvantaged by their isolation from the urban centres.

The issue of the disadvantage associated with location, therefore, is one that has been identified by the informants as a major deterrent to Indigenous Fijian school performance. The poor economic conditions associated with the rural subsistence economy and the isolation of rural school communities from urban centres seem to be the two major factors

that provide negative conditions for the Indigenous Fijians to perform well in schooling. The conditions are not conducive to attracting well-qualified, adequately trained teachers to teach in rural schools. As well, local communities are generally too poor to provide the necessary teaching and learning resources and facilities that are found in the relatively more affluent urban settings. According to government officials, the MOE has recognised the disadvantages associated with rurality and have attempted to address them through school capital development and the provision of teaching and learning resources such as books and chemicals. For a little over a decade, the MOE's efforts were supplemented by special funds provided through the AA policy implemented by the FAB. This took the same form of assistance as the MOE but the target specifically was rural Indigenous Fijian schools. So the disadvantages associated with living far away from urban spaces has been identified as a key factor in the underachievement of Indigenous Fijians in schooling.

Home Background

Many informants have identified some deficiencies in the home background of Indigenous Fijians to account for their poor performance in school. For example, a senior academic at USP highlights the cycle of disadvantage associated with low socio-economic status. He points out:

> We have a vicious circle situation....On average, unfortunately, Fijian students come from lower socio-economic background or homes with much less money for books, for study space that perpetuate itself in their lack of achievement. (T50: 2)

Similarly, Sir Len Usher, former mayor and editor of the 'Fiji Times' who has had many years experience as principal of Indigenous Fijian schools during the colonial period, agrees that the problem facing Indigenous Fijians in education is associated with home background factors, what he terms 'environmental'. He points out that "It's not made easy for Fijian children to study at home because of the environment at home and also...the disposable income of Fijians is probably lower than Indians...Chinese and Europeans and so they haven't the same access to books" (T26: 4).

Many informants have argued that Indigenous Fijian parents may have educational and career aspirations for their children but may not know how to facilitate school success. Adi Litia Qionibaravi, Chief Accountant at the Ministry of Fijian Affairs, points out:

> The way our home is structured, we don't provide for facilities to enable our children to study and parents also do not know or do not understand that they have an important role to play in our children's education like assisting the children, making sure that they do their homework...be there to answer their questions...make sure

that...they attend school interviews, attend fundraising for the school and things like that. (T1: 8)

Mere Tora, Acting Principal Education Officer responsible for Secondary Education, also argues that Indigenous Fijian parents value education but lack the knowledge about how to meet the educational needs of their children. She maintains that Indigenous Fijian parents definitely value education. Their problem is that "they are ignorant" and "need to be guided...to have the attitude to be able to give that support" (T19: 15).

To counter the problem of ignorance and poverty, a senior Indigenous Fijian educator at the USP points to education as the answer because "education is self-supporting, self-sustaining". As she puts it, "If you're educated, you make sure your kids get educated". She maintains that "as more Fijians get educated at whatever level they leave school, they will ensure that their children go to school. They will have adopted a new set of values, a new system altogether and they'll go for education" (T11: 5).

Moreover, a senior Indigenous Fijian bureaucrat suggests that if Indigenous Fijian parents provided a supportive environment for their children, they may do well at school. In her view, this would be possible if Fijians looked "at themselves as individuals" in the sense that if the parents were concerned about "their own children, their survival, their future, parents will begin to wonder about where they're going, where their children are going". This self-reflexivity would enable Indigenous Fijian parents to think "I must not drink grog too much. I must go and work and get income to be able to support my children, to pay bus fares, fees, lunches. I must set space aside for them to study at night because I want my family to succeed. I want my children to succeed" (T56: 1).

A low social class, then, has been identified by the informants as impeding the educational development of Indigenous Fijians. A low level of education on the part of parents and the concomitant low socio-economic status associated with lack of formal education are two factors perceived to be militating against Indigenous Fijian academic achievement. This applies in both the rural and urban areas. Parents who are poorly educated and are economically poor are not taken to be in a position to understand what is required of them to assist their children to achieve their maximum potential in schooling. According to these informants, because of this lack of knowledge, many low-income, little-educated Indigenous Fijians do not understand the conditions that are essential at home to assist their children such as providing time and privacy to study, making the educational

needs of their children first priority by paying fees on time, buying school books, attending teacher-parent evenings and so forth.

Excessive drinking of *yaqona*[11] by Indigenous Fijian adults has been identified by some informants as a major social problem that impedes the social and educational development of the Indigenous Fijian community. For instance, Adi Kuini Speed identifies the *yaqona* as "the curse of the Fijian society" when it is used excessively in both the village and urban areas. Adi Kuini is an executive member of the Fijian Association Party, Chief of the Naikoro District in Navosa and is a member of the Great Council of Chiefs. She maintains that

> yaqona drinking cripples the energy of our people to such a serious extent, especially the men-folk, that the whole traditional social system is becoming a burden to a few, especially the women who have had to carry a lot of the burden...and that's why things are slowing up. (T32: 11)

Several other informants have referred to grog drinking by the adults taking precedence over the educational interests of the child. In both the rural and urban areas, for instance, if people come to visit, the adults will drink grog and there will not be a place for the students to study, particularly since many low socio-economic status Indigenous Fijians live in one- or two-room houses. In this instance, the main living area will be taken up by adults drinking grog. And in the rural area, the only good light would most likely be used for the grog session, thus depriving the student from the best light for study purposes.

Sir Len Usher endorses this viewpoint:

> I think one of the problems...is the general way of life. It's very difficult for children to study in the evenings because in most village houses, the light is not very good and also there is very little privacy....[W]ith grog sessions going on, it's very difficult for children to study or do homework. The general way of life doesn't make it easy for children to spend a lot of time in study except when they're actually in school. (T26: 2)

Another home background factor identified by a few informants is in terms of a conflict of values between the Indigenous Fijian student meeting the needs required for success at school, on the one hand, and the demands placed on the child in the rural area to carry out daily chores, on the other. For instance, Dr Nii-Plange, an expatriate from Ghana who is the Head of Sociology at USP, observes that "the young kid in school becomes a

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[11] The *yaqona* plant (*Piper methysticum*) is a tall, leafy plant that grows to about five feet in height. Its roots are dried, pounded or pulverized, then mixed with water to form a drink. It eventually produces a soporific effect. *Yaqona* is found, not only in sacred settings, but at almost every social gathering (Katz, 1993). The *yaqona* is referred to as 'grog' in English.

victim of this conflict because more time is allocated for him to do other things than to do what he really needs to do to get through in the school system" (T20: 7).

The issues I have discussed so far seem to apply mainly to Indigenous Fijians in rural areas, although they are equally applicable to urban areas. In what follows, I would like to examine some of the data on urban poverty. Susana Tuisawau is a teacher-educator at FIT and President of the FTA. In her case-study research into the Indigenous Fijian urban poor and the reasons for low retention at school, she explains that the urban poor with a low socio-economic status cite the effects of poverty as the main reason why they dropped out of school. One such example is that students could not do their homework because they could not afford the textbook. They could then be in trouble with the teacher at school and this would be a vicious circle resulting in the students becoming too embarrassed about attending school. Eventually, the students would drop out of school altogether.

Another effect of poverty is said to be lack of privacy in the home. The students might not have anywhere to do their homework because they lived in a one-room apartment or in a squatter settlement. Yet another effect of poverty is the problem of bus fares. If there is no money available for bus fares to school, the student would miss a lot of school and would eventually be too far behind to catch up. As Tuisawau explains, "The economic status would determine the quality of the home environment because [this], in as far as provisions for study are concerned, would determine whether the students can do the back-up at home or will determine whether the students can have access to education where it has been offered". For Indigenous Fijians in the urban area who are poor, their inability to attend school is seen to lead to a lot of absenteeism which "progressively becomes worse to the point where the students just drop out of school altogether" (T30: 9).

By contrast, some informants have raised the point that the urban-rural divide is not a simplistic and unproblematic division. For instance, Dr Vijay Naidu, Head of School of Social and Economic Development at USP and Pro Vice Chancellor, maintains that there are some categories of Indo-Fijians such as "cane cutters, workers and the like" who "don't really care too much about what their children know" (T6: 10). Similarly, Krishna Datt, member of Parliament, trade unionist and former school principal, argues that there are categories of Indigenous Fijians in the urban centres, very much like those described in the study by Susana Tuisawau above, who are "more underprivileged" and disadvantaged than some Indigenous Fijians in the rural areas. Both Naidu and Datt are highlighting the important point that social class would be a more appropriate category to explain the disadvantages that students face, irrespective of which ethnic group one belongs to and

irrespective of whether one is located in the rural or urban area. This point repeatedly occurs in the data and is something that I will discuss later.

In sum, then, home background factors considered to be impediments to the educational progress of Indigenous Fijian students are: low socio-economic status, little or no formal education on parents' part, and the kinds of priorities that parents have for their children. The ignorance of poorly educated Indigenous Fijian parents about what is needed to facilitate the educational needs of their children has been particularly emphasised by some informants. The excessive drinking of *yaqona* as well has been identified as another impediment. Another important point emerging from the data is that the distinctions between rural-urban and Fijian-Indian ethnic divisions are not as clear-cut as people think. In other words, the demarcation between rural and urban is not as strong as some informants have made them out to be. This is borne out in the sense that rural Indigenous Fijians are a heterogenous group as are those in urban centres. Similarly, the homogeneity that is accorded to Indo-Fijians by some informants in terms of the disadvantages they face is not borne out in the data. As the informants have pointed out, socio-economic class and level of education reached are far better indicators of how children will do at school than whether one lives in the urban or rural area or whether, indeed, one is Indigenous Fijian or Indo-Fijian.

Cultural Factors

In addition to the disadvantage associated with location and home background factors, many informants have identified some cultural factors as impediments to the success of Indigenous Fijians at school. A poor attitude towards education is one such impediment. Evidence of this is provided by Adi Kuini Speed who argues that Indigenous Fijians are underachieving because of the low priority they place on education. She argues that the traditional way of life requires that social functions, such as deaths and weddings, take precedence in their lives, even for the more educated ones. She puts it this way:

> They're doing badly in school because of our traditional way of life...because Fijians are never taught the importance of education. We never really appreciate, never connect why education is important and vital so we don't apply it. Even for reasonably educated Fijian parents, there's still a question mark there. We don't devote enough time for our children....Our social calendar is more important - the *oga*[12], *solevu*[13] so education comes as a low priority. (T32: 9)

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[12] *Oga* is an Indigenous Fijian word for social obligations such as a wedding, a funeral, a birthday or any other customary obligation.
[13] *Solevu* refers to a large gathering of people for the ceremonial exchange of food, etc., with feasting (Capell, 1941) to celebrate a wedding or to mourn a death, for example.

In addition to Indigenous Fijians spending more time and effort on the "social calendar" with families demonstrating a lack of emphasis on education, Adi Kuini maintains that school committees, particularly in rural schools, also "don't function as effectively as they should". The low priority placed on education by the parents and the community therefore does not make conditions conducive for good teaching and learning.

This viewpoint is supported by Ted Young, General Secretary for the FTA, who agrees that the cultural obligations of Indigenous Fijians take precedence over education. In his view, "education is the last priority" because "the first priority is the *vanua*[14], second priority the church and if there is anything left, it's for our children". Young argues that this attitude is prevalent in the rural area while some of the more educated Indigenous Fijians in urban centres have more flexibility. Unfortunately for "the common Fijian in the village, in the rural set-up, they can't do that" because the "way the culture is set-up, they'll be ostracised" (T29: 6).

Like Young, Professor Tupeni Baba emphasises that Indigenous Fijians, particularly in the rural areas, cannot opt out of cultural obligations because of the social sanctions in place. This contributes to education coming "out a poor third". Professor Baba argues:

> I think [for] a lot of the rural people, given the small setting, the small community they're in, it's very difficult to get away from this kind of obligation because everybody knows if they opt out, if they don't contribute to ceremonies, if they don't pull their weight with the church or the *vanua* or the community, they will stand out. All sorts of social sanctions are there in the village for them to observe this so education comes out as a poor third. (T8: 9)

On the other hand, Sahu Khan, an educator at the FIT, elaborates on the difference between Indo-Fijians and Indigenous Fijians regarding their orientations towards the value of education. Khan maintains that "Indians...are more conscious of education and Indian parents will not spare anything to ensure that their children are educated. They'll make all the sacrifices because that's one of those things that they consider of the greatest wealth - education" (T58: 1). Similarly, Dr Jimione Samisoni, Dean of the Fiji School of Medicine, admits that the Indo-Fijian students "have a different mentality" and "they're brought up in that way", in other words to succeed in school (T 55: 1-2).

By contrast, a senior Indigenous Fijian educator at USP maintains that it is the child-rearing practices of Indigenous Fijians which disadvantage them in the school system. She

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[14] *Vanua* literally means land, region or place. Politically, it is a confederation, a land or *yavusa* (the largest kinship and social division of Fijian society) under a strong chief, in its turn combinable with other *vanua* under a *matanitu* (kingdom) (Capell, 1941).

argues that because children are not valued as a human being in their own right, the way they are treated could affect their self-esteem which would be disadvantageous in school. As she has put it, "Children are not supposed to articulate in the Fijian society. [They] are told what to do all the time. They don't discover for themselves " (T11: 7).

This point is taken further by Dr Vijay Naidu. Naidu maintains that Indigenous Fijians are not encouraged to question, to experiment, to be innovative which affects the self-confidence and sense of independence of the child. He notes:

> Children brought up in many ethnic Fijian communities, also amongst Indo-Fijians but more so ethnic Fijians - these children are not encouraged to really find out why things are happening. They're supposed to know almost sort of implicitly that these are the conventions...the taboos....The systematic learning and questioning and the development of self-confidence is not something that is widely encouraged. (T6: 8)

A further explanation provided for Indigenous Fijian underachievement in formal schooling is the view that Fijian culture discourages individual success. Josevata Kamikamica, is the Leader of the Fijian Association Party and the director of Fijian Holdings, a business arm for Indigenous Fijians. Also a former Minister of Finance and General Manager of the Native Lands Trust Board, Kamikamica argues that Indigenous Fijians are "easily satisfied". He argues that "they probably approach the school with the attitude that as long as they pass they move on to the next stage, that's fine", and that "there is not the urge to get to the top of their class". He attributes this lack of ambition in school to the fact that "right in the homes and maybe in our society, individual success is not encouraged". Instead, "the norm is that everyone remains about the same" (T16: 6).

Similarly, Dr Michael Davis, Lecturer in Sociology at USP, observes that "there was a culture of ordinariness, a culture of mediocrity, a culture where they were not supposed to excel compared with their mates" among unemployed Indigenous Fijian males (T66: 1). Like Susana Tuisawau's study on the urban poor already described earlier, Davis provides another insight into the low self-esteem of young male Indigenous Fijian males "on the streets". As he has pointed out, "these boys are competing to go to jail...not because they wanted to go to jail but they wanted the experience behind them" in order to "get gain a higher reputation amongst the group" (T66: 2).

By contrast, the group orientation of Indigenous Fijians is raised by the Minister for Education, who argues that "our communal way of life is at odds with school success" (T14: 3). She notes that Indigenous Fijians "do well in sports because it's team work, we do well in fund raising because it's team work". However, when "it comes to individual performance...then we don't do as well" (T14: 9). On the other hand, Sefanaia Koroi argues

that Indigenous Fijians do not do so well because they "do not have a tradition of academic background unlike the Indians who have had a long tradition carried over from India". As he explains it: "Traditionally [Indigenous Fijians] have not aspired as hard as we can to achieve something better, something like education" (T9: 9).

Some informants have indicated that Indigenous Fijian culture should not be made the scapegoat for poor performance in schooling. For instance, Unaisi Nabobo, Lecturer in Education at the FCAE, points out that "Culture is used as an excuse to be lazy because that is how the missionaries and the colonial master defined us and that is how people are using that as an excuse to be lazy" (T45: 2). She argues that "real Fijian culture is excellence in thinking of tomorrow, in seeing there is ample provision for tomorrow and the future". Her main argument is that the perception that Indigenous Fijians are lazy has come out of the way missionary and the 'colonial master' had represented them.

Similarly, a senior academic at USP argues that "there is not enough sensitivity to different cultural contexts and the Fijian cultural context is so different in many ways although there are some interesting similarities but the Fijian context is so different from the so-called Indian context" (T50: 1). His main point here is that criticisms about Indigenous Fijian culture should take account of the different cultural contexts that abound in Fiji. What he means by this is what he perceives to be the enormous social and cultural differences between Indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians that disadvantage Indigenous Fijians more than others.

The cultural orientations of Indigenous Fijians, then, have been identified as other factors that disadvantage them in schooling. For example, the low priority they place on education, their adult-centred practices which creates dependence and lack of confidence and the discouragement of individual success have been identified. As well, their lack of an academic tradition and the lack of goal setting and ambition are additional cultural setbacks to the indigenous child at school. In sum then, some lack on the part of the culture of Indigenous Fijians and their children has been identified as an impediment to their success in school.

School Factors

School factors such as time management, the availability or otherwise of suitably qualified teachers, and inferior educational facilities and resources are emerging as key external factors that affect the quality of education that students receive. In this section,

some informants have identified a deficit in the school environment as detrimental to the success of Indigenous Fijian students in particular.

In terms of school organisation, time management has been defined as a major factor contributing to performance. Kolinio Rainima Meo, Deputy Secretary of Administration and Finance at the MOE, argues that Indigenous Fijians in predominantly Fijian schools do not perform well in examinations because their time is not spent efficiently on learning activities. Surveys conducted by the Ministry to determine the number of hours spent on academic activities have shown that those Indo-Fijian schools that had excellent examination results spent more time on learning activities than those predominantly Indigenous Fijian schools that did not have 'good' results. Meo maintains that predominantly Indigenous Fijian schools concentrate a lot of learning time on sports and other extra-curricular activities compared to predominantly Indo-Fijian schools. As he puts it, "one of the biggest reasons for the decline in Fijian education is the misuse of time" (T41: 6).

Amraiya Naidu, the Permanent Secretary for Education, reiterates Meo's point about efficient use of school time on learning activities. Naidu was principal of Ratu Kadavulevu School (RKS), an Indigenous Fijian boys' boarding school, for four years. He has also served as principal in predominantly Indo-Fijian schools. He attributes success to actual contact time in the classroom between the teacher and the students. He states:

> From my perspective, the only difference I can see between a traditional Fijian school and a non-Fijian school is the extent of time that children have in contact with the teachers because of the importance...we place on extra-curricular activities, as a result of which there is an enormous sacrifice of the actual teaching time between the teacher and the children. (T3: 5)

The Permanent Secretary for Education pointed out that in his four years as principal at RKS, the external examination results improved dramatically because of the emphasis he placed on contact time between the teacher and the students in the classroom. As well, he changed the focus from sports to academic pursuits. For instance, he increased study time, subject teachers supervised during study time and, during the third term prior to final exams, there were extra tutorials and additional morning study for external examination forms.

The importance of time management is supported by Jagdish Singh of Rishikul Sanatan College and Dewan Chand of Bhawani Dayal High School who are both currently principals of predominantly Indo-Fijian schools. They both maintain that time management is a critical factor in academic achievement. Like Naidu's experience at RKS, both principals increase the academic emphasis in the final term of school. In Singh's case, he has

even gone to the extent of preparing a home study timetable for the students which "tells the child what to study, when to study, when to eat and when to sleep" (T7: 5). Both maintain that this academic emphasis, where sports and other extra-curricular activities are excluded for examination classes, has resulted in an improvement in exam results.

Much has already been said of the lack of resources in predominantly Indigenous Fijian schools, particularly those in the rural area. Tokasa Vitayaki, a curriculum development officer who has visited many schools in the country, highlights the difference in the school infrastructures and resources of Indo-Fijian and Indigenous Fijian schools. In the former, she notes, they "have just about everything". In contrast, the facilities available in the Indigenous Fijian schools "are not very conducive to learning as far as the students are concerned". Vitayaki draws our attention particularly to the lack of library facilities and books in many Indigenous Fijian schools, particularly in rural areas. This is supported by Professor Konai Thaman, Head of the School of Humanities of USP who emphasises that "you need books if you want to succeed in academic studies, you need books. There is no simple way around that" (T4: 3).

The issue of the lack of kindergartens in the rural area is introduced by Joeli Kalou, Member of Parliament and former Minister for Education. In his view, emphasis should be placed on early childhood education. He points out that kindergartens are the result of community initiatives and are basically urban-based because these communities can afford to establish and maintain them. In contrast, rural areas do not have the financial capacity, technical expertise or trained pre-school teachers to establish kindergartens so "Fijian students mainly from the rural areas [will continue] to miss out...until kindergartens become part and parcel of the national education system" (T33: 3).

An insight into the availability or otherwise of resources in rural Indigenous Fijian boarding schools can be gleaned from what Sister Genevieve Loo experienced in one. Currently Principal of St Joseph Secondary School in Suva, Sr Loo reminisces on her experiences at a rural Indigenous Fijian boarding school. On her arrival, she recalls:

> That was my first shock, there was absolutely nothing in the school. There was just a bare table and the chairs. I asked for a typewriter and they didn't have it and in terms of equipment there was just nothing and there was not even a library. So the students depended entirely on what the teachers gave. (T21: 6)

Sister Loo also raises the point that basic needs such as water, decent sanitation and a balanced diet are not generally met in rural boarding schools. As she puts it, "We were even short of water and the food was so shocking. The diet was not balanced, there was too much

starch and a lot of carbohydrates....How can the students learn?" As she explains it, the shortcomings in rural boarding schools are not just due to lack of funds but just as importantly to a lack of knowledge about what is important on the part of adults in charge.

The spotlight seems to be on the lack of proper resources and facilities in rural Indigenous Fijian schools. However, because of this emphasis on rural Indigenous Fijian schools, Indigenous Fijian urban schools and Indo-Fijian rural schools, which are just as impoverished, are understated. As Ledua Waqailiti, Head of Languages at Nabua Secondary School points out, some urban Indigenous Fijian schools are also impoverished in terms of resources. She notes, "The school simply can't afford to buy the textbooks and the students can't afford to buy their own textbooks. So we were working on photocopies. Now our photocopier goes kaput every three months" (T24: 10). Similarly, as Krishna Datt points out, rural Indo-Fijian schools are just as disadvantaged as rural Indigenous Fijian schools. He notes:

> When you put through rural Fijians, you've got to pitch them against rural Indians for a comparison. The Indo-Fijians are just as disadvantaged in the rural area compared to the Indo-Fijians in the urban area (T28: 16).

The consensus of these informants is that rural Indigenous Fijian schools do indeed face many setbacks. Many of these revolve around the general lack of funds in the community. As well, the further away the school is from an urban centre the more difficult it is to obtain needed supplies. And as Sister Loo pointed out, how can students learn in unsatisfactory living conditions such as lack of water, lack of proper sanitation, lack of physical facilities and educational resources, poor diet and a relatively uneducated school community? Add the problem of untrained, underqualified teachers and the odds are stacked against the students succeeding in school.

Irrespective of its locality, racial make-up or racial ownership - facilities in schools depend on what the community can provide. Thus, a school attended by many Indigenous Fijians who come from low socio-economic backgrounds could be just as disadvantaged, whether they are in the rural or urban areas. The same can be said of Indo-Fijian schools. They are not all advantaged in terms of facilities and resources, particularly in rural areas. What matters, then, can be summed up by Tahir Munshi, Chief Education Officer Secondary, who notes "the communities which provide the right kind of educational environment for the children in terms of books, resources and the classroom...play a very important role in creating that education background,...atmosphere...and motivation" (T42: 2).

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The quality of teaching has been identified as another school factor that affect students' academic performance. Adi Kuini Speed, for instance, maintains that it is the combined effects of poor facilities and poorly qualified teachers that contribute to the continuing underachievement of Indigenous Fijians. She also raises the issue of the politics of location where "the Indo-Fijian teachers don't go out to the rural areas for some reason" (T32: 15). Indo-Fijian teachers prefer to remain in the urban centres so it is the Indigenous Fijian teachers who are posted to teach in rural Indigenous Fijian schools. Adi Kuini's conclusion is that Indo-Fijians "are getting the better of Fijians at every level - the parenting, the social commitment to progress, the better facilities and the better teachers" T32: 15-16).

Susana Tuisawau explains that inequalities in teachers' qualifications is "one of the contributing factors to the poor performance of Fijians in secondary schools". She points out that Indigenous Fijians teaching in rural schools face difficulty in qualifying for Government in-service award scholarships because of the difficulty in doing extension or distance courses at USP. A teacher is given an in-service scholarship if he or she has completed a required number of extension courses. Tuisawau mentions that at one point, the number of required courses to qualify for a scholarship was fourteen units which seriously disadvantaged Indigenous Fijians teaching in the rural areas. She points out that non-Indigenous Fijians are urban-based and have access to the university or to the postal service and so forth. In contrast, Indigenous Fijian teachers had to contend with the problems associated with distance. She notes:

> Most of the other races are urban-based and they [have] access to the extension service here and to a good postal service if they [are] doing extension. Our teachers are in the secondary schools of the rural areas like Yasawa, Rotuma, Lau, Kadavu, the interior. They don't even have a regular postal service, they cannot do units, or come here. These people who stay around here...go to USP and out of hours. But these people out in the outlying areas, they can't even use the extension service because of the difficulty with the post. The people in the interior don't even have a regular bus, don't even have a bus service going up to the schools. So whenever they want to come to town, like Namosi Secondary School, they have to hire a truck. So the Fijian teachers in Fijian schools are in very remote areas and it's very costly for them to come. Hence the quality of the teaching...must be one of the very significant factors that has perhaps caused the poor performance of students. (T30: 5)

It needs to be explained here that the majority of teachers in the rural area would either have teaching certificates or diplomas and in order to qualify for a scholarship to pursue a degree, they are required to take a certain number of extension courses at the USP. In her comments above, Tuisawau raises some pertinent issues to do with the politics and problems associated with distance. Non-Indigenous Fijians are urban-based and have ready

access to the university where they can either do extension courses in order to qualify for government scholarships or pursue a degree using their own resources. Indigenous Fijian teachers in rural schools, on the other hand, are greatly disadvantaged by distance. The further away one is from the university, the more problematic it is to do distance education (Wah 1997a, 1997b). There are problems with the postal system to the islands, in particular, and in some schools on the main island, transportation poses a major problem as well. As Wah (1997a: 57) has put it, "The problem is not only one of getting the message to its destination but also of getting it there in time, and of getting a confirmation that the message was indeed received".

Hari Ram highlights the need to have well qualified teachers who would be able to adapt their teaching style to particular locational contexts. He points out that "a good teacher [should] be able to teach a particular subject in a somewhat different way in a rural area from the way he uses it in an urban centre, using examples which students are familiar with in the rural area" (T5: 7). Unfortunately, the quality of teachers that Ram raises here is difficult to attract in rural Indigenous Fijian schools. One of the reasons for this is their level of teacher training. As mentioned earlier, many Indigenous Fijians in rural schools are certificate or diploma holders and are in need of further training.

Another reason is the lack of professionalism evident in rural Indigenous Fijian schools. For instance, Krishna Datt points out that he found a difference in the professionalism of Indigenous and Indo-Fijian primary schools during his visits in his capacity as curriculum development officer. He observes that Indo-Fijian school headmasters would generally be in readiness for the inspection visit. In contrast, he found that Indigenous Fijian school headteachers would generally not be ready. Datt observes: "you see him from a long distance, coming out of his home wrapping this *sulu*[15], having grogged whole night and not having got up till 10.30, walking to school". As he puts it:

> This kind of slackness and unprofessionalism makes you wonder....The walls are dirty, the floor has been unswept....How would students walking in there find it conducive to learn...be excited and want to know about the rest of the world? Everything is so dampening and sad (T28: 12).

Officials at the Fiji Teachers Union (FTU) have highlighted problems associated with a shortage of suitably qualified teachers. For instance, Pratap Chand, General Secretary of the FTU, highlights the shortage of teachers in middle-level decision-making positions. He argues that teacher quality has been a major problem in the last decade and "it's going to

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[15] A *sulu* is a piece of cloth worn as casual wear in the home by Indigenous Fijian men and women.

worsen". He points out, "Now we don't have about 140 Heads of Department in our schools, particularly in key areas like Maths, Physics and Commerce. If you don't have good teachers to teach our kids, they will have no chance....Here anyone walks into teaching now" (T35: 2).

This is reiterated by Jagdish Singh, Principal of Rishikul Sanatan College and the President of the FTU. Singh emphasises that the FTU survey has found "fifty per cent of the teachers who are untrained, inexperienced, underqualified" (T7: 6). Singh maintains that some schools have no choice, particularly out in rural areas but to hire people who have reached form five, six or seven to teach the upper levels of secondary school. As well, Singh notes that school managers hire untrained, underqualified people to save funds which is "bad because you cannot compromise the qualification of a teacher with quality education" (T7: 7).

In sum, the poor quality of teachers, combined with poor teaching facilities and resources and the actual time spent on learning activities are school factors identified as playing a significant role in Indigenous Fijian underachievement. The emphasis placed on sports and other extra-curricular activities by Indigenous Fijian schools was raised. The lack of basic facilities and necessary educational resources, particularly in rural areas, has been emphasised. Note that rural disadvantage features prominently in the data here. The politics of location, in relation to teacher placement, is seen as significant. The high level of untrained, underqualified teachers is particularly noted as a contributing factor to Indigenous underachievement.

The whole of section one, then, has examined the data on physical, social and cultural factors perceived to impinge on Indigenous Fijian achievement. It particularly looked at spatial, social, cultural and school factors identified by the informants as significant. I now shift the focus to informants' psychological explanations reported to impact on school performance.

Psychological-Deficit Models

In the literature on underachievement in the United States (e.g., Gould, 1981) and Australia (e.g., de Lacey, 1974), the failure of indigenous groups was historically based on models of mental deficit, psychological lack or low IQ. In these discourses of mental deficit, the dominant idea was that the fault for failure was due to internal deficiencies in the mental make-up of students, that is, students were perceived to be internally flawed. Historically, the ideology of colonialism is based on mental deficit models as I have outlined in Chapter Three. "Natives" were perceived as savages, unparalleled in their physical, cultural and

mental ugliness. This abhorrence for indigenous peoples everywhere rested on the belief that the internal mental processes of these people were deficient. The 'science' of phrenology or craniology was used in the latter part of the nineteenth and early twentieth century by 'white scientists' to legitimate the beliefs of 'white' society that indigenous or 'black' people were mentally deficient. All this was done in the quest of Western science for 'new knowledge'. But equally repulsive was the legitimation, by any means, of colonial power and authority to represent the colonised as psychologically deficient. To show indigenous peoples how different they were to the ideal (i.e., European/white, usually male) was to demonstrate the cultural, social and mental superiority of white men and women.

What is remarkable is the absence or silence of psychological/mental deficit in the accounts of the informants. There seems to be an across the board agreement that Indigenous Fijians are not mentally deficient. For instance, Indo-Fijian Dr Vijay Naidu emphatically states that "in terms of intelligence and aptitude, ethnic Fijians are as good as anybody else so there's no inherent mental attributes which disadvantage them" (T6: 7). Similarly, an Indigenous Fijian informant who is Chief Education Officer, TVEd at the MOE argues that "we [Indigenous Fijians] are slow learners, not slow as in dumb but slow to mature". Adi Kuini Speed, another Indigenous Fijian informant, argues that the assumption of AA that Indigenous Fijians are lacking intellectually "as if there is something wrong with us...is flawed" (T32: 5). Expatriate Europeans also share the same sentiments. For instance, Sir Len Usher, now a Fiji citizen, maintains: "I don't believe for one moment that it's due to any inherent intellectual inferiority" (T26: 4). This resonates with Professor Randy Thaman who argues "in general, Fijians do worse but it is not because of their ability".

When we talk about psychological models in the Fijian context, then, there is consensus that the capability of Indigenous Fijians is not linked in any way to mental deficiencies but are strongly associated with problems in attitudes, which in turn, are tied to culture and location. I now turn to an examination of informant representations of attitudinal deficit. This will be followed by what informants perceive to be another issue that poses psychological problems for Indigenous Fijian students: that of living away from home/boarding with relatives in urban centres. Finally, I will examine what informants say about parallels and distinctions between Indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians about psychological explanations for success in school.

Attitudes

Much has already been said in the previous section about the attitudes of Indigenous Fijians to education in terms of priorities in life and their cultural orientations. The consensus from the data seems to be that for Indigenous Fijians who have not had much formal education, they have let cultural and social obligations take precedence over the education of their children. As pointed out earlier, rural Indigenous Fijians are obligated to participate in ceremonies and social functions otherwise they are ostracised.

Another point that has emerged from what informants say is that while many Indigenous Fijians might value education, their lack of formal education disables them from knowing what is required to facilitate the educational needs of their children. A senior academic suggests that "Fijian parents, on the whole, lean more towards the school and say that is the responsibility of the school for my child to achieve and it's not my responsibility" (T50: 2). As well, a senior Indigenous Fijian bureaucrat notes that the awareness of the importance of education is lacking in Indigenous Fijians (T 56:2).

There also seems to be a consensus that something needs to be done about inculcating in Indigenous Fijian parents a greater appreciation of the schooling process if AA policies in favour of Indigenous Fijians are to work. There is the recognition that if AA policies are to work better, then Indigenous Fijian attitudes towards education need to change. For example, Bessie Ali, Principal of Yat Sen Secondary School, argues this

> boils down to this day to day detail that somehow we have to reinforce. There have to be somehow more educational programmes for them about daily routines, what to do for their children when they are home with them for the first five years because those are the most important years....I believe there should be less emphasis on fundraising and more on advising parents what to do, how to improve their children's performance. (T18: 1-2)

Likewise, a high ranking Indigenous Fijian bureaucrat at the MOE argues that AA policies will not work unless people's attitudes are changed. As she has put it, "We can address certain issues like capital infrastructure, like resources, like books. We can only go so far in affirmative action but the more important half...is the people's attitudes". As she explains it, "It's been a battle because you're working with people's culture, with people's attitude to learning and education in general, with how they view life. It's their view of life you're up against". In her view, "Without parental support, without teacher support, without family support and student willingness to learn, all these affirmative actions are just useless" (T15: 5).

Using a comparative approach, Dr Ahmed Ali, Minister for Education from 1982-1986 and currently Director of the Policy Analysis Unit in the Prime Minister's Office, highlights the difference between the communal orientation of Indigenous Fijians and the Indo-Fijian individual emphasis. According to Ali, "some of the responsibilities towards the overall community will work against the needs of the immediate family". As Dr Ali puts it:

> I think very often there are greater demands on Fijian family members...Fijian society is more fluid, more communal, more community oriented, too flexible....I think the responsibilities of the extended family in the Fijian community sometimes work to the disadvantage of the immediate family members whereas the rest of us are more selfish. My kids are my own kids, my own concern but if something happens to them then I cannot rely on my family automatically whereas with in the Fijian community it's already assumed that help will come....(T2: 12-13)

Esther Williams, Librarian at the USP, provides us with an insight into how Indigenous Fijian parents in urban areas value education in the same way that Indo-Fijians and the Chinese community do, whereas Indigenous Fijians in rural areas would value the church above all else. She carried out a survey of parents of all ethnic groups in both the urban and rural areas to assess their perceptions of the value of education relative to the church and government. She notes:

> Of course, the Indians will say education, and the Fijian will say the church, and that's an obvious kind of answer you'll get. But it was interesting in the urban areas all the Fijians said it was education which was very important, and they felt that education opens up a lot of areas for everyone. So in a way you can compare the Fijians in the urban areas similarly to the Indians and the Chinese.(T27: 4)

Yet another factor that has been identified as contributing to Indigenous Fijian underachievement is the idea that too much security leads to complacency. As evidence of this, Ratu Mosese Tuisawau, Rewa High Chief and former Member of Parliament, argues that too much security is a demotivator and does not encourage individuals to work hard in school. As he puts it, "The non-Fijians, mainly the Indians, are raised in an environment where their minds are suffused with ideas of security...where in the Fijian *koro*[16] , there is generally an attitude of laissez faire, why worry about the morrow...where the preservation of cultural values is more important than the future of the young" (T53: 3).

Similarly, a senior Indigenous Fijian bureaucrat wonders whether it is the fact that Indigenous Fijians own land which gives them security that they are not driven to work hard

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[16] A *koro* is an Indigenous Fijian village or settlement.

to achieve in school. He draws our attention to those land owners who collect lease money whose attitude towards education is dubious. He observes:

> I don't know whether it's because this is our land, our country...that we don't seem driven to be able to achieve whereas with the Indians who come from a system where they're tenants and so the imperative for them is so much greater....You take the Western division, you take the province of Ba which extends from Ra, you take Nadroga as well - these places have collected millions in lease money and so their attitude is why should they go to school, they have all this money, and the attitude is 'why should I invest it, it's money that I didn't sweat for'. (T31: 8)

An agency that has been identified as impeding the educational progress of Indigenous Fijians is the church, particularly the Methodist church. For instance, Ratu Mosese Tuisawau argues that the demands by the church impinge on educational priorities of Indigenous Fijians. He points out that Indigenous Fijian parents "have a vague notion about what education might mean for their children". In his view, "a factor that moulds this kind of attitude comes in from activities generated by church leaders so a lot of time is used up because of church activities". For him, church directives "grip the minds of parents in a very significant way and take away the kind of attention that they should be giving, focussing...for the future of their growing children" (T53: 3).

A more extreme view is taken by a senior educator at USP who maintains that "the church has become the biggest exploiter of Fijians" in the sense "they have taken a lot more resources from Fijians and the church has become almost an opium kind of role" (T11: 13). A similar view is taken by Pratap Chand, the General Secretary of the FTU. Chand is of the view that Indigenous Fijian parents are too involved in church activities in terms of both time and money which can act to the detriment of their children. He refers to this as "over-churching".

To emphasise the hold the Christian church has on Indigenous Fijians, Dr Ahmed Ali compares it with what the Indo-Fijians went through under the indentured labour system during the period of colonial rule. He notes, "The Indians went through the sub-imperialism of the CSR company and that oriented them to success in this world and the Fijians went through the sub-imperialism of the Methodist church which prepared them for salvation in the next world" (T2: 14).

This is similar to what Josevata Kamikamica observes about the church. In his view, the church does not encourage the valuing of education. As he puts it:

> If we hear sermons in the church, they run down education. *Na vuli, qori e na sega in vakabulai keda. Na vakabulai keda ga o Jisu. Eda sa kila ni sa vakabulai keda tiko o*

Jisu. But we all know that God has also called us to understand his creation. That is so we can make better use of what is available to us. (T16: 7)

The Fijian phrases here are translatable as "Education will not save us. Only Jesus can save us. We all know that only Jesus can save us". What Kamikamica is referring to here is the notion that the Methodist Church seems to generate resignation on the part of the followers that their and their children's education is unimportant. Religion is more important. This seems to negate the Protestant work ethic which the Roman Catholic Church is renown for. According to Adi Kuini Speed, we must not treat different Christian denominations as a homogenous entity. As she puts it:

> ...Catholics [who] attend the Catholic schools...tend to do better than the rest...because of the emphasis that the church gives to education. And because the church gives emphasis to education within their social community in terms of the congregation and the teaching...this rubs off from the parents to the children and so they work as a team. Whereas in the Methodist Church, my church, this doesn't happen. Our social calendar is more important, where we going to meet next Sunday, who are we going to entertain, where are they from, can you get some food....(T 32: 11)

Kamikamica also argues that Indigenous Fijians may have the natural resources in terms of the land, sea and mineral resources but it is the Indo-Fijian community that has "power" in terms of the information that they have gained through an education. He argues that education is critical for Indigenous Fijians because "information is power". He points out that Indo-Fijians "rely mainly on education" which "has been their strength" (T16: 8).

Reverend Dr Ilaitia Tuwere, President of the Methodist Church in Fiji, endorses Kamikamica's view by saying "education is power" and "whoever is educated has power in today's society" (T12: 3). He goes on to say that the "the church should be a liberating force in Fijian society", in every area including education. He notes:

> It should not run its business as usual...just preaching and things like that. We should attempt to interpret the faith so that it becomes a living force addressing the realities of the day, what our children are facing and that is what should be happening to the church. And we should be honestly asking ourselves as to what aspect of culture is inhibiting progress and growth and we say 'this is the weak part of our culture' as well as affirm those aspects of culture that encourage growth and progress. (T12: 3)

In sum, then, Indigenous Fijians are perceived to lack the appropriate attitudes that lead to success in education. One way that this is manifested is in the prioritising of their daily lives. It would seem that education is not viewed as the number one priority in their lives, particularly as it cuts across lack of formal education and low socio-economic status.

This is exacerbated by the obligations and demands expected of Indigenous Fijians by their traditional leaders, kinship community and the church. There is general agreement that education needs to become top priority if AA policies are to work (AA policies will form the focus of the next chapter). Another psychological factor identified to explain Indigenous Fijian underachievement is to do with landowner leasers who have managed to attain financial security from lease income at the expense of a 'good' education for their children. Why should they bother with education when they are financially secure? However, there is recognition that many Indigenous Fijians, particularly in the urban areas and some island communities, consider education to be very important for the future well-being of their children.

In this section, I have examined the data on portrayals of Indigenous Fijian attitude to education as one psychological explanation for Indigenous Fijian underperformance at school. The next section examines the data relating to the psychological impact of living away from home for those Indigenous Fijian students, particularly from rural areas, while attending a secondary school.

Living Away From Home

Many Indigenous Fijian students are sent to the urban or semi-urban schools for a secondary education. This is because there might not be a secondary school in their area or parents might perceive the quality of an education obtained in an urban school as superior. As a result of the great distance from their homes in the rural areas, these students either board at school or with relatives. The psychological impact of this separation from the immediate family is provided by some informants as an added explanation for the underachievement of Indigenous Fijians in formal schooling.

There is the belief that children from the rural areas, who are sent to live with relatives in the urban centres to pursue a secondary education, generally find that their adopted home circumstance is not conducive to producing good results in schooling because of the tendency by their relatives to consider their educational needs of secondary importance. Ted Young, for example, draws our attention to this problem where these children "become an additional problem". He points out:

> A lot of rural parents...send their children to...live with their relatives and really, it's quite difficult for their relatives in Suva, Lautoka, Nadi. They are not policed, not monitored very well. Time is not given to them to spend on their school work. Relatives use them as house girls....Urban families meet the usual problems and when these relatives come to stay with them, they become an additional problem. (T29: 6)

This viewpoint is supported by Ameen Sahu Khan, a Senior Lecturer and Coordinator of the Centre for Professional Development at the FIT. Drawing on his experiences teaching in an all girls Indigenous Fijian school, Khan argues that Indigenous Fijian girls, in particular, are considered "a burden on the family they were living with". He notes that "they were obliged to do housework at home and all the errands" and their educational needs were "regarded as a secondary matter by their hosts" (T58: 1).

Tokasa Vitayaki maintains that children who live away from the immediate family are more likely to perform "poorly than the one who comes from home every day". She explains that the emotional psyche of these students, whether at boarding school or living out with relatives, is affected to such an extent that they develop a 'no care' attitude to schooling. With that kind of attitude, they do not work too hard and consequently do not do too well in examinations.

Asinate Gadolo, Curriculum Development Officer in Primary English taught for thirty years, mostly in rural Indigenous Fijian schools. She argues that "boarding still has its place in the school system" despite their shortcomings. However, committed and dedicated teachers need to teach there. These teachers almost become surrogate parents so need to possess caring and nurturing qualities. Recalling her experience in a boarding school, she notes:

> I remember when I first came out, my first school was a boarding school. The teacher on duty for the week is up twenty four hours. You were the first to wake in the morning at 5 a.m, run assembly at 6.00 then you supervised the morning work from 6.30 to 7.30 a.m. Then you supervised the students while they have their meals. You need committed teachers who would show concern for the students....So we need really dedicated teachers who not only teach well but also look after the students. At boarding school, part of the responsibilities we have as parents should be shouldered by these teachers so that should be recognised in the school. This should apply both in the classroom and in the hostel. (T40: 4)

Here, Gadolo also raises the demands placed on teachers not only to be good teachers in the classroom but also to be good surrogate parents. What she is indirectly pointing out is that extra care needs to be taken in the selection of teachers who go out to teach in boarding schools if there is to be an improvement in examination results of Indigenous Fijians in boarding schools..

Those students who are accepted at boarding school may face problems of isolation and loneliness as they are separated from close family. There are many adjustments to be made and when these are compounded by loneliness, the students are not likely to succeed in

school. Sister Genevieve Loo expounds on the problems faced by students who board. She has taught for twenty six years, ten of which were spent in a rural Indigenous Fijian boarding school. Sister Loo talks particularly about the problem of loneliness and the lack of a listening adult ear faced by students who are at boarding school. For instance, she notes:

> The boarders, as a group...appear to be happy but if you delve right into their psychological needs, you find that many of them are lonely...are unhappy....[T]hey have personal problems but they have no opportunity to share that. Sometimes they get letters from home and maybe a parent is sick....So there are personal problems. Unless the students are courageous enough to share or if there is somebody willing to listen, they very often kept their personal problems.

Sister Loo draws out the difference between those students who live at home with parents and those who board in that the former have the listening ears of their parents whereas those at boarding schools do not. She notes that the difference between boarding school and day school is that "In a day school the students go home every day. They have the opportunity there to go over their problems with their parents, whereas in boarding school they don't and this contributes to poor performance" (T21: 4).

This problem, as explained by Sister Loo, is a significant one. Not only are there no teachers who take on this role but there are no trained counsellors in boarding schools. There is a lack of adult support in boarding institutions. The students are not willing to talk to teachers of the same ethnicity because they are "limited by cultural expectations and so on". As well, Sister Loo explains that teachers with families do not really have the extra time to listen to students' problems. Another problem raised by Sister Loo associated with boarding school is the lack of support from home in terms of pocket money for the students. This creates anxiety which sometimes leads to stealing. In Sister Loo's words "Sometimes they don't even have pocket money. They are short of things. They write home and the money is slow in coming then they end up stealing from one another" (T21: 4). Sister Loo points out that students at boarding school also contend with un-met basic needs. This could be in the form of water shortage and an unbalanced diet full of starch and carbohydrates. As well, students have a lot of difficulty with English which, compounded by difficult and foreign content, makes learning problematic. Boarding school experiences, therefore, do not seem conducive to good academic achievement.

To sum up then, those students who live away from parents seem to face a lot of difficulty in adjusting to the new situation in which they are placed. Those who live with relatives find that their educational needs are perceived as secondary and those in boarding

school have to contend with many difficulties to do with loneliness, un-met basic needs and problems with understanding complex curriculum delivered in an unfamiliar language.

An important finding of this chapter is that in Fiji, informants are in consensus that AA is a response to social, cultural and locational disadvantage, compounded by attitudinal limitations on the part of Indigenous Fijians. Why is there such a significant absence or silence in psychological explanations in terms of attributing underachievement to lack of innate ability or mental skills? There are three possible reasons. First, the majority positioning/positions of Indigenous Fijians may have generated the situation where the political consensus is that people do not see Indigenous Fijians as inferior, that is, it might be politically risky for people to be saying that Indigenous Fijians are underachieving in school because they are inferior. In other words, a Fijian version of 'political correctness' might be an explanation for the significant absence of psychological models historically espoused in Western nation states like the United States and Australia. Second, there may be a genuine belief that Indigenous Fijians have proved, through their achievement and participation in the public sphere, that they are just as capable as anyone else. Third, this might signal a genuine postcolonial shift in terms of people deliberately shedding the discourses of inferiority inherited from colonialism.

The next two sections examine some of the explanations for the success of non-indigenous and Indigenous Fijian students in schooling to see whether there are parallels in their experiences that might shed some light on these issues of school achievement and underachievement.

Success of Non-Indigenous Fijians in Schooling

It is interesting to note that throughout my interviews with the informants, almost all of them drew comparisons and contrasts between Indigenous Fijians and the Indo-Fijian and Chinese communities. It is pertinent, therefore, to examine some of the explanations for the success of non-indigenous students at school.

One factor that has been identified as a contributing factor to non-Indigenous Fijians doing well at school is the belief that an education would provide a secure future. For instance, Hari Ram maintains that "Educational success is considered to be very important and to be the means of success in the future". To achieve this, "they make a lot of sacrifices to ensure that their children are very well educated, very much more I think than Fijian parents do" (T5: 10). Similarly, Dr Vijay Naidu points out that Indo-Fijian parents generally have a very deep appreciation of education and they encourage...and motivate...have a sense

of competition for their children and a great interest in how they perform academically" even to the extent that "there is this constant pressure on the child to do well at school" (T6: 10). Here, Naidu and Ram are talking about the motivation many Indo-Fijian parents have to see that they facilitate the educational interests of their children even to the extent where they make sacrifices. They provide the necessary support, including the facilities needed like a quiet study area, books and so forth. And as Naidu says, it puts a lot of pressures on the child to perform well at school.

Ameen Sahu Khan explains how this pressure affects the Indo-Fijian child, even to the extent that they commit suicide if they fail exams. He points out that "failure in the exams means a lot of embarrassment for the students and it brings embarrassment to the family as well" (58: 2). This is in contrast to Indigenous Fijians where, according to the Ilai Kuli, Member of Parliament, "Failure in the Fijian home is not taken seriously" (T71: 1).

Another factor identified by some informants is to do with the lack of security that Indo-Fijians have in terms of land ownership. A strong motivation for Indo-Fijians to see their children do well at school arises out of the situation where Indigenous Fijians own the bulk of the land, thereby disabling other ethnic groups from purchasing any land. Indo-Fijians, therefore, look to education to provide future security. Hari Ram points out that "Indians do feel that because they don't have security in the area of land ownership, they need to do something else that will compensate for it. And I think there is a grain of truth in the saying 'education is to a non-Fijian what land is to the Fijians'" (T5: 10).

Similarly, Filipe Tuisawau explains the difference between Indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians in land security and the motivations to pursue an education. He states:

> Indians strive more to survive because I think they have this feeling of insecurity as most of the land is owned by Fijians....The only security for Indians is education....Once the son or daughter has a good job, they can look after the parents...whereas for Fijians, their attitude is 'this is our country, we own the land, we can go back to the land' so the urge or motivation in Fijian society to complete an education, to strive for higher education, is not at the same level as the Indian population. (T46: 1-2)

An additional explanation given for Indo-Fijians pursuing a good education for their children is the struggle Indo-Fijians faced during the indentured labour period. As Krishna Datt has put it, "the psychology of Indians...springs from the indentured experience". Education was perceived as "the only way out of all this quagmire and the recycling of the same experience" (T28: 7). Datt goes on to elaborate that now that Indo-Fijians are no longer under the indentured system, the other challenge that they face is the threat of expiring land

leases every thirty years. This situation has made Indo-Fijians more determined to get a good education in order to get off the land and education is seen as the only way out for them, what Professor Konai Thaman calls their 'safety net' when they attain an education and get a job (T4: 17). And as Inosi Naga, Principal of Latter Day Saints Technical College, has put it, Indo-Fijians and Chinese "work hard and desire to be successful" (T69: 2).

Moreover, many informants have identified the individual orientation of the Indo-Fijian culture, as well as their ability to adapt, as factors that facilitate the success of Indo-Fijians in education. Professor Tupeni Baba, Head of Education and Psychology at the USP, for instance, points out that "The school culture is very much in line with the way they live their own culture, not only with their own culture but also their ability to adapt" (T8: 3). In his view, "Indo Fijians have shown great adaptability to cultures wherever they have gone. They retain their own but they're very good at adjusting and adapting" (T8: 4).

Dr Ahmed Ali maintains that Indo-Fijians and the Chinese are nuclear-family oriented which advantages the children because their educational needs are provided for. He notes:

> Many of the Indian children and many of the Chinese students who are doing well come out of situations where they receive greater attention. I think one of the things that may favour the Indian and the Chinese student is the family structure. [It] is much more a nuclear family. An Indian kid goes home- he has a room to himself and he can switch on the light at 5.30 in the morning when he wants to study. (T2: 12)

The point that Ali is making here is that compared to the extended, communal networks that Indigenous Fijians are renown for, Indo-Fijians and the Chinese community are more individually oriented. Resources are therefore contained within the nuclear family in contrast to the commitments to the extended family of Indigenous Fijians. Indo-Fijians, for example, are then able to provide more for their children like a room for each child and other modern amenities that children in the rural area are not accessible to. Indo-Fijian children then, because of the individual orientation of the family, have better chances of their educational needs being met.

As well, informants have pointed out that the Indo-Fijian and Chinese communities are urban dwellers which may give them an edge over a significant number of Indigenous Fijians who live in rural areas. As an example of this, Susana Tuisawau points out that the experiences of the Indo-Fijian and the Chinese child is complementary to school learning as they live in or near urban centres. Their exposure to media and educational resources is far greater than the rural indigenous child and hence have more advantages that facilitate their success in formal schooling (T30: 13).

Furthermore, Una Nabobo argues that the Indo-Fijian and Chinese child are advantaged in that they have a culture of academic scholarship which Indigenous Fijians do not have (T45: 2). This is supported by Dewan Chand. Chand notes that "Indians have a very long tradition and history of education. In the Indian cultural set-up, respect for education is an in-built thing" (T23: 4). Dewan Chand (principal) and Krishna Datt (politician) both expound on their religious Scriptures which reinforce the importance of knowledge and learning. This provides the conditions that make it easier for Indo-Fijian children to adapt to school.

Explanations for Indo-Fijian success in school have implications from accounts of the informants on Indigenous Fijian underachievement. One explanation given for Indo-Fijian success at school is attributable to a strong individualist orientation. As their resources are centred around the nuclear family, they are generally able to cater for the educational needs of their children. This is in contrast to the communal nature of Indigenous Fijian families and communities. Indo-Fijian school success is facilitated by the high premium placed on an education. Indo-Fijian parents are perceived to have the 'appropriate' attitude to education which facilitates their children's success in school. As well, Indo-Fijians are identified as having an academic tradition which gives them a head start over Indigenous Fijians. Furthermore, the point has been raised that Indo-Fijians and the Chinese communities are clustered around the urban or semi-urban areas compared to the wide scatter of Indigenous Fijians, mainly around the rural areas. The advantages, therefore, associated with close proximity to opportunities provided for by the infrastructures, facilities and educational and other resources that are located more in the urban than rural areas have been highlighted. By the accounts provided this far, it needs to be reiterated again that rurality (spatial disadvantage), low economic status and lack of formal education (social class) have worked in complex ways to disadvantage Indigenous Fijians.

Success of Indigenous Fijians in Schooling

With all the emphasis placed on the underachievement of Indigenous Fijians, one almost forgets that there are successes, that there are Indigenous Fijians who have made it through school, even the rural low socio-economic status child who has conditions militating against their success. What are the factors that contribute to Indigenous Fijians passing school examinations and even making it through the tertiary system? Are there parallels in their success and the success of the Indo-Fijians and Chinese students? What are the implications of these for the education of Indigenous Fijians? How relevant are these

findings on the implementation of AA policies in education? These are pertinent questions that will need examination.

First, let us take a look at what 'successful' Indigenous Fijians identify as factors that have contributed to their doing well academically in school and passing the relevant national exams. A sense of struggle, parental encouragement and support, and hard work have been identified as three factors that contribute to the motivation to succeed in life. For example, Filipe Tuisawau notes that "We struggled to survive....That was the motivation in my life not to go through that again and to make sure I succeeded" (T46: 3).

Similarly, Josevata Kamikamica points out that it was the support he got from his parents, his inner desire to do well, and seeing his father working very hard to support his education that spurred him on to the best he could. He points out that the element of struggle "is centrally critical. We need to feel that we have to compete, that the world is not going to fight for us or the Fijian society. We have to work hard, we have to do better" (T16:2). As well, Kolinio Rainima Meo, Deputy Secretary for Education, attributes his father's struggle to put him and his brothers through school as a motivating factor to succeed. As he puts it, "where the parents were being driven to believe in education as the solution for anything, the children are successful". Like Kamikamica, Meo believes "there is no substitution for hard work" (T41: 17-18). Moreover, Mere Samisoni, Managing Director of Samisoni Enterprises Ltd, points out that it was her mother's role model and the inculcation early in life of "an ethic for work, an ethic for an education and an ethic for family" that contributed to her success at school and in life (T22: 11).

Another 'successful' Indigenous Fijian is Mere Tora, who has a senior position at the MOE. She attributes her success to her hardworking father who strove hard to put nine children though school. Life was a struggle and her father saw education as a way out for his children. She also saw hard work as necessary to succeed and her father was a role model for her. She says "It was right from an early age that I saw he was a very hard working man and...we emulated him at hard work. Right from an early age I associated hard work with success" (T19: 12).

By contrast, Aloesi Vucukula, a Senior Lecturer at FCAE, attributes her success in school to two factors: her family background and good teachers. She notes:

> For me, the most important thing is my family background. I think that has given me an edge over the other students. There was a lot of support from home and then my parents were able to economically provide for me....Also as a student I wasn't burdened with...domestic duties. The schools I went to later played an important role.

I went to ACS and Natabua and in those two schools, the most important thing was the teachers. I had really good teachers. (T47: 3)

This is supported by Professor Tupeni Baba. Drawing on his "own personal experiences and some studies done by my own students that followed up a number of Fijian achievers" he identifies "very good teachers, very good supporting environment in schools and very good support from the parents" as significant factors for school success of Indigenous Fijians. As well, he identifies another factor which has been raised earlier, that of role models, what he calls "significant Fijians or significant others".

What seems to be emerging from the data is that Indigenous Fijians who succeed do so for several reasons. For some, it is the economic circumstance of the family that provided the impetus to work hard in order to succeed in life. This is very much like the experiences of Indo-Fijians who were motivated to work hard to escape the drudgery of farming on leased land. It is the element of struggle, of overcoming poverty, that provided the impetus of making a success in life. For some other Indigenous Fijians, whose socio-economic status was better, it was parental support that provided the conditions for success in school. Two factors that cut across class and ethnicity are home support and good teachers. For Indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians alike, a home environment that provided for the educational needs of the children facilitated success. As well, for both categories, good schools, but particularly good teachers, provided them with the conditions to succeed. For some Indigenous Fijians, it is the internal desire to improve themselves that enabled them to do well at school and in life. And for others, it is the role model of their parents and "significant others", as Baba puts it, that have driven them to work hard and succeed at school.

What I have done so far is to examine what the data has revealed to explain Indigenous Fijian underachievement. The first main category of possible explanations has been covered under the first section—Socio-cultural deficit models—where disadvantage of location (rurality), home background, cultural factors and school variables were identified as some of the key components that impacted on achievement. The second main category to explain why Indigenous Fijians are not doing too well at school has been covered in this section. This focussed on psychological factors that affect the success or otherwise of students at school and covered areas such as attitudes, the impact of living away from home and a more specific look at the reasons for school success of non-indigenous and Indigenous Fijians. A significant absence in the accounts of the informants that cuts across all ethnic

groups is the acknowledgment of the mental capability of Indigenous Fijians. Thus, psychological models in the Fijian context are articulated as attitudinal problems, which in turn, are intricately tied to culture and location.

Historical Structural Models

This section examines informant accounts of neocolonial educational structures that are still in place, decades after the political and physical severance of colonial power. I begin by examining what is said about the impact of colonialism on the Indigenous Fijian mind and social institutions. Then I examine the data on the effects of a predominantly English-based curriculum, pedagogical approach and assessment. As well, an examination of the impact of the language of instruction is undertaken.

Colonial Historical Experiences

Dr Ali argues that "The so-called benign colonialism of the British was devastating in its impact. There was a great deal of discrimination. The whole philosophy was that we were not as good as the white man" (T2: 9). Ali maintains that the "colonial experience has worked against Fijians". Josevata Kamikamica elaborates on this by arguing that under the period of colonial rule, Indigenous Fijis were protected by colonial policy in such a way that independence was not encouraged. As he has put it, "after cession we have been subjected to live within a controlled and protected environment and we were given the assurance that everything will be looked after by the government, Her Majesty the Queen" (T16: 6).

One who shares this viewpoint is Dr Reverend Ilaitia Tuwere who argues that "the protective principle that guided the colonisers" meant that "in some ways [Fijians] were over-protected". Tuwere maintains that it was this overprotective policy on the part of "those in authority during the colonial days" that was detrimental because it has led to the development of a strong sense of dependence on outsiders to provide for the needs of Indigenous Fijians. As Tuwere puts it, "When we had independence...we did not feel...independent" because "we were not really allowed to try to swim and...struggle" (T12: 1-2).

This protectionist policy of the Colonial Government is described by Dewan Chand, Principal of Bhawani Dayal High School, as the policy of segregation. Chand also points out that it is this policy which has kept Indigenous Fijians from competing with other ethnic groups in social and economic terms. As Chand has put it:

When you look at the history of Fiji, for a very long time Fijians were segregated under colonial rule. They were put into their little *koro*, they were not allowed to mix much with the Indian communities, they had a school of their own, a church of their own, very Fijianised communities. And this is one of the reasons why they have missed out in the socio-economic competition of which Indians are a part. (T23: 5)

Adi Kuini Speed endorses this view and argues, like Kamikamica, Tuwere and Chand, that Indigenous Fijians have led a "sheltered life" since the period of colonisation by the British. She notes that this sheltered life has endured after independence with the advent of AA. The "handout mentality" is prevalent today because government has continued to provide assistance to Indigenous Fijians to the detriment of initiative and independence. As she puts it, "it's the sheltered life that we've led under the colonial system and admittedly after independence that we haven't really been given a chance to think for ourselves, do things for ourselves, to use our own initiative" (T32: 6).

Noting the problem of dependence during colonial rule is Professor Asesela Ravuvu, Director of the Institute of Pacific Studies at USP. Ravuvu identifies communalism as "the biggest problem among Fijian communities" and argues that this was instituted by the Christian church and the Colonial Government, in particular, to attain and maintain control over the indigenous people. He then explains that it is this creation of communities that has led to the development of "a sense of dependency", not on themselves as was previously the case, but on the Colonial Government and the church for their survival. He continues by arguing that it is the security given Indigenous Fijians by the Colonial Government that has led to the demise of their survival instincts, their sense of independence and self-confidence. This is how he describes it:

> The ethos of the Fijian family has changed tremendously through the communal aspects that has been imposed upon them. Before, the families were out there in the rural areas, in the communities, up on the hills and suddenly the government came in, the church came in. They created new communal communities which were wider and have taken away from individuals the need to sustain themselves individually or as a family and to be increasingly dependent on communal institutions like the church, the school, the province, the *tikina*[17] , the *koro*. All these are communal institutions created by the Colonial Government and the religious institutions have also created communalism that has given all these people continued protection and continued influence in relation to the individual to do things for themselves. I think this is where the whole problem lies today and that is the overemphasis on communalism to the detriment of the individual's ability to do something for his own survival. (T34: 2)

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[17] A *tikina* is a district, a subdivision of a *yasana* or province (Capell, 1941).

On the other hand, another perspective is provided by Mere Samisoni who points out that an elite group was used by the colonial power in such a way that their power is firmly entrenched today. As she describes it, "To support colonialism...the colonial powers appointed some elite, including the chiefly system to support their policies". According to Samisoni, the British also "institutionalised the feudal system of production" and rewarded the elite and chiefs for their assistance. Explaining the role of the elite, Samisoni notes, "The elite were to support the 'core' (colonial power) so that in the event the core interests were violated by the workers, by the proletariat, the elite would protect them and so today the elite are still there". Samisoni believes that "the colonial powers really froze our development in time because some of the chiefs justify their role today in the sense that they are contributing to the economy". She asks, are chiefs "really helping the economy or are they just a group of people who are paid once a year to sit in council and make decisions reinforcing feudalism that is irrelevant to our economy?"

This section has presented some of the data that demonstrate the devastating psychological impact of the process of colonialism. The policies of the Colonial Government discouraged the development of independence, competitiveness and initiative and created a dependency syndrome instead. As Ravuvu puts it, the creation of communalism by the church and the government has led to the demise of those characteristics which enabled them to survive prior to the advent of the British to Fijian shores. An elite group was also utilised by the colonialists, as Mere Samisoni has pointed out, "to support colonialism". The impact of colonialism was covered in Chapter Three. In what follows, I examine the data on the impact of one of the neocolonial educational structures—the curriculum—on the achievement of Indigenous Fijians.

Curriculum

Several informants have identified a conflict in the culture of the school and that of the home as an explanation as to why Indigenous Fijian students do not perform particularly well at school. For example, Filimoni Jitoko makes the point that the home environment of the Indigenous Fijian, particularly in the rural area, is not compatible with what occurs in schooling. He notes:

> I think [the curriculum] is disadvantaging...Fijian students mainly because their home environment is different from the home background of other races and so their experiences when they go back to their home is different. It might be familiar for the other races when they go back home in the sense that what they learn in school is there also in the home. But you look at a student in Gau, or Koro or in Lau, he learns something about dynamos in the Physics curriculum about motors and that's it.

That's the only place that he's told. When he goes back to the village, he sees the kerosene light and nobody is there to help him explain. (T13: 5)

Jitoko here points out that there is a conflictual relationship between what is taught in school and the experiences of the rural Indigenous Fijian child at home. Many things that students are taught at school are alien in the rural environment. The example given, of dynamos and motors in a Physics lesson, is far removed from the local experiences of the rural child. In an environment where cars are not commonplace and the only form of electricity comes from a generator that is sacrosanct to the village community, how can this student's learning be reinforced, let alone explainable, without having some experience of the object under study? The implication of Jitoko's comment is that the child's very limited experience of what is taught at school, when not reinforced by the experiences at home, is not conducive to success at school.

Calls have also been made by some informants for the curriculum to become more relevant and less academically oriented. As evidence of this, Josevata Kamikamica points out that the curriculum needs to be less abstract and to be in keeping with the way Indigenous Fijians learn. He describes Indigenous Fijian learning styles as thinking " in terms of the totality of things. We want to know why things happen in a certain way". As he explains it:

> We are more comfortable with relating ourselves to the totality of our existence. That is to say that 'I handle this, this is a table, I can see it, I can handle it and if it's broken I see why it's broken'. In a theoretical mode, in an abstract mode, some Fijians generally find that a bit difficult to handle because we are not developed to think in that frame of reference because if a young person in the village starts to ask those kinds of questions earlier in life, *tikolo*[18], *via kila na ka*[19] will be the answer he or she gets. (T16: 9-10)

Here, Kamikamica also suggests that Indigenous Fijians are more practically-oriented in their learning. This in reinforced by their world view and childhood practices which discourage questions. As reiterated by a senior Indigenous Fijian bureaucrat, Indigenous Fijians are supposed to know their place, whether as child or adult. This bureaucrat adds, "Constantly one hears 'oh he doesn't know his place, he's too cheeky' or 'you're over-educated, that's why you don't know your place'. This is a very strong social thing that also needs to be overcome" (T31: 11).

Many informants are of the view that the curriculum is too academically oriented. Joeli Kalou, for instance, maintains that "In essence, our education system is actually training

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[18] *Tikolo* is translated as 'shut up' or 'be quiet'.
[19] *Via kila na ka* is translated as 'you want to know too much'.

students to become failures at the end because our academically oriented system only caters for thirty or forty percent of students who are being taught". Like Kamikamica, Kalou would like the curriculum to "be more practical" (T33: 10).

Moreover, as Professor Konai Thaman argues, because the formal school system does not value other kinds of learning aside from academic book learning, this sets up many Indigenous Fijian students for failure. She raises the point that a person is judged according to his or her performance in examinations even when he or she is successful in other spheres of life. She states:

> If you take Fijian...kids who grew up in a semi-traditional situation the whole socialisation, the goals of learning, just about everything is in opposition to the school. There's just no valuing within the formal structure of anything that is done in the informal structure. Now when that happens, unless you're an extraordinary kind of person to live a kind of double life, it's very difficult for kids to adapt and when of course they can't adapt, that means failing the exam. And they keep failing....Eventually you're going to think you're a failure when in fact the only thing you've failed in is the school in the formal education system. But this has been translated into other spheres and unfortunately, the whole society looks at you now and judge you according to whether you've done well at school or not. (T4: 4-5)

Arguing along the same lines as Professor Thaman above, Josevata Kamikamica notes the contradictions between Indigenous cultural values and school values. As he has put it, "the values of our system are not the same as the values that the educational system encourage". He also compares the notion of success in the traditional system with that of the modern system. In the former, he points out, "success means someone who can fit in very well in society, does all the work that society requires and is prepared to perform when called upon, whereas in the education system and the world outside...success means doing better than someone else" (T16: 8).

Like Thaman and Kamikamica, Sefanaia Koroi reiterates the point that the curriculum is foreign and does not put much worth on the cultural values of Indigenous Fijis. As he put it, "The curriculum brought in were mere replicas of curriculum from other countries so therefore we...have done away with some of the cultural values that children can understand" (T9: 10-11). In consequence, Koroi argues, the curriculum could be inappropriate, especially when an educated person finds that he or she cannot find a job and judges himself or herself a success only in terms of passing exams.

Indirectly, what Thaman and Koroi are referring to here is that the curriculum in place today is a replica of the curriculum in Great Britain or New Zealand (a past colony of Great Britain). Despite its foreign nature and academic orientation, it continued on in neocolonial

189

hegemonic formations even after Fiji attained political independence in 1970. And as Filimoni Jitoko has pointed out, teachers have not contextualised the curriculum to local sites despite efforts to localise it after independence. As Jitoko puts it:

> We have said that we have localised the curriculum but how far [is] the local flavour there which the students are familiar with in terms of their experiences? I think we're still far from attaining that. We might have localised it because it was produced locally but the content might still be foreign...particularly for the students in the rural areas....[W]e haven't really localised to the extent that students can be confident or familiar with it. And teachers don't give local examples when they teach....We need to tailor every aspect of the curriculum to the local context. (T13: 4)

Picking up on the theme of rural disadvantage, Viliame Saulekaleka, Member of Parliament and a former President of the FTA, maintains that the curriculum "disadvantages Fijians out in the rural area". He stresses that the academic nature of the curriculum seems to suit those in the urban areas more. As well, Saulekaleka raised the issue of failure in school and Indigenous Fijians committing crimes which results in many of them ending up in prisons, what he calls "the Republic's College".

Susana Tuisawau also believes that the curriculum is too urban-based. However, it is her view that rural Indigenous Fijian students are disadvantaged primarily because of inequities in access to resources. She says "We're using a common, a national curriculum dictated from the centre. However, there is no equality of access to resources because of the geographical location of the schools and the students...[and] this would always disadvantage the Fijians" (T30: 8).

Taking a different perspective, the Minister for Education agrees that the curriculum is urban-based and that the knowledge that rural students have is undervalued. Conversely, Vakatale argues that the curriculum in place does not prepare urban students to survive in the rural area. Using the concepts of efficiency and productivity as examples, Mere Samisoni takes the Minister for Education's point about using Indigenous Fijian knowledge further by arguing that the knowledge Indigenous Fijians have can be incorporated into the school curriculum so that they can "apply the learning in today's market economy". This is how Samisoni puts it:

> [W]hen we talk about concepts, we have efficiency and productivity. They are both in our culture. We see it growing up. For example, when we pull the *tavioka*[20] out, we cut the branches, we plant it again, to me that is efficiency. And then the leaves, these are placed around the plant so that is waste management and productivity....Those concepts should be worked through to present day environment,

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[20] *Tavioka* translates into tapioca, a tuber plant that is one of the main root crops for Indigenous Fijians.

to present day content so that our people can understand what it's all about and understand where they've come from to apply the learning in today's market economy. (T22: 3)

Similarly, Bessie Ali believes that the curriculum should be less Western-oriented and should utilise more Indigenous Fijian knowledge. As she puts it, "I think the curriculum could be a lot less Western-oriented. It could be a lot more Fiji-based so that Fijian students with their knowledge of their background have an opportunity to express themselves" (T18: 3). This view is supported by Reverend Dr Ilaitia Tuwere who calls for a balance between "the particular and the universal", between 'Fiji-oriented' and 'English or European based' cultural knowledges. He points out:

> It (The curriculum) has become part of our heritage, part of our history....I'm not saying it's necessarily bad....I think we have gained a lot from that too and it has helped us as a nation. But I think there also is a point in saying that there is a balance to be drawn...a balance between the particular and the universal. If the curriculum is weighted in favour of the universal and the quality of life is not coming forth...then we must explore that kind of curriculum that can be called essentially ours, that is Fiji-oriented and not only English or European based. (T12: 9)

I began this section on historical structural explanatory models by introducing some of the data to show the psychological impact of colonialism on Indigenous Fijian independence, initiative and sense of competition. This section has examined the data on the impact of the curriculum on Indigenous Fijian achievement. Two things are clear. First, the issue of spatial disadvantage is a recurrent category of analysis in the informants' discussion on Indigenous Fijian underachievement. Second, a foreign and academically oriented curriculum is seen to disadvantage those students whose learning styles and cultural orientation are different from that of the school. Calls have been made to make the curriculum more relevant and practical. As well, calls have been made for the curriculum to value indigenous knowledge and cultural values. This will be discussed further in Chapter Seven. In the next section, another educational structure, the 'Western' pedagogies of schooling are examined to demonstrate the impact they have on Indigenous Fijian underachievement.

Pedagogical Methods

Several informants have identified the pedagogical methods of schooling as a contributing factor to the poor educational performance of Indigenous Fijians. One pedagogical issue identified is the contradiction between the culture of schooling and that of

Indigenous Fijian homes. Another concerns the conflict between the learning styles of Indigenous Fijian students and contemporary teaching methods.

The contention that there is a contradiction in school culture and that of the Indigenous Fijian home is made by several informants. For instance, Professor Tupeni Baba argues that "the culture of the school is very different from Fijian cultures and ethos". A serious problem for Baba is the notion that "the individual orientation of the curriculum...emphasises largely academic learning and does not recognise the community-based, home-based learning". What is more serious is that "the pedagogy, the whole teaching approach on which the whole curriculum, the teaching-learning process of the school is based, makes that assumption that...school based learning is important" (T8: 1). What Baba is raising here is the subordination of "learning that is done in the community that is brought into the school by the children, particularly their own cultural learning". Indigenous knowledge systems are considered 'unimportant' in school because of the assumption that "school based learning is important". And as discussed earlier in the section on the curriculum, many informants have pointed out that the neocolonial curriculum in place is Western-oriented, foreign, too abstract, too urban-based and, in many cases, irrelevant.

Professor Baba also criticises curriculum design where the assumption is that those who develop curriculum know what is to be taught and that the teaching process is merely an inculcation of what developers have designed. He finds this "a totally unacceptable way of approaching teaching and learning". He argues:

> That kind of approach does not acknowledge that the people...are coming with... legitimate knowledge from their communities, legitimate knowledge which should also be part of the curriculum. They should contest the knowledge that we have but we don't encourage that. (T8: 3)

More importantly, Professor Baba calls for more critical pedagogy. As well, he suggests a change to the whole ethos of schooling otherwise the Indigenous Fijian would "remain on the periphery even though he is now in the majority in his own country". The critical pedagogy that Baba envisages is one where "the form of teaching and learning would have to be altered from more rote into a facilitative...process and examinations will have to be based on how students articulate what they feel, what they think rather than what we want them to think and feel" (8: 3).

Another informant who thinks that school pedagogical practices are at odds with Indigenous Fijian achievement is Professor Konai Thaman. Thaman argues that students do well in school if their home culture is compatible with the culture of the school. She argues

that some research should be carried out into the learning styles of Indigenous Fijians to determine how they learn best and that these findings should then be incorporated into teacher training programmes. She specifically points out that Indigenous Fijians should not necessarily change their culture and make it more European but that the teachers should change their teaching methods to take into account the experiences of the Indigenous Fijian students. She states:

> [T]he teachers should change their methods of teaching to take into account experiences of the Fijian kids so I think this is a problem. We have been looking at Fijian culture as if it is so negative so that we say 'well you know you should become kind of an honorary Palagi so that you could succeed in school'. That to me is the wrong way to go about it. It's to say to the school what can you do to accommodate these kids rather than saying these kids must change so that they can pass the exam. (T4: 3)

Thaman maintains that culture should not be viewed as a negative thing but should be considered a privilege. She disagrees strongly with the deficit models that blame the victim for his or her failure but recommends that it is the schools that should change to accommodate the students rather than the Indigenous Fijian students changing so they can pass examinations. As she puts it:

> I hope that in the future we move into a scenario where culture is looked upon as a privilege and not a negative variable in the whole education process because if we're on about improving learning then you are going to have to find out from the learner by whatever methods how you can bring about better learning. And you have to find out the best way of bringing this about and therefore the deficit model is definitely out as far as I'm concerned....(T4: 9)

Other informants have also noted this contradiction between the culture of the school, which is more individualistic, and that of the Indigenous Fijian home, which is more communally oriented. For instance, Filimoni Jitoko, in a similar argument to Professor Thaman, contends that Indigenous Fijians "have failed in the system because...we have a conflict in schooling and the culture of the student". As Jitoko explains it, students are taught "in the school to work individually" which is reflected in the teaching methods used. And yet, "when they go back to their homes, they are put back in the context of a communal-type work environment". In his view, "we have two conflicting worlds where the student is trying to learn" (T13: 4).

Like Thaman, Jitoko suggests that the learning styles of Indigenous Fijians be considered in teaching, particularly their cultural trait of working communally. He recommends that teachers consider encouraging "students to work in groups" rather than the current emphasis on individual exercises. Similarly, Davindra Nath, argues that the

curriculum is too individualistic and, therefore, disadvantages Indigenous Fijians who learn better in groups. As he has put it, "the curriculum has very little place for cooperation for which the Fijian culture is renown [and they] are really good at". He maintains that the curriculum "places a very high priority on individual achievement and there is no reward for collective achievement".

Reverend Dr Ilaitia Tuwere argues that because some subjects like Maths, Science and Commerce are "late arrivals" for "a large number of Fijian students", a new way of teaching them that accounts for their learning styles should be found. He points out: "Indians have been exposed" to these subjects for a long time whereas they are "late arrivals" for Indigenous Fijians. He suggests that "another way of teaching them should be found...a better methodology or simply more time or attention to be given to them in the school system" (T12: 7-8). Here, Tuwere is indirectly referring to the academic culture associated with Indian learning and their familiarity with Maths, Commerce and the Sciences which gives them an advantage in school. In comparison, Indigenous Fijians are unfamiliar with much of the language and concepts. As such, he suggests that some AA is provided, perhaps in the form of more time and attention. Even better, he recommends that teaching methods take this point into consideration.

In sum, then, many informants are concerned that colonial academic curriculum and teaching styles ignore the learning styles of Indigenous Fijian students. As well, a call has been made for changes to be made to both the curriculum and pedagogical styles (as one cannot separate the two) in such a way that they become more appropriate and culturally sensitive. In the next section I discuss what informants say about another educational structure that is a powerful legacy of colonialism, the assessment system.

Assessment

Many informants consistently agree that Fiji's educational system is too heavily examination oriented and that performance in examinations has become the criterion to judge a person's 'success' in life. Professor Konai Thaman points out that the process of formal schooling has caused Pacific societies to reconceptualise what an educated or learned person is. The meaning has changed from "a very pragmatic one, one that is closely related to survival in a particular society, to someone who has a string of degrees". The perception is that a person becomes a total failure if he or she fails national examinations because people have "been conditioned to think that schooling is more important than any learning outside of the school which is very unfortunate" (T4: 5).

Sefanaia Koroi argues that school success is measured in terms of success in academic-type exams and that the school system disadvantages those Indigenous Fijians who have many talents and skills outside of the academic arena. In his view, the curriculum needs to be restructured in order to cater for students who are not academically inclined, so that "everybody can be recognised for the potential and skills that they have rather than their ability in reading and mathematics" (T9: 11). In a similar way, a senior academic at USP argues that people are labelled failures just because they are not successful at national examinations and cannot attain a job in the professions, what he calls "a two-edged sword". They may have other talents and be successful in areas that are non-academic and yet they are perceived as failures because of the assumption "that the only success is to score high marks in exams and become a professional" (T50: 3).

Highlighting the negative aspects of examinations, Tamarisi Yabaki, curriculum development officer in charge the Social Studies curriculum for primary schools, argues that the examination system can affect both teachers and students. On the one hand, failure in exams stigmatises students in that they "have nothing to fall back on". On the other, exam results drive the teaching-learning process and also stigmatises teachers if the classes they teach attain poor results. As Yabaki puts it:

> [A] major factor that...affects Fijian performance is the examination system because there is no alternative for failure. Once you drop out after failing these exams, there is nothing else that you can fall back on to get you going. I think it affects the teaching of subjects in school because if you are teaching an examination class, the teacher is psyched up to think that the bottom line in teaching is the exam. You've got to produce good results so that you're in the good books of the community. If you're a grant-in-aid teacher, you can easily lose your position if the committee says that you haven't performed well. (T38: 5)

Arthur Crane, Principal of Gospel High School, disapproves of examinations because teachers teach to the examination at the expense of good teaching. He points out that "too many teachers are able to just come along with the textbook, teach what it is and emphasise the examination...and use the exam as a stick over the kid's back for the last...six weeks before the exam". In placing an emphasis on exams, teachers " can almost sit back and be satisfied with a mediocre performance for the large part of the year" (T55: 7).

Like Crane and Yabaki, Sister Genevieve Loo highlights the intense pressures put on students and teachers in preparation for national examinations. She points out that "an awful lot of rote learning and drilling" occur in these classrooms which do not prepare students to think for themselves when they reach senior level (T21: 9-10). What Sister Loo is raising

here is something she personally observed when she spent ten years teaching in a rural Indigenous Fijian boarding school. It is her view that junior secondary schools prepare students to be rote learners rather than independent thinkers mainly because of the demands placed on teachers and students by an exam-oriented educational system. Similarly, Dr Vijay Naidu reiterates what Sister Loo is saying by maintaining that examinations encourage rote learning and are "a stumbling block for most people because it is very competitive" (T6: 14). Moreover, he argues that examinations make people competitive and if one does not have a spirit of competitiveness, one cannot succeed in school.

A different approach is taken by Una Nabobo who raises an issue to do with assessment procedures. She talks about the contradiction between what is required in exams and the socialisation patterns of the child. As Nabobo puts it, "Not only are we exam-oriented but I think the assessment procedures encourage people to speak their minds, to express themselves. Now the socialisation of the Fijian child is not like that. The assessment procedures are written and the Fijian is a very oral person" (T45: 3).

A similar perspective is provided by Susana Tuisawau who points out that Indigenous Fijians do better at the practical application level but unfortunately, they are assessed on their knowledge of theory. She notes, "They're more field oriented but the kind of assessment that we do is...paper assessment" (T30: 11). She adds:

> I think we need competency-based assessments, criterion-referenced rather than norm-referenced....I think that would bring out a lot more because...[the Fijians are] more practically oriented. They are not people who would carry this much information in their head and then regurgitate it....[They] are quite often concrete learners. I notice that Fijians would like to see where something is applied and we learn by doing, experientially and then we learn. (T30: 11-12)

Tamarisi Yabaki would like to see internal assessment as an alternative to examinations but raises some practical issues associated with such a move. As she explains it, "We can have other alternatives but the problems are resources, finance and administering the internal assessment" (T38: 6).

A few informants have seen the need to abolish two national examinations, one conducted at the end of year six and the other at the end of year eight. Krishna Datt describes these exams as "just nonsense" and Ted Young describes them as "two of the most destructive exams". Similarly, Hari Ram supports the abolition of the two exams but he recommends the use of tests in the primary school purely for diagnostic purposes, and not for the purpose of elimination. As he puts it, the main role of tests "at the lower levels is to find out how effectively one is teaching and to adjust teaching styles in accordance with the test

results". However, Ram is of the view that exams at the higher levels are necessary "where access to the next level of education is not possible for all" (T5: 8-9).

In sum then, the emphasis on national examinations drives the way the curriculum is taught. In many cases, as many informants point out, rote learning in classrooms has become the norm as a response to the focus the educational system places on exams. There is recognition that more practical-based assessment and more internal assessment might better accommodate the learning styles of Indigenous Fijians. However, the problems associated with resources and administration have been raised. The point has also been made that school learning is perceived to be the most important kind of learning and therefore success in exams has reconceptualised the way Indigenous Fijians now view themselves and others. Unfortunately, when a person fails national exams, this is perceived by society as that person having failed in everything. The feeling seems to be that exams are there to stay because the educational system does not have the scope nor the resources to implement a different assessment system.

Language of Instruction

There are many contradictions in informants' views of English as the language of the curriculum, of schooling and of learning. On the one hand, there is the view that English should not be the language of instruction because it disadvantages Indigenous Fijians, particularly out in rural areas. On the other hand, many informants believe that English should remain the language of schooling as it is the international language of communication and hence, students have a head start when they learn in English. As well, there is the view that since teaching in the vernacular is impractical in multi-ethnic Fiji, English should be retained as the medium of instruction.

One informant who argues that those Indigenous Fijians who do not have a good grasp of the English language are disadvantaged when teaching is done in English is Reverend Dr Ilaitia Tuwere. He argues that English is an "intellectual language" and has "tremendous power in shaping our children, shaping their ideas". He maintains that "the Fijian who hasn't got the capacity to grasp the English language...will be greatly disadvantaged in school and society" since "English is the ruling language in the judiciary, the law, commerce, information, education" (T12: 8).

Adi Kuini Speed agrees with Reverend Tuwere but argues that this should not be used as a justification to explain failure because Indigenous Fijians are just as capable as students of other ethnic groups in attaining good academic results. She notes, "English is a foreign

language. It's loaded with concepts that are foreign to our tradition and culture and we are measured by those foreign concepts and they are foreign expectations made on our performance and our thinking". However, she believes that " while there may be some basic problem to do with a foreign language...we shouldn't use it as a justification because...Fijians have the capacity...to adapt to any kind of conceptual demand...that's why we've produced people with PhDs" (T32: 12).

Some informants hold the view that people in Fiji have no choice but to have English as the medium of instruction. For example, Sefanaia Koroi maintains that judgements on school success or failure are based on how well one knows the English language and how well one learns through the medium of language. Because Fiji has "adopted a Westernised type of curriculum and that the key to success lies in the language that everybody has to speak which is English", the people "have no choice because that is the language of the curriculum, that is the language of the books" (T9: 10).

Similarly, Filipe Tuisawau argues that teaching in the English language disadvantages Indigenous Fijians because it's "a second language for Fijians who speak Fijian all the time" but he makes the case that we have no choice as it is the medium of communication in Fiji and internationally. At the same time, Tuisawau maintains that "the Fijian language should not be undervalued". He points out that in "emphasising the English language, there is the danger...from the perspective of the children...that they might think the language, the Fijian language, is inferior" (T46: 2).

Una Nabobo points to the disadvantages that Indigenous Fijians who make up "the rural majority" face, particularly where English is taken to pass exams but yet is not spoken in the home as "they don't have the reason to be speaking English anyway". As well, she raises the dilemma that teaching in the vernacular does not seem a viable choice given the financial constraints and the fact that "English is something that you are made to do to pass school" (T45: 3).

On the other hand, Esther Williams argues that rural students should learn English from an early age so that they are not disadvantaged at secondary school: "English is the main means of communication so the earlier the start we get, the better". By contrast, Tamarisi Yabaki contends that teaching in the English language disadvantages Indigenous Fijians as it is not the first (dialect) or even second (standard Fijian) language that they have to master. She envisages a day when rural students can learn in their own dialect and sit exams written in their dialect:

In most rural schools, the child grows up with a dialect. In addition, he has to master the Bauan which is the standard Fijian language. After the Fijian language, he has to tackle what I call 'the third language' which is English. It's only in classes one and two that they are taught Fijian and then they go on to English. I would like to see a day where English is not compulsory, where Fijian is the medium of instruction for most of our rural kids. I would have them sitting exams in Fijian, maybe their own dialect. So I think that language is one of the factors [contributing to underachievement]. (T38: 5)

Yet Ameen Sahu Khan emphasises the point that English is necessary as the language of instruction if it continues to remain the official language of communication. Moreover, Khan argues that while the vernacular may be used, what should be borne in mind is the point that if students are to do well academically, they "would need English and they will need to be exposed to that language" (T58: 4)

In sum, note the ambivalence about the place of English in schooling. Many informants believe that having English as the language of instruction disadvantages Indigenous Fijians who do not have a good grasp of the English language. This has implications particularly for those in rural areas. And yet many other informants believe that there is no option, that English needs to remain the language of instruction. The chief reason for this is that English is the official language of the curriculum, "of the books" as Sefanaia Koroi put it and of communication, both in Fiji and internationally. The suggestion that the Fijian language become the language of instruction has been raised. However, this has been vetoed for the reasons given above, as well as the point that there are too many problematics associated with such a major change, in terms of resources, both human (teachers) and financial.

Interpretations

What conclusions can be drawn from the data on explanations for racial inequalities in formal schooling? What is the significance of these data? What insights can be gleaned regarding the nature of Indigenous Fijian underachievement? These are pertinent questions that need addressing.

The Parallelist Theory of Racial Inequalities in Schooling

One of the significant insights arising from the data analysis is that of complexity. There are no easy answers to the causes of underachievement at school. Issues of historical past, class, gender, ethnicity, location and cultural orientations all interweave with social,

cultural and political realities to produce a mosaic of complexity. The 'parallelist position' theory introduced in Chapter Two (See again Figure A in Chapter Two) to explain difference in school learning is, therefore, very useful here. As McCarthy (1990) has argued, inequalities in schooling are produced by constant interactions of race, gender and class dynamics in the economic, political and cultural spheres.

In light of the data, I would like to add another category to each axis so that there are four dynamics, namely race, gender, class and location and four spheres, namely economic, cultural, political and historical. The reason for this is that the issues of space (rurality) and colonial history are specifically pertinent to education in Fiji. For the Fiji context, then, the Parallelist Model would be represented in this manner:

	Historical	Economic	Cultural	Political
Class				
Race				
Gender				
Location ·				

Figure C: The Revised Parallelist Position Theory to Explain Underachievement in Fiji

When I first introduced the parallelist model in Chapter Two, six categories of analysis were used to explain racial inequalities in schooling - the dynamics of class, race and gender in the economic, cultural and political spheres. What I have added to McCarthy's model are the categories of location and history.

The dynamics of class, race, gender and location are the characteristics specific to the learner which would interact among each other and with historical, economic, cultural and political forces to determine his or her performance in the school system. From the evidence of the data provided, the interactions of factors particular to the learner, such as home background, ethnicity and place of residence, and neocolonial educational structures, such as curriculum and assessment, have demonstrated the complexities and contradictions associated with the issues of achievement and underachievement. To take another example, the psychological models used to explain Indigenous Fijian achievement have demonstrated the complexities involved in this interaction between race, gender and the colonial experience. The attitudes of Indigenous Fijians, in particular, have been singled out by many informants as a significant psychological factor. Either as a cultural effect or an outcome of the colonial experience, when one adds the "dependency syndrome" or "handout mentality"

that is said to be characteristic of Indigenous Fijians, we can see how complex underachievement is. The contradictions associated with this are highlighted when one adds the dimensions of class and location and sees them interact with social, cultural and political forces.

The point I would like to emphasise here relates to the complexities and contradictions associated with Indigenous Fijian underachievement. There is no single, mono-causal explanation that would adequately explain this. On the contrary, the picture emerging is one of complexity, where the informants themselves have admitted that they see the whole issue of underachievement as a very complex one indeed. Taken on their own, social-cultural deficit models, psychological explanations and the negative impact of neocolonial schooling structures present only partial and incomplete stories. However when treated as a whole, they present a holistic, non-essentialising explanation that is more appropriate (Parekh, 1986; McCarthy, 1990) (See Chapter Two).

Singular explanations, therefore, represent different pieces of the jigsaw puzzle called Indigenous Fijian underachievement. When taken on their own, they have limited explanatory value, but when fitted together, they represent a comprehensive and meaningful whole. Figure D provides a comprehensive picture of how the external factors in the social, economic, political and historical spheres would interact with the personal and individual characteristics of the learner, that is his/her race, class, gender and location/space, to determine the kind of school experiences he/she would have.
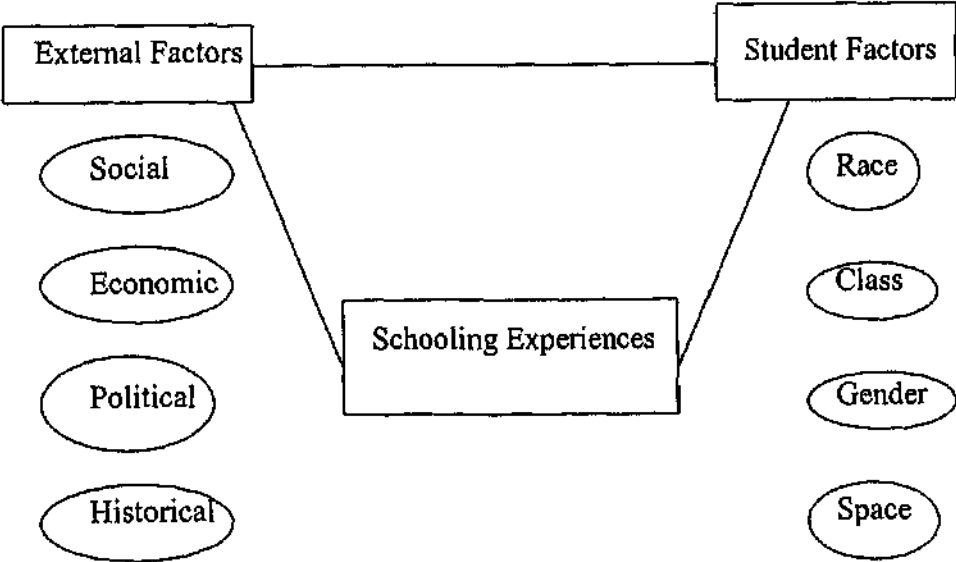
Figure D: Using the Parallelist Model to Explain Racial Inequalities in Schooling in Fiji

In this model, socio-cultural, psychological and historical structural factors all play a part in producing racial inequalities in schooling.

I now turn to a discussion of some of the important issues that have emanated from the data. I first elaborate on the concepts of space and history as important categories of analysis in the Fiji context. The notion of symbolic violence is particularly examined. I then discuss the parallels in the data regarding the factors that contribute to school success of Indigenous Fijians and 'others'. Moreover, I identify key silences in the data, such as the lack of discussion on the disadvantages faced by non-Fijians minority groups. The issue of gender is also underemphasised by the informants. Finally, I discuss some of the unresolved issues that the data have not cleared.

Space as an Analytic Category

The dimension of space is significant because the bulk of Indigenous Fijians are dispersed in rural locations compared to non-indigenous communities who are more urban-centred. From an analysis of the 1986 Census Report, 67.3% of the Indigenous Fijian population was rural-based. As a result of the many disadvantages associated with distance and isolation from urban nerve-centres, Indigenous Fijians in the rural area do not perform well at school. Of course, the notion of rural disadvantage is relative to what is defined as urban advantage. Rural disadvantage is a reality that interacts in complex ways with the dimensions of race, gender and class. As well, all these would further interact with historical, social, cultural and political forces in just as complex and multi-faceted ways. The issue of rurality is a very real and troublesome one because we are looking at rurality against economic models of development and the constraints of the capitalist market economy.

Demographically, therefore, rural disadvantage was identified by my informants as a major challenge to the academic achievement of Indigenous Fijians. The further away the student lives from urban centres (with the assumed availability of educational resources, better teachers and schools), the greater disadvantage he/she faces. The low socio-economic status of rural Indigenous Fijians, in particular, has been pin-pointed as one of the major contributors to poor performance in schools. The informants have noted that many rural Indigenous Fijians are materially poor because they have not attained an education that would enable them to migrate to those urban areas where they would earn a living.

There are not many opportunities for economic enterprise in the rural areas. Indigenous Fijian rural dwellers are basically subsistence workers, growing enough for daily sustenance and selling whatever is excess in order to buy the extras that would make life a bit

more comfortable, as well as pay for educational necessities. The poor economic base of rural areas, coupled with the general lack of education of rural dwellers, then, are two factors that have been identified as contributing to the poor performance of rural Indigenous Fijians in rural Fiji.

In any discussion of the condition of spatial disadvantage, the dimension of place should also come into play. The reason the bulk of Indigenous Fijians are dispersed in rural localities is because of their close affinity to their land. Their village is where their place in the world is, it is where they physically and spiritually belong. Many of them are born there and that is where they will be buried. Since success in life is increasingly redefined in terms of succeeding at school, many Indigenous Fijian families are uprooting from traditional to modern spaces. It is the perception that a good life can be obtained from getting a job that has spurred the movement into the urban centres. So those who remain in the rural area do so because of the strong sense of place associated with land ownership.

It is timely that we reconsider space and spatiality as a new way of viewing social realities (Gregory, 1994; Soja, 1996).The category of space (and place) should be viewed as seriously as the normative categories of race, class and gender in discussions of social realities. As Sakeasi Butadroka has put it, how can Indigenous Fijian compete with other ethnic groups when "most of the Fijian parents are still in the rural area without any provision for electricity, for medical services, for roading, and for good housing" (T36: 5). Or as the Minister for Education, Taufa Vakatale has argued, "Rural Fijians are disadvantaged".

The important issue raised by informants is how can rural communities be empowered through education, decision-making processes, cultural emphasis and institutional changes, to name a few, to ensure their access and participation in national life? The data consistently identified spatial disadvantage as problematising and complicating the traditional notions of class, race and gender. And yet, there is enough tension in the data to suggest that rurality need not necessarily be considered in a negative light. There are enough indications that there are positives in the rural environment that can be harnessed, affirmed and developed. For instance, there are references to the stress that middle-class Fijians undergo in urban centres that are associated with a materialistic kind of lifestyle. The quest for a house (with high mortgages) and the materiality that go with this ownership, such as furniture, bank loans (with high interest rates) and the stress of keeping up with bills associated with urban living, have been alluded to by several of the informants. As Rainima Meo has put it,

What do you mean by quality of life? Suppose somebody who has reached form six...has gone to the village...they don't pay an electricity bill, they don't pay any bills

at the end of the day....Compare this to a better educated person...with a car, a fridge, a washing machine and at the end, you scratch your head. Did you pay this? You pay for everything and what does this bring you? Only hypertension and stress. (T41: 11)

As well, there is the suggested romanticism associated with rural living that may not be borne out by rural dwellers. For example, the notion that there are no bills, etc, in the rural areas might be counterpoised by the subsistence economy that would make life such a struggle for many rural dwellers. A top ranking educationist at USP has argued that "Fijians spend a lot of time in rural areas....Women in rural areas are spending a lot of their energy trying to survive, getting the daily sustenance which most urban people are spared from" (T1: 7).

In any case, the emergence of rurality as a prominent feature in the discussion on underachievement and AA adds complexity because it is clearly not an issue of race, class or gender. Rather, rurality cuts across these arenas so that there is ambiguity and contradiction in the overall discussion. In the Fiji context, description and analysis of any social phenomenon should not only include the categories of race, class and gender but should also include a fourth category, that of spatiality or rurality.

History as an Analytic Category

The discussion in the third section of this chapter - historical structural models - highlights an important category that is missing from discussions on racial inequalities—that of history. The impact of a colonial past—socially, culturally, politically, psychologically, ideologically—has been discussed in great depth in Chapter Three. The point has been made that educational structures in place, at this historical juncture, are neocolonial in form and content.

It is interesting to look at educational structures as a possible explanation for underachievement because it takes the emphasis away from the underachiever. The focus of examination moves from the student to the school to see whether structures, such as the curriculum, school organisation, pedagogies and assessment, might disadvantage categories of students. This argument holds the structures responsible because they disadvantage those students whose culture, language, styles of learning, knowledge systems and epistemologies are different from those desired by, and zealously guarded by, the school system.

I would like to revisit the literature review carried out in Chapter Two, where I foregrounded the conceptual resources provided by postcolonial theory that were pertinent to this thesis. The hegemonic neocolonial educational structures in play at this historical

juncture demonstrate how powerfully colonial metaphysical and epistemological 'realities' are embraced by the ex-coloniser. As Raymond Williams (1976) has described it, educational institutions are the main agencies for the transmission of an effective dominant culture. In the case of Fiji, the dominant culture is the 'Western' culture that became institutionalised during the period of colonial rule. The British-based system of 'knowing' and 'doing' have so totally and deeply saturated 'the consciousness' of Fijian society that the educational structures inherited from a colonial past have continued in hegemonic forms. And as Michael Apple (1979: 6) has emphasised, schools not only process knowledge, they also process people by acting as "agents of cultural and ideological hegemony".

Educational and political leaders in Fiji need to reflect on the answers to the questions that Apple (1979) has asked regarding the supposedly "legitimate knowledge" that is taught in schools. For instance, whose knowledge is it? Who selected what is taught in the curriculum? Why is it organised and taught in this way? What knowledge is made available and just as importantly, unavailable to students? Much local and national reflection needs to be undertaken to examine closely the curriculum, pedagogies, school organisation and assessment that are in play at this historical juncture, almost four decades after political decolonisation occurred.

Thomas and Postlethwaite (1984) also asked some questions that would assist leaders in thinking about the continuing impact of colonialism on educational institutions. For instance, in terms of the purpose or role of schooling, they asked who determined this, from what culture is this derived and whose welfare is served by the purpose of schooling. In terms of the curriculum and instructional methodology, they asked Who determines the nature of the curriculum and teaching methods? What are the cultural sources of the curriculum and teaching methods? Whose welfare is served by the curriculum? These are important questions that need deep examination otherwise colonial hegemony will continue to hold power in supposedly politically decolonised nations.

One thing is clear. Educational structures in play, even at this historical juncture, have not been decided by 'local' people. The curriculum and pedagogies or "teaching methods", as Thomas and Postlethwaite (1984) have described it, are definitely 'Western' in origin and content and have not been designed to serve the welfare of the people. During colonial rule, they served the purposes and welfare of Western people in Fiji. They were certainly not designed to serve the welfare of 'locals'.

Symbolic Violence

I would like to draw your attention to the notion of "symbolic violence" that I introduced in Chapter Two. Sultana (1993), drawing on the work of Pierre Bourdiue, a French philosopher and sociologist, emphasises the point that schools that do not value the "realities, language and dignities" of their students are guilty of "symbolic violence". As Sultana points out, these schools are violent and powerful in their labelling of who a school failure is, and it is the experiences they provide for students who are 'different' that marginalise and exclude. So powerful indeed are the people who do the labelling that those students who are labelled failures internalise this attitude and are seriously marked for life.

Bourdieu and Passeron (1977: 18) define symbolic violence as "any power that succeeds in imposing meanings and in imposing them as legitimate in disguising the relations of power which are at the root of its force, adds its own force, that is a specifically symbolic force, to those relations of power. It is the "violence which is exercised upon a social agent with his or her complicity" (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 167-168). Symbolic violence, then, is the power to dominate the disadvantaged groups by imposing "instruments of knowledge and (sic) expression of social reality...which are arbitrary but unrecognised as such" (Bourdieu, 1977: 115). Bourdieu's work in education has been to describe and account for the objective processes which continually exclude underprivileged children (Harker, 1984). Schooling becomes the monopoly of those classes capable of transmitting through the family the instruments ('habitus') necessary for the reception of the message of schooling. As Bourdieu has put it:

> The culture of the elite is so near to that of that school that children from the lower middle class...can acquire only with great effort something which is *given* to the children of the cultivated classes - style, taste, wit - in short, those attitudes and aptitudes which seem natural in members of the cultivated classes and naturally expected of them precisely because (in the ethnological sense) they are the *culture* of that class. (Bourdieu, 1974: 39)

I argue that the neocolonial educational structures that are an inheritance from British colonisation with their alien ideologies, epistemological bases and orientations represent a form of symbolic violence. The curriculum, pedagogical methods and assessment do not value the cultural knowledge, expertise and wisdoms that Indigenous Fijian students, and indeed students of other ethnic groups, bring to the classroom. The fact that English is the language of schooling, and the tokenism given to the teaching of the vernaculars, is testament to the dominating presence of colonial authority and power. Because Fiji has continued with Western models of assessment, those who do not pass the national examinations carry the

label of 'failure' in education. As Professor Konai Thaman has noted, the tragic outcome of this labelling is when this is carried over to mean a failure in all aspects of life.

The curriculum, assessment and pedagogies that are in play in this postcolonial moment are more or less a continuation of what was prior to 1970, that supposedly magical moment when Fiji became a politically independent nation-state. The curriculum and the ensuing pedagogies and assessment system are still 'Western' in focus and emphasis and are, in many cases, considered too foreign, inappropriate, irrelevant and impractical. There has been some measure of localisation of the content to include material on Fiji and the South Pacific. However, the focus is still very academic, theoretical and fashioned after offerings in the New Zealand and Australian curriculum.

This raises the question of social and cultural relevance and appropriateness. The undervaluing of Indigenous Fijian language, knowledge and culture has been picked up by some of the informants and is something I would like to discuss in detail in Chapter Seven. As well, alternatives to the current educational system will be pursued later. I will, therefore, pick up on this argument about hegemonic, neocolonial educational structures in greater depth in Chapter Seven. The important question to ask is what would be an appropriate hybridised curriculum that would be relevant in the Fiji context. This question will be addressed in the final chapter where I will explore a vision of the postcolonial curriculum.

Success in Schooling

Given that educational structures generally do not serve the welfare of decolonised nations, how and why do Indigenous Fijians, and 'other' ethnic groups in Fiji, succeed in schools? The data seem to show that school success is contingent on several factors. First, there is an element of struggle, whether the student is Indigenous Fijian or not. The desire to succeed in order to move out of poverty is one such motivator. Second, having parents who value what a 'good' education brings, and no matter how poor, will strive to provide a facilitative environment for the educational success of their children is seen as another element that leads to success in school. Having this home support was cited as an important contributing factor for both Indigenous Fijian and Indo-Fijian. Third, 'significant others', in the form of 'good' teachers or role models of the same 'race', were reported to contribute to the success of Indigenous Fijians in school.

An element that has been highlighted by several informants is the closer the home culture of the student is to the culture of the school, the more advantaged that person is. Children who count as middle-class are included in this category, as are those who live in

urban spaces compared to their rural counterparts. Students who have educated parents and speak English in the home are perceived to have an advantage over those students who come from low socio-economic backgrounds, particularly if they live in rural spaces.

The categories of location/place and social class have more salience in explaining school success and failure than the overrated category of race. As consistently emphasised in the data, the category of space (rurality) has intersected the normative analytical categories of race, class and gender and as such, to explaining Indigenous Fijian underachievement.

Silences in the Data

Another point I would like to expand on is the silence amongst the informants regarding the underachievement of non-indigenous children. With so much emphasis on Indigenous Fijian failure, one does not hear about the large numbers of non-indigenous students who do not do too well at school. As well, one hears very little regarding the reasons why this category of students also faces the problem of inequalities in school inputs and outcomes. What are the reasons for this silence? Is it because there is too much rhetoric about indigenous failure that this drowns the 'others' out? Why is there such an emphasis on Indigenous Fijian underachievement to the exclusion of all other ethnic groups? In fact, why is there a continuation of the notion of 'othering' that was the mainstay of the process of colonialism? Is this because of Indigenous Fijian political hegemony that was a result of the transfer of political power from the colonial 'masters' to Indigenous Fijians? My intention is to explore many of these questions in Chapter Six.

There is also a silence in the data regarding gender. Only several female informants have mentioned gender issues. Is this because the underrepresentation of females in education and employment is seen as acceptable? Is this because male dominance is perceived the hegemonically accepted practice? Is the silence in the data regarding gender issues a result of the lack of available comparative statistics on the same? It is difficult to decide what the reason is for this silence. Whatever the reason, the 'fact' is that Indigenous Fijian women are heavily underrepresented in scholarship awards and consequently in university admissions, and in middle to top positions in the private and public sectors. Local and national leaders will need to decide whether this situation should be allowed to continue or whether gender-based AA should become part of race-based AA. Or indeed, whether gender-based AA is necessary.

Other Unresolved Themes

The analysis has raised more questions than there are answers. These questions relate to the issue of comparisons, the status of current educational structures, the place of vocational and technical education and the cultural orientations of Indigenous Fijians juxtaposed against schooling and so forth. Is it appropriate to compare the educational performance of Indigenous Fijians with those of other ethnic groups? Does the Indigenous Fijian community need to change its cultural attitudes and orientations to provide more success stories? Even if Indigenous Fijians changed their ways and attitudes and there was an upsurge in their academic performance, is the economy able to provide them with gainful employment? Should there not also be a restructuring of educational structures to ensure that Indigenous Fijians, and indeed students of all ethnicities in Fiji, are not disadvantaged by the structures? Can vocational education take an equal place with academic education in people's perceptions and in practice?

Other unresolved questions relate to the issues of employment, the place of indigenous knowledge and cultural value systems and the impact of globalisation. With the limited resources available to a small nation state like Fiji, can it not have a vision where there are alternative paths for students to take so that there is not such a high rate of unemployment and the concomitant increase in crime perpetrated mainly by Indigenous Fijians? Can the curriculum value Indigenous Fijian cultural and knowledge systems? Can all community knowledges and cultural value systems be accommodated in the curriculum? With regard to the explanations cited for the underachievement of Indigenous Fijians in formal schooling, should not the current policies of the government, AA policies included, be re-examined and re-directed if need be? And given the insidious and blatant impact of the process of globalisation, where everything is ruled and judged according to the global market economy, what is the status of all these questions? These are pertinent questions that need to be addressed by Indigenous Fijian leaders in all walks of life and other ethnic communities in Fiji. I will certainly attempt to answer some of these questions in the following chapters.

Summary

This chapter has documented and thematised informants' commentaries on the underachievement of Indigenous Fijians in formal schooling. I have argued from a parallelist position which recognises the interplay between the dynamics of race, class, gender and location working with each other and amongst social, cultural, political and historical forces to explain racial inequalities in education. Note here the addition of two additional

categories of analysis: those of space and history. I have argued against deterministic, essentialistic, mono-causal explanations because on their own, they hold very little salience. However, when one puts all these explanations together as in a jigsaw puzzle, the pieces interweave into a multi-faceted, multi-layered, comprehensive, holistic and complex explanation that begins to make meaningful sense of the issue of Indigenous Fijian underachievement in schooling.

In terms of socio-cultural deficit models, some deficit in students' physical, social and cultural environment was emphasised as the main contributing factor for Indigenous Fijian underachievement. In particular, the disadvantages associated with location and space from urban nerve-centres, the home background of students, their socio-economic status, the cultural orientations of their parents and school variables, such as resource availability, time management and teacher quality, have been identified as significant socio-cultural factors that impact on Indigenous Fijian school performance.

The factors that were reported to have a significant psychological impact on Indigenous Fijian educational performance were parental attitudes (deemed to be inadequate, particularly amongst the poorly educated) and living away from home. Since a predominant number of secondary-aged Indigenous Fijian students are either in boarding institutions or live with relatives in urban centres, this has been identified as a major psychological factor that impacted on school performance in negative ways. The "overchurching" of Indigenous Fijian parents in terms of their time and funds, as Pratap Chand describes it, demonstrates the psychological hold that the Methodist Church continues to have over a significant number of its congregation.

Moreover, I outlined some reasons for the success of students in schooling, irrespective of ethnicity. The common themes emerging for school success of both Indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians (measured in terms of passing national and university examinations) are the element of struggle (to get out of a negative situation such as poverty or the indentured inheritance, i.e., cane farmers), a supportive home background, conducive school conditions, such as 'good' teachers and/or the role models provided by "significant others", as Professor Tupeni Baba puts it. Moreover, as an informant has described it, "there is no substitute for hard work".

Racial inequalities in education, therefore, need to be seen as complex, contingent and historically specific. As I suggested in Chapter One, the myth of Indigenous Fijian underachievement needs to be dismantled in the same way as misperceptions abound of Indo-Fijians and Chinese students being high school achievers. In the next chapter, I will

examine the data on AA policies to see whether they are an appropriate historical response to the issue of racial inequalities. I will particularly take a look at the way the policies were conceptualised and implemented. As well, the positive, negative and unintended outcomes of the policies will be assessed.

CHAPTER SIX

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICIES: CONCEPTUALISATION, IMPLEMENTATION, OUTCOMES

In the last chapter, I explicated the informants' representations of the underachievement of Indigenous Fijians. Racial inequalities in schooling were represented in terms of socio-cultural deficit, psychological-deficit and historical structural models. An important finding of the previous chapter is that taken singly, these explanations are guilty of the "fallacy of the single factor", as Parekh (1986) has put it, or of "essentialism" in McCarthy's (1990) terms.

In this chapter, I examine the interview data in terms of perspectives provided by the informants regarding the conceptualisation, implementation and outcomes of AA policies in education in Fiji. As explained in the latter part of Chapter Three, the two policies that remain in place at this historical juncture are the allocation of half of the government scholarships in any given year to Indigenous Fijians students (begun in the mid-1970s and administered by the Public Service Commission) and the annual allocation of $3.5 million, which increased to $4.7 million in 1994 (established in 1984 and administered by the Fijian Education Unit of the Ministry of Fijian Affairs), to specifically assist Indigenous Fijians in education. It is the conceptualisation and implementation of the latter that has attracted substantial criticism from the informants.

Conceptualisation of AA Policies in Education

In analysing any public policy, it is important to understand the context surrounding the development of that policy, who the main stakeholders were, who made the policy, whose values are served and in whose interests the policy was made. As well, it is important to understand the processes before, during and after the production of the policy. Just as importantly, it is critical to have an understanding of how power is exercised in the policy decision. It is clear that policy is both process and product so, in order to understand a policy, we need to understand the contexts of policy text production, of practice, of outcomes and of political strategy. I now focus particularly on the context of policy text production in terms of informant understanding of rationales that underpinned the conceptualisation of AA policies in education and the use of 'race' as a category to make comparisons.

Rationales for AA

The rationales for the conceptualisation of race-based AA in Fiji are explained by Dr Ahmed Ali, an Indo-Fijian who was Minister for Education from 1982-1986. As well as holding a senior academic position at USP, he has served in the diplomatic Corps as Ambassador to Malaysia and Consul General in Auckland. Dr Ali is currently the Director of the Policy Analysis Unit in the Prime Minister's Office. He points out that on taking up the minister's position:

> It was my task to help improve Fijian education because...there was a great concern over [their] performance....They were significantly absent from important areas of our life, particularly our economy as well as our social life. So there was this tremendous disparity. The task was in one sense to improve the performance of the Fijians in examinations...and also to somehow bridge the tremendous gap that existed in the teaching profession because many of the Fijian schools were staffed by Fijian teachers....So we had to work towards uplifting the whole performance, and improving the whole structure of Fijian schools. (T2: 1-2)

Here, Ali highlights the underrepresentation of Indigenous Fijians in tertiary education and employment in positions of responsibility in the private and public sectors of the economy, an issue of national concern in the 1970s and the early 1980s. His mandate was to improve the education of Indigenous Fijians at the school level. The quality of teachers and staffing of rural Indigenous Fijian schools in particular, and the quality of Indigenous Fijian schools in general, were some of the areas that Ali felt needed improvement.

Ali argues that given this tremendous disparity between Indigenous Fijians and others in social and economic life to the detriment of the Indigenous Fijians, AA is essential, not only because of its "moral imperative", but also because it was a "pragmatic" social policy. He views AA as "an insurance policy" against social strife, particularly in a society which has two major ethnic groups, one being the Indigenous Fijians who need special assistance, and the other a migrant community who is perceived to be ahead in education and in terms of economic advancement. He states:

> There is this moral imperative and there is also the pragmatic reality....It's a pragmatic policy. When you get a gap between two communities, particularly in an ethnically fragmented society, what happens then is that you get dissatisfaction and at the end of the day, you have collision so we used this remedy. Morally it was important to bring up the Fijians. Secondly, it was important because in one sense by giving the extra, you're taking out an insurance policy for the other communities. I think that was essential. (T2: 3)

The specific "remedy" or policy that Ali is referring to here is the $3.5 million annual fund that was established in 1984 to look after the educational interests of Indigenous Fijians. In our interview, Ali explained that when he became Minister for Education in 1982, there was another AA policy already in place, namely the allocation of 50% of all government scholarships to Indigenous Fijians. On seeing the poor quality of education in predominantly Fijian schools in terms of substandard facilities and equipment and inadequately trained teachers, he felt that additional assistance was needed beyond government scholarships to help redress the inequalities that existed in the education of Indigenous Fijians. The main assumption, therefore, behind the development of the policy of an annual fund of $3.5 million to assist Indigenous Fijian students in education was that the problem, identified specifically as resource lack in terms of school physical infrastructure and educational resources, could be addressed or resolved by pouring in more money. As Ali notes,

> I realised that Fijian schools were tremendously disadvantaged....[O]ne of the factors affecting Fijian performance was...a tremendous lack of resources and we had to do something about equalising....You can't have a society where there are wide gaps and the gaps keep widening. The Americans were forced to resort to affirmative action - they're evaluating it now. The Malaysians did it to bring up the Bumiputras and we've done it. So we had to find a way and you know 50-50 was not adequate. (T2: 2)

Ali adds

> You couldn't leave the situation be because you were then headed for a collision course socially as well as in political terms. So you had to rectify it but I think that twelve years is too short a time for us to say now, okay throw it out. You know if you look at a country like Malaysia which had an upheaval in 1969 and even more rigorously has implemented affirmative action and that's 27 years now. It's still doing it to a large extent because there's a generation gap and a generation gap is about 30-35 years. So it will take a while....(T2: 4)

Here, Ali is rationalising the creation of the special fund. He contends that extra financial resources were needed to counter the physical and educational resource problems in Indigenous Fijian schools. He sees the main positive social effect of this policy, therefore, as the prevention of a collision course, both socially and politically, between the educationally disadvantaged Indigenous Fijian community and the non-indigenous community. Using the examples of America and Malaysia where AA is still being played out, he argues that twelve years is too short a time to judge the effectiveness

of the special fund policy and that at least 30 years is needed for AA to make its impact felt.

Others share this sentiment regarding the timing and duration of the Special Fund of $3.5 million. For instance, Winston Thompson, a retired Permanent Secretary of the Public Service Commission who has also served in various very senior positions in other government departments, as well as Ambassador to the United Nations in New York, and is now currently the Managing Director of Telecom Fiji, has this to say about the time frame of the 3.5 million fund policy:

> It's a total misconception. I think what was trying to be addressed by the affirmative action isn't something that was going to go away in a short time. It was a fundamental problem of the system and the $3.5 million was really not enough to address it, but it was a major input at the time, and to expect it to go for only five years was really totally unrealistic. It was something that would have had to be put in train and go on for a long time. (T17: 6)

Thompson here refers to the initial time frame of five years in the initial phase of policy formulation. He, like Dr Ali, recognises that AA policies were not going to have an impact in a short period of time and that a much longer period is needed for AA to work as intended. Thompson contends that putting a time frame, and a short one at that, on AA was ill-conceived and unrealistic.

Sefanaia Koroi is a proponent of AA. He was Head of the Fijian Education Unit, which is the implementing arm of the Ministry of Fijian Affairs for the $3.5 million annual fund, from 1988-1991. Koroi argues that without AA, the educational gap would have been wider than what it is today. And like Ali, Koroi maintains that Fiji would have experienced political instability and upheaval, what he describes as "turbulent times politically in this country" (T9: 6).

A senior Indigenous Fijian community representative at USP supports the principle of AA to assist a disadvantaged group in society. She argues that Indigenous Fijians are "Johnny come lates" to formal schooling and therefore the government is "morally obliged to look at Johnny come lates into a system or a minority...in terms of numbers or a minority in terms of opportunities" (T11: 4).

There are those informants who support AA but feel that the rights of other people should not be compromised. Evidence of this is provided by Hari Ram who points out that it would be in everyone's interest "if this gap in the educational attainment of Indigenous Fijians and others was...reduced". Arguing for the reduction in the educational gap and a better representation of Indigenous Fijians "in the professions

where they're conspicuously absent like engineering, law, medicine, etc, there will be less resentment between the races and there would be better prospects for harmony and cooperation". He points out that "what needs to be done when any special measures, particularly measures aimed at helping a particular group are introduced, is to make sure that the measures are working and...do not take away the rights of other people who have access to education" (T5: 4-5).

Here, Ram highlights several important aspects of AA. First, that a disadvantaged group who happen to comprise the Indigenous people of Fiji, needs to be assisted so that they do not feel resentful about their lack of representation and participation in the professions, by implication in education, and by extension in positions of responsibility in the public and private sectors of the economy. Like Dr Ali and others, Ram also highlights the need to maintain harmony and cooperation within ethnic communities but he also makes two other points: first, that the policies should be made to work and second, they should not compromise the rights of others in accessing education.

Adi Kuini Speed also believes that AA is necessary because of the social and economic disadvantage faced by Indigenous Fijians but she argues it is timely that this is brought to an end because of the assumption behind AA that Fijians are lacking intellectually. Adi Kuini supports AA because "Fijians are so backward socially and economically...and there is indeed a genuine need to close the gap in numbers of academically trained Fijians" (T 32: 2). However, Adi Kuini is of the view that AA should not be continued, first, because of the inherent assumption of intellectual deficit or lack on the part of Indigenous Fijians and, second, because of the lack of independence that comes from the spoon feeding that is a characteristic of AA. As she has put it, AA affects "the whole ability or capacity of the whole community to use its initiative in fending for each other in terms of education, socially, economically and otherwise" (T32: 6).

By contrast, on the policy of scholarship awards to tertiary institutions, Professor Konai Thaman, argues that AA is necessary but additional assistance should be given to those students who enter USP with lower marks in order to level the playing field. She states:

> I think affirmative action is necessary...but other things should be in place and you can't just give scholarships to students without assistance. The reason why I think there is a place for affirmative action [is the] fact that people don't start off equal. It's not a level playing field for everybody. (T4: 6)

Thus far, the informants have indicated that they all support AA to assist Indigenous Fijians, even if they had some reservations about race-based AA. But perhaps the most vocal criticism of AA has come from Professor Baba. Baba argues strongly against AA policies saying that at the political level, they are "absolutely immoral" because the policies are not based on consensus or approval from the bulk of the populace which would create "a lot of dissatisfaction". As well, he criticises AA policies because they "create inequalities among Fijians themselves". However, his most scathing criticism is that AA basically is a way of maintaining "political hegemony". As well, he notes that accountability has not been built into policy text production. He puts it this way:

> I think that...what is going on at the moment...is the maintenance of hegemony, the maintenance of power, the maintenance of a bureaucracy. It's the bureaucracy to maintain what's going on. There is no attempt to seriously look to whether this is effective or not. There is no attempt to be accountable either to the Fijians or to the whole community. I find that absolutely unsatisfactory. (T8: 10)

In the main, then, the bulk of informants from all six interview categories and different ethnicities support AA for Indigenous Fijians who they acknowledge as educationally and economically disadvantaged. The rationales for the conceptualisation of AA policies are to do with levelling the playing field, as Professor Konai Thaman has put it, or because it is a moral imperative, as Dr Ahmed Ali describes it, to assist disadvantaged groups in society who are underrepresented in higher education and employment. An additional rationale, identified by Dr Ali, Hari Ram, Sefanaia Koroi and others, for the development of AA is the prevention of civil strife or social disorder that would arise if social and economic inequalities that Indigenous Fijians faced were not dealt with. On the other hand, as Professor Baba has pointed out, AA has created inequalities amongst the supposed beneficiaries as well as created a bureaucracy intent on maintaining political hegemony. In the next section, I outline comments on the poor conceptualisation of AA policies, before examining perspectives on comparisons of educational performance upon which AA policies were based.

Poor Conceptualisation

Many informants hold the view that the AA policy of a special annual fund specifically for the education of Indigenous Fijians was poorly conceptualised. For instance, Hari Ram has made the observation that it is a flaw of this policy to assume that

pouring in more resources would bring about a significant difference in the educational gap between Indigenous Fijians and other ethnic groups.

Another perspective is provided by a senior Indigenous Fijian bureaucrat in Government. He argues that "there has not been an integrated approach" in the conceptualisation of the $3.5 million annual fund policy. He argues particularly that the focus on scholarships is shortsighted without a parallel strategy to change Indigenous Fijian attitudes towards the value of education. As he has described it, "There has not been enough thought given to affirmative action...there has not been an integrated approach to see whether this is really working and whether their actual targets have been accomplished". As well, he notes "I don't think much thought was given to actually looking at an integrated approach like involving the family from the very beginning and trying to change attitudes" (T31: 1).

He argues further that the development of a time frame and proper targeting were not part of the conceptualisation process as they should have been. He notes that AA is "open ended...and it's just pouring endless amounts of money [down the drain]". These criticisms have been made regarding the AA of allocating a special education fund for the education of Indigenous Fijians. By contrast, Winston Thompson argues that the Government had no choice because what was needed was to get as many qualified Indigenous Fijians through in the quickest possible time. By implication, this was to enable them to hold positions of responsibility. As Thompson describes it:

> The system had no option. The Government had no option but to start at the top levels because you had to try to pick up people to push through who would then give you the quickest turnaround in terms of somebody coming back with a qualification....It was a practical reality you had to deal with and ideally you might have wanted to do it in ways that would have addressed the whole thing. Government is a thing of compulsions, of priorities that you have to deal with them. You can't deal with it on a proper, logical, systematic, rational basis. You've got to deal with it as you find the situation. (T17: 6)

It is interesting that Thompson talks about governments working on "compulsions", on "priorities". He provides us with an understanding of why AA was conceptualised in terms of human resource development by starting at the top level. He acknowledges that the better approach would have been the systematic, logical and rational strategy that would 'ideally' be a holistic approach. However, as Thompson notes, the "practical reality" was to get as many Indigenous Fijians through the tertiary

system as quickly as possible, and scholarships awards by both the PSC and the MFA were perceived as the means to do this.

Comparisons in Educational Performance

The basis for AA policies has been the comparisons made between the educational performance of Indigenous Fijians and other ethnic groups. Based on these comparisons, specific government assistance was given to narrow the educational gap[21] that was perceived to be the problem inhibiting Indigenous Fijians from playing a more significant part in social and economic life. It is interesting that 'race' (not gender or class) should be seen as the category for comparison.

Informants are divided on whether a comparison should be the basis for AA. For instance, the Minister for Education, Taufa Vakatale is very supportive of comparisons being made between the educational performance of indigenous and other communities because this "encourages them to perform". As she puts it, "if we just compare Fijians and Fijians, they won't ever compete with the best so we must compare them with other races". She emphasises that Indigenous Fijians "must hurt to see that they are not doing so well" and must be made to feel "guilty as well because they get the same opportunities, in some cases, they get better opportunities" (T14: 6).

In contrast, Professor Baba (T8: 12) contends that comparisons should not be made because AA is based on the "cultural deficit model" which defines Indigenous Fijian students as failures in the school system because "they're deficient in the culture of the school, in the language of the school, in the ethos of the school, in everything of the school". As Baba points out, it is unfortunate that "the basis for affirmative action is based on their performance at school". He goes on to argue that this is inappropriate but that unfortunately because of the influence of modernisation, "Fijians have to be dragged into the modern sector. They're supposed to be accountants and lawyers, they're supposed to be good in business and the private sector as well and they're not". He also makes the important point that because Indigenous Fijians do not succeed in school, they are perceived to be

> a failure in society at large. It's a replication of what is going on in the school. So what is happening is the school becomes a microcosm of society. The Fijian is seen to be deficient because he doesn't have the modern values, modern attitudes

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[21] I have provided a detailed coverage of the concept of 'the educational gap' in the section on Racial Inequalities in Schooling in Chapter Three.

for competing now in the global economy. So the Fijian will never catch up in a global economy unless there is a total transformation of Fijian society. (T8: 12)

Baba has drawn a picture here of the critical relationship between schooling and the wider society. Because Indigenous Fijian home culture is at odds with the school culture and they do badly at school, this is transferred to the economic sector where they are seen to be deficient in terms of modern values and attitudes. Here, the Indigenous Fijian is perceived to be a failure just as he is a failure at school. If we draw the extension further, the values that are encouraged at school, like competitiveness and individualism, are the same as those that are encouraged in order to survive in a market economy. Because the Indigenous Fijian orientation does not resonate with that which is encouraged in the school and survival in the modern economy, he is deemed a failure on both counts. The alternative, for Baba, is to determine the "proportion of success" that Indigenous Fijians have had in schooling instead of using other races "as yardsticks" for success. For Baba, the focus needs to change to look at the progress that Indigenous Fijians have made over the years in terms of numbers and proportions in the last twenty years, for example. Baba concludes by saying that the Fijians, unfortunately, are "beginning to judge themselves as failures" because they are compared with other races.

An Indigenous Fijian in a senior position at USP maintains that if comparisons are made to show a disadvantage, then that is positive but "If you're comparing for political purposes...it's very frightening" (T11, 4). She thinks "it's almost immoral to compare" and that considering that Fijians are "Johnny come late" into the educational system, they have done very well since the first schools were set up in Fiji. This resonates very closely with what Professor Baba is advocating with regard to examining how Fijians have progressed over the years and that without any comparison with other ethnic groups, they have done very well indeed. This is also echoed by Professor Konai Thaman who argues that it is wrong to think in terms of gaps because "we are interpreting success in life as synonymous with success in school". As she has put it:

> It could be that we have to stop thinking of the notion of the gap and just say there are some things that Fijians can do very well...they don't have to catch up with anybody. I think it's wrong to think of gaps [but] this is because we are interpreting success in life as synonymous with success in school and as long as do you that, maybe you couldn't narrow the gap or close the gap because everybody is not the same. (T4: 15)

By contrast, Hari Ram maintains that it is "unavoidable" to make comparisons given the presence of different racial groups in Fiji. However, it is the "unrealistic conclusions" that are drawn from making such comparisons that become a problem. According to Ram, the flawed assumption or conclusion that is drawn from such comparisons is that more financial support will ensure the improvement of Indigenous Fijian performance in education. If what Ram is saying holds salience, what implications does this have for the AA policy of giving additional resources to specifically assist Indigenous Fijians in education? As Dr Ali has said, one of the underlying assumptions behind the $3.5 million annual policy was that the Indigenous Fijian community was "deprived and disadvantaged" in terms of resources. On the other hand, Dr Ali argues that "Affirmative action, by being timely, has prevented the kind of conflict that has existed in other places" (T2: 5).

There is a complexity to AA that is not evident on first sight of the policies but, as one delves deeper into the context and the arguments put forward by differing perspectives, it becomes evident that matters are not as straightforward as they appear to be. On the one hand, a huge educational gap had to be redressed, otherwise racial tensions and conflict would arise. On the other hand, if there were flaws in the way the policies were conceptualised and implemented, does that make AA inappropriate or irrelevant? Or is it not so much what assumptions are made and what action is taken but more a question that some action is taken, whatever it may be? As long as the disadvantaged group is appeased and the threat of civil strife averted?

Implementation of AA Policies

I have provided a narrative of the perceptions of the informants about their understanding of the context in which race-based AA policies in education were conceptualised. There have been many criticisms made about the lack of clear conceptualisation, the lack of clear targets, the limitation in the initial time frame for AA, and so forth. In delineating different perspectives on the necessity of AA, we can see the ambiguities and contradictions already emerging from the data. One thing is clear: AA policies, wherever they are implemented, are controversial and draw many criticisms. It is particularly in the area of policy implementation in Fiji that AA has many critics.

My purpose in this section is to draw out the complexities and ambiguities that surround the implementation of AA policies in education, not only in terms of what emerges from the data but also in the informants' perceptions of the actual policy process.

First, I begin by examining the debate on differentials in admissions to tertiary admissions. Second, I examine informant perspectives on who really benefits from AA. Third, I look at criticisms of the way the special education fund administered by the MFA has been implemented. This is with regard to such issues as transparency, accountability, monitoring, communication/liaison, assessment and review. Provincial inequalities are perceived to be an effect of implementation so I will examine these as well. In addition, I explicate the views of the informants regarding the issues of means testing and emphasis on school development. Finally, I examine the data on why AA has failed and what constitutes this failure.

Differentials in Admission to Local Tertiary Institutions

An effect of the AA policy to provide opportunities for Indigenous Fijians to access higher education has been the differential in entry marks between Indigenous Fijians and others. Because of the stiff competition for the limited government scholarships available to the non-indigenous community. Indo-Fijian students, for example, have entered tertiary education with much higher marks than Indigenous Fijians. Indigenous Fijians, on the other hand, have not scored highly on the Form seven exams and there are fewer of them in terms of numbers so in granting them tertiary awards, the FAB, in particular, have had to accept students with lower marks in order to meet its quota. Dr Vijay Naidu explains that the minimum entry mark to the university is not compromised but there is indeed a differential in entry point marks between Indigenous Fijians and others. He puts it this way

> USP's entry requirement is 250 marks for Form 7 and there are particular areas where we say that [students] need...a pass in this...or that subject in addition to the 250....And all of our students come at that level irrespective of their ethnicity or nationality. Where the problem arises is when PSC determines its policy or the Fijian Affairs Board....Because the number of ethnic Fijians passing Form 7...examinations is much less than non-ethnic Fijians, the competition for the scholarships is not as intense as that...allocated to non-ethnic Fijians. So as a result of that...the cut-off point for scholarships has thus far been lower on the part of ethnic Fijians than on the part of non-ethnic Fijians. (T6: 5)

One of the criticisms of AA that it benefits a group of people at the expense of those that do not, is raised by Sir Len Usher. Sir Len notes two effects of the AA policy of scholarship awards. One is the lowering of standards that comes about "because you have children who are not fully qualified for higher classes and they don't do very well because they're not really ready to". The second effect of this AA is non-beneficiaries

becoming "resentful or...unhappy because they feel that they are discriminated against" (T26: 7).

Like Sir Len, Winston Thompson is of the opinion that one of the reasons Indigenous Fijians do badly at university level is their relatively lower entry marks. He points out that "there is no comparison" between Indigenous Fijian and the non-Fijian groups because the latter "is way, way ahead". And "because Indigenous Fijians come from the bottom end...many of them are not going to perform". This contributes to the high drop-out rate which "becomes a compounding problem" (T17: 12).

By contrast, the view that the problem does not lie in the selection process but in what happens to the students once they get into university is taken by Professor Konai Thaman. She argues that if not many Indigenous Fijians are graduating from university, "the problem is not affirmative action, [therefore] I would question the process". She points out that

> Affirmative action is not saying we'll just take any...Fijian student and put them at USP. They have to attain a minimum standard and they have attained that. And if they are failing...then I'm not going to say there's something wrong with AA. I'm going to say what's happening to the Fijian students at USP because, to me, that's where the problem lies, not the selection process. (T4: 6-7)

For Thaman, the answer lies in recognising that not everyone is the same and that some students will need extra assistance once they get into tertiary institutions. She points out that "Part of the problem with AA, certainly at USP, is that those of us who deal with the students treat them as if they are exactly the same and that's where the problem lies. They're not the same. They didn't start out the same and they won't end up the same" (T4: 2-3). For those Indigenous Fijian students who get to USP with marks close to the minimum entry mark, Thaman's position is that the AA policy of scholarship awards is insufficient on its own. Alongside this government policy should exist policies at the institutional level to assist those who will need extra assistance. In this way, students who need help will be affirmed and the policy will then be made to work better.

There is also recognition by some informants that careful monitoring of the progress of AA beneficiaries should be made by both PSC and FAB, if AA is to be more efficiently utilised. For instance, Dr Nii-Plange, Head of Sociology at USP, argues that what is needed for these beneficiaries is "Serious talks in the beginning...to be followed through carefully" and "for their performance to be monitored" (T20: 4). Nii-Plange advocates that the "inculcation of a strong sense of responsibility and a commitment to

work need to be put into the students who get this affirmative action programme money". And for the policy to work, he recommends that some way is found to make beneficiaries "realise that this is not just there for grabs...it is there to be attained, to be earned" (T20: 5).

This view is shared by Professor Randy Thaman, Reader in Geography at USP. Thaman maintains that the scholarship officers "both in Fijian Affairs and in the PSC don't monitor progress, attendance, effort and behaviour closely enough" (T25: 3). Scholarship officers, according to Thaman, "have got to be much tougher in terms of ensuring that they [the beneficiaries of AA] are serious students". Otherwise, Thaman argues, "if we turn a blind eye to underperformance or indiscipline, then we will pass the problem on to the society as a whole" (T25: 5). He suggests that scholarship officers "have to be much tougher and when the student is mucking around, give the scholarship to someone else".

Many of the comments on differentials in admission to university have come from academics. One point of view is that lower entry marks result in poor performance that in many cases would lead to wastage. Another point of view is that there is nothing wrong with the student; instead, it is an imperative for tertiary institutions to activate strategies of assistance that would make AA work more efficiently. As well, there is the argument that close monitoring of the academic progress of beneficiaries is required in order to maximise the returns from AA. In the next two sections, I examine informant perspectives on who really benefits from AA by also going into the area of means testing, something which is not currently part of AA.

Who Benefits from AA?

A strong criticism emerging from the informants about the implementation of AA policies is that the policies are not helping those Indigenous Fijians who are seriously disadvantaged, those who really need them. For example, Dr Vijay Naidu argues that "some of the people who could well afford to pay their own way in a number of areas have been given awards...because of the absence of means testing" (T6: 2).

This resonates with comments made by the Minister for Education, Taufa Vakatale. She notes that it is the already privileged Fijians, children of the educated middle-class, who are being given scholarship awards. This is how she puts it:

[W]e are inclined to give out scholarships to people who have access to education...the educated Fijians, the middle class Fijians who are the ones making

use of this. So we are widening the gap even further [between rural and urban Fijians]...I was looking at the awards that the Ministry of Fijian Affairs has been giving. I see familiar surnames, these are children of ministers...parliamentarians and professionals who are getting the scholarships. (T14: 6-7)

Another group of Indigenous Fijians has been identified as disadvantaged by the AA policy of providing financial assistance for the purposes of school development. This group are those who attend predominantly Indo-Fijian schools. No assistance has been provided to these schools because of the criteria that the school has to be predominantly Indigenous Fijian in composition and ownership. As Vijay Naidu puts it, Indo-Fijian owned schools like Suva Sangam and Suva Muslim should be assisted through the AA programme if the intention is to help "rank and file ethnic Fijians to get ahead and get training" (T6: 4). A senior Indigenous Fijian bureaucrat in the government calls for more creativity in the way the fund is implemented, what he calls a "broad perspective".

In a similar vein, Hari Ram adds that there should be a mechanism in place to ensure that the assistance provided is used specifically for the development of Indigenous Fijian students at the school. Ram does not specify in which ways, probably in recognition of the problematics associated with such a move. Given that resources in a school are developed for the benefit of all groups in the school irrespective of their race, how this suggestion could be implemented is problematic. Whatever the assistance given to assist Indigenous Fijian students schooling in Indo-Fijian owned schools, what is clear is that the focus of AA will have to be changed to take on board this new direction if, as the informants claim, the aim of AA is to assist all Indigenous Fijians who are economically disadvantaged. In other words, the target groups within the category of Indigenous Fijian need to be reconceptualised.

A large number of informants have identified rural Indigenous Fijians as disadvantaged because it is those in the urban centres, mainly from middle-class families, who are benefiting from AA while these rural students generally miss out on scholarships. The category of space is consistently raised as the principal category of disadvantage. For instance, the Minister for Education, Ms Taufa Vakatale argues that rural people are not "on a level playing field" therefore they should get AA. In her view, "urban Fijians are not disadvantaged". It is rural Fijians who "are disadvantaged". Similarly, with regard to material resources, Viliame Saulekaleka, Member of Parliament, argues that schools out in the rural areas are disadvantaged. According to Saulekaleka,

"The basic problem is that they don't have learning materials" and "books and reading materials are out of the question" (T57: 2).

In this section, what is emerging is the 'fact' that it is not those who are economically disadvantaged that are the principal beneficiaries of AA. Rather, it is the 'advantaged' middle-class Indigenous Fijians who are winning scholarships. A related issue to do with who benefits from AA appears in the next section. Many informants in the academic, politician and bureaucrat categories support the notion of means testing of parental income to determine that it is indeed 'poor' Indigenous Fijians who are the beneficiaries of AA, not middle-class, well-to-do people. As a result of the underrepresentation of Indigenous Fijians in education and positions of authority and power, means testing was never a consideration in scholarship awards. One reason given for this is the urgent need to get as many Indigenous Fijians through the tertiary system. Nevertheless, some academics think that it is timely that AA targets those Indigenous Fijians who are economically disadvantaged and they strongly support the use of means testing.

Means Testing

Dr Vijay Naidu is adamant that before any scholarship is awarded, at least for the first qualification, means testing should be carried out so that those students who are disadvantaged economically are assisted. For him, a redefinition of the concept of 'disadvantaged' is necessary, particularly when there are ethnic minorities in Fiji, like the Kiribati and Solomon Island communities, who are not assisted by the government in the manner that Indigenous Fijians are. As well, he would like the concept of 'disadvantage' reconceptualised in the light of privileged Fijians getting assistance when there are categories of Indo-Fijians who clearly are disadvantaged. As Naidu has put it:

> [T]he first scholarship that people receive should be means tested...otherwise how do you define 'disadvantage'? When you say people are disadvantaged and Fijians require affirmative action then do [privileged Fijians] get their children in on that basis? These are the kinds of questions I would raise...when we know that there are other minorities in Fiji, for example, the Kiribati community, the Solomon Islander community who are very, very disadvantaged but who, under current circumstances, never get access to such affirmative action. There are also categories of Indo-Fijians, the sons and daughters of canecutters, who clearly don't have any money at all and they're being penalised because they happen to belong to the Indo-Fijian community....(T6: 2)

Arguing from a resource management perspective, Hari Ram believes that means assessment is necessary in the allocation of scholarships because of the limited resources that the government has. As he puts it, "I support the idea that students who have a difficult financial background and whose parents are impecunious, need much greater assistance than children whose parents are able to pay for their education". Where resources are limited, it is therefore the "government's prime responsibility to help those people who are in greater need of help and who cannot help themselves" (T5: 4).

Professor Tupeni Baba agrees that means testing should be part of the criteria for the award of the FAB managed scholarships but he makes two points: one that the concept of income should be extended to include the income generated from the lease of land by Indigenous Fijians and secondly, where there is excellence, students should receive full scholarships irrespective of their parents' income. He calls for "a thorough examination of what you regard as income" and this should "not merely be based on work-income because a lot of income would have come from the rent of land". He particularly notes that we "must not rule out excellence" and that scholarships should be set aside for "those people who are the high fliers...because it would be good for the nation" (T8: 8).

In defence of the absence of merit testing, Sefanaia Koroi, a senior bureaucrat who was head of the implementing arm of the special fund for Indigenous Fijians, points out that means testing was never a consideration because in the initial stages of policy implementation, there was a difficulty in getting enough Indigenous Fijians to qualify for scholarship awards to tertiary institutions. He explains the emphasis was on getting Indigenous Fijians through to tertiary institutions irrespective of socio-economic status. He puts it this way:

> [Means testing] was not part of the criteria [for selection] because the policy was provided for Fijians irrespective of whether they were sons of *Ratus*[12] or villagers. If they qualified for the course they're applying for, they get it [if the committee decides]. (T9: 8)

Similarly, Josevata Kamikamica, a former member of the Fijian Education Committee that made decisions on the disbursement of the Fijian Education special fund,

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[12] *Ratu* is a Fijian term to describe a male who is of chiefly rank.

argues that the objective of the policy was to bridge the educational gap and considerations outside of merit and interview performance were not taken into account. As he puts it, "the objective was to bridge the gap and...in my time on the Committee, we looked at performance irrespective of where they're from, not only in terms of their academic marks. We also looked at their interview performance" (T16: 4).

According to Kamikamica and Koroi, then, the main consideration in the early stages of the policy was getting qualified Fijians on scholarship irrespective of their economic circumstance. Means testing, therefore, has never been a part of the implementation of the $3.5 million special annual fund policy. However, a growing number of informants across all categories are of the view that socio-economic status (social class) should be an important criteria for scholarship awards.

Lack of Transparency and Accountability

In the previous two sections, I examined views on who benefited from AA. This narrowed down to a discussion of the reasons why means testing was not part of the way the special education fund for Indigenous Fijians was implemented. In so doing, I have outlined some of the views on who truly benefits from AA and the conclusion seems to be that AA should be given to those Indigenous Fijians who are economically disadvantaged. There is thus the widespread belief that social class should be a determinant in the award of scholarships. In this section, I examine another criticism regarding transparency and accountability issues. A significant number of informants are of the view that there is a marked lack of transparency and accountability in the implementation of the AA policy administered by the MFA.

As evidence of this claim, a senior Indigenous Fijian bureaucrat points out that the there is a lack of accountability where the $3.5 million fund is concerned. He explains that the secrecy that surrounds the way this policy is implemented is to do with Indigenous Fijians coming from "a hierarchical society" where "questioning at any level isn't encouraged". So when one goes up to ask a legitimate question of officials at the Ministry of Fijian affairs, there is no compulsion for officials to give this person an answer. Instead, "they're eternally given the run around". He is particularly concerned when the decision making and implementing bodies take on the attitude that "they're not really accountable" to the public (T31: 2).

He continues by asking "how open the authorities in the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Fijian Affairs have been in providing information on how the

resources have been allocated". In his view, "it appears in papers when they go to the *Bose Levu Vakaturaga*[23] but beyond that, there's no openness about it" (T31:3).

What is emerging from what this informant is saying is that here was a race-based public policy that was not transparent to the general public. As many of the informants have said, the criteria for scholarship awards have never been made public. What would explain this lack of accountability in terms of the way the MFA administered the special education fund? An answer is provided by Dr Ropate Qalo, Lecturer in Sociology at USP, who refers us back to the coups of 1987. As Qalo and others have put it, AA is political. Qalo argues that the coups "gave people a false image of authority because the coup is a perversion of authority" and when politics "become overt...affirmative action taken on those terms becomes dicey" (T63: 2). In this case, Qalo argues "There is no accountability" and "There is no conscience". Qalo goes on to point out that "Fijian ego is okay for Fijian-ness with its social control in position... [but] if social control and cultural parameters are absent, it's dangerous. That's what the coup did". What has occurred, then, is described by Winston Thompson, who maintains that "People have not always been selected on the basis of open competition among the Fijians. There has been a certain amount of favouritism,...nepotism...[and] political interference" (T17: 4).

What Thompson, Qalo and others are referring to here is that the Indigenous Fijian hegemony and the assertion of their authority and control (especially after the coup) encouraged the development of the attitude that they were not accountable to the rest of the population. There seemed to have been the attitude that because they had political control, they could treat the special education fund as if it were their own funds, and not like the public funds that they were. Consequently, if we accept this explanation, lack of transparency and accountability will become ingrained as a hegemonic feature of the policy.

Lack of Liaison/Communication between Agencies

Yet another criticism made in relation to the implementation of the MFA administered special education fund is the thinking that because the special education

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[23] This is a reference to the Great Council of Chiefs, a legally mandated institution that makes major decisions for Indigenous Fijians. According to this informant, the Great Council of Chiefs is privy to any information on resource use. Outside of this, according to this source, there is no transparency in the use of these funds, nor is there any sense of accountability.

fund was meant for Indigenous Fijians, then decisions for its disbursement had to be made solely by Indigenous Fijians at the MFA. It becomes clear from what the informants say that there was a lack of communication and liaison between agencies such as the FTA, the Fijian Education Unit at the MOE, and the Fijian Education Unit at the MFA that had the interests of Indigenous Fijians at heart.

For instance, Susana Tuisawau points out that there has never been any liaison between the FTA, which looks after the interests of Indigenous Fijian teachers and students, and either the MFA or the MOE when it came to the implementation of the Fijian education fund. She maintains:

> There wasn't [any liaison]. None whatsoever...and every year when we [the Indigenous Fijian teachers] have our conference...[w]e would identify all these needs and...send the feedback to the Ministry of Education...year in, year out...hoping this would help but there doesn't seem to be any improvement. (T30: 3)

The implication of what Tuisawau is saying is that the MOE and the MFA should have liaised closely with other agencies involved with the education of Indigenous Fijians, such as the Fijian Teachers Association. Her argument is that a concerted effort would be beneficial for the standard of Indigenous Fijian education.

A senior bureaucrat at the MOE, Filimoni Jitoko, echoes this. Jitoko is the head of the Fijian Education Unit at the MOE which was established in 1995 but does not have a recurrent budget. This unit has nothing at all to do with the Fijian Education Unit at the Ministry of Fijian Affairs which manages the special education fund. From our discussions, it became obvious that there has not been any liaison between the two units and yet their common interest is looking after the interests of Indigenous Fijian students. It is interesting that these two ministries have a unit called the Fijian Education Unit and yet, there is no communication between the two in terms of professional advice and consultation. The special unit at the MOE does not have an operating fund, and unlike the Fijian Education Unit which manages the special education fund, encourages participation and resource sharing with any agency that wants to make a contribution to the education of Indigenous Fijians. Jitoko describes it this way:

> One of the sad things...is that...we don't have any specific allocation for our work....Whenever we want training, for example, we would ask CDU because they have training funds. When we travel, we make use of the travel vote for Research and Development and we are working with the FTA very closely in terms of workshops....[T]hey provide the funds, we provide the manpower so we...conduct the workshops while they, through their network, provide the

venue...the funds for the catering and subsistence for the teachers...Anybody who wants to contribute to Fijian education, we encourage...and share resources because that is the only way to go. [W]e feel that if we isolate ourselves and do things on our own without any coordination, we can't achieve anything but if we work together then we can achieve something. (T13:9)

The implication of Jitoko's comments is that a concerted approach needs to be taken regarding the education of Indigenous Fijians. All the agencies involved with the education of Indigenous Fijians, including the MFA, should be brought together and their efforts coordinated to maximise the benefits arising out of this combined involvement. Another implication of what Susana Tuisawau and Jitoko have said is that the MFA has worked in isolation in implementing the Fijian education fund. This could be detrimental to the welfare of Indigenous Fijians.

Tunnel Vision: Lack of Input from the non-Fijian Community

A related issue to the lack of communication between relevant agencies in the education of Indigenous Fijians is what Winston Thompson has called "tunnel vision". Some informants have suggested that the isolationist policy of the MFA should be replaced with one that not only utilises the contribution of agencies concerned about the welfare of Indigenous Fijians but, just as importantly, utilises the knowledge and expertise that non-Fijians have.

Thompson, for one, believes there is too much "tunnel vision" in decisionmaking about the education of Indigenous Fijians. He suggests that "a greater universality is brought in [and examined] from a broader context" in order for AA to work better (T17: 16). He particularly recommends that "a much larger group of non-Fijians" who would help in terms of providing "a broader set of expertise, a broader philosophical approach" be involved in decisionmaking regarding the selection of Indigenous Fijians for scholarships.

This view is shared by Hari Ram He argues that those people who deal with policy making issues in relation to the use of the Fijian education fund "should have advice from a variety of sources, including advice from our [MOE] people who are not directly connected with Fijian education, people who are experts in particular fields, including advice from non-Fijians as well" (T5: 3).

Similarly, a senior Indigenous Fijian bureaucrat argues that Indo-Fijians should also participate in decisionmaking regarding the education of Indigenous Fijians because

their taxes contribute to the Fijian education fund. The reason he gives for the 'tunnel vision', to use Winston Thompson's words, that is characteristic of decisionmaking on Fijian education is that no one from within the Fijian community has actually thought otherwise, that is, to include other ethnic groups in policy decisions for the problem that is defined as distinctly Indigenous Fijian. The senior bureaucrat puts it in this manner:

> I couldn't agree more [to including non-Fijians in decision making on Indigenous Fijian education] because we live in a multi-ethnic society and they're tax payers, they're also funding Fijian education. I think why it hasn't been done is that no one has really thought about it and they've just been doing...[because] they're comfortable with it and they all know each other and this goes on and on...which is very unfortunate....[The record of Indo-Fijians] speaks for them and they offer so many valuable lessons. (T31: 6)

In sum, there is acknowledgment by both Indigenous Fijian and non-indigenous informants that wider consultation with the non-Fijian community would contribute to the expertise and advice that would enhance the quality of decisionmaking in the implementation of the Fijian education fund policy. There is also the notion of Indigenous Fijian political hegemony, where the status quo becomes established early and followed to the extent that "it saturates the consciousness", as Raymond Williams (1976) has described it, of the Indigenous Fijian psyche and becomes a hegemonic fixture of implementation. This is reminiscent of what Professor Tupeni Baba said earlier about his view of the way AA is now implemented which is "the maintenance of hegemony, the maintenance of power, the maintenance of a bureaucracy".

Need for Proper Assessment/Review

Yet another criticism levelled at the way the Fijian education fund is implemented is the lack of policy assessment and review. Since the policy was established in 1984, the informants have indicated that there has not been a review carried out to take stock of progress and weaknesses.

For example, Sefanaia Koroi points out that one of the negative aspects of implementation has been the lack of direction. He maintains that "constant evaluation of the policy is not taking place and therefore you cannot redirect it, you cannot reevaluate to see where you're going right and where you're going wrong". He argues for "a constant review to relook at these policies" (T9: 16).

This opinion is echoed by a senior Indigenous Fijian bureaucrat who claims that "From the beginning, it has been the conclusion that the way to address this is to give

scholarships to students at this level and that's it". He goes on to argue that the advantage of a review is the capacity to say "we got to this and obviously it's not working" and the potential to "sit down and think about ways of doing it [better] or scrapping that" (T31: 4).

Provincial Inequalities in Scholarship Awards

In the early to mid-1990s, there was much controversy over what was perceived to be provincial inequalities in scholarship awards. For some informants, merit should be one criteria for scholarship awards, and if the fund is to be apportioned according to province, then these informants argue there are conditions which should be met. Several informants would like to see a provincial distribution of awards. But a significant number of informants, however, believe that scholarships should not be distributed province-wise.

Professor Baba attributes "the hue and cry of the provinces" for scholarships to be equally distributed to the fourteen provinces as a response by Indigenous Fijians to the inequalities they perceived in policy implementation. As he explains it "certain provinces who have been behind, who haven't got too many people in secondary schools, are also losing out [on] scholarships". It is these provinces which are seeking "a way of redressing these inequalities" and if funds are provided province-wise, then "they will put the money to which they think is appropriate and they will seek advice from their educated people from the province" (T8: 7).

The Minister for Education, Taufa Vakatale, would like to see two uses for the funds: first, the Government, through the Ministry of Fijian Affairs, should decide on national priorities in terms of manpower training which would be awarded on merit; and second, she thinks that a proportion of the fund administered by the Fijian Affairs Boards should be allocated to the fourteen provinces and Rotuma who "will set out their own priorities" in this manner:

> For example Lomaiviti might decide...to develop their marine resources, Namosi might want something in forestry or mining or they might just want to send their students to Form 7 because they haven't got Form 7 students. Their priority might be just at the higher secondary school. (T14: 7)

In a similar vein, Hari Ram agrees that funds for scholarships could be allocated province-wise but he stipulates that certain conditions will need to be met. First, he argues that "a proper needs assessment would have to be made" which "is quite an

enormous exercise". Second, he suggests that "a very carefully thought out set of criteria will have to be formulated before this sum of money is apportioned to different provinces". He maintains that "allocating the same amount to every province" is not an answer and neither is "allocating sums of money in proportion to the population of each province" as "a province with a relatively small population may need more help". Ram's main concern is to ensure that a proper study is carried out and criteria for provincial distribution carefully considered so that funds are "utilised most efficiently" (T5: 3-4).

On the other hand, a senior Indigenous Fijian government bureaucrat is ambivalent about the call for scholarships to be allocated on a provincial basis, asking the important question "where does one draw the line?" He points out that "mediocrity" would result. He also argues that "The problem of pandering to provincialism is that somewhere along the line, bright students just become statistics". He would like to see that provincial allocation is carried out on "a case by case basis" rather than a rigid "cast iron rule" (T31: 3).

As well, Josevata Kamikamica argues that scholarships should not be given out on a provincial basis because it would downplay the role of merit in scholarship awards or as he puts it, "In the long run, it is going to dampen our [Indigenous Fijian] ability to compete at the very highest levels". However, he points out that if there is an allocation for provincial scholarships, there should also be a separate provision for those on merit, irrespective of province. As well, he would like some assistance to be given to those provinces which are lagging behind so that the recipients of the scholarships act as "role models" to the rest of the community.

Amraiya Naidu, the Permanent Secretary for Education, argues that scholarships should not be allocated on a provincial basis because Fiji is "too small a country to put in such fragmentation". He makes the point that Indigenous Fijians who get scholarships should be viewed as people of Fiji, as Fijians, rather than by province" (T3: 9).

A senior educator working at USP, who views AA as a 'political tool', does not agree with the idea of allocating scholarships to provinces because it is her belief that scholarships should be awarded according to merit, not province. As she puts it:

> People go to university not because they come from a province but because of their academic eligibility....That bit of having to satisfy a quota, apportioning a quota to a province has always bothered me because the distribution of intelligence in a population has nothing to do with geographical barriers or is not provincially based. (T11: 4)

A very senior bureaucrat from the MOE disagrees with the idea of allocating scholarships to provinces because "the bulk of the Fijian people will never be educated" as the money will "probably go to some place else". Her advice is for the fund to be "better coordinated centrally" (T15: 8). What is being implied by the senior bureaucrat is that there is a high possibility that instead of utilising the fund for education purposes, the money may be utilised in other provincial development projects. As well, it is her view that a central coordinating body should be responsible for determining national manpower needs, which is very similar to what the Minister for Education has said above.

In sum, there is a varied response by the informants on whether AA should be distributed according to province. On the one hand, some informants think that it is necessary in order that provincial inequities are addressed. On the other hand, some informants believe that AA should not be provided on a provincial basis because this would compromise the merit principle and would lead to "mediocrity" as one informant puts it, or as another informant has put it, this would lead to more "fragmentation". In between these viewpoints are two more variants: on the one side are those informants who believe that it is possible to have two uses of the fund: one directed by Government in terms of national manpower planning and the other at the micro-level by the provinces who would determine their own educational needs. The other variant is provided by those who believe that provincial allocation of funds should only be made once strict conditions are in place. Two such conditions have been identified as a thorough needs assessment of each province and the development of specific criteria for the distribution of the funds.

Having thus discussed views on the provincial allocation of AA funds, I now turn to representations of the way the Fijian education fund was monitored. I will follow this with a discussion on the way informants have reacted to the change of focus from human resource development and capital development of Indigenous Fijian schools to purely human resource development.

Poor Monitoring

Another criticism of the implementation of the Fijian education fund is the perception that there was poor monitoring of AA beneficiaries, particularly at overseas tertiary institutions. Winston Thompson, for instance, notes that:

Once [the students] have been selected and have gone away, [they] have quite often been left in a state where they don't get their allowances on time. I would

imagine it would be frustrating so these students start off with a disadvantage, who come from fairly protected backgrounds, not able to compete in an open scholastic situation. They go away with quite a considerable mental trauma and then they don't get their allowances. It's a pretty upsetting sort of situation. (T17: 4)

There are two points that Thompson is making here: first, there is the problem of adaptation to a new environment, coupled with the late arrival of living allowances. Thompson explained that when he was Ambassador in New York, he would get frequent phone calls from students on FAB scholarships asking him to liaise with FAB regarding their allowances as sometimes they would go several months without receiving their living allowance. Dr Ali highlights the same problem when he was Consul General in New Zealand. He contends, particularly, that students' progress should be monitored with the view to helping those who need additional assistance and maintaining a 'positive approach' to students and their problems (T2: 14). Similarly, Josevata Kamikamica calls for more efficient implementation where the payment of allowances to overseas students is concerned. He points out that "there is a need to ensure that the administration of that policy is more efficient" (T16: 3).

Besides criticisms of poor monitoring of students on overseas scholarships, there has been much criticism of the way the capital development programme, that was part of the Fijian education fund, was implemented. For instance, a very senior official at the MOE points out that a "methodical assessment and appraisal of the whole scheme" (Fijian education fund policy) needs to be undertaken. She explains that that is difficult due to the cumbersome bureaucratic red tape involved and that school development, in particular, should have been better coordinated. She argues that "there was so much abuse" and suggests that "there needs to be a proper appraisal before you give out money". As well, there needs to be better coordination between agencies involved in the implementation of the school capital development programme. She notes:

> You really need to have support, a team....At the moment, the infrastructure is such that there is one agency which is giving out the money, there is another agency...which does the building....[I]t takes a lot of time and there is a lot of loss incurred in between of a lot of money....There are too many people with different fingers pulling the string and it's not good....The will to do affirmative action is there but it is not properly coordinated. (T15: 3-4)

Likewise, Professor Baba outlines the problems of implementation as "very little assessment of the needs of the schools and students, very little monitoring of what goes

on in the schools after money has been given and very little examination of what comes out at the end of it all". He notes, in particular, that "the belief seems to be that money can solve the Fijian education problem" (T8: 6).

What all these informants are referring to is the utilisation of the special education fund specifically provided for the education of Indigenous Fijians in terms of school capital development. As explained in Chapter Three, from 1984 to 1993, the $3.5 million special fund has been utilised in two ways—on human resource development through the provision of tertiary scholarships, both locally and overseas, as well as the physical development of Indigenous Fijian schools, particularly in the rural areas. The latter has been in terms of assistance with the building of classrooms, toilet blocks, boarding facilities, science laboratories and school libraries as well as the provision of educational teaching and learning resources, such as books, science chemicals and the like.

A summing up of this section is best represented by this quote from a senior Indigenous Fijian government bureaucrat who argues that:

> there's really no careful monitoring of the way policies are administered. The government is constantly being asked to approve another $3 million or $4 million every four or five years for Fijian education. It has become an end in itself and you've got this large bureaucracy to support these officials...but that becomes...removed from the problem. And then of course there is the question of whether it's the proper use of resources which I think is an important question in a country like ours where funds are always an issue. (T31: 2)

This informant is referring to the political hegemony I raised earlier. With the hegemony of Indigenous Fijian political control, there is the tendency to continue with AA without strategies in place for monitoring, for review or for public accountability. The problem was considered a peculiarly Indigenous Fijian one which was not perceived by decisionmakers to require input from other communities. The "tunnel vision" that Thompson has referred to has become an entrenched feature of race-based AA policies. As the informant above has noted, the important question that has to be asked and answered is whether AA makes "proper use of resources".

Emphasis on Human Resource Development

In 1994, Cabinet approved an increase in the Fijian education fund from $3.5 to $4.7 million a year for an undefined period of time. Since then the focus of disbursement has changed, almost exclusively, to human resource development. This effectively brought to an end assistance that Indigenous Fijian schools were getting for

infrastructural development and the provision of educational resource materials. This move by the MFA has raised much criticism with calls made for less emphasis on human resource development and more on assisting disadvantaged Indigenous Fijian schools.

As evidence of this, the Minister for Education, Taufa Vakatale has argued that one third of the funds should be provided as grants to rural Fijian schools while two thirds be maintained for scholarship awards. As she says, "we should really cut down on the number of scholarships that we give out" so that "$3.5 million [is used] for scholarships and $1.2 million for grants to schools in rural areas" (T14: 6).

Similarly, Adi Kuini Speed questions the emphasis of the fund on human resource development at the expense of school development. As she puts it, "We seem to be thinking of affirmative action only at the tertiary level but [it] is drastically needed...at the communal level, with primary...and secondary schools". In her position as Chief of the Naikoro District, she makes these observations:

> The village district school is unbelievable....Louvres [and]ceilings are missing, dormitories are overloaded, the toilets are not working, there are no typewriters for the teachers to type their exam papers. How do you expect our children to perform in such a situation? And then you come to the secondary school, Navosa College, the same sort of situation prevails. And of course we don't have qualified teachers so all these reinforce each other and to just think of affirmative action by giving scholarships in the urban situation to those who come to know about the scholarship system, to me, is not addressing the problem....You will always be left [with] the Fijian education problem. (T32: 7-8)

In these comments, Adi Kuini emphasises the problems faced by rural Fijian schools which do not have the financial capacity to upgrade facilities and provide educational resources for both teachers and students. As well, the lack of qualified teachers reportedly exacerbates the problem of underachievement in rural Indigenous Fijian schools. Another point made by Adi Kuini pertains to the urban Fijians in the 'know' who gain from the scholarship awards at the expense of school development in the rural area. For Adi Kuini, a better way of "addressing the problem" is to focus on school development and the provision of qualified teachers in rural schools. This would entail AA that would "introduce kindergartens in the village system, improve the facilities and the teachers at the district schools" as well as "the Fijian secondary schools".

By contrast, the argument for maintaining the special fund on scholarships is provided by a ranking bureaucrat at the Ministry of Education who comments that tertiary scholarships are costly. The problem of affordability for Indigenous Fijian parents to pay

for their children's tertiary education is one of the reasons why there is almost exclusive emphasis on scholarship awards, in comparison to Indo-Fijian parents, who make sacrifices to send their children to university as private students. A second reason given for this emphasis is that the Ministry of Education's capital investment budget has significantly increased. As this senior bureaucrat explains:

> When [the $3.5 million] is translated to scholarship terms, it really is very...small...It's only a handful of scholarships....I think the idea of movement away from capital [development] to scholarships is that...the average Fijian parent can afford the cost of primary education...can afford even a secondary education...but a tertiary education is really without the reach of most Fijian parents, even the well to do. So the whole idea was to support that area because Fijian parents cannot otherwise afford a tertiary education whereas the Indian parents are able to save. They live very frugally and then support their own students through USP, even overseas on a private basis. How many Fijian parents are able to do this? I think that's why they've moved away from capital investment because also the Ministry's capital development budget has grown, has been increased several times. (T15: 6)

Thus, we have seen differing perspectives on the abolition of capital development to an almost total focus on human resource development in the form of more scholarship awards for Indigenous Fijians. One group of informants (politicians) decries this development and would like to see a move back to the physical development of Indigenous Fijian schools. On the other hand, there is the explanation by bureaucrats that tertiary education is unaffordable for many Indigenous Fijian parents and hence, this view holds, focussing exclusively on scholarship provision is justifiable. The context surrounding the substantial increase in the MOE's own capital development programme also contributes to an understanding of the decision by the MFA to concentrate on scholarships. Since the MOE could assist Indigenous Fijian schools using their own funds, the decision was made for more emphasis to be placed on human resource development.

Why the Educational Gap Has Not Closed

Much has been said by the informants about why the educational gap between Indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians has not closed, as was the intention behind AA. These explanations have ranged from deficiencies in policy conceptualisation and formulation and poor implementation to social, cultural and psychological differences between Indigenous Fijians and other ethnic groups.

Arguing from a perspective of social and cultural difference, Reverend Dr Tuwere attributes the non-closing of the educational gap to what he terms "theories of life" of Indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians. He maintains that "Indians are an accumulative race while the Fijians are distributive". He claims that "While the Indians go to the bank to deposit money, the Fijians are bringing the money out". As he puts it:

> It is more than that. It is within the system, our own way of life...the way we look at the world and how we situate ourselves socially. How we understand ourselves socially is quite different and this partly explains why there is still a gap because theoretically, we are governed by two different theories of life. One is accumulative, one is distributive. (T12: 8-9)

By contrast, Professor Konai Thaman contends that the gap has not closed because "it is based on the deficit model...and it's like the whole stage development thing...everybody trying to catch up with the Joneses so you certainly can catch up but by the time you get up here, they're moving along over there" (T4: 15). This is similar to Winston Thompson's explanation. His argument is along the lines of a "moving continuum" where the gap remains the same because "people have moved on, they haven't stayed still" (T17: 8).

Also arguing from a social and cultural difference perspective, Dr Ahmed Ali explains the existence of the gap to the fact that Indo-Fijians have had a "tremendous start" over Indigenous Fijians because "the imperative with the Indian family was that education was the means to success". Through education, Indo-Fijians "were going to catch up with the white man". As Ali has put it:

> [T]he Fijians didn't quite move at this pace so we've got a head start and it's going to take a while for Fijians to catch up with us. And we went into the professions. We were going ahead, and still are; we are not waiting for others to catch up, we want to stay ahead. (T2: 14)

On the other hand, some informants have used psychological models to explain the educational gap. As evidence of this, Hari Ram attributes the continuing existence of the gap to the explanation that those who are not beneficiaries of AA will be "psychologically motivated to work harder to make up for that lack of assistance which the community feels should have been made available". They see the situation as a challenging one and will consequently be "psychologically motivated" to work just as hard, if not harder. As Ram has put it, "it could be the fact that indigenous students have been helped more than non-indigenous students that has led the group that is not so much assisted to work even harder" (T5: 11).

Focussing more on policy formulation and implementation issues, Adi Kuini Speed, politician, attributes the failure of AA policies in narrowing the educational gap to two factors: one, to the problems of conceptualisation where "the policy has not been thought out carefully"; and two, to the lack of communication between the grassroots village level and those who make decisions. She points out that it may be a lack of assertiveness and education on people's part, "the lack of strong leadership", that leads to the suppression of problems faced by villages, districts, provinces from the political agenda. It is this lack of communication of problems at the local (villages, district, tikina) and national (Great Council of Chiefs and the Ministry of Fijian Affairs) levels, according to Adi Kuini, that leads to the Government not knowing "because they are not told" (T32: 14-15).

Arguing also from a policy perspective, Professor Tupeni Baba maintains that AA have not succeeded in narrowing the educational gap for the following reasons: "they have been ineffective, ill-conceived, are directed at the wrong place" (T8: 11). Similarly, a senior Indigenous Fijian government bureaucrat attributes the failure of AA to poor conceptualisation and the lack of an integrated approach to take into account the corresponding need to assist Indigenous Fijian parents, particularly out in the rural area, to understand the value of an education and strategies of facilitating their children's education. He puts it in this manner:

> I don't think the philosophy behind [AA] has been well developed. And neither have the policies in themselves....[T]here has been little analysis as to the nature of the problem and how it is to be addressed. And then there's been very little done to actually put in place plans and policies beyond giving scholarships....[T]here's been nothing to see how this can be integrated with other considerations like how to improve rural schools, how to improve getting families to change attitudes. So it's not really surprising that they have not worked as well as one might have thought. (T31: 9-10)

What is obvious is the heterogeneity and complexity in informant perspectives regarding the conceptualisation, formulation and implementation of AA policies. The policy administered by the MFA is the one that has attracted the most criticism, particularly regarding conceptualisation and implementation issues. This chapter has explicated the different perspectives regarding such topics as the rationales for AA, the use of comparisons and 'race' as a category of difference, who benefits from AA, means testing as well as transparency, accountability and evaluation issues. Other topics covered have included provincial inequalities, entry differentials to USP and reasons why the

educational gap has not closed. These are key issues used in an understanding of the processes involved in policy development and implementation. As well, we have seen that these processes are not only complex but are interactive and multi-layered. Finally, we have seen how Indigenous Fijian power and influence (political hegemony) have been used in making political choices about what AA should comprise of, who should benefit, who should implement it and the processes of implementation.

Outcomes of AA

I have already examined perceptions by the informants of the ways AA policies in education have been conceptualised, implemented and played out. An analysis of AA policies would be remiss if a discussion was not made of their outcomes. In this section, I examine portrayals by the informants on the positive, negative and unintended outcomes of the policies.

According to the informants, the outcomes of AA have been rather mixed. On the one hand, there are positive outcomes such as a significant number of Indigenous Fijians gaining access to tertiary institutions, and consequently, to positions of power and authority in both the public and private sectors of society. As a result, racial inequalities in education and employment between Indigenous Fijians and other ethnic groups are not as stark as in the decades of the seventies and eighties. Another positive outcome is the 'role model' argument of 'successful' Indigenous Fijians providing the psychological boost for other Indigenous Fijians. However, these positive outcomes need to be weighed against the negative. The more serious of these are reported as resentment from the non-benefiting group, inequalities among Indigenous Fijians, particularly between the rural and urban community, the maintenance of political hegemony and reported wastage from poor implementation. As well, there is the view that related to political hegemony is the notion that Indigenous Fijians have given in to the "handout mentality" and view AA as "a God-given right". Certainly, some of these negative outcomes can also be viewed as unintended outcomes.

Positive Outcomes

The most significant positive outcome has been identified by the informants as more Indigenous Fijians accessing tertiary education and positions of authority in society. Adi Kuini Speed, for example, points out that one positive outcome of AA is that Indigenous Fijians are becoming better represented at the tertiary level as well as in

242

employment. As she says, "one positive aspect of the affirmative action so far is that we've been able to produce some very well qualified Fijians at the tertiary level who are now placed in various senior positions in government, education, USP" (T32: 7).

Similarly, Winston Thompson's assessment of the positive outcome of the two AA policies is in terms of the numbers of Indigenous Fijians making it through the tertiary level. Without AA, Thompson argues, "there would be fewer Fijian students" as "children of other [races] would have captured most of the scholarships, particularly the government scholarships" (T17: 3).

By contrast, one of the very few informants to raise the gender issue, Bessie Ali, a high school principal, sees a positive outcome of AA in terms of the policy rectifying gender imbalances. She points out that more Indigenous Fijian female students are making career choices in formerly predominantly male areas. She notes:

> I have seen definitely in my teaching experience an improvement in the morale, in the self-esteem of Fijians students and more especially in the Fijian girls....I see as a result of this affirmative action a venture into areas that they may not have even considered previously. (T18: 3)

Arguing also from a social justice perspective, Dr Vijay Naidu points out that one of the positive outcomes of the AA policies is that the truly disadvantaged Indigenous Fijian has been assisted. As he puts it, AA policies "would definitely capture a category of students who otherwise would not come to university". These "disadvantaged" students would be "from poor families, from rural schools" (T6: 6).

Dr Ahmed Ali makes a similar point, although his call is for more tolerance of those students who are failing in that they should be given more time to complete their degree. This is because of the disadvantage they have lived with such as "coming from rural backgrounds" and from "families which do not have the advantage of a university education". What Ali is saying would be a counter argument to those who maintain that AA has resulted in financial wastage in the form of students failing their university courses. He argues:

> Look at the number of Fijians we've got trained who would not have been trained otherwise....Okay, true I'm aware that there is criticism about government but can you tell me any programme, anywhere, that does not have a failure rate? Every programme has that but you don't completely debunk it and get rid of it just because of it. True some of the weaker Fijians are failing, but don't you think it's good to have that programme and let somebody get through the first year and then succeed later on or to take [longer to do a three year degree] rather than not to have that person educated at all? (T2: 7)

Here, Ali provides a different insight into financial wastage accruing from failure to do well at university. His is a perspective which contradicts the traditional notion of counting costs purely in economic terms. As he puts it, which programme "does not have a failure rate?" He also raises the dilemma of programmes which have academic 'failures' and argues that it would be better to spend extra money on a person to enable him or her to get a tertiary education rather than not giving that person the opportunity in the first place.

Negative Outcomes

On the other hand, elaborating on the cost factor as a negative outcome, Professor Baba asks these questions: "At what cost? How many failures, at what cost? At what cost to the Fijian people and at what cost to the nation as well?" He argues:

> You cannot merely say that "oh yes out of the hundred that we sent to Australia, we got ten back. That is perhaps a good wastage". That I wouldn't call a success even if it increases Fijian graduates. I will count that against the losses in terms of money revenue, in terms of the ill feelings th·t it has created not only in the Fijian community but in other communities as well. I would not regard this as successful. (T8: 11)

Here, Baba is not only talking about the economic loss that is incurred when AA beneficiaries are not successful at university. He is also raising the resentment and ill feelings AA engenders, not only in other ethnic communities that do not benefit in any way from AA, but also from within the non-benefiting Indigenous Fijian community. Baba introduces a new dimension here about resentment coming not just from the non-ethnic Fijians. There is a widespread belief that only non-ethnic Fijians would feel resentment. For instance, Sir Len Usher points out that AA is "creating resentment by non-Fijians" and gives them "the feeling that they are being discriminated against" (T26: 8). As well, Winston Thompson emphasises the notion of resentment where "it has not been encouraging on the other side for the non-indigenous Fijians to see people getting scholarships who have not performed. And they feel that if they had got it, they would have made good use of it" (T17: 3). The notion that Indigenous Fijians themselves would be non-beneficiaries (those who miss out on scholarships, for instance) and would feel discriminated against is a novel one. This is a reflection of the homogeneity that is assumed in matters that are 'racial' in nature. The idea that Indigenous Fijians as a group would benefit from AA is therefore problematic because there are many who do not benefit in any way from AA in the same manner as the non-target groups.

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On the other hand, elaborating on the cost factor as a negative outcome, Professor Baba asks these questions: "At what cost? How many failures, at what cost? At what cost to the Fijian people and at what cost to the nation as well?" He argues:

> You cannot merely say that "oh yes out of the hundred that we sent to Australia, we got ten back. That is perhaps a good wastage". That I wouldn't call a success even if it increases Fijian graduates. I will count that against the losses in terms of money revenue, in terms of the ill feelings that it has created not only in the Fijian community but in other communities as well. I would not regard this as successful. (T8: 11)

Here, Baba is not only talking about the economic loss that is incurred when AA beneficiaries are not successful at university. He is also raising the resentment and ill feelings AA engenders, not only in other ethnic communities that do not benefit in any way from AA, but also from within the non-benefiting Indigenous Fijian community. Baba introduces a new dimension here about resentment coming not just from the non-ethnic Fijians. There is a widespread belief that only non-ethnic Fijians would feel resentment. For instance, Sir Len Usher points out that AA is "creating resentment by non-Fijians" and gives them "the feeling that they are being discriminated against" (T26: 8). As well, Winston Thompson emphasises the notion of resentment where "it has not been encouraging on the other side for the non-indigenous Fijians to see people getting scholarships who have not performed. And they feel that if they had got it, they would have made good use of it" (T17: 3). The notion that Indigenous Fijians themselves would be non-beneficiaries (those who miss out on scholarships, for instance) and would feel discriminated against is a novel one. This is a reflection of the homogeneity that is assumed in matters that are 'racial' in nature. The idea that Indigenous Fijians as a group would benefit from AA is therefore problematic because there are many who do not benefit in any way from AA in the same manner as the non-target groups.

Like Baba, Josevata Kamikamica also introduces a more complex perspective on AA in Fiji. As he has described it, "The only negative outcome that I see is that [AA] would increase the gap even amongst Fijians themselves" in terms of educational, social and economic opportunities. It is "the middle-class Fijians and high class Fijians" who mainly live in the urban areas who "take advantage of all the educational opportunities in the urban areas" (T16: 5). Kamikamica goes on to argue that children in the urban areas are more advantaged and because they are the ones making the best use of AA opportunities, "they tend to perform much better than the rural Fijians" (T16:5). It is his view that "as we continue with these policies, the gap, even amongst Fijians, will widen" (T16:5).

Speaking of "disadvantaged categories of society", Dr Vijay Naidu argues that a negative outcome of the policies has been the use of scholarships by privileged Indigenous Fijians which has limited the extent to which the policies would have assisted the disadvantaged Indigenous Fijians. He notes:

> There are people who are taking advantage of the system who can very well afford to [to pay]. [W]hat that means is the possibility of using these resources to extend affirmative action to even a larger category of both Indigenous Fijians and others is lessened because the people who are advantaged are taking these resources (T6: 7)

Many of the informants have argued that one of the negative outcomes of the AA policies is the development of a complacent attitude by those who are benefiting, who regard the assistance as a "natural right", as a "God-given right", or view themselves as a "special" group. Hari Ram points out that those who believe that it is "their natural right to be assisted by virtue of the fact that they are Fijians and they should continue to be assisted regardless of the way they perform" would "develop an attitude which is not going to be conducive to their own development as individuals". He maintains that for those students who "do not perform, attempts should be made to find out why they are not performing and, if necessary, the awards should be given to other Fijian students who are more deserving" (T5: 4).

The notion that scholarships for AA beneficiaries who do not "perform" at university should be given to "more deserving" students is one that has consistently come through in the data. As well, the "complacent" attitude of Indigenous Fijians is one that is identified as negative. As Winston Thompson has argued, "The attitude...that has become more prevalent among the Fijians is the feeling that this is a God given right,

they have to get these numbers without really having to work for it. And I think that's a bad thing" (T17: 4).

Exploring why Indigenous Fijians have taken on "the handout mentality", a ranking Indigenous Fijian bureaucrat in Government argues that AA "is going to continue...indefinitely" because "since 1987, there is an arrogance" manifested in the "attitude among a lot of Fijians" that "this is my country, these are my resources". It is this arrogant attitude that gives Indigenous Fijians "the expectation that this is going to continue...indefinitely" (T31: 3).

Perhaps why there is this attitude of "arrogance" and the expectation that AA will go on indefinitely can be explained by Professor Tupeni Baba, a critic of AA, who has already argued that "what is going on is the maintenance of hegemony, the maintenance of power, the maintenance of a bureaucracy...to maintain what's going on" (T8: 10). Here, Baba is critical of the way the MFA has administered the special fund AA policy. He seems to be suggesting that AA for Indigenous Fijians, by Indigenous Fijians, is a reflection of the hegemony of Indigenous Fijian political rule. I will expand on this in the next section. There, I will also detail some of the unintended outcomes of AA. Certainly, the resentment of the non-target group is one. Second, the backlash from the Indigenous Fijians, as Baba has indicated, is another. The underlying assumption of intellectual deficiency is yet another unintended outcome of AA. As well, the colonising effect of AA which encourages the "handout mentality" attitude can be construed as another unintended negative effect of policies put in place to assist Indigenous Fijians in education and employment.

Interpretations

In Chapter Four I provided a literature review on policy and policy analysis and made the point that it was my intention to take a critical policy analysis approach in this examination of portrayals by the informants about the conceptualisation, implementation and outcomes of AA policies in education. It has already been established that context is important, hence the examination of AA in its micro-context. I have provided a narrative of perceptions of the policy process surrounding AA. I have also provided evidence of the complexity and multi-dimensionality associated with the AA policy process. By utilising the informants' voices, I have laid out in detailed richness the viewpoints of critics and proponents of AA in Fiji. I now turn to an interpretation of these data utilising the postcolonial theoretical resources that I introduced in Chapter Two, my own

knowledge and experience of AA in Fiji, my reading of policy documents and the insights gleaned from the interview data.

AA in Fiji: A Postcolonial Response to Colonial Inequalities

AA in education in Fiji was a deliberate intervention on the part of a predominantly Indigenous Fijian government to equalise life opportunities for the Indigenous Fijian community. Knowingly or unknowingly, AA Fijian style was the postcolonial response to the educational and social inequalities created by a colonial history. As Dr Ali has put it, "the colonial experience has worked against Fijians" and that "the worst that we've encountered in independence is still better than the best that we had under colonial rule" (T2: 9).

The evidence in Chapter Five suggests that the neocolonial hegemonic educational structures firmly in place after political independence have continued to disadvantage Indigenous Fijians in particular. A manifestation of neocolonial educational structures is the emphasis placed on a foreign academic core curriculum, although some semblance of localisation of the content of schooling has taken place. As well, English being the language of instruction continues to disadvantage many of the Indigenous Fijian students who have their base in rural schools, where substandard facilities, inadequate educational resources, and poor quality teachers are the norm. Furthermore, the pedagogy of the school and the way schooling is organised are in contradiction with the Indigenous Fijian way of life. The accounts in Chapter Five suggest that Indigenous Fijian students who succeed in school (measured in terms of passing national examinations) do so, either because their home culture is compatible with that of the school, or the teachers and the school have a significant impact on the students' performance. By the evidence of the people interviewed, then, AA was a remedial strategy to overcome Indigenous Fijian disadvantage in order to promote equality of opportunity that would enable Indigenous Fijians to be better represented in education and employment. It was a strategy to promote equal outcomes in education, thereby enabling the economic participation of Indigenous Fijians in market capitalism.

It is not surprising that AA was the response to the inequalities arising out of Fiji's colonial history. A predominantly Indigenous Fijian Government had the power and legitimate authority, according to the accepted Western definition of democracy, to lead the new nation having won the first general elections in 1972. Officially, Fiji was granted political independence in October of 1970. But prior to this, the wheels to see to

a smooth handing over by Great Britain had been set in motion. The 1969 Commission into the state of education in the colony had, as one of its seven terms of reference, the brief that the Commission must investigate the state of the education of Indigenous Fijians with the purpose of making specific recommendations to improve on this. The Education Commission identified serious limitations in the education of Indigenous Fijians which I have detailed in Chapter Three. The problem of isolation and distance of the majority of Indigenous Fijian schools from mainstream economic centres was one. This contributed to the poor quality of provision and service of educational resources and teachers, which was identified as another serious limitation. As well, the Commission highlighted not only the very poor performance of Indigenous Fijian students at the higher national examinations but, more seriously, the paucity of Fijian students in terms of numbers represented in the secondary school system. Amongst other recommendations, the Education Commission suggested a preferential policy of setting a quota on scholarships in favour of Indigenous Fijians. It recommended that half of all Government tertiary scholarships in any one year be reserved for deserving Indigenous Fijian students. This recommendation became a government AA policy in the mid-1970s and has been in place to date.

The Postcolonial Government was concerned at the underrepresentation of Indigenous Fijians at the upper secondary and tertiary levels, and their consequent underrepresentation in key positions in "the public and private sectors of the economy", as the official government documents put it. It is not surprising that at political independence, the Government of the day would do whatever it could to attack the problem in the shortest possible time. That the government defined the problem by using 'race' as a category of analysis, by making comparisons between the educational achievements of Indigenous Fijians and other ethnic groups, had an air of inevitability given the racial composition of the population and the ethnic Fijian majority in the government. The non-Fijian community was performing significantly better at national examinations than Indigenous Fijians. It is therefore not surprising that the incumbent Government, which was predominantly Indigenous Fijian in composition, would desire to improve the lot of the indigenous community. The Government may not have had the mandate from all communities in Fiji, as Professor Tupeni Baba has put it, but it had the power to do so. And the backing of the 1969 Education Commission, which specifically recommended a quota to provide access to Indigenous Fijians at tertiary level, ensured that it was not long before this became a public policy.

The policy, then, of allocating half of all government scholarships for Indigenous Fijians is justified if the purpose was to bring about a more proportional representation of Indigenous Fijians in middle and top positions in employment. For over a decade this policy was never fully realised because of the difficulty in getting an adequate number of Indigenous Fijians to pass the higher national examinations (See Tables 1-5 in Chapter Three). In terms of numbers and percentages, the Indo-Fijian community was far ahead. A decade of this policy did not really see a significant number of qualified Indigenous Fijians making it through the tertiary level. Again, it is not surprising that a special annual fund was set up for Fijian education in 1984. This time, the substandard condition of rural schools and the lack of educational resources in predominantly Indigenous Fijian schools were acknowledged as matters of serious concern.

Clearly, the issue of financial resources to these schools to counter this lack was one reason why the special fund was created. Because not enough Indigenous Fijians were making it up to the upper secondary level, the rationale for this policy was that if conditions for learning were improved there would be better performance by Indigenous Fijians at the secondary level so that they would be able to qualify for scholarships. As I detailed in Chapter Three, the special fund was utilised in two ways: capital development in schools and human resource development in terms of scholarship awards. It was decided that the policy of allocating half of all government scholarships to Indigenous Fijians was not really making a significant impact so tertiary scholarship awards became a feature of the special Fijian education fund. A little over ten years since the establishment of the special fund, it has increased to $4.7 million and the focus has been on human resource development.

As also detailed in Chapter Three, in addition to the allocation of 50% of all Government scholarships to Indigenous Fijians, the other significant AA policy was the establishment of a Fijian education fund of $3.5 million dollars, specifically for the education of Indigenous Fijians, which was instituted in 1984 on an annual basis and continues to this very day. Fiji has never had a government that is not predominantly Indigenous Fijian in composition. That is probably one of the reasons why AA policies that favour a particular racial group are still in play today. That is the reason why it was relatively easy for the Government in 1984 to formulate and implement a policy that would benefit only one community over the others. What of the minority communities in terms of population numbers? This would include the Banaban and Solomon Island communities. What of those facing social and economic disadvantage from the Indo-

Fijian community, which is the other dominant group in terms of numbers. AA, in the form of a special fund, has been set up to assist those who are disadvantaged from other communities in education and is administered by the Department of Indian Affairs. This, I suppose, was a conciliatory gesture to counter the disquiet regarding the special treatment for Indigenous Fijians in education and business. The fact remains that Indigenous Fijians have always had the political power to ensure that their educational and economic interests are not ignored.

Again, as indicated in Chapter Three, Government documents acknowledge that soon after political independence in 1970, the Government also instituted other AA policies that were to advantage Indigenous Fijian education in particular. One of these was the development of junior secondary schools in the rural area to provide Indigenous Fijians with access to a secondary education. Another was a public relations campaign through the radio and newspapers in the Fijian language to assist Indigenous Fijian parents to recognise the value of an education for their children. Moreover, there were strategies to attract qualified teachers to teach in rural schools. The impact that these policies have had on improving Indigenous Fijian education is difficult to ascertain because for one, they are not quantifiable but are qualitative phenomena. As well, there were problems in their implementation. For instance, while junior secondary schools mushroomed in the rural area, they were poorly resourced and it was difficult to attract qualified teachers, particularly non-Fijians, to teach in rural Indigenous Fijian schools. In any case, how can one draw a direct relationship between providing access to education with success in school? How can one assess what impact radio programmes would have on Indigenous Fijian achievement? There are no quantitative measures that one can use to draw a direct relationship between one of these variables with Indigenous Fijian achievement in national exams. Nevertheless, the Government's attempt to provide more access for Indigenous Fijians at secondary school and to provide Indigenous Fijian parents with information on the value of education for their children must have had an impact. At this historical juncture, Fijians are better represented at the form six level, and the rise of an Indigenous Fijian middle-class is a reflection that more and more Fijian parents are seeing the relationship between education and economic participation and well being.

Was AA an Historically Appropriate Response?

According to a broad range of informants, AA seems to have been historically appropriate in the Fiji context. In a nation where there are two dominant racial groups, one the indigenous group and the other a migrant community, it was appropriate to have AA put in place for the indigenous population who was performing badly in formal schooling and, as a consequence of this, in attaining a good standard of living that would accrue from getting good educational qualifications. It was inconceivable at political independence in 1970 for the indigenous group that held political power to be lagging behind the other racial groups in education and employment, a situation that was ripe for civil strife and for social and political turbulence - as Sefanaia Koroi, Dr Ahmed Ali, Joeli Kalou and others have indicated. More Indigenous Fijians had to be trained to take up senior decision-making positions in the public and private sectors of the economy to counter their underrepresentation in order to have a more equal representation. For a nation with limited financial resources, AA policy aimed at a quick turnaround in terms of a more proportional representation in middle and top positions in employment, as Winston Thompson describes it, seems appropriate.

But is it fair to other racial groups in Fiji for Indigenous Fijians to be the beneficiaries of special treatment? Is it morally and philosophically justifiable for Indigenous Fijians to be assisted over and above the other groups? Is it just to give scholarships to a group of people who have scored lower marks than other groups because there is a quota system in place? In the Fiji context, if the educational gap had been allowed to widen after political independence with a predominantly Fijian government in place, there would have been greater resentment against the non-Fijian community who were perceived to be doing better at school. This resentment would have festered and it would have taken only a few outspoken voices to stir up feelings against the non-Fijian community. This would have led to political instability and social and economic upheaval as some of the informants have argued.

It is my position that AA in Fiji was historically appropriate. It is necessary to counter the social and educational inequalities inherited from Fiji's colonial history. The form that this took is questioned by many informants but it does not detract from the reality that it was essential to assist the Indigenous Fijians who were significantly underrepresented in the higher levels of education and, consequently, in the public and private spheres of the economy. As the senior Indigenous Fijian educator at USP, Dr Ali, and others have argued, it is morally just to assist this group to attain distributive justice

and racial equality. There are implementation issues but these do not detract from the reality that for Indigenous Fijians, AA was necessary to promote equality of opportunity in order to attain a more proportional representation in education and employment in a capitalist economy. As Joeli Kalou puts it, AA "is a way of satisfying economic parity in the sense that when you become educated, the chances of you holding positions of responsibility increases, the chances become better and you make an economic impact" (T 33: 9).

Better Implementation

However, having said that AA in Fiji was significant does not mean that one has to accept that it could not have been better implemented. The criticisms made against the way the $3.5 million special fund has been managed are justified, given that it was financed from public funds, from tax paid by other communities besides Indigenous Fijians themselves. These criticisms include lack of appropriate targeting, lack of transparency and accountability, "tunnel vision" as Winston Thompson has put it, the lack of input from non-Indigenous Fijians and economic wastage.

These critical comments are also justified given the limited resources of a small nation state such as Fiji. Since 1984, at least $50 million of public funds has been utilised to assist Indigenous Fijians in education, a significant investment for a nation with limited natural and financial resources. A serious question that has been raised concerns the continuing emphasis on providing access to Indigenous Fijians in the tertiary educational sector when Indigenous Fijians were not reaching the upper secondary school levels in significant numbers. To this day, Indigenous Fijians continue to do badly in school compared to other ethnic communities (See Tables 1-5 in Chapter Three). They have a higher failure rate at Forms six and seven and have a comparatively higher attrition rate. Funds provided to Indigenous Fijian schools, particularly in rural areas, were mainly for capital development—for building new classrooms, for new science laboratories and libraries, for providing books. It is not surprising, therefore, that this physical development of schools would have little impact on the high failure and attrition rates of Indigenous Fijian students with almost half of the students, who begin school at Form three, not making it through to Form six.

In the conceptualisation of the two AA policies, the primary aim was to narrow, or close, the educational gap between Indigenous Fijians and other racial communities in Fiji, notably the Indo-Fijians. The policies were based on the human capital model where

there is an assumed relationship between capital investment and the required output. The underlying assumption therefore, of both policies, was that if financial capital was poured in for human and physical resource development, there would be a consequent narrowing of the educational gap. These policies have not made a significant impact on the educational gap as originally conceived. In her analysis of AA policies in Western nations such as England, the United States and Australia, Helen Smith (1991) maintains that these programmes did not directly address the problem of poverty faced by the disadvantaged pupils. As well, the programmes did not critically examine the structure of the school, its programmes and resources of the schools that were assisted by AA. Three more criticisms about the AA programmes that Smith makes are that first, the resources provided were inadequate, second, the poor were enmeshed in another layer of welfare bureaucracy, and third, the supposed beneficiaries of the AA programmes were subjected to sociological scrutiny which blames them for being failures. How pertinent are these criticisms to the AA context in Fiji? I would think they are very pertinent indeed.

Funds to assist poor Indigenous Fijian schools were aimed at superficial surface changes in school physical development. It was assumed that pouring in more money on physical development would generate a parallel development in student performance. It is not surprising that this did not occur. The structure and context of the school and the curriculum were not held up for scrutiny to see whether changes should have been made there. It was assumed that the failure lay with the students for not passing, not with the school. It is interesting that none of the informants attributed underachievement to psychological models of mental deficiencies. Rather, the consensus amongst all the informants is the problem lies with Indigenous Fijian attitudes, closely tied up to culture and location. AA programmes are aimed to compensate for perceived problems in the home/family environment by initiating changes in the school environment. They also do not address the problem of poverty that surrounds the supposed beneficiaries of the programme. Funds going into physical school development do not address the problem of the lack of material goods for students to perform well in school like exercise books, writing materials and educational resources such as books and toys, that are taken for granted by those who can afford to buy them. AA does not address the problems many poor families face in just surviving on a day by day basis in terms of meeting basic needs. Neither does it address the problem of paying school fees and other financial requisites of schooling.

Resource Issues

As some of the informants have indicated, the financial resources of AA policies in Fiji were inadequate to tackle the problem of Indigenous Fijian underachievement. Indeed, as the evidence in the next chapter will suggest, it is arguable whether a lot of money would solve the problem without parallel changes occurring at other levels. For instance, pouring in more money for capital school development would be pointless without an intensive community/adult education programme for Indigenous Fijian parents' facilitation of their children's performance. As well, focussing assistance at the tertiary level would not be beneficial if assistance is not provided at every tier of the educational system, beginning at kindergarten. Additionally, investing money for physical development of schools requires curriculum reform. And without adequately trained teachers to make the required impact in the classroom, the foregoing reforms are likely to be meaningless. And since everything is tied up with the economy, raising the standard of living of Indigenous Fijians by providing them with the financial means to do with employment and business growth would be another necessity.

An abundance of resources—natural, financial and human—unfortunately is not what Fiji has. Considering that resources are inadequate, the main question is how to maximise the benefits of what is available. However before I discuss this further, I would like to examine the outcomes of educational AA programmes in Fiji. I will address this question of maximising the benefits of the current programmes in Chapters Seven and Eight.

Positive Outcomes of AA

What are the positive outcomes of the AA policies on the Indigenous Fijian people, on the nation and on the economy? As some of the interviewees have indicated, one of the positive outcomes has been the increased number of Indigenous Fijians now occupying key positions in the public and private economic sectors. This has resulted in a more proportional representation of Indigenous Fijians in education and employment. The participation of Indigenous Fijians in the market economy has been ensured. AA has also resulted in the enhancement of the general status and quality of life for Indigenous Fijians. The empowerment of middle-class Indigenous Fijians is a tangible positive outcome of AA. Ultimately, AA policies in Fiji have promoted racial equality and consequently, have resulted in distributive justice by attempting to equalise opportunities available to Indigenous Fijians.

Unintended Outcomes

On the other hand, AA policies have had negative unintended outcomes. An unintended consequence of AA has been the internalisation of the thinking that Indigenous Fijians are failures at school. This is perhaps the worst effect of AA. As Adi Kuini Speed has put it, one of the flawed assumptions of AA is that it assumes "that Fijians cannot compete on equal grounds with others as if there was something wrong with us". The basis for the programmes is the deficiencies of Indigenous Fijian students, and by extension, the deficiencies of Indigenous Fijian orientation, value system and culture. Despite the lack of subscription by informants to a psychological deficit model which attributes underachievement to mental deficit, the blame is placed squarely on the shoulders of the Indigenous Fijian student for being a school failure. No thought is given to whether there is something wrong with the structure of the school and the way it is organised. No thought is given to whether it might be the pedagogy of the school that may be at fault. And indeed, no thought is given to whether the curriculum might be disadvantaging Indigenous Fijians in some way. Instead, Indigenous Fijians were found wanting psychologically, socially and culturally.

As the data in Chapter Five indicates, their lack of motivation, their lack of self-esteem, their inadequate home background and their cultural orientation are held up and used as explanations for their inability to achieve the 'Western' way which is measured in terms of passing examinations.

Worse still, Adi Kuini Speed suggests, Indigenous Fijians internalise the message that they are failures and are found wanting when compared with other racial groups in Fiji. What this does to their sense of well being, to their self identity is open to conjecture. But when the subliminal message hits home that Indigenous Fijians are failures and need government assistance to make it though life, I am sure that this would significantly affect the Indigenous Fijian psyche. This would be an unintended consequence of AA.

Another unintended outcome of AA is the backlash from both Indigenous Fijian and other communities in Fiji. There have been criticisms and resentment from within ethnic Fijian ranks. The increased call for scholarships to be awarded on a provincial basis is a manifestation of this resentment. Yet another unintended outcome of AA has been the parallel educational success of non-Fijians without any AA that has made it very difficult for the educational gap to be significantly narrowed, let alone closed. And

as some of the participants in this study have pointed out, there is a rise in the number of educated Indigenous Fijian middle-class which has exacerbated rural-urban inequalities. Rural Indigenous Fijians are more and more disadvantaged compared to their urban counterparts in the opportunities available to them and the relative economic disadvantage that they face.

Moreover, an unintended consequence of the AA policies is the flattening out of the traditional hierarchical nature of Indigenous Fijian society. Whether this is a positive or negative thing is yet to be ascertained. This is being played out through the 'commoner' Indigenous Fijians getting educated and playing an important role in the economy as compared to chiefs, who have always played a leadership role in traditional Indigenous Fijian society. How this will influence the traditional power relations, where the chief's authority is seen as paramount, is yet to be seen. Will the future educated Indigenous Fijian commoner supplant the authority of the chiefs? Will there be conflict within the Indigenous Fijian society as a result of a more egalitarian power structure? Will the rise of the Indigenous Fijian middle class see the end to the chiefly system? Will education be the downfall of traditional Indigenous Fijian society? These questions remain unresolved issues about the unintended consequences of policy.

Negative Outcomes of AA

What have been the negative outcomes of AA policies? Much of the criticism has been levelled at the way the $3.5 million annual Fijian education fund has been implemented. There has been wastage in terms of tertiary failure. One of the explanations for this is the relatively low marks that Indigenous Fijians enter university with compared to the non-ethnic Fijian community. Another explanation cited for the wastage is the difficulty Indigenous Fijians face in adapting to a more relaxed environment after the rigid, disciplinarian environment of the boarding school or the Indigenous Fijian home. But as Dr Ali points out, which public programme does not encounter wastage? At the same time, Professor Tupeni Baba and Winston Thompson have queried whether the wastage is too high.

Another negative outcome of AA is the ostensive colonising effect it has had on the Fijian people where, as Adi Kuini Speed has described it, "initiative is not emphasised but where help from government is emphasised". As surely as the process of colonialism captured the minds and bodies of the colonised, the practice of AA has the potential to enslave Indigenous Fijians in mind and attitude. Again, as Adi Kuini has

indicated, Indigenous Fijians "have always led a sheltered life in terms of the colonialised mentality...that continued after independence". Just as the colonised become dependent on the colonisers for their livelihood, so have Indigenous Fijians become dependent on AA to get them out of the vicious cycle of underachievement in school and the economy. AA, coming soon after political independence, has seen a continuation of the dependency attitude that had been cultivated in Indigenous Fijians since Fiji became a British colony.

This has occurred to such an extent that some Indigenous Fijians are beginning to perceive AA as a "God-given right", as some informants noted. This kind of attitude does not encourage total commitment by parents and students alike to be competitive in schooling. It does not encourage the desire to work very hard so as to attain a place according to merit in competition with other racial groups. Instead, it encourages a complacent attitude to success and life which is non-synchronous with the accepted version of success in life.

More seriously, one of the negative outcomes of the AA policy administered by the Ministry of Fijian Affairs is what Professor Baba has called "the maintenance and perpetuation of a bureaucracy", of a "political hegemony" of AA for Indigenous Fijians by Indigenous Fijians. Political hegemony is to be expected when political control is in the hands of the racial group that is benefiting from AA. On the other hand, it is unacceptable when the same policies are continued year in and year out without a concerted review and evaluation carried out at particular stages of implementation to determine which directions to take. To my knowledge, there has not been a comprehensive review of the $3.5 million special education policy since its inception in 1984. What has been established is a bureaucratic system that is characterised by "tunnel vision", in the words of Winston Thompson, that is resistant to change, that will maintain the status quo at the expense of creativity, vision and innovation.

It is understandable therefore, although not to be condoned, that lack of transparency and accountability would accompany the entrenchment of the bureaucracy that is responsible for making decisions about, and implementing policies to assist the Indigenous Fijians in education. For to do otherwise would presuppose the rational, objective, cost-benefit analysis that is characteristic of public policy in Western nations. To do so would assume that a time-frame and/or a review would be built into the policy. And to do otherwise would assume that efficiency and effectiveness would be goals built into the formulation of public policy. Policy analysis as a discipline, as a paradigm for providing appropriate information and predicting trends to enable policy makers to

formulate policies, was never an integral part of policy making in Fiji. It should not come as a surprise, therefore, that transparency, accountability, review/evaluation and strategies to determine efficiency and accountability were not a part of the formulation and implementation of the $3.5 million special fund to assist Indigenous Fijians in education.

Summary

In this chapter, I have provided a comprehensive, richly textured description, analysis and interpretation of AA in Fiji's micro-context *as represented by the informants*. In an attempt to provide a critical policy analysis framework, I have addressed the following questions: (a) How were AA policies in education conceptualised and produced and what were their rationales? (b) How were these policies implemented? (c) What have been their outcomes—positive, negative and unintended? (d) How has power been played out, who made the AA policies and whose interests have AA served? (e) Was AA in education in Fiji an appropriate response to the social and educational inequalities created by a colonial history? (f) Are the criticisms that have been made regarding the implementation of AA policies in education justified?

One conclusion that can be drawn from the interview data is the complexity and multi-dimensionality of the policy context. Another is the complexity and multiplicity in the viewpoints of the informants. The contradictions and ambiguities, as well as the similarities in views that have emerged from the data are perhaps reflections of how the study of policy is indeed complex and multi-tiered as the literature in Chapter Four indicates. The policy process is not a straightforward one and the contexts of influence, policy text production, practice, outcomes and political strategy have all been addressed in this chapter.

I have argued that AA was an appropriate and strategically essentialist postcolonial response by an Indigenous Fijian Government to the social and educational inequalities created by Fiji's colonial history. AA was a strategy to overcome Indigenous Fijian disadvantage to enable better representation of Indigenous Fijians in education and employment. Ultimately, then, AA can be seen as a strategy to promote equality of opportunity and outcomes to enable Indigenous Fijians to participate more actively in a market economy.

In terms of influence and political strategy, Indigenous Fijian political power has enabled the production and implementation of AA policies which have caused much

controversy in Fiji. On the negative side, Indigenous Fijian political hegemony has reportedly led to abuse in the implementation of these policies and a shortsighted 'vision' of AA. One such example are the claims of nepotism, favouritism and political interference against the way the Fijian education fund has been administered by the MFA.

It is particularly in the area of practice or implementation that many of the criticisms of the AA Fijian education fund have arisen. While all the informants admit that one of the positive outcomes of AA has been the significant proportion of Indigenous Fijians making it through tertiary study and occupying positions of authority and status, there is a collective view that issues of accountability, monitoring, wastage and evaluation need to be addressed. An urgent call has been made particularly for a review of the policy to determine the strengths, weaknesses and possible strategies for the future. In other words, there are calls for better implementation of AA policies so that optimum efficiency and effectiveness are achieved.

Given that AA is highly likely to continue in Fiji into the next century, the critical question to ask is how can the Government maximise the benefits of available funds set aside for the educational advancement of Indigenous Fijians at this historical juncture. Suggestions not only for managing the Fijian education fund more efficiently, but for improving the education of Indigenous Fijian in general, will form the focus of the next chapter.

There is agreement amongst the informants that a shift in focus of AA to incorporate all those disadvantaged members of society, irrespective of race, is overdue. It is interesting that those making these comments from the Indigenous Fijian community are educated Indigenous Fijians who would like to see more equity in the distribution of government funds. In the next chapter, many of the informants argue for a redirection of the policies to tackle the lower levels of schooling in terms of the provision of kindergartens, particularly in rural areas, better primary and secondary facilities, the provision of qualified teachers at all educational levels beginning at kindergarten and the revamping of the curriculum so that it becomes more relevant and culturally democratic. As well, some of the informants have recognised that if Indigenous Fijians are to participate in the capitalistic market economy, there is no way forward except to participate and succeed in the school system. As well, there is recognition that to be successful in both education and business, Indigenous Fijians will have to change their cultural orientation, their attitudes towards education because Fiji is part of a global economy. The call for an emphasis to be put on community education of the Indigenous

Fijian parents/adults to recognise the value of an education and the strategies that they can use to realise success on their children's part is something that has come out strongly in the interviews. All these suggestions and more will be examined in the next chapter.

CHAPTER SEVEN

REFORMS: SCHOOL, POLICY AND PEOPLE

This is the last of the three principal data chapters. The previous two chapters examined the informants' constructions of explanations of Indigenous Fijian school failure (Chapter Five) and their representations of the conceptualisation and implementation of AA policies that were developed to 'affirm' the education of Indigenous Fijians (Chapter Six).

This chapter analyses what the informants say should be done about reforming schools, AA policy and people. I examine proposed changes to the curriculum, teacher education and time management. This is followed by a detailed examination of the discourse on policy redirections in terms of informant perspectives on the kinds of policy reforms that should be instituted. The next major section on people-reforms is where I examine the discussion on changing the Indigenous Fijian outlook. Community education, in particular, is the suggested process by which this change should occur. A more efficient communication network involving all the agencies involved in the education of Indigenous Fijians is posited as a critical strategy. The roles of the church, chiefs and the educated person play an important part in this discussion. This is followed by other suggested changes that do not quite fit into the above categories. An examination of the discussion on political will and vision follows under the rubric of leadership changes. Additionally, globalisation issues, as raised by the informants, are scrutinised as well. Finally, my interpretation of all these data in the form of further discussion of important issues, as well as a summary of the chapter, will form the last two sections of this chapter.

School-Based Reforms

In this section, I examine the portrayals by informants about what should be done to improve the education of Indigenous Fijians in terms of school-based changes. There are calls for a major overhaul to the curriculum so that there is a balance in local, national and international knowledges. As well, there is recognition that the knowledges of all communities, especially Indigenous Fijian, should be valued in the formal curriculum. This has implications for teacher education which is another major change called for. To counter the claim that predominantly Indigenous Fijian schools spend too much time on extra-curricular activities, there have also been suggestions for more efficient use of school time.

Curriculum Reform

In Chapter Five, there was extensive coverage of the informants' representations of explanations for Indigenous Fijian failure in formal schooling. There was acknowledgment that the neocolonial, hegemonic educational structures in the form of the curriculum, pedagogies and assessment left much to be desired. The informants saw the curriculum as too foreign, too academic with an emphasis on book learning which, in many instances, was viewed as irrelevant and inappropriate. Hence the view, as Ledua Waqailiti has argued, that "the whole curriculum needs revamping...to change so that it is suitable for students" (T24: 4). Or as Sefanaia Koroi has put it, "we have to look at the curriculum again and restructure it so that it fulfils the needs of the whole spectrum of the student population in secondary schools" (T9: 14).

As well, many informants believe that indigenous cultural values and knowledge systems are undervalued and undermined by this Western-oriented curriculum. Professor Tupeni Baba, for example, would like to see schools rejecting "the whole culture deficit model that we're working under" (T8: 14) so that the curriculum is one which values "community knowledge". It would be an "integrated" curriculum meaning that "learning will be very much community based" and that the "whole pedagogy" and "method of teaching will have to be critical pedagogy,...not pushing down the throat of the kids some foreign kind of knowledge" (T8: 14).

Multiple Points of Exit/Vocational Education

Many informants have decried the academic focus of the curriculum which is perceived as disadvantaging many students. They have called for more pathways to account for the more practically based talents and skills that students have. For instance, Dr Vijay Naidu argues that Fiji's "educational system needs review" so that it does not exclude people from a livelihood and does not make them feel like failures. Naidu then goes on to suggest that the educational system should have "multiple exits and many alternative ways" of preparing people for a livelihood which need not "necessarily be academic". These could include preparation for "middle-level jobs" such as electricians, plumbers, painters, construction workers which requires trades-person training.

As well, Naidu suggests that because Indigenous Fijians are good at sports and art, those are some areas that could also be developed to provide avenues for students to pursue something they are already good at. As he puts it, "People nowadays can make a livelihood out of playing good rugby, good soccer, good athletes, in arts. Why should we not enhance

those capacities and why should we leave these kids to the academic process and find that they don't fit?" (T6: 12)

Similarly, Rainima Meo reiterates the need to identify and move students to alternative systems where their ability in non-academic subjects is recognised and nurtured. He stresses that after "ten years of general education these kids are mature enough to be subjected to some specific or specialist training". They can be trained "to become a painter...a wood carver or...a carpenter" which is equivalent to "a low to medium skills manpower" level, what Dr Naidu refers to above as "middle-level jobs".

The call for multiple exits by Dr Naidu and Meo is reiterated by Filimoni Jitoko who says, "We haven't really opened a lot more doors where students can go through if they have failed this mainstream academic line". Jitoko calls specifically for more practical community-based learning such as learning to farm on the land. A senior Indigenous Fijian bureaucrat agrees that the land should be utilised by Indigenous Fijians. As well, he suggests other avenues, such as the "information revolution technology in which people can find a niche" (T31: 9).

Some important questions about the status of an academic-type education, when it does not necessarily provide students with employment, are raised by Rainima Meo. He also raises the problem faced by the education sector when other available options are not made clear to the students. As he has put it:

> What is this academic achievement...and what would be [its] importance when...there are no more jobs available on the market? Will academic achievement be the priority for everybody's schooling?...The child was only told that this is the particular channel you have to do because you have to get a job....But that child was not told right from the beginning that you have to be educated...to be one who can survive in the world on your own and the end of your schooling and that is what you are not teaching at the school now. (T41: 11)

On the issue of vocational education, Mere Tora argues that this is perceived as second best, "like a last resort" against an academic-type education. She suggests that whatever alternatives are offered, it is critical that perceptions change so that the alternatives are "also seen as important", as worthy and equal in status to an academic-type education (T19: 7).

The Chief Education Officer, Technical and Vocational Education & Training at the MOE stresses that there is a lot of uncertainty about the status of vocational education because "there's a lot of talk and not enough of action". She identifies the basic problem as

limited resources because "running technical/vocational education is a very expensive exercise". As she explains it:

> Should there be an outcry for more technical centres...we won't be able to look after their interests because we just don't have the money, we don't have the resources. Now we have a lot of schools crying out for vocational centres and we're telling them, this is our criteria now. If you have the staff, if you have the room to do it, and you have the equipment we [MOE] give the approval". (T59: 1)

The officer points out that the "new thrust" of the MOE "is working towards entrepreneurial training". While the current focus is "skills based", the new "focus is entrepreneurship" where students "learn their skill but they use entrepreneurship to try and give them the training to try to utilise those skills to earn money, to go back perhaps to the village and become a better villager".

A different perspective to curriculum reform is made by several informants regarding making the curriculum context and place specific. For instance, both the Minister for Education and Ilai Kuli, Member of Parliament, have recommended that in Levuka, for instance, Marine Biology should be offered because of the presence of the Pacific Fishing Company Limited (PAFCO), and forestry and tourism be on offer in the Western Division, while the study of minerals could be part of the curriculum in Namosi. In a similar way, Peceli Rinakama, Principal of Naitasiri Secondary School, recommends that Agricultural Science be a compulsory subject in Naitasiri in recognition of land utilisation potential in that province. As Rinakama has put it, "To be frank, we don't have avenues for employment in Naitasiri. The only avenue is the land, where they can be full-time farmers with the knowledge they learn from Agricultural Science" (T49: 3).

Vakatale, Kuli and Rinakama have recognised that specific emphases could be placed on what will have to be a flexible curriculum that would take into account the economic activities in those areas. This would provide links between what is offered in the curriculum with employment opportunities in those areas. For as Rinakama argues, "What I want is that there should be no drop-outs. I want all the children to drop-in so if they fail from the academic stream, they go to the vocational but not necessarily go to Suva to join the army or police or prison" (T49: 3). Further, Rinakama suggests that "career paths" are mapped out "as soon as a student enters secondary school" with teachers assisting "them in mapping out the possibilities as to the career paths of students" (T49: 3).

In sum, then, what the informants have raised here is the incongruity between what schools do and the demands of the marketplace. Or rather, the absence of alternative systems of education which will prepare students, who do not make it through to university, with

skills and know-how that will enable them to start up their own businesses or that will earn them a living. The point has been made that the curriculum is foreign and irrelevant for the bulk of indigenous students, especially those out in rural schools. As such, calls have been made to make the curriculum less academically oriented and more practically oriented. Vocational and technical education is seen as one option that, if developed properly, would be viewed by more people as a viable option. As well, suggestions have been made for parallel non-academic institutions for Indigenous Fijians in the arts, music, dancing, sports and the like. Since Indigenous Fijians clearly have talents outside of the academic arena, the implication is that these talents should be nurtured and developed as an option. The next section takes a look at the call for reforms to be made in emphasising the value of Indigenous Fijian knowledge systems in the formal curriculum.

Valuing of Fijian Epistemologies, Language and Culture

There is widespread agreement that the Western-oriented curriculum in place does not place much value on indigenous epistemologies, culture and language. The historical basis for this is explained by Professor Konai Thaman who points out that "When schools were introduced, the missionaries just assumed that we had no knowledges and if we did, they were primitive and had nothing to do with cognitive process and that it wasn't worthwhile". The result of this undermining of indigenous knowledges is that Pacific Islanders "couldn't use our knowledge as a context of thinking" but instead "had to use somebody else's culture". This has perpetuated the thinking that indigenous knowledge systems are "not a worthwhile context for intellectual pursuits" (T4: 12).

Likewise, Dr Ahmed Ali highlights how the colonial experience undervalued Indigenous Fijian knowledge systems. He cites several causes of this. First, he suggests that "Maybe...we're dealing with the Western body of knowledge and it takes time to acquire it". He also emphasises that Fiji is still a relatively new nation and that Indigenous Fijians may be facing difficulties coming to grips with schooling. He particularly notes, "And remember we've also got out of the colonial experience only about 26 years ago and that's important" (T2: 9).

Here, Thaman and Ali are referring to the 'othering' process that occurs in the colonial encounter. As I explained in Chapter Three, the impact of colonialism on every facet of life in Fiji was devastating. The underlying philosophy behind colonisation was that Western cultural values, language and epistemological systems of knowing were superior to the colonised and that colonised people were in need of civilising. It was the project of social

engineering "to produce institutions and personalities that would be familiar to Europe" in order "to render the colonized predictable and controllable", as Sardar et al. (1993) have put it, that formed the rationale for the undervaluing or total annihilation of anything indigenous from the curriculum. This would explain why many informants have pointed out that the teaching of the Fijian language, as a subject, is not seen as important which has consequences for people's sense of cultural identity.

For instance, in the same way that Mere Tora viewed vocational education as not having the same status and weighting as academic subjects, Sefanaia Koroi points out that Fijian as a subject does not have the same status and importance as academic subjects. As he puts it, "It has played a very small part in the main curriculum in its importance". As a consequence, "it's gone so bad that it's not valued...by the children" (T9: 12). Koroi continues by warning that if we ignore the values of the Indigenous Fijian people that come through their language, customs and culture, they will become alienated. This alienation will disadvantage them from learning other "foreign" subjects. He tentatively suggests that maybe the neglect of Indigenous Fijian cultural and value systems in the school curriculum is a reason for the educational gap between them and other ethnic groups in Fiji. He acknowledges that we should "learn from other components of the curriculum, the general knowledge in science, mathematics and other areas". But he emphasises that "when you ignore the whole basis of people's culture you are likely to reap some disadvantage and maybe this gap that we're talking about may be due to that neglect" (T9: 12).

Ilai Kuli is also of the view that "There is lip service to Fijian language and literature in the curriculum" (T71: 1). In a similar way, Setareki Delana, Principal of Sila Central High School and President of the Fiji Principals Association, points out that Indigenous Fijian knowledge, culture and language "is not adequately covered in school". He points out that it is important for Indigenous Fijians to appreciate themselves first before learning other things. He states:

> we should put more emphasis on the history of our land, our development in the past and understand our origin. It's only when we have an appreciation of our own selves that we can appreciate our own culture and race. As [the curriculum] is Western-oriented, we think that the Fijian way is old-fashioned, backward and it has gone to the extent that people don't respect their elders. (T51: 2)

This view is shared by Viliame Saulekaleka. He argues that "there should be much emphasis on the teaching of Fijian culture and tradition in school to enlighten our people to love to be a Fijian". He tentatively suggests that the undermining of indigenous cultural

knowledge systems "may be a reason why our boys and girls are so violent nowadays because they don't know the customs" (T57: 2). Another repercussion of the undervaluing of Indigenous Fijian cultural knowledge systems in the curriculum is raised by Filimoni Jitoko who argues that this has led to the development of some half-baked Fijians "accustomed to some half-way systems".

A different perspective is taken by Filipe Tuisawau who argues that it is not the education system that is threatening the cultural identity of Indigenous Fijians but the impact of Westernisation and globalisation. As he has put it, "there is a threat, not in the education system, but from society in general - the media through radio and television, and all the things coming into this country". All these pose "a threat to identity rather than education" because people perceive what they see "on TV, for instance" as " more superior than what our identity is". The result of this is that the things that Indigenous Fijians are "bombarded with" in terms of "aspects of Western culture" gives "Fijian children high expectations, material expectations...and unrealistic goals" (T46: 2-3).

However, there is consensus amongst the informants that something ought to be done to ensure that more value is placed on the teaching of what is important to Indigenous Fijians in formal schooling. For instance, the view that the Fijian language should be emphasised in school because of the functional value it has for communication, especially when an Indigenous Fijian is in a position of leadership, is taken by the Minister for Education. Vakatale notes:

> the sooner the Fijian students realise that what's important is communication, they would see that the Fijian language is important....They will be the leaders of the Fijians and you have got to be able to communicate with Fijians. You've got to be able to speak the language...to know the norms and what is done....I think we should make the...young Fijians know that to know their customs and traditions and their basic Fijian-ness is functional, that it's useful, that it serves a purpose and it's not just being proud to be Fijians but that their very Fijian-ness will serve a function in their lives. (T14: 11)

Moreover, there is the argument that the study of the Fijian language and culture should not be confined to Indigenous Fijians alone but should be learned by all ethnic groups in Fiji. Dr Vijay Naidu, for example, gives several reasons for this. First, it would foster better understanding between Indigenous Fijians and other ethnic groups. As well, Naidu notes that there would be greater "appreciation of the breadth and scope and relative complexity of Fijian cultures and traditions". He points out that "there should be a greater appreciation of things Fijians because it's a very rich culture, a very rich tradition and a very

rich civilisation that is worthy of perpetuating in a very systematic way" (T6: 16). Giving the example of how "the old Fijian customs managed resources very well", Naidu emphasises the point that "The traditional methods of managing marine resources and an understanding of the seasons - when to do what - are worthy of retention and will make us a better people generally" (T6: 16).

In a similar way, Ilai Kuli argues that the Fijian language should be taught in a meaningful way in the curriculum because "There is only one Fijian race in the world" (T71: 1). Dr Ahmed Ali also maintains that Fijian should be taught as the most important language because Fiji "is the place where you will teach Fijian culture and language". He suggests that all ethnic groups learn Fijian but he sees no need for Indigenous Fijians to learn Hindi as Fijian "is the indigenous language" (T2: 10).

By contrast, some informants have argued that the multiracial nature of Fiji's population should be considered. Winston Thompson, for instance, stresses that because Fiji is "a multicultural community", learning other languages should be compulsory. As he has put it, the curriculum "should place more value on cultures and traditions, not only Fijians but of others because we are a multicultural community". His reasoning is that learning other languages broadly "to understand the customs, cultures and traditions...would be better for everybody" (T17: 7).

An informant who shares this view with regard to the need to value the cultural context of all communities is Aloesi Vucukula. She argues that a cultural analysis should be carried out so that the best parts of all the cultures in Fiji are incorporated into the curriculum "because our society is multicultural, it's culturally diverse". This is to avoid "cultural imperialism or monoculture in the curriculum".

Additionally, some informants have argued for a redefinition of the way Fijian culture and language is taught in the school because of the current emphasis on a Western framework. As evidence of this, Una Nabobo notes:

> We might want to teach Fijian culture and language in the schools but we are teaching it within a Western framework. We might want to redefine the framework, pedagogy, epistemology, everything....I foresee classrooms outside, children taken on tours to see how pottery is made and so forth. (T45: 3-4)

Further evidence for a reconceptualisation of the teaching of Fijian culture and language in schools is provided by Professor Konai Thaman who suggests that there are two ways of placing more value on Indigenous Fijian culture and language in the formal school curriculum. One way is to have a special subject, perhaps to be called 'Fijian Studies', made

compulsory for all Indigenous Fijians to take. This would continue all the way up to Form six. The other alternative which Thaman favours is "to incorporate Fijian knowledge, values and skills into every subject" be it Maths, Science, Commerce or History. She admits that the second option is problematic because of the difficulties involved, such as knowledgeable teachers. Nevertheless, she supports this option, not only because the Indigenous Fijian system has knowledges in all subject areas, but more importantly, the message will go across that this is a critical subject that is worthy of study. As Thaman argues, "if we can incorporate that in the different subjects just think of the message and think how that is going to impact [on] the mind-sets of Fijians in the future" (T4: 12).

Similarly, Ilai Kuli would like to see "more emphasis on Fijian language and culture, more funding". In particular, he suggests that the wisdom and knowledges that people "who could be regarded as libraries" have should be recorded before they die because "When we bury them, we're burying a library" (T71: 1). This point is a crucial one as Indigenous Fijian culture is predominantly oral. As I mentioned in Chapter Three, my grandmother had a phenomenal memory that could trace my family tree back at least six generations. As Kuli and others have suggested, leaders need to recognise that indigenous knowledges and wisdoms are stored in memories and with the passing of the generation of people in their seventies and eighties, a reservoir of knowledges is disappearing unless efforts are made to store this in a retrievable form.

Other strategies are proposed by Mere Samisoni who points out that the Fijian language should be supported and used in as many places as possible. She suggests, for instance, that it be taken as a subject up to university level and that signs everywhere should also be in Fijian. As well, it could be supported by private sector companies such as banks, even to the extent that visitors to Fiji be encouraged to learn to speak the language. She argues that Indigenous Fijian values "must be part of our psyche and the images must be congruent with what we practice" (T22: 16).

On the other hand, a senior educator at the USP raises some key issues associated with the problematics of a subject that would teach Indigenous Fijian culture and language. She makes the point that Indigenous Fijian culture is heterogenous and that there would be hegemony when one dialect and one culture dominates. She notes:

> if we do a curriculum with Fijian culture, someone's culture is going to be the overriding culture. For now it is the Bau, Tailevu....But why should one culture dominate and at the expense of other smaller cultures? Fijians are not homogeneous and there is no Fijian culture....So I really think understanding their cultures in a place

is one thing but having one overriding culture...becom[ing] the superseding culture I disagree with. (T11: 8)

To sum up, this section has looked at informant representations of the undervaluing of Indigenous Fijian cultural values, knowledge and language in the formal school curriculum. The reason for this can be traced back to the introduction of formal schooling when the church and Colonial Government saw indigenous knowledge systems as primitive and unworthy for inclusion. This initial exclusion of things Fijian from the curriculum has continued. And while Fijian as a language is taught at school, it does not have the same status and value as academic subjects. This neglect is perceived by some informants as contributing to Indigenous Fijian underachievement and the increase in the crime rate. As well, this neglect is seen as creating "half-baked" Indigenous Fijians who are "accustomed to some half-way system" as Filimoni Jitoko puts it. There is so much to learn and be learned from indigenous knowledge systems that the general agreement is, that not only should this be incorporated into the curriculum, but that everyone should learn it. This is in recognition of Fijian indigeneity and political power. However, the multicultural nature of Fiji society is acknowledged with suggestions that the best part of each culture is incorporated into the curriculum so as to avoid, as Aloesi Vucukula succinctly put it, "cultural imperialism". As well, the problematics associated with developing a subject called Fijian Studies are raised when there is heterogeneity in Indigenous Fijian cultural knowledge systems.

Teacher Education

There is recognition by the informants that if there is an overhaul to the curriculum, it would have some serious implications for teacher education. As is evident from the above section, the emphasis is placed on a curriculum that would not only place more value and status on a subject called Fijian Studies but also an inclusive curriculum that would take into account the knowledges and value systems of other cultures in Fiji.

Professor Konai Thaman argues that curriculum and teacher education are key elements to enable Indigenous Fijians to improve their educational performance. She maintains that the content (curriculum) and processes (pedagogies) need to be looked at concurrently in teacher education programmes. The programmes should take account of the different ways students in Fiji learn and develop strategies that would help these students learn better. As well, Thaman argues, the content and pedagogy of teacher training curriculum should get "the teachers to understand, not just...what is Fijian and what is Fijian

culture but to understand how Fijian kids learn...and to develop strategies to help them improve their learning" (T4: 23).

Thaman further notes that in relation to teacher education, an examination needs to be undertaken of "the ways in which we can change our teaching styles to suit the majority of...rural students...because they just come from a different environment" (T4: 23). What Thaman is advocating is that teacher education programmes need to recognise that 'Western' textbooks may not necessarily be appropriate for the classroom situation in Fiji and that teaching styles must take cognisance of the different learning styles of students. Thaman does not negate the value of a multicultural curriculum and concludes that "a learning environment that neglects the culture of the learner is culturally undemocratic" (T4: 25).

According to Professor Tupeni Baba, the teacher education programmes will need to be based on a "more critical pedagogy" where "the form of teaching and learning would...be altered from more rote into a facilitative kind of process and examinations will have to be based on how students articulate what they feel, what they think rather than what we want them to feel and think" (T8: 3).

There is recognition, therefore, that the content, pedagogy and assessment in teacher preparation programmes will need to change in conjunction with curriculum reform in the school system. This will have to occur particularly if Fijian Studies is incorporated as a valued and meaningful content of learning, in contrast to the perceived superficial coverage of Fijian as a subject of study in school.

Time Management: Less Emphasis on Extra-curricular Activities

The other school-based factor raised by some informants in Chapter Five concerns the way schools organise and manage school time. Research conducted by the Ministry of Education has concluded that the experiences of non-indigenous schools, which emphasise academic concerns, can be enlightening for Indigenous Fijian schools if the aim is to improve examination results.

In the estimation of the informants, 'successful' schools are those which place a lot of emphasis on academic pursuits, where the focus is on teaching and learning for success in examinations. The school ethos becomes geared towards passing examinations. For this purpose, efficient management of time seems to be a crucial factor. For instance, Amraiya Naidu's portrayal in Chapter Five, of his experiences as principal of a predominantly Indigenous Fijian boarding school points to time management as critical to success in examinations. The school was then organised in such a manner that academic matters took

priority, particularly in the term when students were to sit the national examinations. Similarly, Dewan Chand emphasises that "if you have a controlled time management of the Fijian children, they can perform" (T23: 3).

The MOE, through the efforts of the Research and Development Unit which incorporates a Unit dealing with Indigenous Fijian Education, has focused on the issue of time management and has carried out training programmes with principals and school managers aimed at making Indigenous Fijians school just as 'successful' as successful non-indigenous schools. The 'success' or otherwise of such a focus is yet to be felt but the feedback obtained by the education officials and Indigenous Fijian principals involved seem encouraging. There is consistent feedback to suggest that timing is a problem in Indigenous Fijian schools and that there is much to be learned from successful non-indigenous schools.

This section on institution-based changes has seen calls for a concerted overhaul of the current curriculum, an associated reform of teacher training programmes and, at the school level, more time spent on academic activities rather than extra-curricular activities has been suggested. All these suggestions have been made with the view that these institution-based changes would serve the interest of the least advantaged (Rawls, 1971). In this case, the least advantaged in formal schooling are perceived to be Indigenous Fijians.

Policy-based Reforms

In Chapter Six, I examined the informants' representations of the conceptualisation and implementation of race-based AA policies. In particular, many criticisms were made about the way the Special Fund policy, administered by the Fijian Affairs Board, was implemented, such as lack of transparency and accountability, financial wastage of public funds, and the award of scholarships based on patronage and nepotism rather than merit. There is consensus also that a review is long overdue to determine the effectiveness of these policies and indeed whether they need to be redirected to be more efficient and effective. There is also some agreement that AA policies need to be refocussed and perhaps channelled to other areas which would help the least advantaged. Some of these suggestions, which are raised in the following sections, involve community level assistance in terms of resourcing the rural communities, providing assistance at the lower levels of schooling (kindergarten to secondary school) and other conditions under which AA could be made to work more effectively. As well, there are consistent calls for a reconceptualisation of the way AA is regarded so that there is a shift from the current emphasis on race to one based on class.

Less Emphasis on AA at Tertiary Level

Almost all informants have made suggestions regarding the need for AA to be focussed at the lower levels of education and on community development rather than its current emphasis at the tertiary level. For instance, Filimoni Jitoko makes the case that "We need to touch the critical points if we are to make any major impact like the schools, the communities and even the attitudes of Fijian parents, for example, need to be changed" (T13: 13). He particularly would like AA funds to be used for development of community resources in the disadvantaged rural areas. This would take the form of "construction of community libraries and the resourcing of the community with educational materials" because "the major disadvantage of Fijian students in the villages is in the schools so if there is nothing in the schools, there is nothing there". It is his view that there should be equality in "community resource because the major disadvantage is in the resources in the community" (T13: 11).

As well, Jitoko would like AA to be in the form of the provision of scholarships or financial assistance to Indigenous Fijians at secondary schools and not just at tertiary level. He notes:

> [A]lso we've got to assist the...bright students who are not coming to secondary schools in the rural areas because now there's nothing for the parents. They cannot afford to send them....That is the area that we should look at, trying to give people opportunities to progress until they come to university. (T13: 11)

Suggestions have also been made with regard to AA occurring lower down at kindergarten, primary and secondary school rather than the current focus at the tertiary level. For instance, Taufa Vakatale would like some AA at the kindergarten and primary school levels, particularly in rural schools, because "we need to get the basic education which is very important". And as she puts it, "In rural areas, they don't have anywhere to go for preschool. That's a very important difference and if we really want it to have any real meaning, then perhaps we look at the base rather than giving scholarships...and have preschool as the norm in rural areas" (T14: 4-5). This is echoed by Joeli Kalou who emphasises the difference between establishing kindergartens in the rural areas compared to the urban areas. Like Vakatale, he notes the rural disadvantage and would like to see AA funds used to establish and maintain kindergartens, particularly in rural areas, so that they become "part and parcel of the national education system" (T33: 3).

In contrast, Krishna Datt believes AA should be geared "towards the primary schools because the primary school is the gut of it" (T28: 13). Alongside this, Datt calls for attitude

changes in teachers as well as more involvement of parents in the school, not only in terms of "fundraising...but the actual involvement in the work of the children which is very different". He reiterates the point that adult education for Indigenous Fijian parents is needed to raise "their consciousness to the same level as the middle-class Fijians whose children are doing...well" (T28: 13).

There has, therefore, been recommendations for AA to change its focus from concentrating on scholarships at the tertiary level to the lower levels of schooling, where it is perceived to be needed more. For instance, suggestions have been made that AA should begin at kindergarten and the primary sections in order to set a good educational foundation. As well, informants have suggested that scholarship awards should begin at secondary level rather than at tertiary level to enable more meritorious Indigenous Fijians to access the tertiary system. Moreover, Indigenous Fijian rural communities have been targeted as those in need of education resources that would benefit both adult and child. On the other hand, suggestions have also been made regarding the improvement in the way AA has been implemented. These are covered in the next section.

Improved Implementation

Besides suggesting that AA should begin at the lower levels of education, many informants have recommended more efficient implementation. Suggestions have been made regarding better targeting, transparent criteria for selection, better monitoring, a time frame, regular reviews and evaluation. In sum, there is general agreement that more efficient management of AA is necessary.

As evidence of this, a senior Indigenous Fijian government bureaucrat who requested anonymity, raises the following issues regarding better implementation: setting "conservative targets that are quite clear and practicable for the officials at the Ministry [MFA] and for the students who benefit" and for other communities to "see what exactly is involved like the criteria" for selection which is an issue to do with transparency. Another issue raised by this senior government bureaucrat deals with setting a time frame so that AA is "not open-ended". As well, he recommends a "major evaluation" and careful monitoring "and if it's not working, scrap it and try and think of something else". Moreover, he recommends that careful monitoring occurs with the selection of students awarded scholarships and that they be "closely monitored in terms of performance".

Mere Samisoni asks a similar set of questions, but argues particularly that "AA has to have vision, purpose, more planning and management" (T22: 15-16). She points out that

AA should "be driven by research and management, not politics, not provincialism, not divisions in the country, not race but by measurement of what is really valuable and that is your human assets and potential for self-worth, satisfaction and dignity" (T22: 15).

The need for a review of AA policies has consistently been referred to by many informants. A senior Indigenous Fijian bureaucrat in government, for example, asks how long AA should continue. She is concerned that "it seems AA will go on forever" and that "No one will have the courage to say stop, this is enough". She notes that "Every government that comes into place will continue with it when really we must look at the reason why we're doing it and how effective it has been. Maybe we'll find out that this is not the most effective way to do it" (T56: 3). Another dimension to implementation is added by Tahir Munshi who maintains that "any project which is not reviewed is not a good project. We should evaluate, we should find out whether certain things are bringing about the desired results" (T42: 15). And, as Reverend Dr Ilaitia Tuwere puts it:

> if education is really useful, then the usefulness of this fund should be visible in the sense of the quality of life of the Fijians in the commercial sector, in the rural sector, in our villages. We should see the fruits of this in that the Fijians are performing well....If they're not performing...then something is drastically wrong with the whole thing....[T]hey should evaluate the whole scheme. (T12: 7)

Yet another perspective, to do with performance indicators, is placed on the implementation of AA by Dr Nii-Plange who asks "when you implement the AA programme, what are your objectives?" He maintains that clear objectives are necessary so that "by the end of a decade you produced x numbers of Fijian economists, x numbers of Fijians with management degrees, x with medical degrees". He cautions that if there are no such "indicators of measuring to what extent you have succeeded" then "there is a yawning gap in the AA programme" (T20: 3).

Similarly, Adi Litia Qionibaravi would like to see "an assessment of the Fijian manpower strength as it is today in both the public and private sector...so that we can then assess what areas that we need to concentrate in". She specifically notes that "there might be other areas of need that we need to utilise". However, she makes the point that "you can only do that after thorough research is carried out...every two years to make an assessment of the current manpower strength of Indigenous Fijians and Rotumans in the country" (T1: 5).

By contrast, Dewan Chand, in arguing for efficient resource management, states that "one of the conditions [for AA policies to work] is having the skills of managing resources". He maintains:

> This is a very minimum prerequisite to ensure that the project succeeds. Very often and very sadly, we hear there is no report on the financial resources, there is no record about how the money has been utilised. In other words, there is mismanagement of funds. So people will have to be taught how to manage funds. (T23: 13)

On the other hand, Winston Thompson points out that in scholarship allocation, there has to be "a mix between a quota system and a merit system because you don't want it entirely quotas, you don't want entirely merit but there has got to be a sufficient balancing of the two so that over time, you've got a reasonable strength of these things being given" (T17: 11).

This section has examined representations of informants on how policy-based changes can be best effected. One school of thought would like less emphasis placed on AA at the tertiary level. The main argument here is that problems in schooling begin lower down at the preschool, primary and secondary levels, therefore that is where the focus should be. The second school of thought is generally in agreement about the current focus of AA, but argues that better implementation of policies is critical. Recommendations have been made about clearer objectives, appropriate targeting, better monitoring, ongoing research, and a better system of review and evaluation.

Administrators with Integrity

One such suggestion to make AA work more efficiently is the perception that what is needed are administrators with good personal qualities who would be incorruptible. For instance, Ratu Mosese Tuisawau suggests that AA needs "committed administrators". Similarly, Dewan Chand makes the point that we "need to have people with vision" in the form of "quality administrators who would not be carried away by too many biases". Other personal qualities that Chand identifies are honesty and having "an in-depth understanding...appreciation and recognition of saying there is a problem and the need to have the missionary zeal to tackle the problem". What AA does not need are "people with a lackadaisical half-baked attitude sitting in the boss' chair" (T23: 12).

This view is supported by Professor Asesela Ravuvu who maintains that "we don't have people with integrity so that's the big question. If people in government don't have this kind of integrity, there is no way these policies can work" (T34: 11). Similarly, Joseph

276

Veramu, Lecturer in Education at USP, points out that "there's a need for people who run this [AA] to have high personality qualities", who should be "above board" and who "are not susceptible to corruption" (T64: 2).

Integrated Approach

Another condition that is suggested for more efficient implementation of AA is the need for coordination between government and non-government organisations. For instance, Esiteri Kamikamica, a former President of the FTA and community worker, emphasises that "NGOs and government..[have] got to pull together because we are a community". She emphasises that "It has to be a coordinated, integrated educational development for the indigenous people with the help of the non-indigenous because we can't save ourselves from the situation we are in now" (T54: 2).

Many suggestions have been made that, in order for AA to work better, there needs to be an integrated approach to the whole issue of Indigenous Fijian achievement. For instance, Adi Litia Qionibaravi argues that "first we begin from home - there's got to be an active adult education programme" with the appropriate bodies involved such as "FAB...the church...other organisations...the chiefs". She continues:

> There's a need to alert parents on the roles that they should be playing. There's a need to improve Fijian homes, there's a need to provide better facilities in the village. On the teacher's side we hope there will be better placement of teachers. If teachers are not moving out to the rural schools for some reason then that should be looked into, if teachers are teaching the wrong subjects, that needs to be looked into. On the administration of schools, that needs to be looked into....On the Fijian Education Unit, the structure...and staffing should be looked at. There should be improved communication between us and the students [on scholarship] and there should be a lot more staff working there [Fijian Education Unit] so that the administration of the fund is better carried out. (T1: 12)

AA for Mature-Aged Indigenous Fijians

A very different approach is taken by some informants on what can be done to ensure that scholarship awards are maximised: that scholarships should only be given to 'mature' Indigenous Fijian students rather than to students coming straight out of high school.

Sakeasi Butadroka argues that "every student that reaches form seven must go to the army for compulsory service for two years where their hands will touch the soil and the hammer, the spade". While they are doing this, there should be night classes offered "so that they can go up to university" when this compulsory service is completed. On the other hand, Krishna Datt is of the view that Indigenous Fijian students "should have to work first

for one or two years" so that when "they go to university they do much better because they are more mature, they control their emotions and they come there because they know that this is my last chance, I've got to make it" (T28: 11). When comparing pre-service and in-service students, Professor Randy Thaman points out that the latter group are more mature and are more committed to their studies whereas many students "coming straight out of school who have been on scholarships...just don't put in a hundred percent effort" (T25: 3).

AA Plus Extra Assistance

Some informants have argued that for there to be an improvement in AA at the tertiary level, additional assistance is needed. For instance, Professor Konai Thaman argues that with AA at tertiary level, "You can't just get them into university without giving them some extra assistance" (T4: 2). She points out that "if at the end of the day we're not having a whole bunch of Fijian graduates coming out...the problem is not AA. I would question the process" (T4: 6). She goes on to maintain that:

> Part of the problem with AA, certainly at USP, is that those of us who deal with the students treat them as if they are exactly the same and that's where the problem lies. They're not the same. They didn't start out the same, they won't end up the same. They have different learning styles and if...people recognised that and addressed this then you probably don't need AA. (T4: 2-3)

Similarly, Professor Randy Thaman notes that what is needed is "affirmative action in admission, supported by systematic, mandatory remedial help for people that have come from systems where their English or numeracy is weak or when they have poor science backgrounds". As he puts it, there are some students who could be struggling through "quadruple filters" because "their English is not very good in the beginning". These students "don't understand the lectures, they don't understand the books...they don't understand the exam questions...and when they are writing in English, they also have a hard time expressing themselves". However, he suggests that while we "definitely need to give some remedial help", tertiary institutions "have to get a little bit tougher in the second or third year". And "if they are not trying, if they are not coping, terminate the scholarship" (T25: 2).

In sum, then, there has been a diversity in suggestions put forward by the informants regarding how to improve the way AA policies can be made to work. One such suggestion is "the need to have people with vision", "quality administrators" with "integrity" involved in policy implementation. Better coordination and integration between agencies involved in the education and development of Indigenous Fijians, as well the involvement of other

ethnic communities, are also suggested because "You cannot address Fijian education and performance in isolation", as Winston Thompson puts it. An emphasis is also placed on those Indigenous Fijians who receive scholarships in that they need to understand that getting a scholarship is not a "free gift but something that has to be taken with a sense of commitment...and responsibility", as Dr Nii-Plange describes it. There is the view that mature-aged students should be awarded scholarships and that students coming straight from school should either work or be involved in some youth or voluntary scheme that will give them some sense of maturity and responsibility. As well, there is the view that AA is not enough, that once students with scholarships go to university, there should be mechanisms for "extra assistance" in place to help those who genuinely need this assistance.

AA: Race-based or Class-based?

Some informants hold the view that race-based AA in Fiji has gone on long enough and that it might be time for these policies to be class-based instead. For instance, Reverend Dr Ilaitia Tuwere argues that AA is needed to help "those who are lagging behind and...we really are talking about everybody". He adds:

> It cuts across racial lines. While there are many Fijians who lag behind, there are also Indians who are lagging behind and AA, if it is to make sense,...must be geared towards the need of those who really need it....If we neglect these people and I'm not saying Fijians only but also other races...the whole nation is going to suffer social problems....(T12: 7)

Tuwere continues by asking "How long has this positive discrimination for the Fijians been running?" He suggests that a time should come when "we stop talking in terms of ethnic groups" and "simply talk nationally and say who are the people who are deprived of all this at the national level and see who really needs this affirmative action". He argues that "the time for that must come when we should be moving in this direction". Tuwere maintains that "If we want to build a good Fiji we must be talking about everybody, those who are deprived and those who are deprived across the board" (T12: 7).

In a similar vein, Pratap Chand points out that "Fundamentally...it is the concern of all communities everywhere that the underprivileged must be supported through AA" and that "other people, irrespective of race, be given consideration" (T35: 1). He adds that AA should be "related to means, not race" and that Fiji "has reached a stage...where we now have a significant number of middle-class Fijians, very well-to-do Fijians". He maintains that AA "should be for everybody, for all underprivileged people" (T35: 3-4).

What Tuwere and Chand are saying here is endorsed by Josevata Kamikamica who would like to see a broadening of AA so "the programme moves away from a racial base to a more broad-based programme". He puts it this way:

> Education is a very, very important factor in empowering the people and...to the extent that the government can provide the resources,...these policies should continue and then they should perhaps be broadened as our achievements improve, broadened in the sense to include...needs assessment including other people who are in need - Indians, Chinese. (T16: 5)

Dr Vijay Naidu is also of the view that a redefinition of who is truly 'disadvantaged' should be undertaken in the allocation of AA and that this can be carried out by means-testing of parental income. He adds that there are equally disadvantaged categories in the non-indigenous portion of the population who would benefit from AA. As he puts it, "there are other minorities in Fiji, for example, the Kiribati community, the Solomon Islander community who are very disadvantaged but who, under current circumstances never get access to such affirmative action". He adds that there are "also categories of Indo-Fijians, the sons and daughters of canecutters who clearly don't have any money at all and they've been penalised because they happen to belong to the Indo-Fijian community" (T6: 2).

What is emanating from both indigenous and non-indigenous informants is that it might be timely for the focus of AA policies to change from an emphasis on race to one based on class, where the meaning of 'disadvantage' is redefined or reconceptualised so that means testing becomes the strategy in this reconceptualisation. However, there is a recognition that this can only occur if there is sufficient political and public goodwill. This will be discussed in the section on leadership changes.

This section on policy-based changes has seen a variety of positions on the status and future of AA. First, there is a perception that the focus of AA should shift from the tertiary to lower levels so that problems at the base can be sorted out sooner. As well, there is the perspective that AA as a policy is fine but that implementation needs improvement. Further, other conditions for AA policies have been spelt out by the informants and they range from the quality of implementors, an integrated approach, the need for all communities to work on the issue of Indigenous Fijian underachievement and to the other extreme, the calibre of AA recipients. The issue of whether the focus of AA should shift to class as the principal criteria of disadvantage has also been raised in this section. The next section examines portrayals of reforms that should occur in terms of the Indigenous Fijian people.

People-Based Changes

The following discussion is based on the perspectives of informants on changes in the attitudes of people that are needed to bring about an improvement in the status of Indigenous Fijians in schooling and for 'success' in life in general. It begins by examining the lack of debate on issues concerning the Indigenous Fijians, then moves on to discuss portrayals of how the Indigenous Fijian outlook can be changed by agencies such as chiefs, church and educated Indigenous Fijians playing a key role. Community education, in particular, has been pinpointed as a crucial strategy that would uplift the standard of education amongst Indigenous Fijians by empowering parents to be facilitators of their children's education.

Further Debate on AA and Indigenous Fijian Education

Some informants have pointed out that there is a lack of debate on issues to do with the education of Indigenous Fijians, AA and on anything that may be misconstrued as racist. For example, Krishna Datt notes that:

> the nature of the Parliament is so very unconducive to debate. They don't want to get up and say something. If you talk about AA, then you are likely interpreted as either being pro- or anti-Fijian. And that's hardly the image you want to create....But the Parliament is the worst place to raise issues which are multi-cultural, this Parliament. This is why it's really in our interest to try and get a good multiracial block on either side. You could have a healthy debate about this and no one could accuse you of being pro this or pro that. (T28: 14)

In a similar vein, Joeli Kalou notes that "Fijian education, unfortunately, is never debated". He points out that within the government itself, "What a few of us are trying to do now is to have a permanent parliamentary committee on education". This way there would be "the chance to put Fijian education problems on the agenda and get issues discussed and decisions made" (T33: 9).

These two parliamentarians, from different sides of the House, highlight the need for more debate on issues confronting the education of Indigenous Fijians and the related issue of AA policies. A call is made for more transparency and accountability on the implementation of AA. As Datt notes "Now there is the fear that this opposition parliamentarian might ask how was this particular scholarship given away? What was the criteria used? But what do you do when sometimes they just tell you that it was the discretion of the Minister and that's the end of it. You got your answer, you shut up and sit down" (T28: 14).

This reluctance to raise 'racial' issues is also reflected in school and society in general. Tokasa Vitayaki argues that these issues are also avoided in the curriculum. She maintains "The current thinking up there is we don't talk too much about cultural interaction in Fiji because it's too sensitive. We don't talk about land because it's too sensitive. Do not talk about the constitution. When we don't talk about these things, we're depriving the students" (T37: 11).

Changing the Indigenous Fijian Outlook

There is a widespread belief that Indigenous Fijians need to change their cultural orientations and value systems if they are to make headway in school and in the capitalist market system. This is a shared view between Indigenous Fijian and non-indigenous groups alike and cuts across all categories of informants.

The belief that Indigenous Fijians should shift their focus from a communal to a more individual one is made by many informants. For example, Arthur Crane points out that "the problem" is that "the social structure [is] corporate in contrast to the structure of the Indian family which is so segregated" (T43: 14). In a similar way, Dewan Chand also talks about the communalism of Indigenous Fijians compared to Indo-Fijians. Indirectly, he advocates that Indigenous Fijians need to become more individualistic to survive in today's 'cut-throat' competitive world. He states:

> Fijians, by nature are very generous...experience will find that when it comes to teamwork like rugby...they will be able to operate very well, but when to comes to individual competition, that individualism is sadly lacking in the Fijian community whereas Indians are very individualistic in nature. That has contributed a lot towards Indian survival in a very competitive economic and educational environment. There they have no choice, it's a cut-throat competition. (T23: 5)

Yet, Mere Samisoni argues that competition is part of the indigenous way of life, only that Indigenous Fijians need to "translate those concepts to schools, work as well as thinking" (T22: 7). She maintains that Indigenous Fijian culture is competitive in that "we have had to compete in schools, we have had to compete in sports, even growing up in the village our mothers compete baking cakes and the mat weaving". She adds that "Competition is about individualism, but that individuals should be part of the whole" but the problem is that "everything has been separated out" where individualism is seen "as an end in itself" and not "a means to an end" (T22: 4).

By contrast, Sister Genevieve Loo points out that Indigenous Fijians should be more questioning and assertive. She observes that the "cultural problem" is that "Fijian society is

a hierarchical society and...right from home, students are taught to respect their elders, not to question" and that "students had a very deep respect for people in authority". She continues by stating that "they need also to be taught to think for themselves, to ask questions, to be questioning....So there is that cultural background, maybe because this is how they were brought up, they are not assertive enough" (T21: 3).

It is evident, then, that many informants would like to see Indigenous Fijian society changing so that their thinking is more in tune with 'success' at school, work and in the economy. These informants advocate cultural dynamism rather than cultural preservation. Indigenous Fijian cultural strengths such as generosity of spirit, communal orientation, respect for elders that comes about from listening, and their focus on community obligations will all have to be down played if the calls for change in cultural thinking are to be taken seriously. For as Professor Tupeni Baba puts it, "The only way to survive in that same competitive atmosphere is the so called "modern values" which will "push the school even harder than it is now" (T8: 15).

Inter-Agency Liaison

In Chapter Five, one explanation for Indigenous Fijian underachievement in schooling was the portrayal of spatial and class disadvantage, particularly to do with socio-economic status and lack of an 'education' on the part of the parents. There was a consensus among informants that a concerted and integrated effort needs to be made by the different agencies involved with Indigenous Fijians to do something constructive. For instance, Adi Kuini Speed argues for a reconceptualisation of training so that this occurs vertically rather than the 'Western' horizontal training that is the norm. She particularly argues that chiefs, the District Officers, the Roko, agricultural officers, women's advisers, education officers and other agents directly involved with Indigenous Fijians undergo training together. She notes that horizontal type training is irrelevant to the Indigenous Fijian context and that working in teams is more relevant. She states:

> In the Western context, we train people according to what they do, functional groups....But this kind of training...is not relevant in the Fijian context because we always work as a team and also because we are still dependent on other agents in order that a certain policy be implemented effectively. So we realised that if we are to bring about any effective change, it must be conducted along a vertical line in terms of the team that is going to be involved in this improvement...and...they go as a team in the district. (T32: 10)

And yet, Mere Samisoni points out that "there should be more discussion so we can link up so that our people can understand meanings better". She states that "We need more Indigenous Fijians to be able to do well" and that "it is only the outsiders or migrant races who are performing better". She notes that this "puts up a barrier", where race is seen "as an issue, as a phobia", when really the discussion should be finding out the reasons why, in order to move on. One shortcoming that Samisoni sees for race politics is "there is not enough communication, there is not enough understanding, there is not enough interpretation" and that "there is not enough acceptance of our strengths and weaknesses that have to be managed and developed" (T22: 3-4).

Moreover, there is emphasis placed on the need for all communities to work together on the issue of indigenous underachievement, rather than the current "basis that the Fijians have of compartmentalising Fijians and Fijian development and expect that this is going to ensure survival and perpetuation of the Fijian as a race in the future", which is "grossly misguided thinking" (T17: 9), as Winston Thompson puts it. Thompson maintains that "You cannot address Fijian education and performance in isolation" (T 17: 15). This view is supported by Sefanaia Koroi who notes that "there needs to be a concerted total commitment by everybody". However, Koroi is dubious, like Mere Samisoni above, about this occurring because he points out "Unfortunately, you can't have this because we have ethnic differences where some groups see this as a special favour to a particular group who are given a special advantage over them" (T9: 17).

Nevertheless, the need for "political consensus" and the support of all communities is emphasised by Professor Tupeni Baba who maintains that this "is a political question". Baba argues that "You must have AA supported by all people of Fiji and AA, if accepted, must be applicable to anybody who seems to be disadvantaged in a criteria that is defined and agreed upon by all of us" (T 8: 13). Baba goes on to suggest that for AA to be "transparent...be acceptable to the community...be well-defined and...equitable...would require going back into the schools, to look at the curriculum, the ethos, the quality of the teachers in all schools" (T8: 13).

Additionally, Winston Thompson makes the point that "providing more money is not enough on its own" to make a difference to the problem of Indigenous Fijian underachievement. He calls for "a greater sense of commitment and contribution by all Fijian elements—from the family, village, tikina, province to the institutions: Fijian Affairs Board, Bose Levu Vakaturaga, Ministry of Fijian Affairs, etc., and the main Fijian leaders. As he suggests, "all the Fijian elements" should not just be involved in "calling for more

resources to be allocated but more importantly, stressing the dedication, discipline, sacrifice, savings which must be forthcoming from Fijians themselves" (T17: 17).

Adult/Community Education

Education is viewed as extremely important to success in life. The connections are made between an adequate level of education (the higher the better) and a good quality of life. The arguments laid out in Chapter Five emphasise that compared to non-indigenous people, the Indigenous Fijians are not as forward when it comes to fulfilling the educational needs of the children, particularly for those in the lower socio-economic category. Since the majority of Indigenous Fijians are rural-based and the rural areas have a subsistence economy, many Indigenous Fijians have a low socio-economic status. This has implications for the level of education reached and knowledge about what to do to facilitate the educational success of their children. An intensive and regular adult or community education programme is, thus, one area which is seen to be necessary in changing views and practices so that there will be an improvement in the achievement of Indigenous Fijians. As Reverend Dr Ilaitia Tuwere has put it, "Whoever is educated has power in today's society" (T12: 3).

This sentiment is echoed by Mere Samisoni who points out that "the only way you can become more productive is if you are better informed and educated" (T22: 5) and that "Education...gives...people responsibility and empower[s] people to make decisions" (T22: 9). She argues that "a lot of aid should go into educating Indigenous Fijian women "to understand their responsibility, their role in the market place" in terms of "what are the costs,...benefits and the choices they can make from their list of priorities" (T22: 5). She points out that community education is important and that communication is a key element in this process. She particularly explains that "If the facts are explained to the parents for their co-operation they will understand". She states:

> If we get back to them and educate parents in a sender-receiver cycle and process and explain what it's like living in a cash economy, in a market economy, no more village subsistence economy, there has got to be changes and they have got to understand...and accept their responsibility to be flexible and change. I believe our culture is flexible. Today, we just haven't used the communication process to make it so. (T22: 4)

In a similar way, Professor Tupeni Baba argues that more effort should be put into community education "to make parents understand that education requires a lot more attention than currently is being given". As well, he points out that these Indigenous Fijian

parents "should go into it knowing...[that] it entails social change" (T8: 13). Baba also maintains that "Fijian education would have been far better served if we had put in a lot more into community education" rather than "on scholarships...[or] building new buildings" (T8: 9).

One possible way of changing Indigenous Fijian attitudes towards valuing education would be in the form of a booklet. Ratu Mosese Tuisawau argues that a "powerful tool is the printed Fijian language" and that "either the private sector, the market place or Government should set out a simple booklet on parental duties towards the success of their children in education". This could be carried out in a "question and answer" format, very much like the Socratic method, which "will have to be done by someone with expertise" because "when done properly it will grip the imagination" (T53: 4).

Sefanaia Koroi makes the point that traditionally, the Indigenous Fijian chiefs "are key players in the community that we try to attack through our own adult or community education". He advises that the traditional approach of getting to the people through the chief works best "because the chiefs have the power to call all the people who listen to them. So if you can gather them around chiefs and you convince the chiefs of the value of education...the message goes better to the people" (T9: 10).

A radical viewpoint is taken by Una Nabobo who argues that for AA to work, Indigenous Fijians should undergo "intensive training as a people, even to the extent of being indoctrinated". She continues, "Training and education have options and choices. I think we really don't have a choice. We really must indoctrinate them through the church, the media about the importance of education". Nabobo emphasises that "Until and unless you do that, no policy on AA is going to work. Educating the Fijians is not going to be enough, they just need to be indoctrinated just like the missionaries indoctrinated us" (T45: 4).

The Role of the Chiefs

There is widespread belief that Indigenous Fijian chiefs can make a difference in indigenous education through the influence they have on the Indigenous Fijian community. But this belief is tempered by the view that the chiefs themselves need to be educated first if they are to play a legitimate role in persuading their people that a 'Western' education is critical in this postmodern moment.

Adi Kuini Speed maintains that "having looked at the way our people live in the villages, if you do away with chiefly leadership, you do away with the whole traditional

286

system" (T32: 12). Having said that, Adi Kuini is of the view that chiefs and other Indigenous Fijian leaders at the village and provincial levels need to be educated because "it is so critical to equip our leaders with the essential skills, making them aware" as they "are the leaders who virtually run the show as it were in terms of our Fijian people" (T32: 15). Similarly, Josevata Kamikamica notes that chiefs "themselves should be helped to realise the importance of education in terms of understanding the mechanics involved" (T16: 8).

A senior educationist at the USP points out that "chiefs need to be educated if they continue to have some respect" and that "unless they are educated, they will not have credibility" (T11: 13). But as Veniana Lovodua puts it, "A lot of these chiefs have gone through the school system and yet they're divorcing their role of leaders from what's happening today...not realistically looking at their leadership roles to the needs of today" (T 44:3). Lovodua points out that "when it comes to education, they have very little to do" and yet, as Lovodua continues, the chiefs "could fulfil their role as leaders to initiate projects to get people to realise how important education is" (T44: 3). One of these "projects" could be in the form of support from chiefs, such as inclusion on school committees where "things can change", as Joeli Nabuka puts it, but "where the chief ha[s] a laid-back, indifferent attitude, nothing happen[s]" (T10: 9). Nabuka continues:

> But where the chiefs have gone though formal education and have achieved up to a certain level...they certainly contribute a lot. They might not say a lot of concrete things, it's just by their very support, that goes down the line to all the other Fijians and they would give their support wherever the chiefs' support is. (T10 :9)

Similarly, Pratap Chand is of the view that chiefs can have a "huge influence if they put emphasis in the village by holding meetings..., checking on children attending school and finding out why they don't attend and checking on the schools" (T35: 10). And as Esther Williams puts it, "We should educate chiefs. Education is a very strong tool...and then information comes second. You have to educate to inform people" (T27: 7).

Unfortunately, the Great Council of Chiefs, the ultimate institutional authority on matters that concern Indigenous Fijians, "is not doing its part properly in addressing those issues that really touch and are related to the Fijian people" according to Reverend Dr Ilaitia Tuwere. He argues that the Great Council of Chiefs needs to be more proactive, responsive and authoritative. As he has put it, "when we talk about Fijian culture, the chiefs with their authority must be bold, they must be clear about what we should cut down, what we should stop absolutely. They can do it and they should do it" (T12: 4).

Ratu Mosese Tuisawau points out that "Unfortunately...what is discussed depends on the people who run the show" and that "Not much free discussion is encouraged". Nevertheless, Ratu Mosese is optimistic that there are people in the Great Council of Chiefs "whose mental make-up is such that they would take on any worthwhile cause and have it brought for full discussion" (T53: 4).

The important role that chiefs can play in galvanising "the whole community to change" is summed up by Professor Tupeni Baba in this manner:

> I think chiefs play a very important role in mobilising the community, in making the community accept the innovation by showing interest themselves....So many observances that are done...could be simplified and the chiefs can play a prominent role if they encourage this kind of new approach, if they understand why it is done. I think that if they get good advice, the young chiefs will be able to galvanise the whole community to change. It's very difficult to change Fijian communities without involving chiefs. (T8: 10)

The Role of the Church

The category of church is not a homogenous one. As Adi Kuini Speed points out, there are differences between the Catholic and Methodist church. She perceives that students attending Catholic school institutions tend to do better than other churches because the Catholic church to gives "emphasis to education within their social community in terms of congregation and the teaching...this rubs off from the parents to the children and so they work as a team" (T32: 11). The following comments made about the role of the church in changing the attitudes of Indigenous Fijians to education, therefore, apply largely to the Methodist church.

The church plays an influential role in the lives of Indigenous Fijians. Joeli Kalou observes "the church is the only institution really than can say something that goes against culture and there is no reaction. The influence of the church is very strong and that is why...the church can do a lot to improve the attitude of the Fijian" (T33: 11). In a similar way, Sefanaia Koroi states that "people pay more attention to church than education, so they give more support to church activities than to educational activities" (T9: 10). And as Filimoni Jitoko puts it, "the church should relax...its binding effect on the parents" (T13: 13).

According to Ted Young, one way that the church can be of assistance is to "First of all, stop demanding contributions" in the form of "time and money". He gives the example of the annual Methodist Conference which sees a convergence of about 700 choirs. Some Indigenous Fijians are in two or three choirs and the cost would be enormous in terms of

time and money. "If they spend just half of that for their children in terms of buying educational needs, spending the time...supervising" is Young's lament. This is supported by Adi Litia Qionibaravi who notes:

> [I]n villages, they're always having collections, various types of collection - for the provincial councils, for the village development, for education, for the church, etc. And you ask anyone in the village, the average answer would be they would like to see their contribution reduced. So there is a need to integrate all these financial needs and find out the best way of assisting the people...so that the children's educational needs are properly taken care of. (T1: 9)

Focussing specifically on time management, Ratu Mosese Tuisawau points out that "one of the aspects that needs focusing on when dealing with churches is that we emphasise that there are only 24 hours within the day" and that there "should be some sort of meaningful agreement to come to with regard to the allocation of time". This is so because of "so much emphasis which militates against the education of children...appear to be imposed by the church on its members" means "less time available for parents to focus on their children's education" (T53: 4).

Several informants have referred to the importance of the church having strong and visionary leadership. For example, Dewan Chand notes that "The church has massive resources and so much power, and it has so much of influence that it can guide the people in the right direction....So it has to be the right person who is heading that" (T23: 13).

Reverend Dr Ilaitia Tuwere points out that under his leadership, "the cultural force" that the Methodist Church is trying to address is to do with such things as the emphasis of Indigenous Fijians on church activities and the little time they spend with their children. As he has put it, "right up on the agenda is the use of time...in the church activities and the use of money, the time they spend away from their children when they should be with them". He maintains that "it's a battle not only against what is going on in the church but also it's a battle against Fijian culture as well because the church and culture...are so closely interlocked that one is quite difficult to separate from the other " (T12: 4).

The Role of the Educated Indigenous Fijian

Many informants agree that educated Indigenous Fijians are making and can make a big difference in inculcating in parents the 'appropriate' attitudes to education. For instance, Esther Williams points out that "As educators, we can counsel parents and give them advice as to what they can do to help" because most parents "know that education is important, they just don't know how to go about it. They're really limited in what they can do" (T27: 7).

This view is reiterated by Adi Kuini Speed who maintains that the cycle of material poverty in the rural area can only be broken "if somebody who's reasonably well-educated comes in, sees the problem, changes it, does something about it and contacts the right agents". She adds:

> So it's really critical, the only way to break the cycle [of poverty] is for those who are educated in the various districts to come back, make the connection and give the advice or to actually do the work otherwise, this is going to continue. (T32: 10).

Similarly, Dr Nii-Plange points out that "Indigenous Fijians who have obtained very good heights in the formal system...have a responsibility to make themselves heard on this issue" and "should get words of encouragement to their folk in the rural areas, to go back more than they do" because "they are living symbols of what the others can achieve in spite of what exists now" (T20: 10). He is also of the view that educated parents perpetuate education for their children and that the AA policies that have educated many Indigenous Fijians will have "demonstration effects" on their children. However, Nii-Plange sees this as "a long-term situation".

In a similar vein, Filimoni Jitoko notes that "We hope that now we have more educated parents and hopefully they can assist their children or other parents who are not that well educated in the villages" (T13: 3). This is echoed by Joeli Kalou who states that "you've got the educated Fijian parents who are beginning to change. You could see that some parents are giving their children all the help they need to succeed" (T33: 11).

This section on people-based changes has included suggestions for more debate on AA and Indigenous Fijian education. As well, calls have been made to ensure that there is more effective communication and liaison between the agencies involved in the education of Indigenous Fijians. What is being promoted here is vertical type training that is more appropriate in the Fiji context, where "to bring about any effective change, it must be conducted along a vertical line in terms of the team that is going to be involved in this improvement", as Adi Kuini Speed aptly puts it. Because the perception is that the indigenous adult populace is largely rural and uneducated, recommendations have been made regarding changing their cultural orientations through adult or community education. This would be in response to another perception that a large proportion of Indigenous Fijian parents, particularly, do not know how to facilitate 'success' for their children in schooling. Chiefs, the church and educated Indigenous Fijians have been targeted specifically as influential agents in bringing about changes to the education of Indigenous Fijians. As well, another recommended strategy to educate Indigenous Fijians about the value of education is

a booklet in a question-answer mode. Finally, an extreme suggestion has been made that Indigenous Fijians should undergo "intensive training as a people, even to the extent of being indoctrinated" because "educating the Fijians is not going to be enough" and that "Until and unless you do that, no policy on AA is going to work", as Una Nabobo suggests. The next section examines other suggested changes that are perceived to be necessary for the general improvement of the performance of Indigenous Fijians in formal schooling.

Other Changes

Many informants have suggested other changes that would benefit the education of Indigenous Fijians, which do not quite fit into the above categories. One such recommendation is in the area of research. Other suggestions pertain to such diverse areas as training and regular in-servicing of teachers and principals, upgrading of school facilities and resources, more efficient use of community resources and the need for an education commission. Just as importantly, recommendations have been made for the collective interest of the nation to be the basis for local, national and political decision-making rather than the current focus on race issues.

Research

The need for research has been emphasised by some informants. This suggestion has not only been in the area of policy but also in school- and people-changes. For example, Professor Konai Thaman argues for more research to be carried out in the area of learning styles of Indigenous Fijians because "that's part of the reason why they don't perform well in school". Thaman states:

> There's enough research to show that the closer the home culture is to the expectations of the school, the better it is for students. So if that is the case then having AA in relation to scholarships is not going to solve much because you're attacking the problem when it's too late to attack it. It's much better to invest money to try and get schools to recognise if indeed Fijian students learn in a different way to get more of them to succeed in school. That's not to say that we should change the Fijian culture and make it like European culture...but the teachers should change their methods of teaching to take into account experiences of the Fijian kids. (T4: 3)

Thaman is promoting research at the school level to find out the factors that inhibit learning, and to do something about it, rather than spend the money at the tertiary level where it may just be a bit too late. Josevata Kamikamica argues along similar lines when he says "Perhaps part of that fund should be devoted to the kinds of research which deals with

these problems because in that way it will improve the quality of decision-making and curriculum and things like that" (T16: 13). This is echoed by Winston Thompson who points out that "I don't think enough attention is being given to studying the way the education system has gone, where the schools are, how the output of the schools in the various locations are coming through" in order to "understand the dynamics of the way...Fijian education has been coming" (T17: 16). A senior Indigenous Fijian educator at the USP sums it up in this manner, "No one has done a study of whether Fijians have done well since the first schools were set up in Fiji" (T11: 5).

A somewhat different perspective is taken by Esiteri Kamikamica who places an emphasis on the gathering of information before AA funds are distributed. She would like to particularly see a "needs assessment" carried out in order to identify those who are disadvantaged. As well, she would like to see "a very good information network" in place that would then be used to allocate the funds (T54: 4).

In terms of AA policies, Filipe Tuisawau argues for "a proper research into what the gap is between the two major races" in terms of "have we closed the gap, the number of Fijians that have come through with degrees, where the need is for AA". He points out that "there has to be a review of whether the AA policies are achieving what they're supposed to achieve". And because "we can't have policies that go on forever", Tuisawau maintains that "their effectiveness has to be analysed" (T46: 4). Similarly, Alifereti Cawanibuka, Principal of the Fiji College of Advanced Education, argues that "proper research has to be carried out so that the $4.7 million is well utilised". He maintains that "we have to identify what the areas are, what sort of courses and how many people are needed in particular areas" (T62: 2).

Teacher and Principal Training and In-servicing

As well as more focus on research, suggestions have been made regarding teacher and principal training. For instance, Josevata Kamikamica:

> would ensure that the teachers, particularly the heads of various schools are well qualified and trained to understand the problems that we have discussed and to focus particularly if they're teaching in Fijian schools to develop the attitudes that would allow students to compete in later years. I would then look at teacher training, particularly the head teachers, the principals. (T16: 12)

Setareki Delana would also like to see more appropriate training for principals, particularly in rural schools, and advocates a kind of mentoring programme where the

emphasis is more on practice rather than theory. As he has put it, "principals in rural schools are really behind in the sense that the kind of training they are undergoing is irrelevant to their work". I think what the Government should be doing more is to put them on a practical training...rather than the theoretical orientation of training programmes which are mostly irrelevant" (T51: 2-3).

Some informants have raised the importance of continuous teacher upgrading. Ledua Waqailiti, for instance, advocates regular in-servicing for teachers, especially for those "using the colonial system of teaching rote-learning" (T24: 5). Similarly, Dr Vijay argues that the proper training of teachers and professional issues are critical factors to consider in order to get good quality teachers which would go a long way to improving the quality of Indigenous Fijian education. Naidu points out that an educational system "can't afford to have teachers" who "don't have any teacher training qualifications" (T16: 19).

According to Rainima Meo, Filimoni Jitoko and Saula Koroinivalu, the MOE has been active in leadership training of school principals and managers in Indigenous Fijian schools. A "multi-pronged approach in the whole approach of enhancing Fijian education" is taken by the Ministry where principals, school management committees, teachers, parents and public, as well as the Provincial Councils, are targeted so that they are informed of their responsibilities towards the education of Indigenous Fijian parents (T41: 9).

Upgrading of School Facilities and Resources

Suggestions for upgrading at the school level have also been made. For instance, Ted Young would like to see the upgrading "of all the facilities, the equipment, books and all those types of things". Young would like to see Indigenous Fijian children being given "the best and the widest foundation for education at the primary level which is the most important level in terms of the educational development of a child" (T29: 4). Mere Tora notes that "for Fijian education, you really have to start from the schools...the facilities of rural schools...is a priority...and even houses for teachers...because good teachers don't want to go to rural areas because of the poor facilities" (T19: 13).

Some informants would like to see the current focus on human resource development of the AA policy, administered by the Ministry of Fijian Affairs, to change. For example, Filimoni Jitoko argues that the Fijian Education fund should revert back to allocating a portion to "capital development" of Indigenous Fijian schools. He argues that the reason for his stance is "we need the upgrading of facilities in primary and secondary schools because

that is very important for Fijian education [in]...getting the basic foundations first". He continues:

> The allocation of scholarships is very much at the tip for those who have succeeded while at the base, people are still struggling on their own - communities are struggling to build schools, to get better facilities for the children....We would have liked the fund as it was before when they used to have funds for capital works....But lately they've withdrawn that capital allocation and they've put everything into scholarships. I think that is a major blow to the schools because they really relied on that fund. (T13: 10)

More Efficient Use of Community Resources

By contrast, there have been some suggestions that community resources, such as church halls and schools, be utilised more efficiently by the rural indigenous community in ways that would facilitate educational progress. For instance, as suggested by Filimoni Jitoko, facilities outside of the home could be provided after school hours at the school where teachers can supervise homework so that "everything is completed before [students] go home". Or alternatively, the teachers can "discuss with the community the provision of a place...like the church or the community hall, which can be utilised for homework supervised by parents who have been rostered to supervise in the rural areas" (T13: 3).

Education Commission

Representatives of the two teachers' unions (FTA and FTU) have consistently called for a commission to be conducted into education to show the way for the future. For instance, Pratap Chand makes the point that "If we have a commission of education...it may give a blueprint for change" (T35: 5). Jagdish Singh argues:

> [T]he education system in Fiji underwent a thorough evaluation in 1969 and that was the last one. It is now 26 years since that evaluation. Any right thinking person...can make out that we are 26 years behind. So an Education Commission should be set up immediately. (T7: 15)

Suggestions for an Education Commission have not only come from teacher union representatives. Emasi Qovu, the Manager of the Workforce Planning and Scholarships at PSC, maintains that it "is so very unfortunate" when "the people at the Ministry of Education say there is no need for an Education Commission. In his view, "There is a definite need for...an Education Commission" (T65: 4).

Race Versus Nationhood

More importantly, there are recommendations made by some informants that race should not be the basis for the way social, cultural and political life is conducted but that the collective interest of the nation be paramount. The issue of race has been raised as an unpalatable divisive element to the notion of nationhood. Mere Samisoni argues that:

> Indo-Fijians are part of our nation and in the past have put a lot into the economy. Suddenly, when the Fijians feel threatened then this phobia about race comes through. We have to allow Fijians to catch up, say another 50 years. Do it properly, do it with dignity, do it with pride....You don't get anywhere...[by] making people uncomfortable racially. (T22: 16)

In a similar way, Adi Kuini Speed argues that "the drive for nationalism for its own sake...at the cost of nationhood... has cost this nation a lot. And the more we realise that it's the nation that matters more than whether you are Fijian, the more we bring this into focus, the better it is" (T32: 13). Pratap Chand also observes that "we are too deep in our racial thinking" and that "we must break these barriers" (p 5).

Jagdish Singh suggests that "Once all the races of this country don't look at each other as a race but as one nation, one people...then only can we progress as a nation". He argues:

> I want to ensure that every citizen in this country, particularly those who are born here, be they Fijian, Indian, Rotuman or any islander, to accept that they are Fijian and if they accept this they will work towards building Fiji. If you think you're a foreigner there then I don't think you can contribute anything to the development of the country. This is not the time really to talk on racial lines, to divide the community but it is the time for all the people of Fiji to become one. (T7: 16)

Those who have been involved in education, like teachers, principals, MOE officials, and teacher unionists, advocate the integration of schools so that Indigenous Fijians are more exposed to the spirit of individualism and competition. An additional argument given for integration is that there should be "more mixing, much more integration between the two races in terms of schools so that this element of race...slowly dies out and people start looking at people as human beings", according to Tahir Munshi. This view is shared by Dewan Chand who states "as far as education is concerned, it's my desire to ensure that through education we can bridge the racial barriers". As he notes, "The more we segregate, the more we bring in a watertight compartment" which "in the long run...would do damage to our community" (T23: 15). Chand goes on to point out that integration should also take place in terms of teachers where "I would like to been seen, not as an Indian, but as a

teacher, that my services should be available to anybody across the nation". The "tag of Indian or Fijian" should therefore not be a criteria in the selection of teachers teaching in predominantly indigenous or non-indigenous schools (T23: 15).

Here, I have examined the "phobia about race", as Mere Samisoni puts it, that seems to concern the people of Fiji, particularly where issues pertaining to Indigenous Fijians are concerned. There are calls for the interests of the nation to be the basis for political decisions rather than the current emphasis on Fijian nationalism. As indicated earlier by two parliamentarians, there is very little scope in Parliament to openly discuss issues to do with Indigenous Fijians because of the fear of being called "racist" by the Indigenous Fijian populace. For as Adi Kuini Speed puts it, "the more we realise that it's the nation that matters more than whether you are Fijian, the more we bring this into focus, the better it is".

This section has examined areas such as research, the training of teachers and principals, a "multi-pronged approach...in enhancing Fijian education" and the upgrading of school and community facilities and resources. In terms of research, informants have recommended studies be carried out on learning styles of Indigenous Fijians and how the outcomes of these might be incorporated into the school system. As well, there have been calls for research into the extent of Indigenous Fijian progress in schooling and into how far the educational gap has been bridged. Moreover, representations of other changes, such as the need for an education commission and an emphasis on the interests of the nation rather than on racial issues, have also been examined. The next section examines perceptions of leadership changes and encompasses viewpoints on a national vision and the political will to implement this vision.

Leadership Changes

Thus far, I have presented informant representations of the kinds of reforms that need to be taken in order to improve the education of Indigenous Fijians. They had been placed under the headings of institution-based, policy-based and people-based changes. This was followed by an examination of other changes that informants thought were necessary that did not quite fit into these categories. In what follows, I examine informant portrayals of leadership changes. This includes political vision, vision in education and political will. Informants have acknowledged that without the appropriate educational and political vision and without strong leadership, all these reforms they have suggested would come to nought.

Political Vision and Nationhood

There is general agreement amongst the informants that there is a lack of vision on the part of leaders in Fiji. Krishna Datt posits that both Indigenous and Indo-Fijian leadership suffers from this. As he puts it, "the Fijian leadership has become too engrossed in politics and politicking, not just politics". According to Datt, "this politicking is taking them away from the main goal and the question becomes their own political survival rather than statesmanship...visionary issues and major goals. Both races suffer from it" (T28: 19).

This theme is picked up by Adi Kuini Speed who argues that strong leadership is essential to keep the interests of the nation paramount over the "spirit of nationalistic fervour" where the "drive for Fijian-ness at the expense of nationhood has cost" the nation "a lot". She notes:

> [I]t's the responsibility of the leaders...[they] have to instil this in our people that this has nothing to do with being Fijian, it's thinking of the nation as a whole, that if the nation performs well economically and otherwise, then it would be of benefit to the groups within, especially the Fijians as landowners. Then people will see it but if we keep on going around telling people that your land will be grabbed away from you, you have to now start thinking of your own survival, at the expense of the nation, we are going to always have this problem. (T32: 13)

In a similar vein, a former senior government bureaucrat points out that "what we need for the country is a clear vision of where we're going as a country, irrespective of who's in it". His notion of this is "as a nation we want to be at some point in the future where everybody has the ability to live a full and fulfilling life, their children are educated, are able to do what they like when they like, are reasonably well off". He would like such a vision "enunciated by all our leaders" so that would become the focus of nation-building rather than the current focus on "our parochialism" and "our immediate problems...associations and groupings". He continues:

> And that's something that the leadership has to do so that the top leadership in the government, the Cabinet, the churches - if we had a united vision of what we're trying to achieve and then set about to put up the processes to achieve that, we would overcome a lot of the arguments that we have now. (p. 13)

Adi Kuini Speed argues that the major problem in Fiji is the lack of political and national direction because "Fiji has not been able to identify what it wants" and "that is the crux of the matter". She further notes, "We don't really know what we want, where we want to go. If we identify that first, then we will be able to order our priorities" (T32: 13). She maintains "There is no boldness in our thinking" such that "we can take on the policies that

we want". But having said this, Adi Kuini concedes the point that "we must remember we only became independent in 1970". She argues that "Some of us act as if we are 50, 60 years but we had 96 years of political domination by a foreign country from 1874-1970. We can't expect in 26 years to unravel all that so we have to think about the context, that's critical". She cautions "young academics" not to "expect too much of our leaders" as "there must be some balance in it" (T32: 14).

A senior Indigenous Fijian government bureaucrat points out that, in relation to AA policies, it would take very strong leadership to bring a halt to them because it has now reached the stage where "it's a sacred kind of politics" (T31: 4).

Vision in Education

There is agreement by the informants that where education is concerned, there is a lack of vision by leaders at all levels, be it local or national. This criticism has come particularly from teacher trade unionists. For instance, Ted Young notes that "we need people who have vision to be able to develop new directions for the country and for that matter, not only in education but, in all other areas". He goes on to argue that the MOE lacks people with vision because if they had this, "they would have come up in support of an Education Commission" that would give the Ministry a sense of direction. As it is, the MOE has been working on an "ad hoc" basis which is "why we don't know whether we are coming or going, whether we are achieving anything by virtue of being directed properly" (T29: 12-13). This sentiment is reiterated by Pratap Chand who goes a bit further to maintain that the MOE "has merely been administrative" and that leaders at the Ministry "live with the fear of being criticised and that is a problem" (T35: 5). And as Jagdish Singh puts it:

> We need people who are innovative, creative, imaginative who can have a vision for the future and at the moment we have people who have a colonial hangover. They think what has happened in the past is good even now. (T7: 8)

Adi Kuini Speed brings another perspective to this issue when she maintains that educational structures in place today have not been changed "because we are so used to what the colonial administration has left us with...the legacy that we've been left". And yet despite these structures being "not applicable any more" Adi Kuini argues that "nobody has the guts to make the change". She continues:

> one serious [thing] that is wrong with this country as a whole and is reflected in education is that the leaders don't have the guts to change. First of all, if they have

the intellect, they don't have the guts or they're not committed to improving people and those who don't have the intellect, some are not genuine and those who have the intellect don't have the guts. So we have both - nobody is willing to take the bull by the horn as it were. (T32: 16)

The relevance or otherwise of the government's social and economic policies has been raised by Mere Samisoni who maintains that "strong leadership" is needed to develop relevant policies so that Fiji can have a healthy economy. She notes, "Leadership is very important,...leadership has got to be committed because...the meaning of leadership is to bring about...desirable changes that government should play a catalyst role and facilitate. We have to change". She highlights the high proportion of Indigenous Fijians in prison which reflects not only that "policies are not relevant" but also that "we have got a sick ethnic Fijian society".

By contrast, Professor Konai Thaman presents a different perspective on vision. While pointing out that a "shared" vision is "very important", she raises problematic issues that arise "if the vision is not shared" and if "people don't agree that that's where you're going". As she explains, "the reality is...that everything is in a state of flux so you may have a great vision in education as the minister...but suddenly there's an election. The political process is such that different politics affect vision because you put a different person there who has a different vision" (T4: 27). Thaman also makes the point that without vision, 'it's very easy for people to come and manipulate you" in the form of aid packages where "some projects are even contradictory in their goals" so that sometimes there are cases of "the left hand not knowing what the right hand is doing" (T4: 26).

Political Will

Adi Kuini Speed argues that any major change "depends on the political will of those in leadership positions and particularly so at the national level". She maintains that "leaders with some intellectual weight" are necessary to run a country otherwise "you will always end up with a mediocre government". She also believes that the political party that has "intellect, education and skill" is the one that people should choose (T32: 18).

On the issue of sound decision-making, Esiteri Kamikamica points out that "there's nothing more harmful in any development than uninformed decisions and there have been a lot of uninformed decisions in the educational development of our country". She sees the importance of leadership in "any social, political and economic change" because "political

will is necessary to say this is our vision, this is the way we're going to go, let's keep sharing all the way and then after a year we review" (T54: 3).

To sum up, this section on leadership changes advocates strong leadership as a prerequisite to coming up with a national vision that serves the interests of the whole nation rather than particular groups of people. As well, there is recognition that all the changes prescribed for the improvement of the education of Indigenous Fijians and the status of AA policies will come to nought if there is no political will on the part of leaders, be they local or national, to view the change as essential and then ensuring that reforms are implemented. I now turn to examine representations of the impact of globalisation on the educational system, in general, and the lives of Indigenous Fijians.

Globalisation

The processes of modernisation, westernisation and globalisation have been raised by the informants. For instance, Dr Ahmed Ali points out that while the educational structures in place today, that were inherited from colonial times, might disadvantage Indigenous Fijians to some extent, he argues that "we've got to utilise them because we've got to compete in the world". He maintains that Fijians need "to become more competitive rather than less because...the world's becoming more competitive" (T2: 10).

The theme of competition in today's world is taken up by Tahir Munshi who argues that competition is necessary and that the Indigenous Fijian society cannot be isolated from the world of competition. He points out that "In this world of competition...we have to live and survive and compete in the world". As he explains it, Fiji cannot "develop isolation" because it is "too small a country" (T42: 12). Similarly, Isireli Koyamaibole, Chief Economic Planning Officer in the Policy Analysis Unit of the Prime Minister's Office, argues that "there is no compromise". Fiji has "got to produce because of the world market". As he explains:

> We are going through economic reform. Because the whole world is part of this economic reform, is a trading village, we have got to be part of it. What that means is that we've got to compete at a price competitive with other nations like the US, Tokyo, the UK, Germany. When that happens, clearly we see that the people who are not going to benefit out of this are Fijians because the bulk of them are out in the rural areas, in the villages. (T67: 4)

Reverend Dr Ilaitia Tuwere points out that we are in a dilemma because the forces of modernisation and globalisation are creating many changes. It is those "who will run and not faint" who will be successful in today's world. It is those who "understand the rules" and

will is necessary to say this is our vision, this is the way we're going to go, let's keep sharing all the way and then after a year we review" (T54: 3).

To sum up, this section on leadership changes advocates strong leadership as a prerequisite to coming up with a national vision that serves the interests of the whole nation rather than particular groups of people. As well, there is recognition that all the changes prescribed for the improvement of the education of Indigenous Fijians and the status of AA policies will come to nought if there is no political will on the part of leaders, be they local or national, to view the change as essential and then ensuring that reforms are implemented. I now turn to examine representations of the impact of globalisation on the educational system, in general, and the lives of Indigenous Fijians.

Globalisation

The processes of modernisation, westernisation and globalisation have been raised by the informants. For instance, Dr Ahmed Ali points out that while the educational structures in place today, that were inherited from colonial times, might disadvantage Indigenous Fijians to some extent, he argues that "we've got to utilise them because we've got to compete in the world". He maintains that Fijians need "to become more competitive rather than less because...the world's becoming more competitive" (T2: 10).

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Reverend Dr Ilaitia Tuwere points out that we are in a dilemma because the forces of modernisation and globalisation are creating many changes. It is those "who will run and not faint" who will be successful in today's world. It is those who "understand the rules" and

make the necessary adjustments who will make it. Those who have indeed understood the rules are the "emerging elite" made up of "those who are well educated, those who speak in English". And as Tuwere has pointed out, the dilemma Fiji is in is reflected in the traditional cultures becoming "the sub-culture" subsumed under "a new culture, a dominant culture" that is created by the processes of globalisation (T12: 10).

Adding another dimension to the impact of globalisation on the education system, Esther Williams argues that the marketability of qualifications is what counts in today's world and that this aspect should be reflected in the secondary and tertiary curriculum. She states:

> The important issue here...is the marketability of your qualifications. Because we are now competing in the local and international market, our qualifications at the tertiary level need to reflect these forces. How are our curriculum in the junior and secondary school able to prepare our students for this end product is difficult to evaluate or measure....Whether changing the curriculum to enable our students to do well is a question of principle and need. (T27: 8)

Similarly, Dewan Chand maintains Fiji "must produce graduates, people with certificates and education who should be able to travel across and fit into the communities in Australia, New Zealand, England, America and Canada" (T23: 8).

By contrast, Professor Tupeni Baba warns that if the processes of colonialism and modernisation were bad, the process of globalisation is even worse because of its emphasis on this competitiveness, referred to above by Dr Ahmed Ali and others. This competitiveness would be ruled by the global economy to such an extent that students will have to take on 'modern values' in order to survive in school. Baba notes:

> If you think it's bad enough up to now, wait until the full force of globalisation comes through and then it will be much worse. Colonialism was bad and the forms of modernisation and so forth but it is its latest form in terms of the global economy that will push everybody into the same competitive market. The only way to survive in that same competitive atmosphere is the so called 'modern values' and this will push the schools even harder than it is now. So if you think you had it bad up to now, you wait until the full force of globalisation comes through. (T8: 15)

So what Baba is emphasising here is the paramountcy or supremacy of the global market economy which will determine how lives are led, how local economies are run, how schools are administered, what values are important and so forth. One thing that emerges from what Baba is saying is that traditional values will be subsumed under 'modern values', competitiveness being one of the latter. The implications of this are enormous. One such implication is that personal and social relationships will take a back seat to economic

considerations. Curriculum will need to change to take cognisance of economic dictates. Competition will be the name of the game. Profit would dictate the path of development and so on.

In sum, then, the impact of the processes of colonialism, modernisation and now globalisation has been acknowledged by the informants. Given the prominence of the global economic market system and its impact on the local economies of nation-states, Fiji cannot survive without participating in the cut-throat competition of the global market. This inescapable 'truth' is generally recognised in the data and has significant implications for the direction that the education system will follow. The curriculum, pedagogies, assessment and school organisation will probably need to become even more competitive than they are now to keep up with global demands and trends. The implications of this on the performance of Indigenous Fijians will be discussed in the next section.

Interpretation

The constructions provided by the informants on the best way forward for the education of Indigenous Fijians and the implementation of AA policies highlight their diversity, complexity and contingency. When 'race' and comparisons are used as measures to determine who gets AA, the path forward is indeed fraught with difficulty and contradictions, as well as ambiguity and a multiplicity of effects. My revised model of McCarthy's (1990) parallelist theory (See Chapter Five) maintains that racial inequalities in schooling needs to be examined in terms of the constant interactions of learner dynamics of race, gender, class and *spatial location* in the political, economic, cultural and *historical* spheres. In what follows, I explore in further detail what I perceive to be significant issues that have arisen from the data.

In Chapter Five, we saw how issues of racial inequalities in schooling are produced by the constant interactions among race, gender, class and rurality dynamics and in the cultural, economic, political and historical spheres and these demonstrate just how complex and multifaceted these issues are. Just as importantly, the standpoints or perspectives taken by the informants are contingent on the intersections and interactions of their personal attributes of race, gender, class and rural experience juxtaposed against their social, cultural, economic, political and historical background and experiences.

What I would like to do now is to discuss further some important issues that have arisen from the interview data.

Curriculum Reform

The portrayals of curriculum reform put forward by the informants imply the need for a more culturally democratic curriculum and just as importantly, perceptual and institutional changes that would see a change in status of vocational and technical education so that "its worth is also seen [to be] as important" as academic subjects, as Mere Tora put it. The view, as Professor Konai Thaman describes it, of indigenous people "conditioned to thinking that there was not a worthwhile context for intellectual pursuits", has to be dismantled because Indigenous Fijians have, as Dr Vijay Naidu so eloquently put it, "a very rich culture, a very rich tradition and a very rich civilisation that is worthy of perpetuating in a very systematic way". And yet, as Fiji is a nation with diverse cultures, ethnicities and religions, this factor has also to be considered in a curriculum that is able to meet a diversity of needs. Can the leaders in Fiji accept this challenge? Are the different ethnic communities willing to work together to come up with a "counter-hegemonic curriculum" (Connell, 1991) which does not favour a particular group or class of people? Will there be political will for an inclusive curriculum, for a cultural analysis, as Aloesi Vucukula puts it, that will prevent "cultural imperialism"?

In terms of a curriculum that caters for the knowledge needs of Indigenous Fijians, we must take into account Una Nabobo's suggestion that "we redefine the framework, pedagogy, epistemology, everything" because at this historical juncture, we are teaching the Fijian language "within a Western framework" which is clearly inappropriate. It would seem that this stance would also apply to teaching about other languages and cultural knowledges as well because of the tendency to teach them "within a Western framework", as Nabobo puts it. The dismantling of Western frameworks in the way schooling is conceptualised and approached in former colonies is an imperative as they are usually inappropriate and irrelevant in decolonised sites. I will discuss my vision of what a postcolonial curriculum should look like in the final chapter.

Diversity of Pathways

Many informants have called for a diversity of pathways for school leavers that does not disadvantage those that are not academically inclined. The question to ask is can Fiji afford to place an emphasis (financially and ideologically) on vocational education and alternative pathways that are so different from the current emphasis on an academic education? Or is it not more a question of vision and political will to ensure that, if alternative exit pathways are created that would not disadvantage Indigenous Fijians, the

means would be found to ensure that what is envisioned comes to fruition? Is it not possible to prioritise the system of education so that the current focus on an academic-type education is reduced and a more balanced approach is developed so there is equal valuing of vocational and technical talents and skills?

Globalisation

The picture gets even murkier when we consider the impact of globalisation on the already restrictive neocolonial educational structures in place and play at this historical juncture, especially in light of Dr Ahmed Ali's observations that "the world's becoming more competitive". Is it practicable to have a postcolonial curriculum that not only takes cognisance of global effects but also places a significant value on indigenous cultural systems? And how does this stand in light of the above discussion where changes are called for in Indigenous Fijian cultural orientations? If their culture is going to be valued in the curriculum, then is there a need to adapt their ways of behaving, thinking and their epistemologies for the modern/post-modern world? How does this claim stand in light of Professor Tupeni Baba's observation that "Colonialism was bad and the forms of modernisation...but it is its latest form in terms of the global economy that will push everybody into the same competitive market". And as Baba succinctly puts it "if you think you had it bad up to now, you wait until the full force of globalisation comes through".

Changing Attitudes

Another important question that needs reflecting on is whether Indigenous Fijians should change their cultural orientations as many informants recommend. And if the answer is yes, what particular aspects of their culture should they change and if this cultural change is indeed viable, then what are the processes that will need to be observed in order for this to eventuate? How does one go about changing the cultural orientations of Indigenous Fijians anyway? Granted there are elements of Indigenous Fijian culture that may not be conducive to the facilitation of school success, but educated Indigenous Fijians are on the increase and they are making the difference to the underachievement equation, as some informants have pointed out.

Perhaps it is not so much the question of Indigenous Fijians changing their culture but more of what the school can do that does not disadvantage Indigenous Fijians. As Professor Konai Thaman succinctly puts it, "It's to say to the school what can you do to accommodate these kids than saying these kids must change so that they can pass the exam".

Shouldn't it, then, be a question of schools changing their curriculum orientation and pedagogical practices so that educational structures become more appropriate and relevant for students? As it is, their neocolonial configurations make it still so Western-oriented that really, it only serves the interests of those individuals whose home culture is closely aligned to that of the school and vice versa. As Professor Tupeni Baba argues, "the whole ethos of the school has to change" otherwise the Indigenous Fijian "would continue to be on the periphery even though he is now in the majority in his own country".

No More Tunnel Vision

There is also the perspective taken by many informants about the importance of an integrated, holistic approach which utilises all the agencies involved in the education of Indigenous Fijians such as the Great Council of Chiefs, the provincial and village councils, the Ministry of Fijian Affairs, the churches, the media, teachers and educated Indigenous Fijians. Just as importantly, there is recognition that non-indigenous groups, like the Indo-Fijians, can also be consciously drawn into this network because of the expertise and experience they bring. Their success in local educational provision, in school and resource management, and their general 'success' in schooling could be harnessed because, after all, Indigenous Fijian academic performance, when measured against Indo-Fijians, has been the basis for all the concerns about underachievement.

Leadership Reforms

The section on leadership changes demonstrates the views of the informants that no matter what changes are prescribed, nothing concrete can be carried out unless there is a national vision and there is the necessary political will to bring this about. There is consistent acknowledgment that strong leadership is needed in Fiji to lay down this national vision, whatever it may be, and then ensure that there is the political will to do something about it. The implications for this are, of course, enormous. For instance, given the way the Constitution is constructed, it is highly likely that Indigenous Fijians will maintain political power and, therefore, it is indigenous political will that will predominate. As Adi Kuini points out, it is therefore critical that leaders with "intellect, education and skill" hold power, for ultimately, the state of government is contingent on the quality of people at the helm.

Dismantling Racial Barriers

If all the "phobia about race", as Mere Samisoni describes it, is dismantled, then it is possible to have genuine dialogues and consultations between the two dominant groups that have viewed each other with suspicion and resentment over the racial divide since British imperialism introduced Indians from the Indian sub-continent in the late nineteenth century.

Dialogue between Indigenous Fijians and other ethnic communities in Fiji is, therefore, of paramount importance. There have been comments about the lack of debate on indigenous matters in the Parliament. This gets translated into local and national life such that the silencing that occurs regarding AA policies and Indigenous Fijian school failure in the public (and private) sphere is almost deafening in its intensity. It seems as if Indigenous Fijian failure in schools (and business) has infiltrated the minds of all communities to such an extent that it is viewed as normative and naturalised. The reluctance by the current government to open up discussion on matters that concern Indigenous Fijians gives the impression that issues of race remain dominant in the national consciousness.

And yet, a nation cannot "get anywhere...[by] making people uncomfortable racially", as Mere Samisoni points out. This occurs when the "phobia about races comes through" every time Indigenous Fijians "feel threatened", according to Samisoni. For ultimately, according to Adi Kuini Speed, "it's the nation that matters more than whether you are Fijian" and "the more we bring this into focus, the better it is". There is therefore the imperative for more open discussion about public policy that benefits Indigenous Fijians. Public debates and other forums should be open to the public so that non-indigenous communities feel comfortable about speaking out without being branded 'racist' or pro- or anti-Fijian, as Krishna Datt notes. More importantly, the onus for this opening up of public speaking space should begin in the Parliament, where healthy debates can take place without acrimony and counter-productive accusations amongst the political representatives of the peoples of Fiji. It is only when the national collective consciousness casts aside the facade of race that true dialogue can begin.

It seems to me that the "phobia" associated with race needs to be overcome, particularly by the Indigenous Fijian communities, if there is to be any social or economic progress of the nation. By this, I mean that the notion of nationhood should take precedence over indigenous concerns in many respects. For instance, as the discussion above illustrates, there should be open dialogue and discussion on matters concerning Indigenous Fijians. The "tunnel vision" associated with Indigenous Fijians and their development is indeed "misguided thinking", as Winston Thompson puts it. It is a vision "of tolerance, of caring,

of togetherness, of multiracialism, of multiculturalism" which can "only build bridges and strengthen them" which should form the basis for nationhood that is the criteria put forward by a senior bureaucrat who wishes to remain un-named.

An interesting point arising out of the data analysis is how the notion of 'othering' is transferred, contingent on historical context and how the silencing of the (new) subaltern class(es) continues after decolonisation has occurred. Are the lessons from colonial rule so well learned that the politically and numerically dominant group (Indigenous Fijians in the Fiji context) 'othered' and continue to 'other' minority groups. While the Indo-Fijians are considered a dominant group because of their numerical dominance (at the point of decolonisation, they formed the majority in terms of numbers but Indigenous Fijians had political control), they are nevertheless treated as social, cultural, ideological and political 'others'. The significant silencing occurring in the data is with regard to the minority 'others', those who are neither Indigenous Fijian or Indo-Fijian. They are almost excluded from discussions because of the prominent positioning given to the two major ethnic groups and, when they are mentioned, it is raised by Indo-Fijians. There is no mention of them by the Indigenous Fijian informants which seems to be a significant factor. I am not quite sure what this signifies exactly at this historical juncture in Fiji's development. What is clear is that groups that get transformed outside of the subaltern groups become involved in the process of 'othering' in similar ways to the colonial situation. Those that do not fit into the dominant categories of Indigenous Fijians or Indo-Fijians risk silencing and marginalisation. Power has shifted.

We have seen that colonial notions of race and difference have formed the basis for the Western discourses on underachievement and AA. These have been perpetuated in neocolonial formations in such a way that serious thought has not been given to their relevance and appropriateness at this historical juncture. It seems only proper that race barriers are dismantled and the interests of the nation kept paramount. At the same time, this has to be balanced against Indigenous Fijian interests. I am not suggesting for one minute that Indigenous Fijian institutions, such as the Great Council of Chiefs or the Ministry of Fijian Affairs, Provincial Councils and the like, be dismantled. Instead, what I am suggesting is that nation building is a collective effort. It is the racial divisiveness that has kept different groups from true dialogue with each other that I am critiquing. For instance, meaningful dialogue should begin at the top, in the Parliament and Senate. There should be healthy debates on matters that concern Indigenous Fijians by one and all. Off-limit discussion items should be opened out to everybody. Healthy debate and honest dialogues,

after all, make for better informed decisions. Public spaces need to be opened up for this to occur.

At the school level, another suggestion is that a curriculum that serves everyone's interests should be developed. In terms of developing respect for other cultures, Fijian, Hindustani, Rotuman and Chinese should be on offer and a language policy developed that, besides English and their own language, each student should also be able to speak another language. True cross-cultural understanding, tolerance and understanding should start at the school level and the lower down, the better. As far as possible, there should not be any school that favours a particular racial group. What I am suggesting here is the amalgamation of schools so that Fijian and Indian dominated schools become things of the past. In a similar way, the teachers' unions, which have operated along racial lines, should amalgamate so that it is teachers' interests they serve, not what racial group one belongs to.

Use of Comparisons

This leads into another issue that needs much institutional and national reflection. The use of comparisons have been viewed with ambiguity by the informants. Are comparisons between ethnic groups an appropriate basis for decision-making? Should comparisons be made at all? Would it not be more appropriate to measure indigenous performance historically to see what progress Indigenous Fijians have made compared to say, a decade, two decades, fifty years, one hundred years ago? As Tupeni Baba pointed out, it is indeed unfortunate that what is being compared "is the performance at school and the basis for AA is based on their performance at school". Or as Hari Ram noted, "it's almost unavoidable" for comparisons to be made, but worse still is when "conclusions which are actually quite unrealistic" are formed. On the other hand, there is the viewpoint that comparisons are necessary because they encourage Indigenous Fijians "to perform", as Taufa Vakatale puts it. Whatever the perspective, the reality is that comparisons between Indigenous Fijians and other ethnic groups are the basis for AA policies that favour the former group. The question that needs to be resolved is whether comparisons are still necessary and whether other criteria need to be considered as a basis for future AA, whatever it may be. Indeed, one can very well ask if AA should continue in its present state.

AA Reforms

Some informants have recommended a shift in focus of AA policies from race-based to disadvantage based on class. There is recognition that a good proportion of Indigenous

Fijians have benefited from AA as evidenced by the increasing number of middle-class Fijians participating in national life. There is also acknowledgment that in a multi-cultural nation like Fiji, all those who are disadvantaged should have equal access to public goods, irrespective of 'race', gender or religious creed. A question that will be asked is whether Indigenous Fijian interests will continue to be served by class-based AA. An important question that will need to be asked is whether selection criteria will result in beneficiaries who are the truly economically disadvantaged members of society. And of course, there would be other problematic areas, such as which 'neutral' body will be nominated to implement the AA policy and how best to ensure that the operations of such a committee are transparent and accountable to the public. But the important reality that needs to be addressed is whether Indigenous Fijians are willing, in the first place, to forego what has been exclusively 'theirs' since the early 1980s (I am referring particularly to the special education fund to 'affirm' the education of Indigenous Fijians). Is there enough indigenous goodwill and political will to overcome the backlash that is sure to come from the Indigenous Fijian community if the focus of AA changed to class? Are there enlightened Indigenous Fijian leaders who will wholeheartedly support such a change and convince the people that such a move is timely for the good of the nation, leaders with "intellect, education and skill", as Adi Kuini Speed described it.

Another matter that needs to be mulled over pertains to whether the rhetoric on underachievement is not just hype, not just political rhetoric "to maintain the cow" as Professor Baba put it. Pratap Chand refers to the perception that is held about Indigenous Fijian failure as "a myth". It needs to be remembered that there are many Indigenous Fijians who pass national examinations just as there are many non-Fijian failures. The question that needs to be asked is whether the politics of race and difference have been taken to its extreme to ensure that Indigenous Fijian political hegemony is maintained? As Professor Tupeni Baba puts it, what is currently occurring is "the maintenance of hegemony, the maintenance of power, the maintenance of a bureaucracy" in his discussion of the implementation of the Fijian Affairs Board $4.7 million AA annual fund. Are matters too far gone that the tide cannot be turned to allow an objective review of AA policies? Why has there not been a national review of these policies to determine their future directions/redirections?

Race and Identity Politics

Race is a "nodal point" in discourse (Mouffe, 1993). It unifies as well as divides. Colonialism utilised race as a divisive weapon to keep ethnic groups separate and apart. The assertion of racial identity was a form of strategic essentialism utilised by Indigenous Fijians at the point of decolonisation. It was seen as absolutely essential in rectifying the social and educational inequalities that colonialism left behind. The important question to consider is whether race remains a valuable and important point for the rallying of educational purposes at this historical juncture. An emerging factor coming up repeatedly through the interviews is that maybe class is the point at which AA intervention needs to be redefined. With class-based AA, a significant number of disadvantaged Indigenous Fijians would be captured as well as other categories of disadvantaged groups.

The connection made between race and the underachievement of the Indigenous Fijians in education constitutes a myth, a political and social myth that has been perpetuated for a particular purpose. Indigenous Fijians have succeeded in schooling in a similar way to the reality that many Indo-Fijians also fail. These factors are not highlighted in discussions of Indigenous Fijian education. And as Joeli Kalou and Krishna Datt (members of Parliament) point out, there is very little debate in Parliament on issues concerning the education of Indigenous Fijians. What is needed are healthy discussions and debates so that the current compartmentalisation or "tunnel vision", as Winston Thompson succinctly puts it, of matters Fijian is opened out to the public arena. The category of race as a political strategy to maintain the interests of Indigenous Fijians needs rethinking at this historical juncture.

After decolonisation, race served a particular essential purpose, but at this historical juncture, does it remain the same as at the point of decolonisation? The informants in the study indicate that perhaps, using race as a category to 'other' as well as for identity purposes, is no longer useful. Rather, what is emerging is that the categories of class and rurality might have more salience. It needs to be remembered that the Western literature is based on race, a notion that Indigenous Fiji took on board with a vengeance after colonialism formally and officially ended. Maybe, it is timely that a different model is articulated that is more appropriate for the Fiji context.

A New Hegemony

Another interesting issue emanating from the data is how the hegemony of colonial views continues to be articulated in neocolonial times. In this regard, informants seem to have internalised the colonial representation(s) that Indigenous Fijians are school failures by parroting the colonial view of Indigenous Fijian academic inferiority. There is an uncritical acceptance, in many instances, of explanations and models instituted during colonial rule. In fact, many of the explanations expounded on by the informants are a rehash of what appeared in colonial educational annual reports, which are repeated in the Fiji Education Commission Report of 1969 and continue to be recycled in academic papers. This is not surprising, given that the elite group in the government bureaucracy, who had been trained under the colonial 'masters' up to and beyond the point of decolonisation, would unwittingly and unknowingly perpetuate the myth of a persistent and consistent Indigenous Fijian underachievement problem. At any rate, as Dr Ahmed Ali and Adi Kuini Speed remind us, an important factor to remember is that Fiji is a relatively young independent nation and the aftermaths of the colonial experience would be very difficult to be rid of in such short a time.

What needs to be remembered, however, is that the people in Fiji, irrespective of ethnicity/race, class, gender or cultural affiliations, exist together in postcolonial conditions: of economic, cultural and technological marginality in a globalised context. They are no longer colonial subalterns. And yet, after decolonisation, Fiji bought into the binary opposition of Fijians/Indians which formed the basis for all administrative, social, cultural and discursive practices. Race became (and still is) the most important category for the determination of policy decisions, for the way the political parties organised themselves and ultimately, for the way Fiji society was lived, experienced and maintained. Race politics became such a prominent feature of everyday life and of the institutions, especially in politics, that it permeated (and continues to permeate) many facets of Fiji society.

My contention is that in this post-Manichean period, this thesis is providing a consensual voice where there is the possibility of a new voice, the production of a new hegemony and the emergence of a radical democratic politics (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985). The new hegemony that is appearing seems to be calling for equity and equality for all in ways that cut beyond simplistic race politics. There is a clear commitment by Indigenous Fijians, Indo-Fijians and the minority groups to questions of equity, not only in this text, but also in the post-constitutional dialoguing and communicating that is occurring in Fiji. People in postcolonial conditions form new alliances and produce new hegemonies. In Fiji's case, then, we need to rethink whether hegemony is negative as it has been conceived. Does

it have to be negative? When and how is it productive? And who can this new hegemony be productive for?

An Integrated Approach

From the above discussion, we can see that there is a need for reforms in schools, in AA policies and in Indigenous Fijian cultural orientations. Actualising these reforms may not be as easy as it seems. As many of the informants have indicated, an integrated approach must be undertaken that recognises that strategies need to occur simultaneously. It must be recognised also that the effects of these reforms are not going to be felt overnight and that there would be many difficulties and obstacles that will need to be overcome. Indeed, the complexities involved need to be emphasised. There are no easy answers.

Perhaps the most important issue is that of dismantling racial barriers so that nation and not race becomes the principal category for viewing and tackling social realities. Indigenous Fijian, Indo-Fijian, Chinese and Rotuman informants have all indicated that this is what is necessary. Another important issue is that of strong leadership and political will that desires the dismantling of racial barriers. The need for all communities to work together rather than in isolation has been raised. There seems to be a new hegemony in terms of a consensual voice by all ethnic groups that calls for a commitment to issues of equity and social justice rather than division based on race. A 'national rebirth', distinct from colonial, independent, post-coup and pre-1998 constitutional times, seems to be occurring. The formation of new coalitions and new hegemonies is one that is being played out in Fiji in the late 1990s. What path this will take is hard to tell at this juncture.

The 'solutions' (if there are any) to the problems raised in this thesis regarding Indigenous Fijian underachievement, cultural identity and AA policies need to bear in mind the multicultural mix of the nation, but at the same time recognise the real difficulties that schools face. As already mentioned, a holistic, integrative approach needs to be taken that takes on board the recommendations made by the informants of this study. On the one hand, Indigenous Fijians need to be aware of the kinds of conditions that can facilitate the success of their children in schools. On the other hand, people in authority have to be aware that spatial disadvantage is problematic and the notion of educational underachievement is very complex and can be contradictory. At the same time, it needs to be recognised that neocolonial educational structures are problematic for those students who have failed national exams, and that the 'symbolic violence' associated with this process needs to be acknowledged, and attempts made to bring about curriculum and teacher-education reforms

312

that would counter this. Deep reflection needs to be undertaken on these structures to see if they can be changed. It is timely that we stop blaming the underachiever and see if the curriculum, pedagogies, school organisation and assessment may be at fault.

In terms of AA policies, again there are complexities that need to be worked out. On the one hand, there is the view that class should become the primary category of disadvantage. On the other, there is the view that race-based AA is fine; what needs changing is the way it is implemented. More efficiency and effectiveness are what some informants would like to see happen in order to maximise the returns from the national resources that have been spent on the education of Indigenous Fijians. In this regard, recommendations have been made for better targeting, setting a time frame, clear objectives, accountability and transparency, starting AA at the lower educational levels, providing extra assistance at tertiary institutions and including a wide range of people from different ethnic backgrounds in decisions on implementation. The point has been made that AA administrators should have high personal qualities such as integrity and honesty to counter corruption, nepotism and dishonest dealings.

Moreover, changing the orientations of poorly educated Indigenous Fijians with a low socio-economic background has been suggested. In this regard, the chiefs, church and educated Indigenous Fijian have been targeted by the informants as having important roles to play to 'educate' the uneducated masses in order to place a higher premium on education for their children. Community education, in particular, has been identified as a necessary process to effect this change.

In addition, other institutional changes that need to occur simultaneously with all the above mentioned reforms are the improvement of teaching and learning resources, research at the school level with the purpose of enhancing student learning and regular in-service training for both school principals and teachers. In fact, the point needs to be emphasised that research should form the basis for sound policy decisions and in this regard, the government should utilise the intellectual resources provided by the USP for better decisionmaking. An important suggestion made has been for a thorough evaluation of the education system through an Education Commission.

Taken in a piecemeal fashion, these reforms would not have a profound effect but taken holistically, it may be possible that they will have the necessary impact on bringing about essential reform that just might be the 'solutions' that are needed to tackle issues of equity and equality in Fiji.

Summary

In this chapter, I have analysed the representations and portrayals by the informants regarding the way forward in terms of Indigenous Fijian education, AA policy and indigenous development generally. The recommendations made have been in relation to changes to indigenous cultural orientations and epistemologies, what I call people-based reforms. Specifically, community education was advocated as necessary and the church, chiefs and educated Indigenous Fijians were seen as the central agencies in this change process. Another group of recommendations was made in terms of policy-based reforms. This included recommendations for better implementation of the current AA policies, as well as a change in focus to class as the main category of disadvantage, rather than the current focus on race. Further, school-based reforms in terms of curriculum and teaching pedagogies were examined. Moreover, I examined portrayals of leadership changes. Here, issues to do with educational and national vision, and political will to carry out the recommended reforms were found to be most pertinent. Finally, globalisation issues and their impact on the educational system, as perceived by the informants, were raised.

In interpreting the data, I highlighted certain issues. For instance, curriculum reform in terms of placing more value on Indigenous Fijian epistemology, culture and language as well as finding a balance in academic and vocational/technical subjects were seen as important. The notion of changing Indigenous Fijian attitudes so that the education of their children became a priority was examined next. The contradictions that arise when globalisation issues are considered were also raised to demonstrate how complex these issues are. This was followed by a discussion on the need for leadership changes and the notions of race, identity and a new hegemony were also explored. The particularly salient interpretation made is that of an integrative approach that incorporates the recommendations made by the informants. Taken singly, individual reform measures are like a drop in the ocean but, taken collectively, they just may offer a 'solution' to the educational problems facing the nation.

In the next and final chapter, I consolidate the findings of the thesis by first providing a summary of the first seven chapters before discussing in greater depth some of the important issues raised in this research project. In particular, I discuss five AA options that I believe need to be considered by people in positions of power and authority. As well, I detail a vision of a postcolonial curriculum. This is followed by the implications of the study for pedagogical practices, for policy, for leadership, further research, a postcolonial methodology and theory.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE WAY FORWARD: POLICY, PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE AND LEADERSHIP

We are transformed, individually, collectively, as we make radical creative space which affirms and sustains our subjectivity, which gives us a new location from which to articulate our sense of the world. (hooks, 1990: 153)

What bell hooks is saying here about the affirmation of my postcolonial subjectivity and identity is important to me. It succinctly sums up what this thesis is all about because the thesis is indeed a "radical creative space". This space has transformed me individually by giving me "a new location from which to articulate" my sense of the world. In a more important sense, writing from the strategically essentialist positionality of an Indigenous Fijian, this thesis, through the privileging of the narratives provided by the 74 informants, the majority of whom are Indigenous Fijians, is creating a radical space which sustains and affirms the subjectivity of Indigenous Fijians. Indeed, the thesis attempts to provide a "new location" from which Indigenous Fijians, as a collective group, can articulate their situated knowledges. My informants and I are, hence, implicated in this "radical creative space" which is also a "new location" from which to speak and be heard.

In this final chapter, I provide a summary of the thesis, explicate interpretations of informant narratives and discuss some implications of the study. Voice and the creation of speaking and writing spaces, a new hegemony, race politics, and success/merit: these have emerged as important issues in this thesis. I particularly outline the options to AA that will need to be considered by people in authority as well as take a closer look at what a more appropriate postcolonial curriculum should look like at this historical juncture. Further, I explain the possibilities for new kinds of coalitions. In so doing, I discuss the implications of the study in terms of a postcolonial methodology, pedagogical practices, policy, leadership, research, and theory.

Summary of Thesis

This thesis has been concerned with AA and racial inequalities in education in Fiji. Its main purpose was to posit (constructed or representational) explanations for the relative

ineffectiveness of AA policies in narrowing or closing the educational gap between indigenous and non-indigenous components of the population.

In Chapter One, the background and the organisation of the thesis were presented. A brief description of political and educational structures was given to demonstrate the impact the process of colonisation has had on many aspects of life in Fiji. The maintenance and perpetuation of educational structures and practices after decolonisation set the context for the development of AA policies to benefit Indigenous Fijians in education. The issue of *voices* (mine and those of the informants in the study) were foreshadowed to demonstrate their importance in the thesis. I return to the matter of voice in this chapter. I will explicate the implications of indigenous voice(s) on postcolonial methodology(ies).

In Chapter Two, I discussed the theoretical frameworks that underpinned the thesis, namely AA and postcolonial discourses. I argued that traditional notions of looking at AA were limited and that the conceptual resources provided by postcolonial theory were more appropriate in providing a more comprehensive view of AA in decolonised sites like Fiji. Postcolonial concepts are themselves intellectual and theoretical artefacts of a colonial history. For instance, neocolonialism and hegemony are concepts that explain why domination by consent became the acceptable mode of 'politics' after decolonisation occurred. They explain why colonial structures and institutional practices continued to dominate the local scene long after the colonial 'masters' departed their former colonies. As well, the concepts of the 'Other', voice, identity, strategic essentialism, hybridity, and the prospects of what might count as a postcolonial curriculum were defined because of their central importance in the thesis.

The other theoretical framework critical to this research was also explicated in Chapter Two, namely that of theorising AA. Because AA in Fiji has followed the trajectory of AA in the United States of America, the concept of AA was defined and the philosophical debate for and against AA was discussed. As well, the concepts of educational opportunity, equality and inequality were explored. I also explicated the limitations of traditional notions of AA. Further, a comparison was made of the way AA was used in Fiji compared to Western European nations. Chapter Two concluded with a discussion of the value of this research to a better understanding of AA, particularly when

applied to an ex-colonised small island state where the indigenous population holds political and numerical control.

Chapter Three focussed on the context for the study, providing a detailed picture of Fiji's colonial history and the impact of that history on its political, economic and social development. In explicating this history, I took a critical standpoint to lay bare the oppression, domination and exploitation associated with colonialism. The main emphases of this chapter were three-fold. First, Fiji was (and still is) a colonial construct. The formal process of colonisation may have ended at decolonisation but neocolonialism continued to pervade political, economic, and social structures, including especially education. Second, the education system as an instrument of colonisation and colonial reproduction continues in neocolonial formations even after decolonisation has occurred. It is my contention that AA was the indigenous way of asserting its postcoloniality, of countering the colonial legacy. The third emphasis in the chapter is that indigenous people or ex-colonised people need to create their own spaces and rewrite their own histories. This is illustrated by my giving writing space and hence, voice, to pre-contact history, to a history uncontaminated by colonial effects. As well, I described and analysed resistance to colonial rule. The final section of Chapter Three provided a detailed analysis of AA in terms of its rationales, its perceived outcomes and the thinking that led to AA.

The research methodology of the study was described in Chapter Four. I reviewed the literature on qualitative research, particularly on the case study approach, the interview method of data collection and policy analysis. I then turned to an account of the decisions and explanations for the decisions that I made before and during the fieldwork. I also described the processes involved in analysing and interpreting the interview data.

Chapters Five through to Seven formed the main data chapters of the thesis. Chapter Five was a description and interpretation of the informants' representations of explanations for the underachievement of Indigenous Fijians in formal schooling. The explanatory categories fell into three models: socio-cultural deficit, psychological deficit and structural disadvantage. First, in terms of the socio-cultural deficit model, spatial disadvantage (rurality) was consistently identified as a major inhibitor to school success. Moreover, home background, cultural and school disadvantage were identified as major determinants of Indigenous Fijian underachievement. Second, psychological-deficit

models included attitudes of the Indigenous Fijian community and the impact on children when they live away from home. A comparative approach was then taken of the success of non-indigenous and Indigenous Fijian in schooling to see what the parallels were. Success in school, irrespective of ethnicity, was seen to be contingent on a sense of struggle to overcome adversity whether this was poverty or the desire to escape the drudgery associated with tilling the land. As well, parental support and good teachers were also identified as key factors to school success. Third, historical structural models that refer to *the negative impact of the colonial experience, perpetuated in neocolonial educational structures of the curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and the language of the curriculum,* were used by the informants as explanations for the underachievement of Indigenous Fijians in schooling.

A key argument in Chapter Five is that explanations for underachievement cannot be reduced to mono-causal factors. Instead, racial inequalities in education are contingent on the constant interactions among the dynamics of race, gender, class and rurality and in the economic, political, cultural and historical spheres. It cannot be emphasised enough that any attempt to posit explanations for underachievement of Indigenous Fijians in formal schooling must recognise the complexity and multiplex combinations of these interactions. Note here the revisions I have made to McCarthy's (1990) parallelist theory to explain racial inequalities in schooling. Two key factors emerging out of Chapter Five are the issue of spatial disadvantage (rurality), which muddies the distinctions made on the basis of race and social class, and the disadvantage associated with a colonial history. Another key point arising from Chapter Five is how the hegemony of the colonial view regarding the underachievement of Indigenous Fijians reproduces itself in decolonised sites. The cultural deficit models and psychological explanations, for example, which were colonial representations, are reproduced and continue to be parroted long after the colonial 'masters' have physically left. This point is further analysed in this final chapter.

The informants' representations of the way AA policies in education were conceptualised and implemented formed the basis of Chapter Six. There were ambivalences and contradictions on the question of comparisons between Indigenous Fijians and the non-indigenous community that formed the basis for development of AA. In contrast, all the informants, irrespective of ethnicity, consistently supported the principle

behind the development of AA. However, there was an emergent view that these policies need to be reviewed and that it is timely that the focus changes from race to class. There was a lot of dissatisfaction expressed in terms of the implementation of the Special Fund administered by the Ministry of Fijian Affairs, particularly with regard to accountability, transparency and targeting issues.

Chapter Six examined why AA policies have not been effective in reducing educational inequalities. One view was that AA policies were conceptually limited. The principal assumption behind AA was that pouring in financial resources for human resources and school capital developments would somehow see significant quantitative and qualitative improvements to Indigenous Fijian education. The reality did not match the assumption. AA did not translate into tangible classroom outcomes. The simplistic assumption that the answers lay in resources failed to take into account the complexities associated with school underachievement. Another related view is that AA policies were not effective in closing the educational gap because the focus of affirmation was directed at the wrong place. Those Indigenous Fijians who won scholarships had already made it through the system on their own. The scholarship for tertiary study was, therefore, an additional bonus. The argument put forward was that AA should have started where it counted most - at the lower educational levels, even at kindergarten. There is acknowledgment that the outcomes of this would not be immediate but that disadvantage at the school level should have been addressed directly, rather than just through infrastructural development, not to mention the strong emphasis on tertiary assistance. And, of course, there is the central argument that AA was relatively ineffective because of poor implementation.

The outcomes - positive, negative and unintended - of the AA policies were also discussed in detail in Chapter Six. The positive outcomes were identified by the informants as a more proportional representation of Indigenous Fijians in education (higher tertiary qualifications) and employment (decision-making positions). Generally, AA has promoted racial equality and has resulted in distributive justice by attempting to equalise opportunities for Indigenous Fijians to make good for themselves. On the other hand, portrayals of negative outcomes have arisen out of the criticisms levelled against the way AA policies have been implemented. Wastage, measured in terms of tertiary drop-outs by

beneficiaries of AA, was identified as an important negative outcome. Another negative outcome was identified as the maintenance and perpetuation of a bureaucracy, of "political hegemony", as Professor Tupeni Baba put it. The unexpected backlash from the community, especially the beneficiary group, about the way AA has been implemented is another negative outcome. Yet another is the rise in the number of urban middle-class Indigenous Fijians which has exacerbated rural-urban inequalities. In the estimation of many informants, one of the worst effects of AA is the internalisation by Indigenous Fijians of the thinking that they are school failures. *The most important conclusion of Chapter Six is the consistent viewpoint, irrespective of race, class and gender, that the focus of AA should indeed change from one based on race to class.*

In Chapter Seven, the portrayals by the informants of what they perceive as desirable changes were explored in some depth and detail. There were calls for reforms, not only in terms of AA policy and pedagogical practices, but also in terms of Indigenous Fijian cultural orientations, epistemology and value systems. With regard to the latter, adult or community education was identified as the best means of achieving this change. In terms of changes to educational practice, the dichotomy between academic-type and vocational-type subjects was raised by the informants. There was agreement that the curriculum needed a major overhaul and that if this occurred, a change in teacher-training curriculum and pedagogies also needs to be considered. Regarding policy changes, there was consensus that a major review of AA policies in education was critical to determine their effectiveness and future directions. There is recognition by the informants that any policy redirection or curriculum reform is difficult to carry out without a national vision and the necessary political will. That one cannot separate the need for reform from the social and political context is a complexity recognised by the informants. As well, globalisation issues were raised by the informants which compound the multifaceted issues of racial inequalities and AA.

Implications of the Study

There are many issues arising out of the data/thesis that are pertinent for further analysis and discussion. One such issue is the matter of 'voice', not only mine but more importantly, that of the informants of this study. In what follows, I explore the binary

opposition used in academic research of narrative/analysis and the issue of 'subaltern positions'. I discuss the implications of this for a postcolonial methodology. Next, the notion of a hybridised model of AA will be examined with suggestions for alternatives for the Fiji context. I discuss the implications this has for AA policy. Further, I undertake an explication of the postcolonial curriculum in terms of a resituation of the data to show what my vision of education in Fiji might look like. Moreover, I suggest that a reconceptualisation of the terms 'success' and 'merit' needs to be undertaken. These will be discussed in terms of their implications for pedagogical practice. Finally, the implications of the study for leadership, for research and for theory will be examined.

Implications for a Postcolonial Methodology

A concept foreshadowed in the introductory chapter, which surfaced in the Theoretical Framings and Methodology chapters and made brief appearances elsewhere in the thesis, is that of voice. Part of the significance of the thesis is that it has opened up a space for narratives, where both the informants and I can speak because we know ourselves and of ourselves, unlike the colonial assumption that we were knowable subjects incapable of representing ourselves. Depending on which way we look at it, this thesis posits six narratives, one for each of the informant categories. On the other hand, this thesis could be eight narratives, each chapter presenting a narrative. Alternatively, this thesis could be viewed as a narrative representation of other narratives, that of the informants. Whichever way we choose to look at it, this thesis has opened up speaking positions and alternative readings of power relations.

As I will argue, these narratives are legitimate modes of expression because they emphasise vivid particulars about people's realities. They are "transparent representations of what actually happened" and "are told for particular purposes" and "from particular points of views" (Narayan, 1993: 682). I will argue that the authoritative voices of the informants in the study offer potential to enact theory.

In Western countries like Australia, where this very 'Western' thesis was produced, this thesis may be looked on as just another piece of research that has fulfilled certain academic/intellectual criteria. And because the thesis is written by an 'other', a person of difference writing about a particular case study that may not be relevant in Australia, it

might be taken as of marginal significance, as a curio for that field in the West called 'comparative education'. Aside from the examiners, my supervisors and the odd assorted policy researcher perhaps, who in Australia will read the thesis? What relevance does it have for the Australian context? This thesis could, I suppose like many other theses written for other contexts, be regarded as marginal. The important point I would like to highlight here is that in Fiji this text is not a subaltern one and is certainly not marginal. Nor is it a diasporic text. On the contrary, the ideas presented in the thesis will be digested locally and in specific locations. The thesis will be read by people in positions of authority and power. In fact, the thesis itself is an act of creative power. It demonstrates the importance of local voice(s) and the opening out of the silencing brought about by colonial representations. As such, the thesis is also an act of resistance, not only against the confines of rigid 'Western' academic requirements of thesis production, but just as importantly, against the process of colonisation. As bell hooks (1989: 8) succinctly puts it:

> [For] any oppressed, colonized group who endeavors to speak...true speaking is not solely an expression of creative power; it is an act of resistance, a political gesture that challenges politics of domination that would render us nameless and voiceless. As such, it is a courageous act.

During the period of colonialism, colonised subjects were the subalterns to the coloniser. But at the point of decolonisation, the power relations changed. The subalterns (colonised subjects) were no longer subalterns, there was a reorganisation in the social structure of the ex-colony so that the local people were no longer viewed as colonial subalterns. Rather, the position (socially and politically) of Indigenous Fijians, the subjects of the study as well as the providers of much of the data, changed so that they became authoritative figures in their land. Indigenous Fijians, and indeed all other ethnic groups in Fiji, are no longer overtly oppressed or criminally repressed by colonialism. Many of them now occupy positions of authority and power in decolonised sites. The thesis, in utilising the voice(s) presented by those informants who have the potential to influence the life trajectories of many people, speaks from an authoritative position. It also speaks from an authoritative position in another respect. A Western education, especially for a PhD qualification, is perceived as something to strive for in decolonised states. As such, this thesis can therefore be viewed, also, as having its origins in an authoritative speaking position. And because I am an Indigenous Fijian writing about matters that concern

Indigenous Fijians, there is some sort of legitimacy that is associated with this, especially when the thesis takes on board the views of the informants who in their own right occupy positions of authority and power in Fiji, speakers and voices who are no longer colonial subalterns.

Drawing particularly on Kirin Narayan's notion of an "enactment of hybridity", I now critique the seemingly 'Western' preoccupation with rigid academic analysis and argue that the thesis is legitimate in placing an important value on narratives. Narayan (1993: 681) would like to see the current rigid dichotomy between analysis (with an emphasis on theoretical frameworks and generalised statements) and narrative (with the emphasis on vivid particulars) dismantled. The crucial point she makes is that the two categories can be utilised quite effectively in a scholarly text and that narratives should be recognised as playing an important role in academic writing. Arguing that "any writing represents an enactment of some sort of theory", she goes on to define hybridity as the "dual identity" that researchers carry with them where they "are all incipiently bi- (or multi) cultural" as they "belong to worlds both personal and professional". She strongly cautions that "Whether we are disempowered or empowered by prevailing power relations, we must all take responsibility for how our personal locations feed not just into our fieldwork interactions but also our scholarly texts" (Narayan, 1993: 681). I argue that this thesis, this scholarly text, has allowed people, not "theoretical puppets" in Narayan's words, to populate this text, to speak out. For instance, teachers have spoken in the thesis. In particular, Indigenous Fijian female voices have spoken and their words articulated. Just as importantly, the voices of a range of people of different ethnicities and cultural backgrounds have spoken on issues that are not openly debated in Fiji. And, of course, my narrative of the narratives of the informants would otherwise not be heard outside of this artefact of thesis production.

Not only are narratives "transparent representations of what actually happened" but they are also "told for particular purposes, from particular points of view". This makes narratives "incipiently analytical, enacting theory" (Narayan, 1993: 681). And as Narayan puts it, narrative and analysis need not be viewed as opposites but "are contiguous, with a border open even to the most full-scale of crossovers (Narayan, 1993: 682). I argue that this thesis is enacting hybridity, that is, it is both analytical and is enacting theory. By

providing voice therefore to the Indigenous Fijian informants in the study to speak out, and by now drawing on Spivak's notion of strategic essentialism, the authoritative voice(s) (re)presented in this thesis offers potential to enact theory. As Narayan (1993: 682) notes, "Writing texts that mix lively narrative and rigorous analysis involves enacting hybridity, regardless of our origins".

In terms of a postcolonial methodology, then, this thesis has highlighted the important place of voice and narratives in a Western piece of text. Different ways of knowing and telling need to be recognised and affirmed. bell hooks (1989) expressively sums this up in this manner:

> Moving from silence into speech is for the oppressed, the colonized, the exploited, and those who stand and struggle side by side a gesture of defiance that heals, that makes new life and new growth possible. It is that act of speech, of "talking back," that is no mere gesture of empty words, that is the expression of our movement from object to subject—the liberated voice. (hooks, 1989: 9)

Implications for Policy: AA Fiji Style

Are there lessons to be learned from the AA experience in Fiji? Was AA in Fiji an appropriate response to colonial social and educational inequalities? How else could Fiji have conceptualised and implemented AA policies given the (neocolonial) hegemony of colonial discourse? What direction should Fiji take at this historical juncture? These are all important questions that will need discussion and debate.

A question that needs to be answered is whether Fiji was in a position to have implemented the policies differently, in a manner perhaps that is comparable to the implementation of policies in Western nations where transparency and accountability are criteria necessary in the utilisation of public funds: where efficiency and effectiveness are buzz words that are part of work ethics; where mechanisms are in place to ensure it was possible to carry them out; where outcomes are measured in objective, rational economic terms. Fiji has been politically independent for less than three decades. Fiji was shackled under colonialism for almost a century. Such a country needs a long time to find its feet, to ascertain the direction it wants to go, to decide what it wants. It needs time to make mistakes and learn from them. To therefore expect the $3.5 million special fund to have been implemented efficiently in a little over a decade is perhaps asking too much.

The next question that needs some kind of answer is which direction AA ought to take at this historical juncture. Based on the informants' perspectives, Fiji has four options: continue in the same mode, continue but with modifications after review, change focus from race to class or abandon AA altogether. A fifth option is to work at the intersections of race, gender, class and other significant categories of difference. The important question to ascertain is whether a few decades (fourteen years for the special Fijian Education Fund) have been sufficient to make a significant impact. How does one measure whether an impact is significant and how much time is needed before one can say that AA has worked? Are there other performance indicators that can be used that are not economically or managerially orientated, that are not based on accountability measures, that are not quantitative in nature? I acknowledge here qualitative accounts in the Western literature on issues of equity (e.g., Hatcher and Troyna, 1993; Rizvi, 1993; McCarthy and Crichlow, 1993; McCarthy, 1993). However, performance indicators that I have in mind are qualitative measures such as the question of Indigenous Fijian identity and solidarity, community quality of life and the like. It is true that these indicators would be difficult to measure but, nonetheless, they are important factors that need to be considered as well, outside of the usual 'Western' cost-benefit way of evaluating the outcomes of AA. After all, Western managerial discourses generally come up with criteria to measure the effectiveness of AA which are culturally insensitive and biased towards a particular technocratic version of the world. I discuss this further in the final section on theoretical implications.

I am cognisant of the view posited by some informants that AA funding comes out of the contributions of all taxpayers, not just Indigenous Fijians. I also recognise the importance of accountability and transparency measures that act against abuse, as well as the need for measures to evaluate effectiveness. However, the time is ripe for Fiji to devise its own qualitative indicators to evaluate the effectiveness of AA that moves away from aping Western evaluative quantitative models. It is possible for Fiji to come up with a hybridised model of AA that can exist outside the Western model of AA. It is a matter of rethinking AA and having the political will and community support to carry through with decisions.

If the political choice is for the continuance of AA in its current mode (i.e., emphasis on human resource development in the form of scholarships), the issue to consider is what would be the appropriate hybridised model to use that takes on board criticisms made. Can there be alternatives to the way the Fijian Education Fund is implemented such that scholarships are awarded at the secondary level as well as the tertiary level? Can Provincial Councils be mobilised and activated to provide scholarship funds for able students at the primary and secondary levels who otherwise could not afford to continue at school? Is there a possibility that other openings may be explored in the use of the Fund rather than the strict focus on the award of tertiary scholarships? For as some informants put it, those students who have made it through secondary school have been advantaged in any case. What about those who drop out of school because of financial difficulty? The need for assistance at the lower educational levels is clear. The problem arises when it comes to the issue of prioritising needs for a more efficient use of the fund. How can AA be geared so that those who are truly economically disadvantaged are targeted? Is there room for means testing of applicants to determine that the truly disadvantaged get the scholarships?

While means testing sounds like a socially just strategy, the picture is not so clear. There are categories of Indigenous Fijians who are landowners and earn money outside of the normal definition of work-related activities. If means testing comes into play to ensure some kind of justice, what needs to happen is a reconceptualisation of money-income generation that is more flexible and appropriate so that all sources of income are tapped. In other words, if means testing is to be adopted, then the definition of work-related activities needs to change to incorporate those categories of people who earn money but are advantaged by being excluded from this definition.

If the political choice is to continue with AA after a review is carried out, the path that AA will follow is contingent on the outcomes of such a review. The questions raised with regard to the first option (i.e., continue in the same mode) may or may not be relevant here as well. New conditions would need to be set that would guide the implementation of AA. What is not clear is what the alternatives are going to be and whether these alternatives are going to be acceptable to the indigenous people. A point that needs to be made is that the financial resources of the AA policies in Fiji were inadequate to tackle the

problem of Indigenous Fijian underachievement. Indeed, it is arguable whether a lot of money would solve the problem without parallel changes occurring at other levels. For instance, pouring in more money for capital school development would be pointless without an intensive community/adult education programme for Indigenous Fijian parents to learn what they can do to facilitate good performance by their children in school. Similarly, concentrating on human resource development at the tertiary level, at the expense of needy Indigenous Fijians at the secondary school level, may not be a socially just thing to do.

The third political option of changing the basis of AA from a race to a class base is one that has consistently emerged from the data. There is an emergence of a new hegemonic voice that believes in the ideal of social justice, in the notion of an equal and equitable society, where AA is allocated according to class rather than the current focus on race. There is a consistent view coming through that not only is AA not reaching the truly disadvantaged Indigenous Fijians, but that all those who are economically disadvantaged should become the target group for AA. While it is true that there is an increase in the number of middle-class Indigenous Fijians who have benefited from government AA, there is also the perception that increasingly, it is middle-class children who are benefiting from AA, not those who truly deserve it. Many informants have suggested that AA should be allocated according to class rather than continue to be race-based.

However, the issue of class-based AA is not as straightforward or clear-cut as it may seem. There are two other features that appear to add complexity to the picture of class-based AA. One of them is cultural and the other is rurality or the issue of spatiality. In terms of the former, there is the view that if AA becomes class-based, middle-class Indigenous Fijians will be disadvantaged because there is a proportional relationship between higher position (meaning higher income) and the extent of funds to contribute to cultural obligations. Unless high-earning Indigenous Fijians wish to be ostracised by their family and village community, they make a significant contribution to their village and provincial development (financially and in terms of advice and time). This perhaps is an unseen positive outcome of AA that is as yet unrecognised. The communal obligations of Indigenous Fijians are a tangible reality and there is a tendency for those in positions of some power and authority to make a concrete financial contribution for the development of those less able in their village communities. In theory, middle-class Indigenous Fijians

should not have the advantage of AA but, in reality, the picture is not as clear-cut and unambiguous as it appears on the surface.

The second dimension about class-based AA is the issue of spatiality. Clearly, as the data have revealed, there are many disadvantages associated with distance from urban spaces. On the other hand, there are categories of indigenous and non-Indigenous Fijians who are disadvantaged by their socio-economic circumstance in the urban centres. The binarism between rural/urban and the consecutive perception of disadvantage/advantage needs to be dismantled. The rural/urban dichotomy needs to be replaced by the recognition that spatiality cuts across issues of race, gender and class. The category of rurality, therefore, needs to be acknowledged as mediated, contingent and complex.

The fourth option - of abolishing AA altogether - will require serious thought. A careful study will need to be made regarding the impact of AA in education and I would suggest that the measures made in terms of the outcomes of the policies should not just be quantitative. Qualitative indicators also need to be considered such as quality of life and issues of indigenous identity as I have already mentioned. If AA is to be abandoned, there should be public debates and discussions and serious questions asked prior to this decision being made. The reality in Fiji suggests that the Great Council of Chiefs will need to endorse the decision and the Provincial Councils and the Ministry of Fijian Affairs will have to persuade the people that abolishing AA will be beneficial to the nation. A backlash from the indigenous people is what the government does not want to occur. Abandoning AA will be a very difficult decision to make but, if there is the need for this to occur and if there is political will and community consensus, this is a viable option.

The final option of working at the intersections of race, gender, class and other significant categories of difference is the one that I prefer and would support. In this conception, AA programmes would not only cater for Indigenous Fijians but would also tackle the issue of economic disadvantage faced by all ethnic communities, as well as tackling gender inequalities. As discussed in Chapter Three, Indigenous Fijian females are significantly underrepresented in the distribution of both local and overseas scholarships (See again tables 12 and 13 in Chapter Three). If gender equity is to become an aim of AA, then this imbalance will need to be rectified. In this conceptualisation, I am not suggesting that we abolish the current race-based AA. Instead, I would advocate the institution of

more AA programmes that would specifically tackle disadvantage at the intersections of class and gender. In this light, the establishment of ethnic scholarships administered by the Department of Indian Affairs is AA along these lines. I would suggest that within these programmes, gender is considered a major category of disadvantage. Alternatively, AA programmes could be put in place that have class as the major category of disadvantage. In this conception, socio-economic status of parents, irrespective of ethnicity, would be the chief criteria for selection. Here, I foresee AA for disadvantaged Indigenous Fijians continuing but, in addition, I would like to see other AA programmes established to cater for all other ethnic groups with economic circumstance the principal category of disadvantage and gender equity intersecting the different programmes.

Implications for Educational Practice: A Vision of the Postcolonial Curriculum

As long as we treat AA as an access issue without fundamentally changing the structure of the curriculum, racial inequalities in education will persist. Based on the evidence provided by the interview data, it is my contention that the educational structures that Fiji has inherited from British colonisation have disadvantaged Indigenous Fijians. In particular, structures such as school organisation and ethos, assessment and the language of instruction being in English are alien and disadvantaging. More importantly, though, the maintenance of a Western curriculum is one of the most enduring of colonial legacies. It is my firm view that the curriculum in place today, almost three decades after colonial rule physically ended (not psychologically, I argue), is inappropriate and will need to be reconceptualised to nurture the cultural development of individual students. This reconceptualisation is critical in order to counter the 'symbolic violence' that occurs when students are marginalised by an alienating curriculum and school apparatuses. Just as importantly, the reconceptualised curriculum should prepare students for the 'New Times' that are sweeping Western capitalist economies which, through the impact of globalisation, are inevitably going to have significant effects on Fiji's social, cultural and political development.

Small island states like Fiji are at the mercy of so called 'developed' nations in terms of economic aid, exploitation by multinational corporations and the vagaries of the global economic system. Consequently, the curriculum should prepare future workers who

will be able to play the Western (and increasingly, the Asian world) at their own game. It should not only be more culturally democratic but must prepare citizens who are able to traverse the local and the global world, with negotiation skills that take cognisance of the way both worlds operate.

A framework, therefore, of what the postcolonial curriculum would look like would be in response to the following seven questions:

1. What should be the goals of the postcolonial curriculum?

2. What values or ideals should it promote?

3. What knowledges and skills should it emphasise?

4. Who decides on the content?

5. What language will this curriculum be taught in?

6. Whose interests will this curriculum serve?

7. What are the social, educational, economic and political implications of developing and implementing such a curriculum?

The last question is obviously a crucial one because political will and the availability of resources (both financial and human) are two ingredients that are absolutely essential before any curriculum is drastically transformed. The answers to all the questions I have raised here would form the framework for the reinvented postcolonial curriculum.

It is outside the scope of this thesis to discuss the details of this curriculum model, however, an elaboration of the rationale for change will suffice. The rest of this section will, therefore, discuss the rationale for this reconceptualised curriculum and discuss some of the issues involved.

Why transform the current neocolonial curriculum? I say this is necessary for two reasons. First, the curriculum that has been in place since Fiji was colonised is largely foreign, inappropriate and irrelevant at this historical juncture. As such, it has disadvantaged many students by being culturally exclusionary. In other words, the Western-based curriculum has not valued the cultural knowledges and wisdoms of the indigenous and (non-indigenous) communities in Fiji. It has privileged Western epistemology, cultural values and pedagogical systems. These 'truths' need to be acknowledged and something done to bring about a balance in the content of learning so that the local and global both occupy a balanced space.

As well as having a culturally democratic curriculum, the postcolonial curriculum should also be geared to meet the challenging needs of the 'New Times' that are characteristic of the Western capitalist world. The rationale for this is that the social, economic, political and cultural changes taking place in these societies will, in time, influence development in those nations with smaller economies that rely for their survival on trade and aid from these bigger capitalist economies. The reconceptualised curriculum should, therefore, be concerned with addressing the question of how the students are going to reinvent themselves as culturally hybrid, complex and dynamic human subjects in these new, changing times.

A synthesis, therefore, of the best from indigenous and non-indigenous, including Western, knowledge bases is the best approach to take. The postcolonial curriculum should strike a balance between the local and the global. It must take into account the need to value the cultural identity of the indigenous and non-indigenous communities. Sir Geoffrey Henry (1992: 14), Prime Minister of the Cook Islands, puts it nicely in this manner:

> One thing that the University of Life has taught me is that, while there are black and white dogmas, philosophies, and solutions, the areas of grey are large....The ideologies belong to the extremes while, between them, there exists an infinite range of possibilities....With such a range of opportunity, answers will emerge.

It is this range of opportunities, of possibilities that exist in the two extremities of non-Western and Western knowledge systems that should be explored to draw out the best that would be appropriate, not only for cultural survival but, just as importantly, for survival in postmodern conditions heavily influenced by the processes of westernisation, globalisation, economic rationalisation and other -ations that are Western-based.

Thus, there are two critical issues that a postcolonial curriculum must address, that of maintaining the cultural development of each community and at the same time, to be preparing them to cope with, and in, a changing world. These two issues would appear contradictory, even paradoxical. How can one have a curriculum that addresses such contradictory issues? I will attempt to answer this question in the next section where I take a better look at the concepts of a culturally democratic as well as a 'New Times' curriculum.

Fiji is in the enviable position where the local communities have control over the kind of curriculum that their children can have. Unfortunately, the influence of Western

content, pedagogies and school organisation has infiltrated the education system to such an extent that they are hegemonised fixtures, viewed as normative. But everyone has the right to knowledge of, participation in, and enrichment by her or his own culture and a curriculum that values education as an integral part of education for cultural development (Teasdale and Teasdale, 1992: 8).

It is, therefore, imperative that the people of Fiji are shaken out of their cultural inertia so that they become more critical of whose knowledges underpin school learning and recognise the essential need for a society to be culturally empowered, not culturally excluded. This has implications particularly for the government, which is essentially Indigenous Fijian in composition, for without political will to bring about the transformation called for in this thesis, all discourse on reconceptualising the curriculum is pointless. The government should be concerned, not only about the part the education system is playing in preserving essential knowledges, skills and values for the maintenance of cultural identity but, conversely, the education system should also be concerned with generating new values and competencies considered necessary for the future development of the country in a competitive world (Power, 1992: 17).

The impact of powerful forces of standardisation have homogenised, diluted and relegated diverse world cultures to ornamental or marginal positions in the modern world, the results of which lead to cultural destruction and dilution, particularly among the smaller non-Western cultures (Power, 1992: 16). These standardising forces include the spread of the English language and culture, technology (particularly mass media and its associated values of individualism, self-gratification and consumerism) and the ascendancy of the market model and its associated world view. The "hegemony of the economic development model" (Power, 1992: 16) in particular has led to the marginalisation of minority cultures like the Indigenous Fijian.

Konai Thaman, a prominent Pacific Island educator, points out that it is critical that every child, be s/he Fijian, Indo-Fijian, Rotuman or Chinese, learns the language, culture and traditions of the particular human society into which s/he is born. While people should be multicultural and multilingual, it is important that the first step is for cultural and linguistic literacy in her or his culture (Thaman, 1992: 32). A very good reason for this is summed up aptly in an ancient Chinese proverb which says "We cannot know the village

where we are going, unless we know the village from whence we came" (quoted in Henry, 1992: 14).

It is important that the curriculum values the cultural systems of knowledge and wisdom of the students in the nation, particularly so for Indigenous Fijians who make up a very small proportion of the world's population with a figure of less than half a million. The formal schooling system is a permanent fixture in Fiji which occupies the bodies and minds of students for the large part of a working day. It is imperative, therefore, that the knowledge and values inherent in the Fijian cultural system are not left to chance but becomes a part of formal instruction.

It is imperative, also, that the cultural identity of Indigenous Fijians, and indeed of all students, is reaffirmed at the school level beginning with a culturally inclusive, culturally democratic curriculum which would halt the "cultural and environmental bankruptcy" which is "an affliction which has been an obstacle to sustainable development in much of the modern world" (Thaman, 1995: 732). This has implications for curriculum planning, teacher education and research activities (Thaman, 1995). Education for cultural identity has begun in a small way at the Fiji College of Advanced Education in the form of a course, called "Education and Society in the South Pacific", which aims at rediscovering and re-affirming the participants' cultural identity, respecting and affirming the cultural identity of the other, gaining confidence in their own cultural identity as beginning teachers and enabling children in schools to recognise their own cultures and be proud of it (Nabobo and Teasdale, 1995:701). It is envisaged that curriculum development for schools (Thaman, 1992), teacher training institutions (Thaman, 1996A) and tertiary institutions (Thaman, 1996b) will focus on making the curriculum more culturally democratic at these sites.

As well as a culturally democratic curriculum, the reconceptualised postcolonial curriculum should be cognisant of the changes sweeping the globe. These "New Times" have been described as the deep social, economic, political and cultural changes taking place in Western capitalist societies that form the material and cultural conditions for existence (Hall, 1996c: 223). They are manifested in social changes occurring in the West such as new information technologies, increased consumerism, the rise of the service and white-collar classes, the globalisation of the new financial markets and the emergence of

new patterns of social division, especially between public and private sectors and between the rich and poor (Hall, 1996c: 224-225). According to Hall, related to these changes are greater social fragmentation and pluralism and the emergence of new identities. As Hall (1996c: 228) puts it, "the really startling fact is that *these* New Times clearly belong to a time-zone marked by the march of capital simultaneously across the globe and through the Maginot Lines of our subjectivities".

What is the connection between the changes occurring in the West and Fiji? What bearing would these changes have on Fiji's postcolonial curriculum? The march of the tentacles of capital is moving across the globe and there is no doubt that the impact of the New Times will hit Fiji sooner or later. MacDonald's has arrived in Fiji. The shopping mall concept has arrived. Multinational corporations are making huge profits on the cheap labour of the people. The law of commodification and exchange value (Hall, 1996) is beginning to subordinate society and social relationships and its impact is on the increase. There is no doubt that social fragmentation and new hybridised identities are emerging as a result of these changes. It is, therefore, imperative that not only should Fiji's educational system take account of the new technologies sweeping the globe by harnessing what it can in schools but, more importantly, that it teaches critical pedagogies that would empower the people to be aware of the changes occurring, why they are occurring and how they can cope with these 'New Times'. The point needs to be made that it is not possible to go back to an essentialised Indigenous Fijian identity of the past. There is no such thing. Rather, the postcolonial curriculum should recognise that new identities are being forged. A re-invention of Indigenous Fijian identities that should be viewed as an opportunity to move forward in these New Times is what I am advocating here.

In sum, a postcolonial curriculum is one which would empower the local people, particularly the indigenous community, to be conversant with their cultural knowledges such that their sense of cultural identity is affirmed. As well, such a curriculum should prepare locals for the international market system, for instance, as skilled negotiators, well versed in the global culture of the market economy. We can see, then, that curriculum reform is absolutely critical given that AA based on access was insufficient to redress racial inequalities in education, as I have demonstrated here.

Success and Merit

But curriculum change is meaningless unless it is accompanied by change in evaluation in the criteria and benchmarks for access and success that are used. It is my view that the concepts of 'success' and 'merit', that have underpinned questions of educational inequalities and the whole debate on AA, needs re-examination and re-conceptualisation. A principle of social justice in Western liberal democratic states which sees positions and rewards distributed according to individual merit (I.M. Young, 1990) was a colonial inheritance in Fiji. Mobility in society based on a hierarchical division of labour which saw colonialists occupying "scarce highly rewarded positions" and the locals occupying the "more plentiful less rewarded positions" became accepted as a given after decolonisation occurred. Institutional structures which support the hierarchical division of labour based on "intellect and skill" (I.M. Young, 1990) have not been challenged and, indeed, became hegemonic and perceived as the only way the principle of merit should be interpreted.

What are the determinants of success in society? Fiji maintained and perpetuated the Western view of success and merit when the formal process of colonialism ended. Success has been measured in terms of competitive school and tertiary performance which translates to eligibility for highly rewarded positions. The paper credentials which provide the symbol of "intellect and skill" as Iris Marion Young (1990) puts it, become the commodity that offers the most merit in the job market. However, the major problem associated with the "myth of merit", as Young describes it, is that "the merit principle's requirement of normatively and culturally neutral measures of individual job performance usually cannot be met" (I. M. Young, 1990: 206). Educational credentials and standardised test results which function as "primary proxies for direct assessment and prediction of job performance...are no more neutral than more direct evaluations of performance", as I. M. Young (1990: 206) puts it.

Unfortunately, Fiji has used national examination marks at the school and tertiary level to determine whether a person has merit for a job or other social goods such as scholarships. Success at school, therefore, has been measured in very narrow terms - in terms of passing examinations and the quality of that pass. Those who do not succeed are considered failures and, because of the institutional arrangements, are excluded and

marginalised from a quality of life that is associated with 'good' pay and standard of living. As approximately 10,000 school leavers do not have access to a job or to further studies on an annual basis in Fiji because society has deemed them failures for not passing higher examinations, we can see that a reconceptualisation of what success and merit are needs to be urgently undertaken.

Of course, an important question is: What would be alternative ways of viewing success and merit that does not disadvantage a significant proportion of the population? And just as importantly, the question that needs to be asked and answered is: What are the implications of such a move? The implications would involve fundamental changes to educational and other social, economic and political structures in place. A further question that may be pertinent is who loses if notions of success and merit are reconceptualised.

Implications for Leadership

I have raised some critical questions that will need to be seriously deliberated upon by all the appropriate stakeholders in education and the political arena. The implications for leadership at local, institutional and, particularly, national levels are widespread and critical.

Fiji needs vision and strong leadership to pave the way for the reforms called for in the thesis. In terms of curriculum reform, for instance, there has to be present first the awareness that a reconceptualisation is necessary given the current social and cultural conditions that exist, both locally and globally. The people will have to desire a change to meet local and global needs. For a curriculum that takes cognisance of global changes, a think-tank representative of all racial communities in Fiji, from both the public and private sectors, needs to be formed to decide on the global knowledges and values that should be included. Indeed, new coalitions need to be forged to make maximum use of the collective wisdoms and experiences that different groups bring with them. This think-tank group should include parents, villagers and the educated middle class as well as government officials of all personal, cultural, racial/ethnic and political persuasions. A critical part of these curriculum deliberations is nation-wide consultations at all levels before the final curriculum is drawn up. This should be examined in all forums (village, province, Great

Council of Chiefs, government and private sectors, etc) before the final curriculum that meets the conditions laid out here is drawn up.

For a subject, perhaps to be called Fijian Studies, that would affirm the cultural knowledges and wisdoms of the Indigenous Fijian community, Fijian elders from all provinces, plus representatives of the educated Fijian community and Indigenous Fijian parents, should form the group that would deliberate on which Fijian knowledges, values and wisdom the school should impart. It is important to state here that "cultural literacy", defined as a specified level of competencies in the shared knowledge, including certain understandings, skills and values which enable members of a group to communicate effectively with one another (Thaman, 1992: 33), should be one of the fundamental aims of this subject. Another aim would be linguistic literacy and I do not mean in the English language.

With a subject called Fijian Studies for Indigenous Fijians that other interested students may wish to take as well, careful thought must be given to its conceptualisation and implementation. We must not fall into the trap of teaching this subject within a Western framework. I envisage the classroom being a *bure* and the outside world. The learning needs to be contextual and community-related. Pedagogies should include taking the class out to the community or bringing the community to the classroom. The classroom here is not the hegemonic one - four walls, concrete, desks and chairs, books and other paraphernalia that marks the hallmarks of any Western-type classroom. Rather, it would be one that the Indigenous Fijians think is most appropriate, that they build themselves. I envisage Indigenous Fijian resources populating the space—mats on the floor and learning taking place on the floor—devoid of tables and chairs. Assessment needs to be carefully thought through. Here, I foresee the use of criterion-based assessment which places no value or grades or marks on student work. So long as they master the task - whether it is learning the intricate steps of a *meke*, producing some material object or conversing in the language or dialect, students have achieved success.

No doubt, the way forward will be fraught will difficulty. We may be politically independent but the psychic ties to colonialism have been very strong and need to be broken. No doubt, Western frameworks and ways of doing things will continue to hold a fascination for us. However, the effort has to be made to break loose of these ties and be

free to conceptualise a subject that authentically reflects Indigenous Fijian culture, that does things the 'Fijian way' (in all its hybrid configurations), and so forth.

As well, there would be problematics in working out what goes into this subject, given the heterogeneity of Indigenous Fijian language and culture. All care must be taken to ensure that the hegemony of the dominant Fijian language/culture does not become normative. Constant reminders that Fijian Studies should be a distinctively Indigenous Fijian subject should be made - this would mean that community members become the teachers. In rural villages, the dialect of that area and what that community perceives as worthwhile learning should be sanctioned. This means that the Fijian Studies curriculum should be flexible and community-based. Better still, it should be community owned.

In communities where there is a unitary dialect and common ways of doing things, for instance in rural and island communities, I see little problem with the above proposition. However, in urban areas where there is heterogeneity, some negotiated understanding needs to be reached as to what dialect the Fijian Studies curriculum will be taught in and what the cultural emphases should be. Nonetheless, the common thread going through this is that community members should be the teachers and that collaboration and negotiation be the name of the game rather than some fixed, rigid curriculum. Fiji should not fall into the trap of touting an essentialised identity.

Fiji is a nation where the indigenous people are in political control. The onus rests with the government of the day to transform the current neocolonial curriculum into one which is more culturally democratic in order that local cultural systems of knowledge and wisdom are valued in the formal school curriculum. In fact, given the homogenisation and standardisation of 'Western' knowledges and values occurring as a result of globalisation, it is indeed a moral imperative for the Fiji Government to act in order to culturally empower the Indigenous Fijians by giving them agency to recognise the deficiencies of the current school curriculum but, more importantly, to do something constructive about it.

To forge new coalitions, it is timely that the Government threw off its hostility and suspicion of intellectuals at the University of the South Pacific and deliberately negotiated with them for very much needed research in all areas and disciplines - in education, science, arts, language, fisheries, mining, agriculture and so forth, the list is endless. In fact, I would suggest that the Government provides research grants for areas it deems appropriate so that

a culture of research is encouraged and supported that would build up a knowledge bank to inform practice and policy.

It is the view of some of the informants that an Education Commission is imperative to formally investigate the state of education in Fiji. The last one was held in 1969. Many things have changed in three decades but the structures in place have not kept up with changing times. The Commission should investigate every facet of Fiji's education, from preschool through to tertiary and it should examine the curriculum, pedagogies, assessment and the organisation and administration of schools. It should also investigate the place of vocational and technical education as well as other alternatives such as multiple exit systems. As well, it should investigate the state of Indigenous Fijian education and make recommendations as to the status of AA. Other terms of reference should include the place of research, teacher training programmes and the University of the South Pacific. The Commission should provide a negotiated consensus on what directions Fiji's educational system should take. The findings of the Education Commission would map out policy directions for education and AA.

If the political decision is that Fiji cannot afford an Education Commission, then it is imperative that a review is undertaken to determine the current and future status of AA. The criteria for determining what the outcomes are should not just be quantitative in nature. As well, qualitative criteria to measure outcomes should be ascertained so that outcomes are not based purely on economic and managerial measures. The issues raised in the section above on AA should be considered very carefully and hard questions asked and answered.

New Coalitions

It should be obvious by now that any answers to the problematics associated with complex and multiplex issues raised in this thesis have to be pragmatic, practical, negotiated social and political compromises as my informants say. These solutions cannot be a set of ideal principles. The issue that the thesis raises is that at this historical juncture, what kind of new hegemony and kinds of coalitions are needed to deal constructively and collectively with issues of race, educational inequalities and AA?

The current social and political situation in Fiji is ripe for the formation of new kinds of coalitions. In fact, the decade or so after the coups have demonstrated that

Indigenous Fijians cannot develop in isolation from the other ethnic communities in Fiji. This period has highlighted the fissure, the contradictions and the complexities that have arisen. The processes involved in reviewing the post-coup constitution, for instance, are a stark reflection of the formation of new kinds of coalitions. Serious consultation, communication and dialogue in a spirit of 'give and take' between Indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians is perhaps the first sign of the dismantling of racial barriers, that political tool used during colonial times and continued in neocolonial formations to maintain the supremacy of Indigenous Fijians. In an unprecedented development, the Leader of the Opposition, a non-indigenous person, was invited to address the Great Council of Chiefs. As a reflection of the changing times, by listening to an Indo-Fijian leader, the greatest Indigenous Fijian forum of power and authority has opened out the space for new kinds of coalitions, even radical ones, that acknowledge that the interests of the nation are more important than the interests of nationalism.

The reality that there is now a spirit of reconciliation, cooperation, negotiation, consensus and good-will sweeping through post-coup Fiji at the political level should be a promise of things to come. The positive thing is that the spaces have opened up for new coalitions that are beneficial to the nation at the local, national, political, institutional and public spheres. The challenge is that these new coalitions, indeed, fulfil a liberatory function. New coalitions are needed to dismantle racial barriers and discriminatory practices in order to open up more spaces for the common building of a nation that looks after the interests of all its citizens.

Implications for Research

As suggested earlier, the Government should support research at the University of the South Pacific so that decision-making is based on sound research rather than assumptions. This implies a healthy relationship between government departments and tertiary institutions. School-based research needs to occur also. For instance, much has to be known about the learning styles of students, particularly Indigenous Fijians, and the relationship between learning and teaching styles. Much research needs to be carried out at the classroom level to determine if school pedagogies can be improved. Issues of school organisation and management, teacher training programmes and so forth need to be looked

into as well. If curriculum reform is needed, then much research needs to be carried out to determine the direction that reform is to take. Moreover, further research needs to be carried out on alternative ways of viewing success that may be more appropriate for the Fiji context.

There is also much to be done regarding AA policies as well. More research needs to go into the extent to which AA has reduced educational inequalities. Indeed, further research should be undertaken to see whether there is a connection between the two phenomena. Research also needs to be conducted into the 'success' stories of Indigenous Fijians and their educational development tracked over, say, the last fifty years to see if there have been substantial differences. Moreover, it is my view that research should be conducted into the underachievement of ethnic minorities in Fiji, such as the Banaban and Solomon Islanders, to see whether AA is required for them.

Implications for Theory

In terms of theoretical explanations for racial inequalities, the thesis confirms the parallelist position that these are caused by the constant interactions among the dynamics of race, gender, class and in the economic, political and cultural spheres (McCarthy, 1990). For the Fiji context, this research has ascertained the critical importance of two more variables: the dynamic of rurality or spatiality and the historical sphere. As well, this thesis has confirmed that mono-causal explanations are a fallacy: the issues surrounding educational inequalities are too varied, complex and problematic. Cultural and psychological explanatory models that place the blame for underachievement on the victims lack credibility. Similarly, historical structural explanatory models that look to colonial structures and history as the reason for Indigenous Fijian school failure are equally suspect. What is important to note is that singularly, these models lack any substance but taken as a whole, as a complex combination, the holistic picture is more concrete, feasible, realistic and acceptable.

In terms of a theory of AA, I will have to agree that AA does not have a theory because of the disagreement amongst proponents of AA as to its aims and outcomes (Tierney, 1997). Nevertheless, it is possible to draw out some tenets of AA in Fiji that offer new insights into looking at AA in ex-colonised states. One such tenet is my argument that

AA in decolonised states, like Fiji (and perhaps Malaysia), is a postcolonial response to the educational and other social inequalities contingent on a colonial history. AA was a response against the racism and discrimination rampant during colonial days against the 'Others' of Europe. Or rather, AA was a response to the discursive representations of Indigenous Fijian deficiencies in mind and body. Put another way, AA can be seen as a deliberate response to the material inequalities that colonialism leaves in its wake at the point of decolonisation.

New ways of thinking are required when looking at AA in Fiji. One needs to take away the Western lens of mainly measuring outcomes in terms of quantitative input-output models and see indeed whether there might be more appropriate ways of doing this. I suggest that qualitative measures such as quality of life, the building and consolidation of indigenous cultural identity, strengthening of family and community kinship ties and the fostering of community spirit and welfare may be more appropriate criteria for measuring outcomes. Because AA is aimed at groups, rather than individuals per se, AA in Fiji needs to be examined from a group/community perspective. Rather than the restrictive measuring benchmark of looking at how much money went into AA against how many people benefited and how much wastage there was, AA in Fiji needs to be examined from a wider people-based criteria, from a community perspective. Another criteria from which AA outcomes can be looked at is the strengthening or otherwise of kinship bonds of those Indigenous Fijian beneficiaries of AA in the urban centres and their cultural roots in their villages. Are there also indirect material benefits accruing to AA that can be traced to rural development programmes? Is there a relationship between the rise in the Indigenous Fijian middle-class and the general improvement of the lives of their immediate family and extended kin in the village? These questions could make good research topics and they certainly are factors that I suggest AA in Fiji should be re-examined from.

As emphasised in Chapter Five, rurality or spatiality plays a major role in shaping the social, cultural and other realities of Indigenous Fijians. As such, this aspect needs more theorising to see what effects it has on Indigenous Fijians' conception of identity, their place in the social order, their value system and epistemology. The interrelated concepts of place (location) and space (material, physical, spiritual, discursive, mental, etc.) are, therefore, important to Indigenous Fijians. That every Indigenous Fijian has deep

affiliation to the village/place of his ancestors is critical to his/her identity. It is interesting, then, to examine how the kinship ties are maintained between those in urban and rural settings. The processes of modernisation, urbanisation and globalisation have brought about profound changes to the social fabric of Indigenous Fijian life. There are contradictions and ambiguities that arise when there are incongruities in what one knew and what one now knows. By this I mean there are real tensions between life in the urban areas (and all the problems that brings) and life in rural areas.

Susu madrai[24], for instance, is a phrase that is often used to describe Indigenous Fijians socialised in urban centres far removed from their cultural roots and value system. That many Indigenous Fijians are becoming unfamiliar with their first language and their cultural ways of knowing and doing is a social reality that is of major concern to many informants. To counter this, the current curriculum and pedagogical practices (as described above) need careful thought. Much theorising needs to occur on this issue.

As well, much theorising is needed for the concept of a new hegemony. Hegemony has always been perceived in a negative light and has been more or less perceived in terms of class struggle. I perceive the new hegemony in Fiji on two fronts, the first in terms of race-struggle and the second, in terms of radical coalitions that are not class- or race-based. Regarding my first conception, that of hegemony as an outcome of race-struggle, Indigenous Fijians, at the point of decolonisation, sought to protect their own interests. Comprising an approximate population of less than half a million world-wide in 1970, indigenous voice(s) was heard and found a political plane to speak. At the point of decolonisation, Indigenous Fijians took political control. This new hegemony, different from the colonial hegemony, was not an exercise in domination, exploitation or oppression. Rather, it was a positive phenomena because it gave Indigenous Fijians a say in their own destiny, in their own development. AA was an outcome of this new hegemony and I view this in a positive light. Here was a predominantly Indigenous Fijian government doing something positive for a group that had been disadvantaged by colonial inequalities, more so than any other population group.

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[24] This literally means 'raised on bread'. This has a derogatory connotation and is used to refer to Indigenous Fijians who not only have very little knowledge and understanding of their cultural roots and/or language, but do not live the 'Indigenous Fijian way'. Those Indigenous Fijians who have lived most or all of their lives in urban centres are to all intents and purposes referred to in this fashion if they do not conform to traditional patterns of behaviour, attitudes and speech.

One could argue that the Indigenous Fijian hegemony that intensified after the two military coups of 1987 was negative. Domination and the supposed oppression by Indigenous Fijians of the Indo-Fijians, the second dominant racial group, seemed to rear its ugly head. Race had never played such a divisive role as it did in the immediate period after the coups. AA for Indigenous Fijians increased in education and business, many Indigenous Fijians were promoted to positions of authority and power and the transparency and accountability guards were down. Nepotism and corruption were rife in the post-coup period. Viewed from a Western lens, what has occurred in Fiji would be argued as hegemony at its worst.

In these postconstitutional times, the realisation is sinking in that Indigenous Fijians cannot develop in isolation from the other ethnic groups in Fiji. A lesson well learned in the decade after the coups is the recognition that a collective effort is important to nation building, that the success of the economy rests on every ethnic group's participation and input. Particularly important is the realisation that a racially divisive society, that had its roots in colonialism, was detrimental to personal and national development.

In post-coup constitutional times, spaces have opened out for new kinds of coalitions, a new kind of collective hegemony which should be viewed as positive. The racial barriers are going down, there is genuine desire to pave the way for the common good. It would seem that there is a genuine desire for consensus building, for communication, dialogue and nation-building. The negotiations carried out between the Indigenous and Indo-Fijian parliamentarians to bring about an acceptable outcome to a new post-coup Constitution is indicative of radical coalitions.

Which direction this new hegemony will take is open to conjecture. History has demonstrated that dominant groups in society soon establish themselves in truly hegemonic ways which may have negative implications. This Fiji case study thus opens up as an interesting space to rethink how the concept of hegemony may be theorised.

Conclusion

What is clear is that an integrated, holistic, multi-pronged approach is an imperative when looking at the issues of educational inequalities, social justice and AA. For this to occur, visionary leadership is critical for the radical changes called for in the thesis. In any

case, what is needed is a new way of thinking of many things that have been taken for granted, that have been regarded as givens, that have become hegemonic. A holistic interaction of the following is highly desirable. First, racial barriers must be dismantled. Second, spaces for more dialogical communications amongst all communities in Fiji need to be opened up and filled. Third, the curriculum needs to be restructured in order to become more appropriate, relevant, contextualised and culturally democratic. An important outcome of this restructuring would be related changes to school pedagogical practices and organisation which would have implications for teacher-training. As well, there needs to be research occurring in many spheres, but certainly at the school, national, political and university sites for the production of knowledges that would further inform practice and policy. A review into Fiji's education, including the impact of AA, needs to be undertaken to ascertain the future of AA, and should include a rethinking of the concepts of success and merit. In fact, a commission into Fiji's educational system is critical to map out the future directions, not only of education, but also of AA. The membership of the Commission needs to be carefully selected. There are many local intellectuals who can do the job and, to demonstrate that a decolonisation of minds has truly occurred, the composition of the Commission should be local: there is no need for Westerners from overseas to help Fiji determine what it wants for itself.

It should be obvious by now that there are no clear-cut or easy answers to the problems that beset Fiji's educational system and the way AA is thought about and implemented. It should also be obvious that the answers cannot be based on ideal principles of justice and equality that are touted in Western academic discourse. Instead, the answers, whatever they may be, have to be practical, negotiated social and political solutions and compromises amongst the peoples of Fiji. The spaces for radical coalitions have begun to open up at the political level for this to occur. The challenge is how to fill those spaces so that people are empowered, are given agency to think and act so that a collective consciousness for the common good becomes the creed for decision-making. It should be one of the roles of leadership, whether local, institutional or national, to provide agency for change.

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351

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364

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FIJIAN EDUCATION

Mission Statement: For the Year 2001

Since the last Education Commissions Report of 1969 there has been a growing concern over the low academic achievement of Fijians in relation to the achievement of other races in Fiji. Being the custodian of education in the country the Ministry of Education was given the responsibility to appraise and review the existing system, determine the factors leading to Fijians' poor academic performance and identify other measures needed to ·boost Fijian educational achievement.

Over the last years Government has allocated special funds for the purpose of improving the academic achievement of Fijian students. Apart from this special funds which is wholly controlled by the Fijian Affairs Board, the Ministry of Education has taken new approaches and strategies within the limits of its budgetary allocations to minimise the academic gap existing between Fijians and other races.

In order to further improve the performance and achievement of indigeneous Fijians the Ministry of Education will reaffirm its commitment to :

(a)   improve educational facilities and other amenities - classrooms, teachers quarters, science labs, workshop etc. in rural schools.

(b)   provide textbooks, library books, reference books, science and workshop equipment in secondary schools.

©   provide electricity and office equipment (typewriters, photocopiers, computers, fax machines) in rural secondary schools.

(d)   staff rural primary and secondary schools with qualified and specialist staff.

(e)   provide Leadership Training to Head Teachers, Assistant Head Teachers, Principals, Deputy Principals.

(f)   provide In-service training to Assistant Teachers.

(g)   conduct staff development training for each school on factors contributing to School Effectiveness.

(h)   conduct seminars/workshops for school managers and committees and communities in matters relating to their supportive role for the school aimed at attitudinal change. Topic such as Child Rearing Practices should be included.

(i)   provide advisory services on matters relating to school curriculum, teaching methods, staff relationship and community support.

(j)   establish a strong parents and teachers' organisation in schools where this body has not been formed and the strengthening of this body where it has been established.

(k)   establish a network system of schools linked through the Fijian Teachers Association branch network which aimed at positive teacher attitudes, collegial relationships and improvement of students attitudes to work.

(l)   co-ordinate the establishment of a government task force whose prime responsibility is the improvement of Fijian education.

(m)   provide scholarships to deserving students in secondary and tertiary institutions.

(n)   establish Form 7 Fijian schools in other urban centres and vocational schools in rural centres in the country.

(o)   provide and increase Tuition Fee-Free Grants to Classes 1 to 8 and Forms 1 to 4 schools in rural areas.

(p)   introduce Compulsory education in primary schools so as to reduce dropouts and increase the internal efficiency of the education system.

(q)   improve the standard of pre-school education through the upgrading of facilities, teaching aids and the provision of qualified staff.

Country	Programmes
Australia	• B Quantity Surveying • B Music • BE Civil • BSc Veterinary • BE Elec/Mech • B Education • BA Profes. Writing/Comm • B Pharmacy • BE Electrical/ Communication • B Bus. Communication • BE Telecom/ Electronics • BE Marine • B Architecture • B Agric/Econ • B Commerce • B Buss Communication • BE Survey • B Aeronautical • B Mass Comm. • B Nursing • B Applied Sc Corp Production • B Acupuncture • BSc Cartog. • BSc Forestry • B Urban & Reg. Planning • BSc Engineer. • B Hotel Mgmnt • B Applied Sc (Med Lab) • B Design • B Sports Stud. • B Electronics/ Computer Stud. • BSc Food Technology • BA Special Ed • B Bldg & Reg Planning • BSc Env/ Health • BSc Applied Biology • B Financial Admin. • B Buss Tourism • BA Banking & Finance • BA Media Studies/Productn • B Infor. Tech.

		• LLB
		• Cert Farm Mgmnt/Electro.
		• Marine Navigation
		• Compass Compensation
		• Dip Horticul.
		• Dip in Librarianship
		• Dip Mechan.
		• Dip Nursing
		• Dip Banking
		• SCPL
		• Assoc. Dip Banking
		• Assoc. Dip Marine
		• Assoc. Dip Engineering
		• Assoc. Dip Tech/Ref Air conditioning
		• FRACP+
		• Forensic Training Course
		• FRACS
		• MBBS (Electives)
		• Grad Cert in Mgmnt
		• Grad Dip in Visual Arts
		• Pg Dip Wool Pastoral Sc.
		• Grad Dip commerce
		• Grad Dip Dev Admin
		• MSc/Urban Reg Planning
		• Mcommerce
		• MSc Marine Biology
		• MEd (Admin)
		• MA Ed/ Teaching Curric
		• MA Devel Planning
		• M Town Country Planning
		• Masters of Commerce Buss Admin
		• MSc Mineral Economics
		• M Dental Public Health
		• M Bus. Admin
		• MSc Bio/Chem
		• M Health Service
		• M Pub Admin
		• LLM Taxation Law
		• LLM Research
		• ME Civil & Structure
		• MA Intern Trade & Invest
		• M Dental Sc
		• PhD Soc/ Econ/ Pol
		• PhD Ed
New Zealand		• LLB
		• BSc App Bldg
		• B Survey

	• B Commerce • BSc Computer • BE Civil • BE Telec • B Mgmnt • B Eco Plann • BE Mechanical • B Soc Sc • B Anthropol • B Architec • BSc Physio • B Aviation • BSc Forestry • B Pharmacy • B Hotel Mgmnt • Obstetric & Gynaecology • CPL • FRACS • Cert Engnr • Pg Resource Mgmnt • Dip Qnty Surv • Assoc Dip Civil • Dip Nursing • NZCE/ Insurance/ Mechanical/ Aeronautical • National Cert in Travel Tourism • MEd • MBBS • MSc (Physio/ Psychology) • MBA Pub Adm • LLM
United Kingdom	• LLB Civil • Bar Admission • BE Civil • B Tech Auto Engnr & Design • B Engineering • BSc Electronics/ Engnr • B Tech/HND Bldg Studies • B Tech/HND Bldg Mgmnt • LLB • B Bus Office Mgmnt • BSc Hotel Mgmnt • BEd Craft & Design • BSc Marine Bio • BSc Bldg/ Bldg Construction Management • BEd Indus Arts • BE Tech (Automobile) • BE Architecture

- BE (Hons) in Electronic
- BSc Hons Const Mgmnt
- Dip Computer Technology
- Dip Ports & Shipping Admin
- Dip Agri Edu
- Dip Insurance Broker
- Dip Public Health Engnr
- Dip Graphic Reproduction
- Dip Highway Engnr/Mech
- Dip Forestry Technology
- Dip in Public Sector (Audit & Acct)
- Dip in Workstudy
- Dip Community Development
- HND Mech. Production
- HND Civil Engnr
- HND Automobile Engnr
- HND Construction Engnr
- HND Naval Architecture
- HND Electronic
- HND Computer Aided Design
- HND Bldg & Plumbing
- Advance Dip Computer
- Cert Chartered Insurance
- PG Dip Internal Relation
- MA Pub Admin
- MSc Linguistic
- M Phil Devel & Finance
- MSc Agriculture
- M Phil Econ
- MSc Aqua-culture
- M Survey (Hydrology)
- MSc Indus Rel/ Personnel Mgmnt
- M Forensic Sc
- MSc Geo-science Compu
- MA Mass Commun
- MA Rural Socio Development
- MA English
- MA Admin
- MA Ed
- MSc Human Resource Mgmnt
- MA Defence & Security Analysis
- Msc Entre-preneurial Studies
- MBA
- MA Economics
- M Economics
- PhD Marine Bio
- PhD Sociology

	PhD Maths
USA	• BSc Medical Tech • BSc Comp/ Electronics • BA Indus Arts • B Pharmacy • BSc Envir • BSc Acctng • Assoc Deg in Architecture • Assoc Deg Graphic Design • Dip Auto Engineering • PG Airspace Law • Pg Dip Ophthmalmology • Computer Sc • Aeronautical Engnr • Travel Mgmnt Course • Broadcast System Operation • M Acct & Financial Mgmnt • Master in Linguistics • M Programme in Internation Dev
Phillipines	• BSc Devel Communication • Management Development Programme • BSc Agriculture Economics
Switzerland	• Dip Tourism & Hotel Mgmnt
Barbados	• LLM
Japan	• BA Pol Sc • Cert Photographer

APPENDIX C

Postgraduate Awards by Discipline for Students on FAB Scholarships

PGDip	Masters	PhD
• PG Dip Internal Relations • PG Airspace Law • PG Dip Ophthalmology • PG Resource Mgmnt • PG Dip Wool Pastoral Science • Grad Dip Commerce • Grad Dip Dev Admin • Grad Dip Visual Arts	• LLM • LLM Taxation Law • LLM Research • MA Acct & Financial Management • MA Administration • MA Dev Planning • MA Education • MA English • MA Mass Communication • MA Defence & Security Analyst • MA Economics • MA Ed/Teaching Curriculum • MA International Trade & Investment • MA Rural Socio. Development • M Business Admin • MBA Public Admin • M Commerce • M Dental Public Health • M Dental Science • M Economics • M Town Country Plann • M Ed • MEd (Admin) • M Forensic Science • M Health Service • M Linguistic • M Phil Economics • M Phil Develop & Finance • M Programme in International Dev • M Public Admin • M Survey (Hydrology)	• Education • Marine Biology • Maths • Sociology • Soc/Econ/Pol

	• ME Civil & Structure • MSc Aquaculture • MSc Bio/Chem • MSc Agriculture • MSc Entrepreneurial Studies • MSc Geoscience Computing • MSc Hum Res Mgmnt • MSc Indus Rel/ Personnel Mgmnt • MSc Linguistic • MSc Marine Biology • MSc Mineral Econ. • MSc Occupational Health & Safety • MSc (Physiology/ Psychology • MSc/Urban Reg Plann.	

Source: Adapted from information provided by the Ministry of Fijian Affairs

APPENDIX D

Provincial Distribution of Local FAB Awards, 1984-96

Province	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	Total
Ba	4	8	16	21	8	16	20	24	9	19	30	30	37	242
Bua	3	2	9	8	9	3	9	12	12	14	17	10	23	131
Cakaudrove	12	13	25	18	18	13	28	41	11	36	44	41	83	383
Kadavu	7	11	20	21	25	22	28	45	13	25	36	45	59	357
Lau	31	43	63	47	75	46	50	73	45	67	118	93	136	887
Lomaiviti	5	10	20	18	31	10	24	28	13	36	42	27	51	315
Macuata	1	2	9	11	13	10	20	14	6	17	22	22	37	184
Nadroga	3	3	14	14	12	10	11	15	13	28	40	32	41	236
Naitasiri	2	8	8	7	21	12	12	25	7	18	25	33	31	209
Namosi	0	1	4	3	0	4	4	4	7	8	18	10	12	75
Ra	0	8	9	8	16	8	15	16	8	18	20	23	30	179
Rewa	9	10	20	14	21	11	27	19	11	24	37	31	44	278
Rotuma	2	7	14	11	8	10	10	15	12	26	23	27	34	199
Serua	0	3	3	3	7	3	5	6	6	4	6	5	18	69
Tailevu	11	24	38	39	39	30	37	67	41	64	62	79	116	647
Total	90	153	272	243	303	208	300	404	214	404	540	508	752	4391

Source: Ministry of Fijian Affairs

APPENDIX E

Provincial Distribution of Overseas FAB Awards, 1984-96

Province	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	Total
Ba	-	4	1	-	1	1	2	2	1	5	2	1	1	21
Bua	2	-	1	4	1	1	-	6	1	1	2	-	3	22
Cakaudrove	2	7	5	5	3	2	3	1	1	10	7	4	1	51
Kadavu	7	4	1	3	-	2	2	2	2	9	2	1	6	41
Lau	5	8	1	10	4	4	9	9	2	10	11	8	8	89
Lomaiviti	1	1	3	2	1	3	2	3	1	4	7	-	1	29
Macuata	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	1	2	2	1	3	13
Nadroga	-	1	2	1	2	1	2	-	-	4	2	2	1	18
Naitasiri	1	-	3	2	-	1	-	1	-	2	1	-	-	11
Namosi	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	2
Ra	-	1	2	2	-	-	2	2	1	2	6	-	2	20
Rewa	1	1	5	5	3	3	-	4	1	3	1	1	2	30
Rotuma	-	3	1	1	2	3	1	-	-	3	2	3	-	19
Serua	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	1	2	-	-	-	6
Tailevu	4	6	6	6	3	2	9	2	3	7	7	6	6	67
TOTAL	24	36	31	42	20	24	35	34	15	64	53	27	34	439

Source: Ministry of Fijian Affairs

APPENDIX F

Provincial Distribution of FAB Local Graduates, 1984-95

Province	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	Total
Ba	0	0	1	1	2	1	7	11	11	6	17	11	68
Bua	0	1	0	1	2	1	7	7	6	7	3	7	42
Cadaudrove	0	1	1	5	1	10	15	7	18	13	11	12	94
Kadavu	0	0	1	5	6	2	13	15	10	14	7	12	85
Lau	0	0	3	2	12	33	48	30	39	30	22	33	252
Lomaiviti	0	1	1	1	7	4	11	5	20	12	11	16	89
Macuata	0	0	1	2	3	9	3	6	3	5	8	8	48
Nadroga	0	0	2	2	4	11	12	6	8	11	4	9	69
Naitasiri	0	0	0	2	5	6	9	1	9	6	7	13	58
Namosi	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	2	4	5	1	4	20
Ra	0	0	1	1	1	5	8	5	4	12	7	3	47
Rewa	0	1	0	3	3	13	11	10	11	8	8	14	82
Rotuma	0	1	0	1	2	2	8	7	12	6	14	7	60
Serua	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	5	3	2	2	16
Tailevu	0	0	2	4	10	17	36	29	27	20	23	15	183
Total	0	5	13	30	59	117	189	144	187	158	145	166	1213

Source: Ministry of Fijian Affairs

APPENDIX G

Provincial Distribution of Overseas FAB Graduates, 1988-95

Province	PG/Masters	Undergrad.	HND/DIP	Pilot training	Total
Ba	-	9	-	-	9
Bua	1	7	-	1	9
Cakaudrove	10	12	2	-	24
Kadavu	7	9	5	1	22
Lau	14	30	9	3	56
Lomaiviti	3	10	2	-	15
Macuata	1	2	-	-	3
Nadroga	1	-	2	1	4
Naitasiri	2	2	1	1	6
Namosi	-	-	-	-	-
Ra	2	6	-	1	9
Rewa	3	8	4	1	16
Rotuma	1	3	-	-	4
Serua	-	1	-	-	1
Tailevu	12	15	3	-	30
TOTAL	57	114	28	9	208

Source: Ministry of Fijian Affairs
Key: HND - Higher National Diploma

MINISTRY OF FIJIAN AFFAIRS

CRITERIA FOR AWARDS OF MFA SCHOLARSHIPS

UNDER FIJIAN EDUCATION UNIT

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION:

The shortlisting Panel considers the applicants against these criteria:-

(a) **Academic Performance:** whether the applicant's academic achievements meet the minimum entry requirement into USP, and the Panel's own judgement of:

- the number of units passed by applicants
- the other equivalent examinations
- and the ability to cope with USP academic work.

(b) **Choice of Programme of Study:** whether the programme of study to be pursued is appropriate to and necessary for the applicant's nature of work; special emphasis in areas where there is a dearth of qualified Fijians for such a workforce programme is usually advertised as a guide to applicants.

(c) **Recommendation from Employer:** Employer's assessment of manpower needs in the applicant's department and compliments the advertised fields.

(d) **Provincial Distribution:** Students from "PRIORITY" Provinces of Ba, Serua/Namosi, Nadroga and Bua are to be considered for awards if they meet the minimum academic requirements.

(e) **Age of Applicant:** This is always an important matter to be considered and is usually the prerogative of the panel as they see fit.

(f) Civil servants who were recommended by their departments were to be shortlisted by their PS for their final selection, and especially civil servants wishing to pursue programmes that would lead to attainment of a first degree;

(g) Those with a first degree and seeking sponsorship in another first degree were not to be considered for selection unless the Panel sees it satisfying (b) and (c) above.

(h)   Applicants wishing to pursue overseas courses that are available at USP/FIT will be advised to opt for USP/FIT and will not be considered for overseas sponsorship unless the Panel thinks otherwise.

(i)   Applicants who were requesting sponsorship in courses/programmes of study that were listed as those with high priority in the Cabinet paper on Fijian Education, were to be considered for selection, especially applicants seeking necessary qualifications in the Technical and Science areas;

(j)   Priority will be determined by the Panel.

(k)   Applicants with no proof of placement were not to be considered;

(l)   Applicants pursuing courses at USP on MFA awards and were re-applying for overseas scholarships, were to continue at USP with the view of getting the qualifications for which the award was initially given.

APPENDIX I

A Quantitative Estimate of 'Wastage' of FAB Local Awards at USP, 1988-95

Programme	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	Total No. of Students	Costing per year $	Total Wastage $
Diploma	3	10	-	7	11	11	5	7	54	$890	48,060
Degree	53	38	-	65	69	48	46	38	357	4833	1,725,381
Postgraduate	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	460	460
TOTAL	56	48	-	72	80	59	51	46	412	6183	1,773,901

Source: Adapted from information provided by the Ministry of Fijian Affairs

Notes:
1. The performance of FAB scholarship holders is determined at the end of each semester
2. These figures are provided on the assumption that students lose their scholarship at the end of the year
3. The figures could be higher given that these figures are only for one local tertiary institution
4. These figures are estimates only

APPENDIX J

A Quantitative Estimate of 'Wastage' of FAB Overseas Awards, 1990-94

Year & Total No. Terminated	No. Terminated	Country	Programme	Estimated Cost Per Student	Total Wastage
1990 (3)	3	Australia	LLB (2) Assoc Dip Acctg (1)	$30,000	$90,000
1991 (5)	2	New Zealand	PG Resource: Mgmnt (1) MBBS (1)	18,000	36,000
	3	Australia	LLB (2) BA Urban & Reg. Plan. (1)	30,000	$90,000
1992 (12)	3	New Zealand	BCommerce (3)	18,000	54,000
	5	Australia	LLB (4) BAccupuncture (1)	30,000	150,000
		United Kingdom	BE Telecom (1) BE Civil (1) LLB (2)	25,000	100,000
1993 (9)	2	New Zealand	BAnthropology (1) Dip. in Nursing	18,000	36,000
	7	Australia	LLB (6) BA Commun. (1)	$30,000	210,000
1994 (8)	1	United Kingdom	B Elec. Engnr (1)	25,000	25,000
	7	Australia	LLB (2) B Mech. Engnr (1) B Pharmacy (1)	30,000	210,000

			B Sc Food Tech. (1) BA Urban & Reg. Plan (1) B Elec. Engnr (1)		
Total	37				$1,001,000

Source: Adapted from information provided by the Ministry of Fijian Affairs

			B Sc Food Tech. (1) BA Urban & Reg. Plan (1) B Elec. Engnr (1)		
Total	37				$1,001,000

Source: Adapted from information provided by the Ministry of Fijian Affairs

26th August, 1996

THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

Brisbane Qld 4072 Australia
Telephone (07) 365 6550
International +61 7 365 6550
Facsimile (07) 365 7199
Telex UNIVQLD AA 40315

Affirmative Action and Racial Inequalities in Education: The Case of Fiji

Dear

I am currently studying for a PhD degree in the Graduate School of Education (GSE) at The University of Queensland on a Fiji Government-AusAid scholarship. I am writing to seek your assistance in my PhD study. This study will attempt to explore why affirmative action policies have not resulted in the substantial reduction of racial inequalities in Fiji's educational system. Specifically, my research question is: *Despite more than twenty five years of affirmative action to assist indigenous Fijians in education, why are these students still underachieving compared to the non-indigenous population?* I believe that your knowledge and understanding of this and related matters would be of great value in assisting me to answer this question.

I would thus be most grateful if you would allow me a tape recorded interview with you when I return to Fiji for my field research.   I intend to be in Fiji for 15 weeks from 26th August to 6th December 1996.   I will get in touch with you by telephone soon to arrange a convenient time for the interview if you agree. The interview will not take more than 90 minutes. A list of general questions to guide the interview is attached.

Please note that your participation is voluntary and that you are free to withdraw from this study at any time. If you agree to be interviewed, please fill in the **Consent Form** and hand to me in person at the interview. The study will not identify you personally and every effort will be made to ensure your confidentiality. Additionally the study will be conducted within the ethical frameworks for research established by the Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE) and The University of Queensland Ethics Committee.

I will provide you with feedback of the interview in the form of a transcript (on my return to Australia) which you will be able to amend to your satisfaction. At the completion of my PhD, I will lodge one copy of my thesis with the Ministry of Education, one with the Ministry of Fijian Affairs and one with the University of the South Pacific so as to ensure access on your part.

I thank you in advance for your cooperation. If you require clarification on any matter, please do not hesitate to contact me on telephone number 61 7 3365 6352 or by fax 33657199 or by e-mail on *S212637@student.uq.edu.au*. Alternatively you could contact my supervisors Professor Fazal Rizvi at Monash University on telephone number 61 03 9905 9196 or fax (03) 99052779 or e-mail *f.rizvi@education.monash.edu.au* or the Dean of the GSE Professor Allan Luke on telephone number 33656495 or by fax 33657199 or e-mail *a.luke@mailbox.uq.oz.au*

I look forward to receiving your response and meeting with you in Fiji later on in the year.

Yours sincerely

Priscilla Qolisaya Puamau
Postgraduate Researcher

THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

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Telephone (07) 365 6550
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Facsimile (07) 365 7199
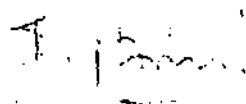Telex UNIVQLD AA 40315

20 May, 1996

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to confirm that Priscilla Puamau is currently enrolled as a PhD student at The University of Queensland. Her research topic is, "Affirmative Action and Racial Inequalities is Education: The Case of Fiji".

As her supervisor I would be grateful for any support that you are able to provide her in granting an interview and enabling her to consult relevant policy documents.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely

Professor Fazal Rizvi

General Questions to Guide the Interview

1. What is your understanding of the term 'affirmative action'?

2. What do you know of affirmative action policies in Fiji's educational system?

3. How important are these affirmative action policies?

4. How have they been implemented?

5. What are the outcomes of these affirmative action policies?

6. Do you think that, on the whole, affirmative action has been successful in promoting the educational interests of indigenous Fijians?

   If not, what are some reasons for the persistence of the apparent discrepancies that exist between the educational achievement of indigenous and non-indigenous students?

Consent Form

.

I am willing to participate in the study conducted by Priscilla Puamau as part of her postgraduate research at the University of Queensland, Australia and I direct that the information may be used in the following way(s): (Please tick)

_____   In the written PhD thesis

_____   In seminar or conference presentations

_____   Published in academic journals, monographs, or books

I understand that: (a) my confidentiality will be guaranteed, that is, my name will not be used to discuss issues in the thesis or any subsequent publications; and (b) my participation is voluntary.

Signature   _____

Name   _____

Date   _____

Postal Address_____

                 _____

Phone No.   _____

Fax No.   _____

APPENDIX L

Administrative Activities Conducted Prior to Fieldwork

1. Decided on the sample to be interviewed: six categories of people (Politician, Bureaucrat, Academic, Community Representative, Secondary School Principal and Secondary School Teacher); the balance in ethnicity (70%-30% in favour of Indigenous Fijians; balance in gender (60-40 either way); to include at least 5 expatriates as well;

2. Decided on duration and specific dates for the actual fieldwork (15 weeks from 24th August-7th December 1996);

3. Selected potential questions to ask in the interview;

4. Applied to the Behavioural and Social Science Ethical Review Committee at UQ for ethical clearance to proceed with the interview. Ethical clearance was approved on 29th March 1996;

5. Wrote to the Minister for Education in Fiji seeking permission to conduct fieldwork in Fiji. Permission faxed back to me on 22 April 1996;

6. Preparation of formal letter, consent form, question guide and cover letter from my supervisor, Professor Fazal Rizvi, to go to potential interviews seeking their participation in the study and the return of their consent forms;

7. Arranged for flight bookings and made arrangements for accommodation during period of fieldwork;

8. Faxed and e-mailed professionals in Fiji for suggestions of people I should interview and their addresses;

9. Decided on names of and numbers for the six different categories of people that I would interview;

10. Mailed out 63 letters to potential interviewees (early June) with a request that consent forms be returned by the end of July 1996; received 32 responses with 29 positives and 3 refusals. Of the 3 who declined to participate, 2 said they was too busy and the other, an expatriate, felt he was not qualified to be interviewed on the topic;

11. Filed consent forms and built up a list of definite participants and relevant information on each such as telephone number, category, ethnicity, gender, work address etc. Also built up a list of those who had not responded to my letter to follow up in Fiji;

12. Applied to Research Committee at this Department for funds to help in the fieldwork as well as an excellent quality tape recorder;

13. Supervisor Professor Fazal Rizvi trial interviewed me with questions I would be asking participants (late July 1996) which was recorded;

14. I trial interviewed two other PhD students from Fiji studying at UQ (first week in August 1996) which were recorded;

15. Advice from supervisor Professor Allan Luke regarding the technicalities of tape recording, interview questionnaire and other matters to do with data collection;

16. Based on three trial interviews and comments from supervisor, I finalised the interview questionnaire I would use;

17. Preparation of a week by week blank interview diary that would be filled as soon as I started contacting and confirming interviews in Fiji;

18. Loaned departmental tape recorder, adaptor microphone and practiced using it more;

19. Bought 50 blank ninety minute long tapes and 5 sets of batteries;

20. Prepared letters for 30 extra participants that I might pick up in Fiji;

21. Reconfirmed flight;

22. Flew out of Brisbane bound for Fiji on Saturday 24th August 1996.

APPENDIX M

General Interview Guide

1. What is your understanding of the term 'affirmative action'?

2. What do you know of affirmative action policies in Fiji's educational system?

3. How important are these affirmative action policies?

4. How have they been implemented?

5. What are the outcomes of these affirmative action policies?

6. Do you think that, on the whole, affirmative action has been successful in promoting the educational interests of Indigenous Fijians?

    If not, what are some reasons for the persistence of the apparent discrepancies that exist between the educational achievement of indigenous and non-indigenous students?

APPENDIX N

Detailed Interview Guide

1. Thanks and Introduction
2. Professional and educational background and experiences
3. Have you played a role in any kind of affirmative action?
4. What is your understanding of the term 'affirmative action'?
5. What is your knowledge of AA policies in Fiji's schooling system?
6. What are your views about the way AA policies have been implemented?
7. What are the outcomes of the these policies (positive and negative)?
8. Are AA policies necessary in Fiji?
   Should Fiji continue to have AA policies to specifically assist Indigenous Fijians in education?
9. Why are Indigenous Fijians continuing to fail in school?
- Psychological studies in the west - lack of motivation, self-esteem, etc.
- Socio-economic/cultural deficit models
10. Why have Indo-Fijians and Chinese students done relatively better at school?
11. Could past and current schooling structures be factors that disadvantage Indigenous Fijians in schooling?
- Curriculum (academic bias)
- Language (English - medium of instruction)
- Pedagogy (based on western principles and knowledges)
- Assessment (exam-oriented)
12. Should the curriculum place more value and emphasis on Fijian culture, language, systems of knowledge and wisdoms?
13. Is there a contradiction between Indigenous Fijian culture and the culture of the school?
14. Can the church play a more prominent role in Fijian education?
    Can chiefs play a more prominent role in Fijian education?
15. Why haven't AA policies succeeded in narrowing the educational gap between Indigenous Fijians and non-indigenous Fijians?
16. What conditions need to be in place for AA policies to work?
17. If you had the legitimate authority and the necessary funds, what major changes would you bring about that would improve the education of Indigenous Fijians?

Written Questions to Ministry of Fijian Affairs on the Implementation of the Fijian Education Fund

A. Fijian Education Unit
- When was this established?
- Why was this established?
- What are its terms of reference?
- What is the composition of the Fijian Education Committee?
- What are the terms of reference of the Fijian Education Committee?

B. The Special Education Fund
How has this policy being implemented from 1984-1996?

(1) Scholarships (1984-1996)
- What criteria is used for the award of scholarships?
- What proportion of the fund has been utilised on scholarships?
- Awardees in local and overseas tertiary institutions?
- Awardees by gender, by province both locally and overseas?
- Number of graduands and programmes of study completed both locally and overseas?
- Number of graduands by gender and province?
- Number of awardees who have failed?
- The costing for awardees who have failed, both locally and overseas?

(2) Capital Development of Schools (1984-1996)
- What proportion of the fund is utilised for this purpose?
- What criteria is used for the allocation of funds for capital development in schools?
- How much has been used on rural as compared to urban schools?
- How many schools in the rural as well as urban areas have been assisted by this fund?
- What schools have benefited, how much money was involved and what type of development was carried out?
- Beside scholarships and capital development, how else has the fund been utilised?

C. Monitoring/Reviewing of the Policy
- What monitoring/review procedures are in place for:
    - progress of students on scholarships
    - follow-up on capital development in schools
- Are there any provisions in the policy for a review?
- Has there been any review of the policy?

D. Other Matters
- Have there been any changes to the way the Fund has been implemented?
- What have been the outcomes of the policy?
- What are the future directions for the implementation of the Special Fijian Education Fund to assist Indigenous Fijians and Rotumans in education?

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Affirmative Action and Racial Inequalities in Education: the Case of Fiji

Dear

Re: Transcript of Interview and Confidentiality

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you very much for participating in the interview with me. The data from our interview will form a valuable part of my study. Attached is a transcript of this interview. I would be very grateful if you could take the time to read through the transcript and make any amendments you consider necessary. If you have made some amendments, I would be grateful if you could return the transcript **no later than Friday 30th May 1997** to enable me to begin analysing and utilising the data. If you have not replied by this date, I will assume that you are satisfied with the transcription.

I would also be very grateful if you could fill the attached **Consent Form** to indicate whether you allow your name to be quoted in the thesis or whether you would like your name not to be mentioned at all, that is to be kept confidential. I would also like to have this returned **no later than Friday 30th May 1997**.

I would be very appreciative if you could return the **transcript** (if there are no amendments please keep the transcript for your own information) and **the consent form** by the date requested for above. Please mail them to this address:

    Priscilla Puamau
    Graduate School of Education
    The University of Queensland
    Brisbane 4072, Queensland
    Australia

Once again, I take this opportunity to thank you for your much valued contribution to my PhD study. Vinaka.

Yours sincerely

Priscilla Puamau
PhD Candidate

CONSENT FORM

1. Please **circle** A or B:

    A. I **agree** to have my name used to discuss issues in the thesis or any subsequent publications

              OR

    B. I wish to have my name kept **confidential** in discussion of the data in the thesis or any subsequent publications.

2. Please fill this out if you have **not** already done so:

I am willing to participate in the study conducted by Priscilla Puamau as part of her postgraduate research at the University of Queensland, Australia and I direct that the information may be used in the following way(s): (Please tick)

_____In the written PhD thesis

_____In seminar or conference presentations

_____Published in academic journals, monographs or books

3. Op**tional** (fill this in only if you wish to)

Please indicate some personal details about yourself (eg. your koro, tikina and yasana if Fijian; your academic qualifications; a history of your work life; the schools you've taught at if a teacher; and any other information you may wish to provide). Please use the back of this page if you need more space.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Signature   _____

Name   _____

Date   _____

Postal Address_____

    _____

Fax Number   _____

E-mail   _____
(if applicable)

THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

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Dear

Re: Return of Consent Form

I hope you have received a copy of the interview transcript and the consent form that were attached to the letter I sent you dated 23rd April 1997.

I would be grateful if you could return the consent form as soon as possible to enable me to determine whether you agree to have your name used to discuss issues in the thesis or whether you would like your name to remain confidential. In case you have mislaid the consent form, I am attaching another copy.

I am assuming that you are satisfied with the transcript but if you think you need to make some amendments, please return the transcript together with the consent form as soon as possible. I would be grateful if these are returned by the end of June or early July.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you once more for your participation in the study. Vinaka vaka levu.

Yours sincerely

Priscilla Puamau
PhD scholar

Graduate School of Education
University of Queensland
Brisbane 4072
Queensland
Australia

FAX: (07) 33657199
e-mail: s212637@student.uq.edu.au

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Dear

Re: Transcript of Interview

My most sincere apologies for the delay in transcribing and in sending you a copy of our interview conducted in Suva sometime in August-December 1996. I had carried out the transcription work some time ago but have only been able to send you a copy now.

As you will notice, I have not transcribed the whole interview. Instead, I have transcribed those portions that I felt could be used in the thesis.

I thank you once more for your contribution to the thesis as well as your patience in waiting for the transcript. Vinaka.

I have provided my fax and e-mail address in case there is a need for you to get in touch with me.

Yours sincerely

Priscilla Puamau
PhD scholar